

**Open**

## **Cabinet**

## **Agenda**

**6 pm**  
**Tuesday, 31st January 2012**  
**The Civic Hall**  
**Civic Centre**  
**New Street**  
**Stourport-on-Severn**



## **Cabinet**

### **The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-**

<b>Councillor J-P Campion</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>
<b>Councillor M J Hart</b>	<b>Deputy Leader, Environmental Services</b>
<b>Councillor N J Desmond</b>	<b>Resources and Transformation</b>
<b>Councillor T L Onslow</b>	<b>Community Well-Being</b>
<b>Councillor J Phillips</b>	<b>Place-Shaping</b>

### **Scrutiny of Decisions of the Cabinet**

The Council has one Scrutiny Committee that has power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from this Committee.

In accordance with Section 10 of the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and Standing Order 2.4 of Section 7, any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and any other three non-Cabinet members.

*The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is 10<sup>th</sup> February 2012.*

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Sue Saunders, Committee/Scrutiny Officer, Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email [susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

### **Urgent Key Decisions**

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

### **Declarations of Interest - Guidance Note**

#### **Code of Conduct**

Members are reminded that under the Code of Conduct it is the responsibility of individual Members to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item on this agenda. A Member who declares a personal interest may take part in the meeting and vote, unless the interest is also prejudicial. If the interest is prejudicial, as defined in the Code, the Member must leave the room. However, Members with a prejudicial interest can still participate if a prescribed exception applies or a dispensation has been granted.

#### **Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992**

If any Member is two months or more in arrears with a Council Tax payment, they may not vote on any matter which might affect the calculation of the Council Tax, any limitation of it, its administration or related penalties or enforcement.

### **For further information: -**

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Sue Saunders, Committee/Scrutiny Officer, Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email [susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on the Council's website - [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm)

Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 31st January 2012

The Civic Hall, Civic Centre, New Street, Stourport-on-Severn

Part 1

Open to the press and public

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any personal or personal and prejudicial interests in the following agenda items. Members should indicate the action they will be taking when the item is considered.  Members are also invited to make any declaration in relation to Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.  (See guidance note on cover.)	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>  To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th December 2011.	6
<b>4.</b>	<b>CALL INS</b> a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the Cabinet.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Items Requiring Urgent Attention</b>  To consider any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Public Participation</b>  In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council/Cabinet, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 9 am on Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2012. (See front cover for contact details).	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Leader's Announcements</b>	

<b>8. Improving Community Well-Being</b>		
<b>8.1</b>	<p><b>Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework Potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Consultation Responses</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services which appraises Members of the level and detail of consultation response received to the recent consultation on potential gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites, including the identification of alternative sites and to agree sites for inclusion in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) and to consider the recommendations from Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012.</p> <p><i><b>Appendix 1 of this report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</b></i></p>	10

<b>9. Improving Community Well-Being/Delivering Together, With Less</b>		
<b>9.1</b>	<p><b>Future Arrangements for the Management of Sports and Leisure Centres</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Community and Partnership Services on the future arrangements for the management of the sports and leisure centres.</p> <p><i><b>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.) Please note appendices 1 and 2 contain exempt information.</b></i></p>	58

<b>10. Delivering Together, With Less</b>		
<b>10.1</b>	<p><b>Write Off of Sundry Debtor Amounts Outstanding</b></p> <p>To receive a report from the Director of Resources which asks Cabinet to give consideration to writing off the sum of £12,723.80 in respect of Oldington and Foley Park Community Network.</p>	67
<b>10.2</b>	<p><b>Pay Policy Statement</b></p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services which asks Cabinet to recommend to Council to adopt a pay policy statement.</p>	69

<b>11.</b>	<p><b>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</b></p>	
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12.	<p><b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b></p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	
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## Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

13.	<p><b>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</b></p>	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,  
KIDDERMINSTER

20TH DECEMBER 2011 (6.00 PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: J-P Campion, N J Desmond, M J Hart, T L Onslow and J Phillips.

**Observers:**

Councillors: H E Dyke, J Holden, F M Oborski, M A Salter and J A Shaw.

**CAB.69 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.70 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.71 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**CAB.72 Call Ins**

No decisions had been called in since the last Cabinet meeting.

**CAB.73 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

**CAB.74 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the new cemetery/crematorium was due for completion on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011. A formal opening would be held in Spring 2012. The Director of Community and Partnership Services and her staff were thanked for all the work they had done to get the facility delivered and Members agreed that it would be an asset to the district and the Council.

**CAB.75 Financial Strategy 2012-2015**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the Financial Strategy 2012-2015.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Corporate Management Team for the work that had been done on the budget. There were difficult decisions to be made to bring expenditure in line with income. There were pressures on the budget as the Council were no longer receiving the interest it was a couple of years ago and a third of the grant funding had disappeared.

Members were advised that £1m would be allocated in the budget to support an economic and regeneration initiative in the district and this would involve engagement with partners in the private sector. A State of Area debate would also be held in the near future.

The administration were content that council tax would be frozen for 2012/13 in line with the government subsidising any freeze. However, future freezes in council tax may not happen.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the opportunity for scrutiny to look at the budget proposals and the submission of alternative budget proposals by the other political groups.

The Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted that the Council was entering into a challenging and difficult period, but the three year budget proposals built on previous decisions and gave the authority stability to move forward in the future. It was proposed that the budget proposals would include the development of Systems Thinking which would help the Council's performance and reduce the cost of processes.

Members were advised that investment would be made in leisure provision in the district such as reviewing the paddling pool provision and modernising the facilities.

Members acknowledged that the regeneration of the district was important for the area.

**Decision:**

**Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:**

- 1. The Council's updated Medium Term Finance Strategy.**
- 2. Cabinet Proposals – taking into account the impact on the Council's Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2012/15 (Appendix 3 of the report to Cabinet).**
- 3. The level of net expenditure and resultant Council Tax for 2012/15 as per paragraph 8.1 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 4. Increases in fees and charges and the impact on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2012/15, as shown in Appendix 4 of the report to Cabinet.**

**CAB.76 Capital Programme 2011/12 Onwards**

A report was considered from the Director of Resources on the Capital Programme 2011/12 onwards.

**Decision:**

**Cabinet endorses and recommends for scrutiny:**

- 1. The Base Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report to Cabinet.**
- 2. The updated disposal strategy, referred to separately in the Cabinet Agenda, which will deliver the Council's decision to dispose of surplus assets in order to generate new usable capital receipts for the funding of the New Headquarters where this is proven to be economically viable.**
- 3. The variations to the Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule in accordance with the Council's Budget Process.**
- 4. The Director of Resources funds the Capital Programme including Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal by means of Capital Receipts, Grants or Prudential borrowing using delegated authority as appropriate.**
- 5. The Director of Resources funds short-term temporary borrowing pending the sale of assets, for New Headquarters funding, from Prudential Borrowing using delegated authority to determine the exact timing and source of such borrowing.**

**CAB.77 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 to recommend to Council**

**Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Mid Year Review Report 2011/12**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that the review panel had discussed matters in detail before recommending them to Cabinet. The training that had been carried out by Sector had been excellent and Members felt that they had received the opportunity to have an input into the training.

**Recommended to Council: The Treasury Management Mid-year Review Report be approved.**

**CAB.78 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011**

**Kidderminster Carpet Museum Trust Request for Cashflow Support (2011)**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that initially there had been concerns with the request from the Carpet Museum Trust but the Committee had agreed that they were happy to support the request. Members perceived that the training given by Sector on Treasury Management had been excellent and had given a broader understanding of the subject.



**Decision:** The request of Cashflow support up to £100,000 in line with the scheme approved by Council for the Carpet Museum Trust, contingent upon a third party being identified to resource the remaining £45,000 of cash flow support be supported.

**CAB.79 Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011**

**Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS)**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members that this item had been presented to the Treasury Management Review Panel where a robust discussion had been held. The Committee had been in favour of supporting the schemes and perceived it would help approximately 33 families to enable them to move onto the property ladder.

The Cabinet Member for Resources thanked Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the debate that had been held and thought that Sector had explained the scheme in detail at the review panel meeting.

**Decision:** Cabinet noted the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme and would hold their own debate on how to take the Scheme forward

**CAB.80 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Decision:** "Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**CAB.81 Property Disposal**

A report was considered from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services which provided an update in respect of Property Disposals in order to fund the capital programme, in particular the new HQ.

Members were informed the policy was adopted by Cabinet and Council two years ago but there was an update to the strategy that was now required.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed properties that were leased out were on a fully repairing lease.

**Decision:** The disposal of the property detailed in the Appendix of the report to Cabinet be progressed.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**  
**31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2012**

**Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework  
Potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Consultation Responses**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	A Better Environment For Today And Tomorrow
<b>CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:</b>	Improving Community Wellbeing
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor J Phillips
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	Director of Planning and Regulatory Services
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Mike Parker – Ext 2500 Mike.Parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft Consultation Statement</p> <p><i>Appendix 1 to this report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details)</i></p> <p>Appendix 2 – Assessment table of Alternative sites put forward through Consultation.</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Alternative site plans to accompany assessment table.</p>

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To apprise Cabinet Members of the level and detail of consultation response received to the recent consultation on potential gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites, including the identification of alternative sites and to agree sites for inclusion in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.2 The Council's Local Development Framework Panel considered the responses and the resulting assessment of alternative sites in detail at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January and then reported to the Council's Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January; Cabinet will receive the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee for consideration at this meeting and for a decision on next steps.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet is asked to **DECIDE** that:

- 2.1 Having considered the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012, which sites to take forward in the Site Allocations & Policies Development Plan Document from the initial consultation undertaken in October/November 2011.**
- 2.2 Having considered the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 which sites, if any, to take forward for a further site specific consultation for a six week period in February/March 2012 and then give delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services to approve the final format of the consultation papers.**
- 2.3 The content of the Draft Statement of Consultation as set out at Appendix 1 is agreed for publication on the District Council's website.**
- 2.4 Delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping, to decide what draft policy wording is appropriate for the pre-submission Site Allocations and Policies DPD for a criteria-based site provision policy for Travelling Showpeople and the future determination of planning applications for gypsy and traveller sites, and to undertake consultation on this.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

**Key Decisions**

- 3.1 Cabinet resolved to include the following sites identified within the Baker Associates Report in the public consultation, for potential new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011:-**
  - a) Site at Stourport Road, Bewdley
  - b) Former Sion Hill School Site, Kidderminster
  - c) Lea Castle Hospital Site, Cookley
  - d) Land adjacent Nunn's Corner, Stourport-on-Severn
  - e) Saiwen, Stourport-on-Severn
  - f) The Gables Yard, Stourport-on-Severn
  - g) Farm, St John's Road, Stourport-on-Severn
- 3.2 Subsequently a 6 week consultation on the above sites took place from 7<sup>th</sup> October – 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2011. This report considers the response to the consultation and the potential suitability of alternative sites put forward through the responses.**

## **Emerging National Planning Policy Update**

- 3.3 Despite the imminent publication of a new National Planning Policy Statement on Planning for Traveller Sites, the Government's objective remains for local planning authorities to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople through the identification of land for sites, with the focus of this being through locally generated policy. Wyre Forest District Council has already started to put this into place with the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD in December 2010. The Core Strategy sets the strategic policy for considering sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It also includes a commitment for the authority to ensure that sufficient sites are allocated for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

## **Outline summary of current need for pitches and update on the Development Management process**

- 3.4 The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) set out an identified need for an additional 30 pitches for the period 2006-13. At the time of the consultation on site allocations there had already been 7 pitches granted planning permission in 2008 at Meadow Park, thus reducing this requirement to a net of 23 pitches. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase 3 identified the need for a further 5 pitches for the period 2013-17. An indicative need (as established through the Regional Interim Statement) was set at 15 pitches for the longer-term post 2017 period.
- 3.5 The table below provides a summary of the need for pitch provision within the District:

<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Number of Pitches</b>	<b>Source</b>
2006 - 2013	30 (23 net of sites approved since 2006)	Adopted Core Strategy
2013 - 2017	5	RSS Phase 3 Interim Policy Statement Options Generation
2017 – 2022	15	Indicative target included within the Phase 3 Policy Statement

- 3.6 The Local Development Framework plan period runs from 2006 and it is important to ensure that any pitches that have been granted planning permission since this time are accounted for in the overall net remaining number of pitches to be found. As stated above 7 pitches were approved in 2008, but during the consultation period further planning permissions have been granted and it important to now take account of these in determining the up to date number of pitches that need to be allocated in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. The table below sets out those pitches that have been granted permission through the Development Control process since 2006 and should therefore be removed from the total number of pitches to be provided.

Site	Pitch Provision	Comments
Meadow Park	7 pitches	Planning permission granted 2008
Nunn's Corner	Additional 2 pitches	Planning permission granted November 2011.
Saiwen	5 pitches	Planning permission granted December 2011.
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 pitches</b>	

A temporary two year planning permission was also granted in November 2011 for 8 pitches at land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane, Stourport – see paragraph 4.8 below.

- 3.7 The above table demonstrates that in addition to the 7 pitches already removed from the 2008 – 13 requirement of 30 pitches (leaving 23) a further 7 can now also be removed, which leaves a requirement of 16 pitches to be allocated for this first part of the plan period. A further 5 are still required between 2013-17 and a further indicative 15 pitches from 2017-22.
- 3.8 Members will recall that although the GTAA did not identify a specific current need or requirement for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople in the District (rather it outlined the need for an additional 22 sites across Worcestershire), there is an existing established site through lawful use at Long Bank, Bewdley. As part of the Core Strategy's preparation, Officers met with the family that reside at Long Bank as the landowner of the site has asked them to vacate. There is therefore a specific current need for one family plot to be allocated within the District through the Local Development Framework process.

#### 4. **KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Draft Consultation Statement attached at Appendix 1 sets out details relating to the consultation process and an overview of the representations received. Officers have produced detailed summary tables of all responses received, but due to their size these have been made available electronically rather than appended to the report.
- 4.2 A total of 1604 representations were received from 1211 respondents. The table below shows the breakdown of representations received by site:

Site Name	Total Number of Respondents	Total No of Responses	Comments	Objections	Support
Lea Castle	566	583	18	557	8
Sion Hill	273	307	7	297	3
Manor Farm	270	326	4	321	1
Stourport Road Bewdley	185	240	14	214	12
Saiwen	21	21	2	15	4
Nunns Corner	19	19	3	12	4
The Gables	20	20	3	14	3
Not Site Specific	72	88	61	17	5
	<b>*1426</b>	<b>1604</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1447</b>	<b>40</b>

\*There were 1211 respondents in total. Some respondents have been counted more than once in this column where they have made representations on a number of sites.

4.3 In addition to these responses, a number of petitions were received as follows:

Sion Hill	411
Sion Hill	179
	<b>590</b>
Lea Castle - From hirer of facilities at Lea Castle	464
Lea Castle Petition handed in by Gill Hill	416
Lea Castle - Cookley Action Group - Signed Comment Forms	256
	<b>1136</b>
Manor Farm - Petition - Facebook -Online	<b>2640</b>

4.4 Public meetings were held at the following locations:

- Bewdley High School, 20/10/11 (in relation to Stourport Road, Bewdley site) 126 attendees
- Cookley Village Hall, 29/10/11 (in relation to Lea Castle site) 164 attendees
- Wolverley Memorial Hall, 31/10/11 (in relation to Sion Hill site) 165 attendees
- Stourport Civic Hall, 2/11/11 (in relation to Land at Manor Farm, St John's Lane and Sandy Lane, Stourport sites) 250 attendees

The draft consultation statement (Appendix 1) sets out the main issues raised at the meetings and minutes of all the meetings held are appended to the statement for further reference.

- 4.5 The above table at paragraph 4.2 demonstrates that a high level of responses were received in relation to the four larger Green Belt sites at Stourport Road, Bewdley; Lea Castle, Cookley; Sion Hill, Kidderminster and Manor Farm, St John's Road, Stourport. The level of response included a large number of objections which included common concerns relating to pitch provision on these four sites. Briefly, these include adverse impact on existing businesses and neighbouring residential areas; the capacity of local services and in particular schools to meet these extra pressures; highway safety issues; the impact on the open nature of the Green Belt and the impact on landscape character in these areas. Generally, there was a very low level of support for the allocation of these sites to provide pitches for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- 4.6 By contrast a much lower level of representations were received in relation to the sites at Sandy Lane, Stourport which included land adjacent to Nunn's Corner; Saiwen and The Gables Yard. Whilst a number of concerns were cited in relation to the potential impact on businesses within the Sandy Lane area, there was a level of support for the allocation of these sites on the basis that there is an existing Gypsy and Traveller community in the area.
- 4.7 The Consultation Statement sets out the representations made by the Statutory Agencies in relation to each of the sites and also includes their general comments. The following issues raised are of particular relevance:
- The Environment Agency submitted representations in relation to the Stourport Road, Bewdley and Sandy Lane sites which relate to their location within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and their subsequent risk of flooding. They raise specific concerns in relation to the Stourport Road, Bewdley site's location within the Source Protection Zone 1 of public water supply. The site is 168m from the bore hole and is therefore highly vulnerable to the risk of pollution from site drainage.
  - Natural England comments on the proximity of a number of the sites to SSSIs and Special Wildlife Sites and the need for mitigation of any potential impacts.
  - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust makes a number of comments in relation to the strategic importance of green infrastructure.
  - Worcestershire County Council Educational Services raise some important points in relation to capacity at local schools. In summary:
    - o There is sufficient capacity at Bewdley Schools, although some year groups are full.
    - o Concerns regarding the capacity of local schools in Kidderminster given that the Local Development Framework is looking to allocate sites for significant levels of residential development in Kidderminster, particularly the Churchfields sites.
    - o Concerns over capacity within Cookley and resulting pressure on school places.
    - o There are surplus places at two of the primary schools in Stourport and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children

from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

- No comments received from Worcestershire County Council (Highways)
- The Highways Agency concludes that the proposed sites are unlikely to have any significant impact on the operation of the road network

### **Assessment Of Alternative Sites Put Forward Through Consultation**

- 4.8 As anticipated a number of alternative sites were suggested through the consultation process. Appendix 2 provides details of all the alternative sites put forward and includes the comments made on them and an Officer response (Appendix 3 contains the site plans). The LDF Panel at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012 considered the officers' recommendations that the following sites have some potential to deliver additional pitches during the Plan Period and are worth exploring further through further site specific consultation:

Land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane, Stourport (Appendix 2 ALT1) – This site was put forward through a representation by the architect. The site currently has temporary permission for 8 pitches. It is considered that solutions to flood risk have been identified by the applicant and that permanent allocation for 8 pitches on this site should now be considered.

1A Broach Road, Stourport (Appendix 2 ALT2) – This site was put forward through a representation by the architect, which recommended that if the site were re-planned in accordance with its licence there is the potential to provide an additional 1-2 pitches

28/29 Sandy Lane, Stourport (Appendix 2 ALT3) – This site was put forward through a representation by the architect. There is a current planning application relating to the site (11/0711/FULL) for 6 pitches.

Land off Wilden Lane, Stourport (Appendix 2 ALT4) – This site was put forward through several representations. This site falls within the Green Belt, but there is an existing use on the site relating to a haulage yard with access and hardstanding. The site may have some potential for future use by Travelling Showpeople subject to availability. However, it has an existing longstanding use which may mean that it is not available and it is located within a sensitive area of the Green Belt along Wilden Lane.

- 4.9 If the first three sites in paragraph 4.8 above were allocated for Gypsy and Traveller sites following consultation, they have the potential to provide an additional 16 pitches within the plan period. This would enable the authority to demonstrate that it has a five year supply of sufficient and deliverable sites to address pitch needs in accordance with national planning policy requirements.

- 4.10 The LDF Panel also considered that the following sites were worthy of further consideration:

Clows Top Garage (Appendix 2 ALT24) – this site originally appeared in the Baker Study but was not taken forward for consideration. The LDF Panel considered its



potential as a site for travelling showpeople. Officers committed to investigate its availability for this use and report verbally to the Scrutiny Committee meeting due to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

Ex Yieldingtree Packing Site (Appendix 2 ALT20) – This site was put forward in the consultation responses for further consideration. The LDF Panel felt that this site might meet the travelling showpeople need. The site is in the Greenbelt and in quite an isolated location. Officers again committed to investigating availability and reporting back verbally to the Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

Land at Hoobrook Trading Estate (Appendix 2 ALT25) – This site is not large enough for the travelling showpeople use that had been suggested in the consultation but the LDF Panel thought it may accommodate a small number of gypsy & traveller pitches (possibly up to 5). The site is in an employment area within the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and possibly affected by the proposed Hoobrook Link Road from the former British Sugar site. Officers again to report to Scrutiny on 30<sup>th</sup> January on likely availability.

- 4.11 Cabinet will need to consider the recommendation from Scrutiny Committee on those sites the officers consider appropriate for further site specific consultation as set out in paragraph 4.8 above, together with those the LDF Panel suggested in addition at 4.10 and decide which, if any, they wish to consult on further.

### **Summary of Pitch Allocation Taking Account of Consultation**

- 4.12 Following the consultation that has been undertaken, the Council is now in the following potential position:
- The number of pitches required, taking account of permanent planning permissions, is now 36 up to 2022 (net 16 up to 2013, 5 for 2013-17 and an indicative 15 for 2017-22).
  - If the Cabinet progresses the allocation of sites at Nunn's Corner and The Gables which were part of the consultation, then these sites will provide a further 7 pitches for the period up to 2013, leaving a figure of 9 still to be allocated.
  - If the Cabinet decides to progress to consult on the first three additional sites in paragraph 4.8 (above) that were put forward during the consultation, then these provide a further 16 possible pitches which would then fulfil the remaining requirement (9) for the period up to 2013 and the 5 pitches up to the 2017 period.
  - If the Cabinet decides to progress to consult on the sites suggested at 4.10 by the LDF Panel then a figure of 10 pitches would be required post 2017.
  - As the post 2017 figure was an RSS Phase 3 projection, it would then enable the Council to more accurately predict the pitch requirement for this period after the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is undertaken in 2013/14 and rely on the planning application system to continue to deliver the jhg10 pitches that have not been specifically allocated.

**Meeting the additional pitch requirement through the Development Management process**

- 4.13 The table set out above at Paragraph 3.6 demonstrates that a number of sites have come forward through the Development Control process in recent years and have delivered pitch provision to address the outstanding needs. It is therefore considered a reasonable prospect that sufficient unallocated sites will come forward through the Development Control route to help address the longer term outstanding needs to 2022.
- 4.14 In respect of Paragraph 4.13 above, it is anticipated that the Development Control system could continue to deliver those pitches that are not specifically allocated within the Development Plan Documents, to meet the longer term need for the post 2017 additional pitches (subject to a review through the GTAA process in 2013/14)
- 4.15 Whilst there is evidence to demonstrate a track record of delivery through the Development Control process to meet identified pitch needs. It has however, proved more difficult to meet the identified need in association with the Travelling Showpeople within the District. The local family of Travelling Showpeople has been engaging with Council Officers for some time through the Development Plan process in order to identify a suitable alternative site. If Cabinet decides to consult on any of the 3 possible travelling showpeople sites suggested at paragraphs 4.8 and 4.10 above then the need may be met. However, if a suitable site cannot be allocated for use by travelling Showpeople within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD, it will be necessary to include a specific criteria based policy which would enable sufficient flexibility to assist with the delivery of a Travelling Showpeople's site in the shorter term through the Development Management process. Officers will develop draft policy wording in relation to a criteria based approach to site provision for Travelling Showpeople and for future planning applications for the LDF Panel to consider in more detail at its next meeting in February.

**Next Steps**

- 4.16 Cabinet needs to consider the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 in respect of sites to be included in the Site Allocations & Policies DPD and/or for further site specific consultation. Such consultation would be undertaken during February/March 2012.
- 4.17 Consultation responses would then be used to inform the final allocations for pitch provision within the Publication version of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document. This document will be reported to Cabinet in June with a view to it being taken to July's Council meeting to seek approval for its publication and submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.
- 4.18 Officers will consider draft policy wording in relation to a criteria based site provision policy for Travelling Showpeople and for determining planning applications for further gypsy and traveller sites, within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD. This will be reported to the LDF Panel for consideration at its next meeting in February and Scrutiny Committee in March and will be the subject of targeted consultation with statutory consultees and other stakeholder groups in March, allowing responses to be taken into account in the pre-submission publication document, to be reported to Cabinet in June.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The costs of any targeted site specific consultation on alternative sites and subsequent preparation of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD can be met from within the existing Local Development Framework budget.

**6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Site Allocations and Policies DPD needs to be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An equality impact screening test has been carried out, which shows that the proposals will not have any negative impact on equality. In fact, the allocation of sites could bring associated positive impacts for one of the largest ethnic minority groups within the District.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 In the absence of sufficient allocated sites the District Council may run the risk of being open to increased levels of unauthorised encampments. This may also result in more planning appeals and increased costs to the Authority.

**9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to decide which sites it wishes to include in the Site Allocations & Policies DPD arising from the initial consultation; which, if any, sites it wishes to consult further on; to agree the Statement of Consultation and agree to officers developing further policy wording.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 None.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- LDF Panel Report & Appendices (16/01/12).
- Scrutiny Committee Report & Appendices (30/01/12).
- Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople Potential Site Allocations Consultation – Response Summaries (January 2012).
- Draft Planning Policy Statement: Planning for Travellers (April 2011).

## Appendix 1

### Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document

### Consultation on Potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

### Draft Statement of Consultation

January 2012

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# **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in December 2011, Wyre Forest District Council is now preparing two site specific Development Plan Documents; the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD. The Site Allocations and Policies DPD will need to allocate sufficient sites to meet the identified need for accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.2 The commitment to providing pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is clearly outlined in National Planning Policy as well as in Local Planning Policy. Despite the proposed change in policy, the Government's objective remains for local planning authorities to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople through the identification of land for sites, with the focus of this being through locally generated policy. The proposed PPS will reinforce this ambition and will require Local Planning Authorities to use a robust evidence base to establish need; set pitch and plot targets to address accommodation needs; identify specific sites in their Development Plan that will enable the continuous delivery of sites for at least 15 years from the date of adoption; and identify sufficient specific deliverable sites to deliver site need in the first five years of the adoption of the relevant policy.

1.3 Wyre Forest District Council has already started to put this into place with the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD in December 2010. The Core Strategy sets the strategic policy for considering sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It also includes a commitment for the authority to ensure that sufficient sites are allocated for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.4 The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan underwent a Preferred Options consultation commencing in May 2011. The District Council chose not to consult on potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople at that time but to hold a separate specific consultation on the issue, due to its significant importance to local communities within the District.

1.5 This report sets out details of how the consultation was undertaken, the engagement techniques used and an overview of the consultation representation.

## **2. Overview of the Consultation Process**

2.1 Wyre Forest District Council appointed consultants Baker Associates to undertake an assessment of suitable sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the District. The study identified 15 sites which were considered to have potential for this use. These sites were presented to the District Council's Local Development Framework Review Panel, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet during September 2011. At their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September the Cabinet decided to undertake a consultation on 7 of these sites as follows:

- Stourport Road, Bewdley
- Former Sion Hill Middle School
- Former Lea Castle Hospital Site
- Land adjacent Nunn's Corner, Stourport-on-Severn
- Saiwen, Stourport-on-Severn
- The Gable's Yard, Stourport-on-Severn
- Manor Farm, St Johns Road, Stourport-on-Severn

2.2 The consultation took place between 7<sup>th</sup> October and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011. The following engagement techniques were used in undertaking the consultation:

- Letters to all people listed on the database which includes statutory consultees, landowners, businesses, and local residents.
- Letters to all properties who share a boundary with the sites.
- A Public Consultation Information Pack which was published on the web-site and made available at libraries and Hubs across the District.
- A hard copy response form.
- An interactive response form.
- A series of public meetings in areas close to the affected sites.
- Press releases to publicise the consultation details and public meeting details.

### 3. Overview of Representations

3.1 A total of 1604 representations were received from 1211 respondents. 16 of the respondents were statutory consultees and the remainder were general consultees.

3.2 The table below shows the breakdown of representations received by site.

Site Name	Total Number of Respondents	Total No of Responses	Comments	Objections	Support
Lea Castle	566	583	18	557	8
Sion Hill	273	307	7	297	3
Manor Farm	271	327	4	322	1
Stourport Road Bewdley	185	240	14	214	12
Saiwen	21	21	2	15	4
Nunns Corner	18	18	3	11	4
The Gables	20	20	3	14	3
Not Site Specific	72	88	61	17	5
	<b>1426*</b>	<b>1604</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1447</b>	<b>40</b>

\*There were 1211 respondents in total. Some respondents have been counted more than once where they have made representations on more than one site.

3.3 In addition to these responses, a number of petitions were received as follows:

Sion Hill - Handed in by Howard Martin & Mumshad Ahmed	411
Sion Hill - Handed in by Julian Phillips	179
	<b>590</b>
Lea Castle - From hirer of facilities at Lea Castle	464
Lea Castle Petition handed in by Gill Hill	416
Lea Castle - Cookley Action Group - Signed Comment Forms	256
	<b>1136</b>
Manor Farm - Petition - Facebook -Online	<b>2640</b>



## 4. Summary of Main Issues

4.0.1 This section will set out a summary of the main issues raised with respect to each of the sites put forward for consultation. Those issues raised by key stakeholders will be drawn out in more detail in addition to key issues raised by Statutory Consultees such as the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Worcestershire County Council.

### 4.1 Site at Stourport Road, Bewdley

4.1.1 A total of 240 representations were made in relation to this site from 185 respondents. Of the 240 representations received 14 were comments, 214 were objections and 12 were supportive of the site.

4.1.2 A public meeting was held at The Bewdley High School and Sixth Form Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> October to look specifically at this site. The main issues raised at the meeting were:

- Concerns regarding the difference between a Gypsy site and a site for Travelling Showpeople.
- Concerns about water supply, sewage disposal and pollution as well as concerns about flooding, proximity to the water borehole and the site's location in Source Protection Zone 1.
- Support for the site because it has no near neighbours, it has water, drainage and electricity and it is close to services such as schools. The site would allow families to have a stable life.
- Concerns over the Green Belt location of the site.
- Concerns over access and road safety issues.
- Concern that the site would dominate the local community.
- Concern over the impact on the regeneration of Bewdley.
- Concern over whether the site will meet local need for true Gypsies.
- Questions regarding the cost of living on the site and whether the residents will pay Council Tax.
- Concern over the fact that Cabinet shortlisted the 15 sites in the Baker Report to 7 for consultation.
- Concern over the effect on house prices and insurance premiums.

### Statutory Agencies

- **The Environment Agency** identify that the site lies within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and is also within the Source Protection Zone 1 of a public water supply. The site is also 168m from the bore hole and is therefore highly vulnerable to the risk of pollution from site drainage and other potential on-site activity. For residential caravan sites within this zone the discharge of foul drainage effluent to ground would not be permitted and a connection should be made to the mains foul sewer. For surface water drainage, the discharge of clean roof water to ground may be acceptable provided all down pipes are properly sealed to prevent pollutants from entering the system.
- **Worcestershire Wildlife Trust** identify that the site lies within the Green Belt and the flood zone and should not be brought forward unless the various exceptions and sequential tests can be passed. Notwithstanding those tests it is also important to note that it falls in the green link between the River Severn and a substantial green infrastructure resource at the Blackstone, Devil's Spittleful and Rifle Range SSSI complex. We would therefore suggest that in light of wider green infrastructure aspirations in the district

development in this area should be resisted. Accordingly we would recommend that this site be ruled out of the allocations process.

- **Natural England** identify that the site is 0.5km from Devil's Spittleful SSSI location 0.5km north east and adjacent to River Severn local wildlife site.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that there is sufficient capacity at Bewdley schools to accommodate this development, although some year groups are full at Bewdley schools, a number of pupils are coming from outside the catchment.

### General Responses

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- The fact that visitors to the town may no longer want to use the car-park at Blackstone and walk along the river into Bewdley and the impact this will have on businesses.
- A number of responses question the suitability of the site when brownfield sites are available within the District.
- Green Belt location.
- Many responses question the capacity of the school to take additional children.
- Existing traffic congestion on Stourport Road, especially at school time.
- Many responses question how services such as sewerage, water and electricity would be provided.
- Access to the site and increased traffic congestion.
- Flood risk.
- The proximity of the site to the water bore hole and the fact that it is in Source Protection Zone 1.
- The impact on tourism, particularly the impact on visitors to the Blackstone picnic site and the poppy fields.
- The visual impact at what is a gateway into the town.
- The lack of infrastructure in Bewdley to support the additional population.
- The travelling showpeople feel that the site would be suitable for them but the land is owned by Gypsies.
- The site would enable travellers to walk to local facilities including schools.
- A number of concerns raised relate to landscape impact.
- Many concerns relate to who will pay for the site to be established and maintained.
- Questions are raised as to whether travellers want to be displaced from their existing sites and communities.
- Some responses question whether there will be a limit to how many dogs and horses can be kept on the site and what other activities can take place there.
- A number of responses question how the site will be contained and monitored.
- A number of responses raise fears of an increased level of crime.
- A number of responses relate to concern over house prices in the area falling as a result of the proposal.
- Many responses question the need for additional pitches and why other authorities are not providing pitches.
- Concern over the potential detrimental impact on wildlife.
- Concern that the site is too closer to the schools and sports facilities.
- Concern over additional light pollution and noise pollution from the site as well as concern over the impact of existing noise and light pollution on the site.
- Some support for the site relating to its proximity to services and facilities, it is a stand alone site with few neighbours, it is near main roads and it is not a very good piece of Green Belt.

## 4.2 Former Sion Hill School

4.2.1 A total of 307 representations were made in relation to this site from 273 respondents. Of these, 7 were comments, 297 were objections and 3 were in support of the site. Additionally, two petitions were received against this site containing a total of 590 signatures.

4.2.2 A public meeting was held at Wolverley Memorial Hall on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011 to consider this site. The main issues raised were:

- Concerns relating to the future use of the playing fields.
- Concerns about how the site would impact on existing levels of deprivation in Broadwaters and efforts to improve the area.
- Concerns regarding a possible covenant on the site restricting it to educational use.
- Suggestion that the site should be used to provide jobs or a training centre.
- Concern about the costs of bringing the site forward.
- Concern that the Gypsy community do not want to live on that specific site.
- Concern about impact on house prices and whether compensation would be available.
- Concern about the capacity of the existing schools.
- Concern that providing sites will encourage travellers from across Europe to settle in the area.
- Concern that the site could spread beyond any allocated area and onto adjacent open space.

### Statutory Agencies

- **Worcestershire County Council** confirms that they own the site and that there are no covenants on the land restricting its use. They refer to the extant planning permission for conversion to a professional development centre and state that whilst no plans exist to implement it as yet it may be implemented at some time in the future. They also state that the playing fields are used by St. Oswald's School and they may require room for expansion at some point in the future. They raise issues relating to drainage and suggest that the cost of the upgrading works required may be uneconomic for this type of development to carry.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** have raised concerns regarding the capacity of the local schools given that the Site Allocations and Policies DPD already allocates sites for significant levels of residential development in the area, particularly the Churchfields sites.

### General Responses:

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Further consideration should be given to retaining the site for educational use.
- Concern about the capacity of the local schools.
- Concern about whether there is a need and why other authorities are not providing sites.
- Questions are raised as to whether the Gypsy community would want to live on the site.
- Questions are raised regarding demolition costs and how these would be met.
- A number of alternative uses for the site are suggested including a community centre, relocating Wolverley High School, a replacement for Wolverley Primary School, a sports centre, affordable housing, a relief road and drop off point for St. Oswald's school, a youth centre, sheltered accommodation or a day care centre.

- A number of responses raise concerns over the future of the playing fields and the safety of children playing there.
- Concern that the site would prevent Springfield Park gaining Country Park status.
- Concern that the site is out-of-town and too far from amenities.
- Concern over the impact of additional traffic on congestion and road safety.
- Concern that Travellers would be overlooked on this site.
- Concern over falling house prices and increase crime and insurance premiums.
- Concern that the area already suffers from significant levels of deprivation and this would exacerbate the issue.
- Concern that the short listing of sites was undemocratic and flawed.
- Concern that there has not been sufficient engagement with the travelling community to establish their needs.
- Concern that the site is in the Green Belt.
- Concern that there is not good access to a primary school.
- Concern that there are no bus routes past the site.
- Concern that there is a restrictive covenant on the land which is being ignored.
- Concern over the loss of an opportunity to provide employment on the site.
- Concern that it will be detrimental to the regeneration work which has taken place in the Sion Hill area over the last few years.
- Concern that local medical facilities are over-subscribed.
- Concern that the site is too close to the residential community.
- Questions are raised as to why Gypsies and Travellers need permanent sites.
- Concern about noise pollution.
- Concern about anti-social behaviour.
- Concerned about the impact on community spirit.

### **4.3 Former Lea Castle Hospital Site, Cookley**

4.3.1 A total of 583 representations were received in relation to this site from 566 respondents. Of these representations, 18 were comments, 540 were objections and 8 were in support of the site. Additionally, two petitions were received for this site, one from a group that hires the Lea Castle site containing 464 signatures and one from a local resident containing 416 signatures. 256 signed comment forms were also received in objection to the site.

4.3.2 A public meeting was held at Cookley Village Hall on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011 to look specifically at this site. The key issues raised at the meeting were:

- Concern that the consultation letter was not sent to enough households.
- Concern that no other Authorities are providing sites.
- Concern that by using a small area of the site the remainder will remain undeveloped and jobs will not be provided in the local area.
- Suggestion that the site should be used for employment use or an extra care village.
- Concern over property prices falling and insurance premiums rising.
- Concern that the site does not meet the Government guidelines.
- Concern over traffic and access issues.
- Concern over availability of school places and capacity of GP surgery as well as road safety issues related to accessing these.
- Concern over sewerage, water and electricity provision.
- Concerns over Dale Farm type expansion of the site.

- Concern that there is asbestos and ducts on the site posing safety issues.
- Concern over biodiversity and protected species.
- Concern that the meeting was held during half term week.
- Concern that the proposal goes against Adopted Local Plan policies.

**Statutory Agencies:**

- **Worcestershire County Council** clarify that they own a leasehold property on the site and it is unclear at this stage whether their landholdings would be affected by the proposal. They state that the overall redevelopment potential of the site may make the allocation of part of the site for Gypsy and Traveller uses unacceptable.
- **Severn Trent Water** has a major operational reservoir to the west of the proposed development boundary but is not currently aware of any negative impacts which could arise from the proposal. There will be below ground assets associated with the reservoir and Severn Trent wish to continue to be consulted in order to ensure that assets are not built over.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** state that the proposed sites in Kidderminster would add to the pressure on places and for this reason the Local Authority would have reservations about these sites being progressed.

**General Responses:**

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Concern over access to services and facilities as the A449 separates the site from the village and there is no safe pedestrian crossing point.
- Concerns about the capacity of Cookley Primary School.
- Site is favoured over Sion Hill by some respondents because it is brownfield and is better screened.
- Concerns are raised regarding the cost of developing the site especially in relation to asbestos and ducts on the site.
- Concern that the site is within the Green Belt and that the site could take time to come forward because of this.
- Concern from travelling showpeople that the site will not come forward soon enough to meet their needs.
- Concern that the site is not on a bus route.
- Concern over the visual impact of the use on what is an attractive site at present.
- A number of objections suggest that the site should remain in employment use and be used to provide jobs for the local community.
- Many responses raise concerns that residents of Austcliffe Park are required to vacate their homes for one month of the year and the new Gypsy sites will have 12 month occupancy.
- A number of responses refer to the impact on biodiversity including endangered species; the pole cat is cited as an example of this.
- Concern that the proposal was not put to people before the planning stage.
- Some responses question whether the houses surrounding the site would also have Green Belt restrictions removed from them.
- Some respondents suggest using the site as a community park.
- A number of responses suggest that using part of the site for Gypsy and Traveller use could impact on the deliverability of employment or any other development on the remainder of the site.
- Concern that the site is too large and the use could spread beyond the permitted area.



- A number of responses raise concern that people living near to the site will be unable to sell their houses should the need arise.
- Many responses raise concerns about the capacity of local services and facilities such as dentists, doctors and schools.
- A number of responses have questioned the availability of services such as gas, electricity, water and sewerage at the site.
- A number of responses question what will happen to the existing public right of way across the site.
- A number of responses question whether there is any historic connection linking Gypsy and Traveller communities to Lea Castle and to Cookley village.
- Some responses question why the policy in the Adopted Local Plan is being changed.
- A number of responses suggest that the road infrastructure is inadequate to accommodate the development.
- Concern that the use is not a suitable neighbour for the nearby children's home.
- A number of responses question why the site is considered suitable for Gypsy and Traveller uses when the SHLAA concluded that the site was not suitable for residential development.
- Concern that Gypsy families would rather live in Stourport-on-Severn close to the existing communities.
- Concern that Wyre Forest District already has sufficient provision of sites and should not provide additional sites until neighbouring Districts do.
- Concern that insufficient consultation has been undertaken with the Travelling community.
- A number of responses suggest the site should be used as a retirement village.
- A number of concerns are raised relating to addition noise and additional traffic as well as the outdoor lifestyle of Gypsy and Traveller families causing more noise and smoke in the area.

#### 4.4 Land Adjacent Nunn's Corner, Stourport-on-Severn

4.4.1 A total of 18 representations were received in relation to this site from 19 respondents. Of these, 3 were comments, 11 were objections and 4 were in support of the site.

4.4.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

##### **Statutory Agencies:**

- **The Environment Agency** state the site is located within Flood Zone 3 (1%, 'high probability'), based on our Flood Zone Map. They also note that planning permission has recently been granted for the site.
- **Natural England** notes the proximity of the site to Hartlebury Common & Hilditch Coppice 5551 to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary

schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

**General Responses:**

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Some support is expressed for this site arguing that it is better to expand the existing provision in this area than create new provision in other parts of the District.
- Concern that the development would further devalue property and reduce the number of businesses operating in the immediate area.
- Concern that Stourport-on-Severn already provides the majority of sites within the District and provision should be more equally spread.
- Concern that there are currently major problems in the Sandy Lane area between the Travelling community and the businesses and that these need to be resolved before considering formalising the tolerated sites.

## 4.5 Saiwen, Stourport-on-Severn

4.5.1 A total of 21 representations were received in relation to this site from 21 respondents. Of these, 2 were comments, 15 were objections and 4 were in support of the site.

4.5.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

**Statutory Agencies:**

- **The Environment Agency** observes that the site is located within Flood Zone 2, based on their Flood Zone Map, where there is a medium probability of flooding.
- **Natural England** note the proximity of the site to The Lower Heath industrial estate is adjacent to Hartlebury Common & Hillditch Coppice SSSI to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

**General Responses:**

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Some concerns are raised regarding the impact on new Gypsy and Traveller sites on new and existing businesses.
- Some concerns regarding the level of existing provision within Stourport-on-Severn and the fact that provision should be spread around the District.
- Concern that services such as education and medical facilities will struggle to accommodate new residents.
- Suggests the site should be used for affordable housing.

- Support for site as Gypsy and Traveller communities are already in the area, it is not visible and it will not have a detrimental impact on visitors to the town.

#### **4.6 The Gables Yard, Stourport-on-Severn**

4.6.1 A total of 20 representations were received in relation to this site from 20 respondents. Of these, 3 were comments, 14 were objections and 3 were in support of the site.

4.6.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

##### **Statutory Agencies:**

- The Environment Agency observes that the site is located within Flood Zone 2, based on their Flood Zone Map, where there is a medium probability of flooding.
- Natural England observe the close proximity of the site to Hartlebury Common & Hillditch Coppice SSSI to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council) identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

##### **General Responses:**

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Support for site on the basis that there is an existing Gypsy and Traveller community in the area and that it makes sense to expand this rather than provide sites elsewhere.
- Concerns are raised relating to the impact on new and existing businesses and on property values within the area.
- A number of objections are made on the basis that Stourport-on-Severn has enough provision and that further provision should be made elsewhere in the District or by neighbouring authorities who currently have less provision than Wyre Forest District.
- Some objections relate to the capacity of medical and educational facilities.
- Suggestion that the site should be used for affordable housing.
- Suggests that the existing tensions between the Gypsy and Traveller community and business community at Sandy Lane need to be resolved before tolerated sites are formalised.

#### **4.7 Manor Farm, St. Johns Road, Stourport-on-Severn**

4.7.1 A total of 327 representations were received on this site from 270 respondents. Of these, 4 were comments, 322 were objections and 1 was in support of the site. Additionally, a total of 2640 people registered their objection through a combination of a hard copy petition, an electronic petition and a Facebook page.



4.7.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site and the main issues in relation to this site were:

- Concern for the existing tenants of the farm and the businesses which they operate from there as well as concern for their employees.
- Concern about the Green Belt location of the site and the importance of this particular site in terms of maintaining the local distinctiveness of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.
- Concern about the biodiversity which exists on the site.
- Concern about how this proposal relates to the Stourport Relief Road proposals.
- Concern about road safety and the impact of additional traffic on the A451.
- Concern that the only authorised sites in the District are in Stourport-on-Severn and that other areas should provide further sites.
- Concerns were raised relating to the cost of the development and how this would be met.
- Concerns were raised regarding other local authorities not making provision and that this should be done before Wyre Forest District makes further provision.

**Statutory Agencies:**

- **Severn Trent Water** has landholdings associated with a former operational use within this area. Whilst the site does not appear to include land owned by Severn Trent it is suggested that if this site were to be taken forward a review should be undertaken to confirm the extent of the District Council's landholdings to ensure the development does not impinge on Severn Trent's land holdings.
- **Natural England** note that the farm is adjacent to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Special Wildlife Site.
- **British Waterways** identify that this site is in close proximity to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. Their priorities relate to the canal corridor and land and development within and immediately adjacent to the corridor. BW would require development within and immediately adjacent to the canal corridor to safeguard the safety and structural integrity of waterway infrastructure and the safety of users and neighbours; protect and safeguard inland waterways for water resourcing purposes, including the need for water management, improving water quality, managing land drainage, and avoiding, reducing and managing flood risk; protect and enhance the heritage, natural environment and landscape character of inland waterways; encourage public access to and recreation use of inland waterways; protect and support the navigation of inland waterways and waterway related tourism; and protect the operational waterway infrastructure.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

**General Responses:**

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Many responses raised concerns over the fact that the farm was listed as redundant and that the current tenants live on the farm and operate three successful businesses from there.

- Concerns have been raised over the devaluation of properties in the area.
- Concerns about noise pollution.
- A number of responses state that provision should be spread across the District.
- Concerns are raised over the impact of additional traffic on road safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists and school children.
- Concerns are raised over the impact on biodiversity.
- Concerns are raised over the location of the site within the Green Belt and the impact the development would have on what is an increasingly vulnerable area of Green Belt separating the District's two main towns and how this may affect the local distinctiveness of these towns.
- Concerns are raised regarding the impact on visitors to the town, the site is a gateway to Stourport and the proposed development would be highly visible.
- Concerns are raised relating to increased crime in the area.
- Concerns that the site does not meet the requirements of policy CP06 of the Adopted Core Strategy.
- Concern over loss of local employment if the businesses currently operating at the site were to close as a result of the proposal.
- Concerned about highway safety at the junction of Manor Road and the A451.
- Concern that neighbouring authorities are not proposing additional provision and feel this should happen before Wyre Forest District increases its provision.
- Questions are raised regarding the accuracy of the Baker Report.
- Concern that the site is safeguarded for the relief road.
- Concern about the impact on a SSSI.
- Concern about the proximity to the crematorium and cemetery.
- Concern about the cost of establishing and running the site and how this will be met.
- Concerns are raised about the cost of putting in an additional access off the A451.
- Concern that the site is too close to existing population and an old people's home.
- Concern is raised over the concentration of sites in Stourport-on-Severn.
- Questions are raised as to why the Cabinet selected the 7 sites they did for consultation from the 15 which were recommended in the Baker Report.
- Questions are raised over the impact on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.
- Concerns are raised relating to the additional pressure the site would put on local medical and educational facilities.
- Limited support for the site from a small number of respondents.

## 4.8 General Comments

4.8.1 A total of 88 responses which were not site specific were received from 72 respondents. Of these, 51 were comments, 17 were objections and 4 were in support. A number of these responses suggested alternative sites, further details of which are set out below.

### Statutory Consultees:

- **The Highways Agency** concludes that the proposed sites are unlikely to have any significant impact on the operation of the road network. As we have no concerns in this respect, wish to make no comment in response to this

consultation. No responses were received from the Local Highways Authority (Worcestershire County Council).

- **The Environment Agency** state that Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25 'Development and Flood Risk' classes caravans, mobile homes and 'park homes' intended to be permanently occupied as 'highly vulnerable' development. The instability of such structures places their occupants at special risk and they are likely to be occupied during periods when flood risk is likely to be higher (paragraph D19). In line with PPS25 (Table D.3.), 'Highly vulnerable' development should not be permitted within Flood Zone 3 and within Flood Zone 2 requires the Exception Test to be passed. The selection of sites should follow the Sequential Test set out within PPS25, policy CP02 and policy CP06 (criteria 5) of your Council's adopted Core Strategy (December 2010). The draft National Planning Policy Framework would appear to support this approach. We note that the information pack refers to the Sequential Test requirement and that you are currently undertaking Sequential Testing (flooding) to inform your draft Site Allocations and Policies DPD. This would be informed by your Council's Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment by Royal Haskoning. Notwithstanding the above requirement, a site specific Flood Risk Assessment would need to be undertaken as part of any planning application for sites within Flood Zone 2 and 3, which focuses on safe development requirements.
- **Blakedown Parish Council** considers that the Baker Report is flawed and this should be rectified before any allocations are made.

#### **General Consultees:**

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- A number of respondents suggest that no Green Belt sites should be considered.
- Concerns are raised over how long families can stay on sites and that there should be a maximum length of stay.
- A number of responses raise concerns over the number of pitches required and the evidence base behind this figure.
- Concerns were raised regarding emerging national guidance on planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and respondents suggested that the Core Strategy should be revised to take account of this.
- Concern is raised in relation to attracting Gypsy and Traveller families from further afield because provision has been made and what safeguards will be put in place to ensure the provision meets the local need.
- **Mark Garnier (MP)** raised a number of issues as follows:
  - Questioned the overall level of pitches required.
  - Considers that future provision can be met by formalising existing provision on Sandy Lane.
  - Raises concerns that WFDC has not made it clear to the public the terms under which Gypsies occupy the sites – e.g pitch fees, council tax utilities etc.
  - Raises concern over errors in the Baker Associates report.
  - Considers that the Core Strategy should be reviewed to take account of soon to be published guidance regarding Gypsy and Traveller provision.

## 4.9 Alternative Sites

4.9.1 A number of alternative sites were suggested through the consultation process. These are set out in the table below:

ALT 1	Land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate
ALT 2	1A Broach Road, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 3	28-29 Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 4	Land off Wilden Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 5	R/O Household Waste Site, Minster Road, Stourport
ALT 6	Land off Birmingham Road, off Hurcott Lane, Kidderminster
ALT 7	Land off Sandy Lane opp Equimix Feeds, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 8	Romwire Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 9	Habberley Road, Bewdley
ALT 10	Land off the Kingsway, Stourport. To r/o Torridon Close
ALT 11	Stone Depot
ALT 12	Land opposite VOSA testing station, Worcester Road, Kidderminster
ALT 13	Wolverley Camp, to r/o Brown Westhead Park
ALT 14	Former British Sugar Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 15	Land on Burlish Top, to r/o Gould Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 16	Former Settling Ponds, Wilden Lane, Kidderminster
ALT 17	Duke House Clensmore Street, Kidderminster
ALT 18	Land at Finepoint adj Zortech Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 19	Finepoint, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 20	Ex Yieldingtree Packing Site, Nr Churchill
ALT 21	Fenced land off Hillary Road, Wilden, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 22	Site adjacent Fountain Court, Low Habberley, Kidderminster
ALT 23	Land at Shatterford
ALT 24	Clows Top Garage Site
ALT 25	Hoobrook Trading Estate, Kidderminster
ALT 26	Hoobrook Trading Estate, Kidderminster
ALT 27	Site to rear of Lisle Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 28	Land to Rear of Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 29	Potters Scrap Yard, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn

## 5. How the Representations Have Been Addressed

The representations have each been commented on individually by officers and will be reported to Members through the January committee cycle. Tables setting out the summaries of each of the representations received and the District Council's responses to these will be made available on the District Council's website. In light of the comments received, a number of further sites have been investigated to see if they are potentially suitable for allocation as sites for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.

## Appendix 1 - List of People Notified

### **Statutory Consultees**

Abberley Parish Council  
Astley & Dunley Parish Council  
Bayton Parish Council  
Belbroughton Parish Council  
Bewdley Town Council  
British Telecom  
Bromsgrove District Council  
Broome Parish Council  
Central Networks  
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council  
Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council  
Clent Parish Council  
Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council  
Dodford with Grafton Parish Council  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
Elmbridge Parish Council  
Elmley Lovett Parish Council  
English Heritage  
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP  
Hagley Parish Council  
Hartlebury Parish Council  
Highways Agency  
Highley Parish Council  
Homes and Communities Agency  
Kidderminster Charter Trustees  
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council  
Kinlet Parish Council  
Kinver Parish Council  
Malvern Hills District Council  
Milton & Neen Sollars Parish Council  
Mobile Operators Association  
National Grid  
Natural England  
Network Rail  
Office of Rail Regulation  
Pensax Parish Council  
Rock Parish Council  
Rushock Parish Council  
Severn Trent Water Authority  
Shropshire Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
South Staffordshire District Council  
South Staffordshire Water Plc  
South Worcestershire Development Plan  
Staffordshire Police Authority  
Stone Parish Council  
Stourport-on-Severn Town Council  
Telewest Communications Network Ltd  
The Coal Authority  
The Environment Agency  
The Oil and Pipelines Agency  
Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework  
Consultation on Potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites  
Draft Consultation Statement – January 2012

Transco West Midlands Local Distribution Zone  
Upper Arley Parish Council  
Upton Warren Parish Council  
West Mercia Constabulary Police HQ  
West Mercia Police  
West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority  
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council  
Worcester City Council  
Worcestershire County Council  
Worcestershire County Council Economic Regeneration and Sustainability  
Worcestershire County Council, Schools Information and Planning Section  
Worcestershire LEP  
Worcestershire Primary Care Trust  
Wychavon District Council

**General Consultees**

Act on Energy  
Adams Hendry  
Age Concern Wyre Forest  
Aggborough & Spennells Community Action Group  
Aggborough Residents' Association  
Alder Kings Property Consultants  
All Rivers Hydro Limited  
Allan Moss Associates Ltd  
Anthony Douglas Homes Ltd  
Arley Area Environmental Group  
Arlington Planning Service  
Armstrong Burton Planning  
Arts Council West Midlands  
ASDA Stores Ltd  
ASHA Wyre Forest  
Association of Retired and Persons over 50  
Banner Homes  
Barton Willmore Planning Partnership -Midlands  
Baxter College  
Beazer Homes (Mercia) Ltd  
Bell Cornwell Partnership  
Berkeley Strategic Land  
Berrys  
Bewdley Chamber of Trade  
Bewdley Civic Society  
Bewdley Development Trust  
Bewdley Primary School  
Bewdley Tenant Consultative Committee  
Bewdley Town Centre Management Forum  
Bigwood Associates Ltd  
Birchen Coppice Primary School  
Birchen Coppice Tenant Consultative Committee  
Bishops Wood Centre  
Blakebrook School  
Blakedown CE Primary School  
Blakedown Tenant Consultative Committee  
BNP Paribas Real Estate



Bodenham Arboretum & Earth Centre  
Brimble Lea & Partners  
British Geological Survey  
British Horse Society  
British Waterways  
Broadwaters Tenant Consultative Committee  
Bromford Carinthia  
Bryant Construction  
BT Wholesale National Notice Handling Centre  
Buddhist Community  
Burlish Park Primary School  
Burlish Park Residents' Association  
Business Connections 4 North Worcestershire  
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd (CAMRA)  
Campaign to Protect Rural England  
Canning Associates  
Carr Gomm Society Limited  
Carver Knowles  
CB Richard Ellis  
Centro  
Cerde Planning  
CGMS Consulting  
Chaddesley Corbett Educational Foundation  
Chaddesley Corbett Endowed Primary School  
Chaddesley Corbett Tenant Consultative Committee  
Chaplaincy for Agricultural & Rural Life  
Charles F Jones & Son  
Chiltern Railways  
Church Commissioners  
Cill Dara  
Clive Fletcher Developments  
Colin Buchanan & Partners  
Colliers CRE  
Comberton Primary School  
Comberton Tenant Consultative Committee  
Community - The Union for Life  
Community Action Wyre Forest (CAWF)  
Community Action Newtown  
Community First  
Cookley Sebright Primary School  
Cookley Tenant Consultative Committee  
Core11  
Council for British Archaeology West Midlands  
Council for the Protection of Rural England (Wyre Forest District Group)  
Country Land & Business Association  
County & Metropolitan  
Cox Homes Ltd  
CPRE (Worcs)  
Crest Strategic Planning  
D & G Coach & Bus Limited  
David Lock Associates  
David Wilson Homes(WM) Ltd.,  
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group  
Design Council



DIAL North Worcestershire  
Diocesan Schools Commission  
Disability Action Wyre Forest  
DPDS Consulting  
Drivers Jonas  
DTZ  
eco2solar Ltd  
Elmsvyne Homes Ltd  
ENTEC  
Far Forest Lea Memorial CE Primary School  
Farming and Rural Conservation Agency  
FBC Manby Bowdler LLP  
Federation of Small Businesses, Herefordshire & Worcestershire  
Ferndale and District Residents' Association  
First Group Plc  
Fisher German  
Foley Park Community Primary School  
Foley Park Developments  
Forest Oak Short Stay School  
Forestry Commission  
Four Estates Area Committee  
FPD Savilles  
Framptons  
Franch Community Primary School  
Franch Tenant Consultative Committee  
Freeth Cartwright  
Freight by Water Freight Transport Association  
Freight Transport Association  
Friends Families and Travellers  
Friends of Broadwaters  
Friends of the Village Association  
Fusion Online Ltd  
Fyldene Ltd  
G L Hearn  
Garden History Society  
George Wimpey West Midlands Ltd  
Godfrey - Payton  
Goldthorn Property Developments Ltd.  
GPU Power UK  
Greenhill Tenant Consultative Committee  
GVA  
Habberley Tenant Consultative Committee  
Hagley Catholic High School  
Hallam Land Management  
Hallmark Hulme  
Halls  
Harris Lamb Ltd  
Hartlebury C of E Primary School  
Harwood Homes Ltd  
Haybridge High School & Sixth Form  
Health and Safety Executive, Chemical and Hazardous Installations Division  
Heathfield School  
Help the Aged  
Hereford & Worcester Ambulance Service

Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service  
Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust  
Heronswood Primary School  
Highstone Estates Ltd  
Hillcrest Residents Association  
Holy Trinity School  
Home Builders Federation (Midlands and South West)  
Home-Start Wyre Forest  
Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership  
Horsefair Family Centre  
Hovi Developments Ltd  
Hunter Page Planning Ltd  
Hurcott Road Flats and Area Tenant Consultative Committee  
Hurcott Village (Management) Ltd  
Ian Murray Associates  
Independent Advisory Group for Black & Ethnic Minority Issues  
Independent Schools Council Central  
Islamic Mosque  
J J Gallagher  
James Bailey Planning  
Jennings Brothers  
Jephson Housing Association  
Jones Lang LaSalle  
JS Bloor (Services) Ltd  
JVH Town Planning Consultants Ltd  
Kendrick Homes Ltd  
Kent Jones & Done  
Key Developments Co (NHD) Ltd  
Kidderminster & District Scout Group  
Kidderminster and District Archaeology & Historical Society  
Kidderminster Civic Society  
Kidderminster College  
Kidderminster Cycle Club (Cyclists Touring Club)  
Kidderminster Horticultural Society  
Kidderminster Swan Centre Manager  
Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership  
Kier Partnership Homes Ltd  
King Charles I School  
King Sturge  
Lafarge Aggregates Ltd  
Lambert Smith Hampton  
Learning & Skills Council  
Les Stephan Planning Ltd  
Levvel Consulting Ltd  
Lickhill Primary School  
Lickhill Tenants and Residents' Association  
LIDL UK  
Lockett Property Holdings  
London Midland  
M & G Builders Ltd  
MADE  
Madinatul Uloom Islamic College

Marches Energy Agency  
Marches Housing Association Ltd  
Margaret Delabere Almshouse Charity  
Marston's PLC c/o First City Ltd  
Meeting Deaf Community  
mfg Solicitors LLP  
Michael Sutcliffe & Associates  
Miller Homes  
Montagu Evans  
Morgan Tucker Ltd  
Morgoed Estates Ltd  
Morris Homes  
Museums, Libraries and Archives, West Midlands  
Nathanial Lichfield & Partners  
National Air Traffic Services Ltd  
National Farmers Union  
National Playing Fields Association  
National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners  
National Travellers Action Group  
National Trust  
Nex Communications  
Nexus Housing Association  
Norgrove Developments  
North East Wribbenhall Residents' Association  
Octavian Development & Construction  
Odell Trust  
Offmore Comberton Action Group  
Oldington & Foley Park Community Network  
Oldington & Foley Park Pathfinder  
Olympia Homes Ltd  
Orion Developments (Midlands) Ltd  
Our Lady of Ostra Brama Church  
Pawar Developments Ltd  
Pegasus Planning Group  
Persimmon Homes (Wessex) Ltd  
Peter Storrie Associates  
PHAB Ltd  
Phipps and Pritchard  
Pipeline Management Land & Wayleaves Ltd  
Planning and Environmental Services Ltd  
Pound Green Group  
Queensway Tenant Consultative Committee  
R & D Aggregates Ltd  
Ramblers Association  
Redditch Borough Council  
Redrow Homes  
Renewable UK  
Richard Harper Estate Development Ltd  
Rifle Range Tenant Consultative Committee  
Robert Hitchins Ltd  
Rooftop Housing Group  
Royal British Legion  
Royal Town Planning Institute  
RPS

RSPB Midlands Regional Office  
Savills  
Severn Navigation Restoration Trust  
Severn Valley Railway  
Simon Fletcher Architects  
Smith Gore  
Smith Stuart Reynolds  
SPA Housing Association  
Sport England  
Springfield Residents Association  
St Ambrose Catholic Primary School  
St Anne's CE Primary School  
St Bartholomew's CE Primary School  
St Catherine's CE Primary School  
St George's CE Primary School  
St John's CE Primary School  
St Mary's CE Primary School  
St Modwen Developments  
St Oswald's CE Primary School  
St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School  
Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society  
Stansgate Planning LLP  
Stoneligh Planning Partnership  
Stourminster School  
Stourport Business Association  
Stourport Central Tenant Consultative Committee  
Stourport Cricket Club  
Stourport Forward Ltd  
Stourport-on-Severn Civic Society  
Stourport on Severn Horticultural Society  
Stourport Primary School  
Stourport Rugby Football Club  
Stourport-on-Severn Town Centre Forum  
Strategic Health Authority (Estates - Midlands Division)  
Strutt & Parker  
Sure-Start Wyre Forest  
Sustainability West Midlands  
Sustrans  
Sutton Park Community Primary School  
Sutton Park Tenant Consultative Committee  
Terrence O'Rourke plc  
The Bewdley School & Sixth Form Centre  
The Coach House Short Stay School  
The Community Housing Group  
The Diocese Board of Finance Worcester  
The Equality and Human Rights Commission  
The Georgian Group  
The Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform Coalition  
The Inland Waterways Association (Birmingham, Black Country & Worcestershire Branch)  
The Knoll School  
The Lawn Tennis Association  
The Showmans Guild of Great Britain Midland Section  
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The Stourport High School & Sixth Form Centre  
The Theatres Trust  
The Three Counties Planning Consultancy Ltd  
The Tyler-Parkes Partnership  
The Victorian Society  
The Wyre Forest Agenda  
Thursfields  
Tourism West Midlands  
Town & Country Property Services  
Town Planning Consultancy Ltd  
Transition Bewdley  
Turley Associates  
Twentieth Century Society  
Ukrainian Club  
Upper Arley CE Primary School  
Veldon Printers Ltd  
Vision 21  
Wall James & Davies  
Walshes Tenant Consultative Committee  
Warren Developments  
Warwickshire Primary Care Trust  
West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Travelling Children  
White Young Green Planning  
Whitehill Road Residents' Association  
Whiteline Developments  
Whittles Coaches  
Wilden & Stourport Parochial Church Council  
Wilden All Saints CE Primary School  
Wilkins Chartered Surveyors  
Wilson Bowden Developments  
Wolverley Allotment Society  
Wolverley CE Secondary School  
Wolverley Sebright Primary School  
Wolverley Tenant Consultative Committee  
Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance  
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust  
Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership  
Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils  
Worcestershire Girl Guides  
Worcestershire Greenpeace  
Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust  
Worcestershire Racial Equality Council  
Worcestershire Wildlife Trust  
Wyre Forest Action Group for Older People  
Wyre Forest Advocacy  
Wyre Forest Bangladeshi Forum  
Wyre Forest Citizens Advice Bureau  
Wyre Forest Cycle Forum  
Wyre Forest Dial A Ride  
Wyre Forest District Youth House  
Wyre Forest Friends of the Earth  
Wyre Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership  
Wyre Forest Matters LSP Chair  
Wyre Forest Schools Partnership

Wyre Forest Society  
Wyre Forest Tourism and Leisure Network  
Wyre Forest Women's Aid  
Wyre Forest Youth Strategy Group

In addition to the above, a number of local landowners and organisations were consulted via agents and a large number of individuals were consulted as they had previously expressed an interest in being kept informed of progress on and consultations in relation to the Local Development Framework.

**Appendix 2 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss proposed gypsy site at Stourport Road Bewdley held at The Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at 6:30 pm**

Meeting chaired by Councillor S. Clee, Chairman of Wyre Forest DC with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

Councillor Clee opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation. Those people who had registered to speak would then address the meeting and this would be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be finished by 8:30 at the latest.

**Presentation by Mike Parker**

The consultation was launched on October 7<sup>th</sup> and will run until November 18<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the public's views on the use of the Blackstone site for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople use.

Adopted Core Strategy Policy CP06 states that the council will look to allocate sites for gypsy use.

The Site Allocations & Policies DPD Preferred Option was consulted on earlier this year. The allocation of sites for gypsy use was separated out from the document so as not to cloud other issues. Following this consultation, the proposed gypsy sites will be added back into the DPD next year before the entire document moves to an Examination in Public by a planning inspector.

The District has a number of gypsy sites already, including 2 managed by the County Council. Most of these are in Stourport.

The District Council are consulting on 7 potential sites for Gypsy & Travelling Showpeople.

National Guidance is set out in 2 circulars – 2006 on gypsies and 2007 on travelling showpeople. April 2011 – Government consulted on draft guidance 'Planning for Traveller Sites' – no guidance is out yet but document is a material consideration. Robust evidence base is required and need to provide a 5 year supply of sites or any planning applications for gypsy sites will be expected to be treated favourably. The draft policy statement is very similar to the existing circulars.

Why do we need to provide sites? This work is not premature – the Site Allocations and policies DPD needs to be in place to provide certainty. If we don't allocate sites for gypsy and travelling showpeople use it will be very hard to resist any planning applications that come in.

2008 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment set out the requirement for 23 pitches up until 2013. the Regional Spatial Strategy evidence is still the best we have but WFDC agreed to accept a slightly lower number with a requirement for 43 pitches up until 2022.

Baker Associates were appointed to undertake an assessment of potential sites. They looked at a range of sites from many sources. They undertook stakeholder consultation on the key issues not particular sites. An initial desktop study ruled out many sites. The remaining 64 sites were assessed on



accessibility, deliverability and landscape impact and whittled down to shortlist of 15 sites for consideration by Members. 7 were then chosen for public consultation.

Blackstone site – suggested for 15 pitches in the early part of the plan period. Is located in Flood zone 2 so sequential test needed. Could be managed by County, RSL or private.

It was explained that residents of gypsy sites pay council tax and rent to a landlord and for utilities in the same way that residents of other caravan parks. These sites would be for permanent use. There is no requirement for transit sites in the district.

Response forms are available or else please respond electronically via the website. Once this consultation closes on 18<sup>th</sup> November the responses will be analysed and reported back to members. In 2012, the gypsy sites will be included as part of the wider Site Allocation and Policies DPD which will then proceed to an Examination in Public before being formally adopted as policy.

Speakers were then invited to address the audience.

*Jan Adams – Mayor of Bewdley:-*

Is there any difference between a travelling showman site and a gypsy site as although the showman sites are listed as temporary there appears to be a clause allowing permanent occupation and storage?

Are there variable licenses for different sites?

How well are any rules or regulations enforced and how?

*Anne Hill, Netherton Lane:-*

Concerned about water supply, sewage disposal and pollution. Site is adjacent pumping station with groundwater source protection zone surrounding borehole. Underlying bedrock is aquifer supplying town's water. Can we guarantee that noxious substances will not be dumped at the site? Would site be connected to main sewer? Where would funding come from and how much would it cost?

*Shirley Nunn – family own site*

Earlier in the year the site was a temporary home to 7 families in their caravans. The site has drainage, water and electricity. There are no near neighbours. Schools are nearby and town is within walking distance. Developing the site would allow families to settle and have a stable life. Gypsies and travellers or travelling showpeople would be able to keep their culture.

*Richard Styles – Lower Blackstone Farm*

Used to own and farm this site before bypass was constructed. Site is in the Green Belt – would development for gypsy use lead to other uses being allowed?

Flooding issues – rising water table with seepage from below ground affecting sewerage connections.

Access issues – increasing vehicle movements – right turn in/out of site poor.

What about future access if playing fields adjacent?

Would an ecological survey be required?



Feel 15 pitches is too high – only small number of existing residents.  
Noise from bypass plus light pollution.  
Not considered suitable for travelling showpeople as no hardstanding or roads.  
Maximum of 3 gypsy pitches more suitable.  
What evidence is there that pitches are needed in Bewdley? Why not elsewhere?

*Mrs. Durbin – Little Lakes*

Would site be licensed for 12 months?

*Derek Killingworth – Bewdley Town Council*

Parish Councils have asked why consultants say they had been consulted but none of them were consulted about potential sites.

Question suitability of site – is in Green Belt – would need special circumstances to justify release – is liable to flooding so why is this site considered to be suitable?

Why do 'travellers' need a permanent site?

*Mr. Johnston – Acacia Avenue*

Road safety issues – there is too much traffic passing site – not considered safe place for gypsy pitches.

*Mike Parker's Response*

This consultation is about allocating sites for a particular use. Detailed planning applications would still be required at a later date.

Travelling showpeople – those who operate funfairs – would require storage for equipment over winter months plus residential. One site is needed in the district.

Licences – there is no requirement for transit sites. These sites would be for permanent 12 month occupation.

Enforcement of rules – sites would be well-managed as per any other caravan site.

Groundwater protection – Environment Agency and Severn Trent have been consulted. EA would be able to advise about need for treatment plant and borehole protection.

How much would it cost? Would not be directly funded by District Council; would seek grant funding. HCA £60 million provision of G&T sites.

Green Belt – would need to show very special circumstances such as there being no other suitable sites – is not uncommon to have small developments in the Green Belt. It would not set a precedent if sites were allocated for gypsy use in the Green Belt.

Flood Zone 2 – Flood Risk Assessment would be required.

Highways issues – County Council would be consulted about sites.

Light / noise bunding – recognise that this would be required for the site – Environmental health officers will advise.

Why are sites being considered in Bewdley? What is the best solution – concentrate provision in Stourport or spread around district, large sites or small sites?

All sites would be permanent – with 12 month residency.

Parish Council were contacted by the consultants about their experiences of gypsies and travellers. This was not about sites but about issues.

Questions were then taken from the audience.

*Paul Simonds* – what affect will this have on regeneration of Bewdley? Not good advert for tourists. Site is opposite poppy field and beauty spot. Why was site at Habberley Road discounted?

*Martin Lefoy* – who is eligible to stay on such sites?

*Joan Roberts* – lives opposite site – people will stop using car park – they will be wary of leaving cars. Showpeople would not be a problem, but gypsies would.

*Les Taylor* – want gypsy children to be educated and have equal rights but concerned about fear of mess and crime they may bring and question whether they would integrate with local community. How do we know that they are true gypsies?

*Abi Queenan* – runs snack bar on Blackstone picnic site – fears for future of her business.

*Ian Cumming* – do they pay taxes?

*Mary Harley* – is very little police presence in Bewdley.

*Julia Simonds*- gypsy site will lower house prices, should reduce our Council Tax.

*Emma Sellers* – is very little available for youngsters in Bewdley, this will only make things worse.

*Mike Parker's response*

Impact on first impressions of Bewdley – agree that site is highly visible and would need screening.

Habberley Road was dismissed at Cabinet meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September – decision made by Cabinet members – as officer cannot comment – ( heckler - why was Sutton Park Rise removed from list? Man then left meeting followed by 2 more. S Clee asked people not to shout out.

Gypsies and travellers do pay into the system just like the rest of us.

Effect on house prices of development is not a planning consideration.

Provision for young people – out of school activities provided by schools.

Further questions from the audience followed.

*Angela Davies* – development will affect our house insurance.

*Amanda Underwood* – has the school been consulted?

*David Redfern* – school has limited places, town survives on tourism – development would have negative impact, thefts from SVR, potential blight. Is it not all sewn up already??

*Mike Parker's response* - impact on house prices is not a material consideration.

Schools are consulted via the County Council as a statutory consultee.

Meeting closed at 7:30 pm

**Appendix 3 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Former Sion Hill Middle School Site as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site**

**Location:** Wolverley Memorial Hall

**Date:** 31/10/2011

Meeting chaired by Parish Council Vice-Chairman Simon Sherrey with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be closed by 9.00pm. The Chair also outlined that Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council would meet on 1<sup>st</sup> November to formulate a Parish Council response to the consultation. The audience were also reminded to get written comments in to the District Council by 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011. He highlighted that the purpose of the meeting was to get people's views on the site.

**Presentation by Mike Parker**

Mike Parker gave a presentation setting out why we need to plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, the number of sites required, the background evidence which has been used to inform these figures and how we have arrived at the sites for consultation.

**Sue Green**

- Highlighted that the playing field is used by a number of community groups as well as the school. Questioned whether the proposals include provision for a separate entrance to the playing fields.
- Questioned whether pupil to area of open space ratios would still be met should the development go ahead and whether this would have implications for compliance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

**Sarah Rook**

- Chair of Broadwaters Residents Action Group (BRAG) which was formed in 2009. Highlighted that the area won a Keep Britain Tidy Award in 2010. Also highlighted that the area is in the top 10% most deprived in the country according to the IMD.
- Stated that the area feels like the forgotten estate and that the proposal has stirred a lot of interest amongst residents.
- Identified that although the site is in Wolverley ward the majority of those affected live in Sion Hill.
- Identified possible uses for the site including a training centre, and other educational uses.
- Questioned whether the use of the site for a Gypsy and Traveller site would be in accordance with the covenant on the land.

- Argued that the Baker report is flawed.
- Identified that the Council's direct consultation letters did not include the Sion Hill estate. Asked that residents were not treated as fools and that the Council listen to their voice.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Identified that only the brownfield area of the site was being considered for Gypsy and Traveller use and that access to the playing field would be considered through the more detailed work still needing to be undertaken.
- Applauded the coming together of the local community and identified that they had clear and laudable ideas which need to be considered.
- Argued that apart from the misidentification of Manor Farm as being redundant no-one had pointed to any other specific flaws within the Baker Report and whilst people may not agree with its conclusions, its methodology and approach were considered to be sound.
- Consultation – outlined that all properties sharing a boundary with the sites received a letter which is standard practice when dealing with planning applications. Highlighted that there has also been a great deal of media coverage and publicity within local communities and that all information is on the District Council's website.

Howard Martin:

- Introduced himself as elected member for Broadwaters speaking to provide feedback on the meeting which took place on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October. The meeting concentrated on planning and social issues and whether or not the site was suitable. A full written report on the meeting will be submitted to the District Council.
- Cllr Martin welcomed the consultation as the District Council has to listen to views submitted in response to it. Argued that Sion Hill and Lea Castle sites should not go ahead. Although the Sion Hill site would be restricted to the existing footprint it was argued that a similar situation to Dale Farm could occur.
- The Sion Hill area has already lost its community centre and post box and the area gets a rough deal.
- Considered it to be extremely worrying that the Sion Hill School was going to be developed for the benefit of the community and now this proposal is being considered instead.
- Highlighted the area's low IMD score and that help is needed. Highlighted the good work carried out by BRAG and Friends of Broadwaters and Springfield Parks. Argued that if Sion Hill was not developed for the benefit of the community the area will go back into decline.
- Asked all the people to oppose it as it is not right for the area.

John Hart:

- Introduced himself as a District Councillor and Parish Councillor speaking on behalf of Wolverley.

- Identified that in order for the proposal to go ahead the site needs to be demolished and this has a high cost. It makes no economic sense especially given the current restrictions on public spending.
- Highlighted that the current planning permission for a training centre is not being implemented and that other options are being explored.
- Argued that there were no very special circumstances as other sites exist in the District which could be used. This site should be used for community benefit and should provide improved sport and recreation facilities.
- Supported the need for a Gypsy and Traveller site however, the Gypsy community want to remain in the same location and close to each other. Cabinet were urged to take these views on board.

Geoff Hamilton:

- Acknowledged that he was not familiar with the Sion Hill site but that it is close to residential uses and should be returned to school or special needs use. The school in Wolverley village is obsolete and the redevelopment was opposed by the local population because of the disruption to the village. The site could be used as part of the secondary school or for community uses. Both are more commendable than using it to provide permanent dwellings. These people are no longer travellers. Asked Mike Parker as a planning expert what is your opinion on the proposal for the site?

Mike Parker's Response:

- In response to Cllr Hart's question regarding the cost of demolition, the District Council's role is one of facilitation rather than delivery. Third parties will bring the sites forward including the County Council and RSLs. The District Council would support bids for grant funding on allocated sites.
- Education provision is a County Council function and therefore no comments can be made on provision within the District.
- All sites have their difficulties but the sites would not have been recommended to Cabinet if officers did not believe that they were capable of being delivered.

Open Questions

The Chair highlighted that the consultation also invites alternative sites to be suggested and encouraged people to suggest sites.

Derek:

- Moved into area 12 months ago and has attended the Broadwaters meeting and this one. Sion Hill is a deprived area and the only reason for this is that there is no commitment for work or other structures coming in to generate new money for the area.
- Raised concern about sites being run by private landlords who become a law unto themselves, they agree to everything then they make it up

as they go along. Asked “what planet are you on if you think only a small part of the site will be used?” There is no way of controlling it.

- Argued that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have to have somewhere to live and perhaps they should attend these meetings too.
- Stated that allowing private landlords to run the sites would be a catastrophe.

Bev:

- All other sites are nowhere near existing residential uses. Why has this site been identified when it is within a residential area. Once we get the money for the sites who is going to look after them? What about education and health provision? The existing services are already at capacity.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Clarified that when referring to landlords it meant RSLs and the County Council which are regulated bodies rather than private landlords.
- It is common planning practice on Green Belt sites to limit new development to the existing built footprint. It is entirely reasonable to consider the use on the existing footprint.
- The Farm at St. John's Road is in a similar situation with regard to proximity to residential properties.

Bev:

- Clarified that she was referring to the existing sites rather than the other sites in the consultation. The existing sites are in the industrial areas of Sandy Lane not residential areas.

Mike Parker's Response:

- With reference to the funding element, the District Council would only help to seek grant funding.
- The Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will require education and health facilities. Consultation with the relevant providing bodies will identify any capacity issues.

Malcolm Walkward?

- Questioned where the capital costs come from for site clearance £1.5-2million. Asked for confirmation on how much the site would cost to clear and what the development cost would be. Where would this money come from, Central Government or Wyre Forest DC?

Jonathan Hayboard:

- Does 23 pitches include the Travelling Showpeople site or is it in addition and how many pitches are required for Travelling Showpeople?
- The new PPS referred to in the Baker Report does not have a number; please can you confirm the number.

Mike Parker's Response:



- The costs for site clearance are speculative. The providers would apply for grant funding to establish the sites. The HCA have a pot of approximately £60million to bid into up to 2015. Funding would not come from the District Council.
- 43 Gypsy and Traveller pitches are needed and in addition, one site is needed for Travelling Showpeople.
- The PPS draft is contained within 'Planning for Traveller Uses' (2011) which is available from the DCLG website.

Jason:

- Bristol Council have spent £1.5 million for 10 pitches.
- The County Council spent money on Sion Hill School after it closed. Asbestos has now been found there, it should have come up then.

Julia Lockwood:

- These people are not travellers, they are settled travellers.

John B:

- No decision is being made and this is causing blight. House values have been reduced by the proposals. What right has the Council got to devalue people's properties? Why should 45 pitches hold sway over the majority of the population?

Mike parker's Response:

- Clarified that the District Council has no ownership interest in the school site. The County Council own the site.
- The Tonight programme showed Wyre Forest District to be a forward thinking authority trying to plan properly for the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople so that we don't have to keep moving them on.
- Clarified that the people on top table from the District Council were officers, not elected Members.
- Clarified that property values were not a material planning consideration.

Ken Stokes:

- Introduced himself as Chair of St. Oswald's Board of Governors which is remaining neutral because they are a church school.
- Personal opinion is that schools and sports facilities adjacent to a traveller site will not enhance the education and achievement of children.
- Regarding the letter in the Shuttle asking to open arms to Gypsies and Travellers – people who wrote it don't live on Sion Hill.
- Consultation form asks for planning reasons, can we ask planners if they are true. Planners and members should be finding reasons not to allocate sites.

Mr Bennett:



- If your property was devalued you would not be calm. It is disgusting to take value away when people have worked all their life. Travellers means devaluing life. The Council should be looking after the people who are already settled in the area.
- Use industrial sites they already have hard standing areas. Do not push this disruption into settled areas.

John Bennett:

- What have you based the assumption on that providing sites will reduce travelling.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Professional officers will set out the pros and cons of the sites. Members will take this on board when making their decisions.
- Clarified that it did not reduce people travelling. It gives the Council greater strength to resist sites that occur where we don't want to see them if we can point to the process that has been gone through and where the provision has been made.

Claire Salter:

- We have lived here for 15 years and do not consider ourselves to be deprived although the area is recognised as an area of deprivation.
- The school is full to capacity with the kitchen being extended to provide enough space to prepare school meals. The teachers work hard to get an acceptable OFSTED report. It is reported that 30 travellers would bring 10 children. Where will these children go to school and what will they do all day when the school can not accommodate them?

Adrian Sewell:

- If the Baker Report is not flawed why have 8 sites, 4 of the preferred sites been removed?

Mike Parker's Response:

- The County Council are the education provider and we will take their advice regarding school place provision.
- In response to Cllr Sewell's point, just because the Council took a different approach does not mean that the Baker Report is flawed.

Geoff Hamilton:

- Would you consider that this site is better than sites already ruined by industry e.g everywhere between Wilden Lane and Stourport Road? It would be easier to slot the development in there. Slotting it into Sion Hill is bad planning. Any site is capable of accommodating the use if it is cleared. *Note: it was clarified through the chair that this is to be considered as an alternative site.*

Mike Parker's Response:

- Reminded attendees that if they have other sites in mind to submit them.

- Drew attention to the fact that there are a number of brownfield sites within the Green Belt.
- Reiterated that all of those sites out to consultation are believed to be capable of being delivered.

Dean Cox:

- Reiterated that the Parish Council do not support either the Sion Hill site or the Lea Castle site. Pointed out that the Parish Council do not make decisions. Identified members of the Cabinet in the audience.

Unknown:

- Argued that the former British Sugar site would be ruled out because of the Ashland Chemicals blast zone. If this was true we should not hang much hope on it being developed.

Gail Alexander:

- The voluntary effort that the community have put into the regeneration of Broadwaters Park should be rewarded by using the Sion Hill site for the good of the community rather than to its detriment.

Unknown:

- Stated that both his daughters had had bad experiences with Gypsies having had their horses stolen by them. Suggested that Gypsies and Travellers may be difficult to live next to.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Clarified that County Council will look into the covenant on the school site.
- With reference to the blast zone, the HSE have recently reduced the area which is covered. The British Sugar site is earmarked for mixed use development including some residential. If people wish to submit the site as an alternative then they should not be put off by the blast zone.

Fleur:

- Raised concerns over the fact that providing sites could encourage travellers from across Europe to settle in the area.

Unknown:

- The Tonight programme showed a successful site which was built on industrial land which had no impact on existing residents.

David Palmer:

- Stated that he had recently moved into the area. The Councillors make the decisions. It appears to have been taken for granted that there is a requirement on the basis that we may, at some point, want to move travellers on. Considers that we should not be providing residential sites across the District on the off chance that Travellers might settle somewhere that we want to move them on from.

- Questioned how many travellers would work within the Wolverley and Cookley area and argued that most won't want to go there, they will be forced to the area because a site has been provided that the local community do not want. Suggested that as there were no representatives of the Traveller community at the meeting perhaps that was an indication that the Travellers did not want to come to the site.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Reiterated that we are not looking to provide transient sites within the District as no need has been identified for such sites. The sites will be for settled Travellers. We need to provide sites in order to avoid Travellers settling where we would not want them to. It is a long process to move Travellers on from sites which are not authorised.
- Reiterated that the Baker Report sets out what evidence has been used to underpin the identified need.
- Reiterated that all members of the community, including the Gypsy and Traveller community were welcome to attend the meetings and that representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community were present at the Bewdley meeting.

Malcolm Hazlewood:

- Who holds the licence for the parks once they are operational and what monitoring will be in place to make sure that the conditions are not breached.

Brian Marks:

- Questioned the need for more sites - is it to clear the unauthorised sites in Stourport-on-Severn? Moving unauthorised people to authorised sites?
- The school problems have arisen from Sion Hill School being closed down. The other schools are now oversubscribed with children in portakabins. The money to rebuild the schools has fallen by the wayside.
- Referred to a school in Malvern which has a high number of Travelling children and has received a poor OFSTED report because Travelling children are disruptive.

Terry Foller:

- The field is used by the community and the school. The development will disrupt the children.
- Questioned whether Sport England have been notified.
- Questioned why some sites were excluded by the Cabinet.

Mike Parker's Response:

- In response the question regarding licences it was clarified that the District Council would issue a licence and enforce the conditions of that licence. Monitoring of the sites would take place.
- Clarified that the 43 pitches are in addition to the current facilities within Stourport-on-Severn. 8 of the pitches within Stourport-on-Severn are

currently tolerated and one of the options is to formally recognise these pitches and then they will come off the need figure.

- Confirmed that Sport England have been consulted as part of this consultation process. Also clarified that we are talking about the existing hard standing, not the playing fields.

Victoria:

- Asked for a show of hands for and against the proposal. No one indicated that they were in favour of the proposal and almost everyone in the room indicated that they were against it.

Geoff Hatch:

- Questioned why no member of the County Council was present if they are part of the consultation process and own the site.

Mel:

- Encouraged all attendees to fill out a response form.

Ryan:

- Lea Castle and Sion Hill – how can the Council say the sites are capable of being brought forward when they do not know the cost of doing this? How much certainty is there over the viability of these proposals?

Mike Parker's Response:

- There is a long way to go before the financial issue is considered. No bids have been made and no money has been offered as yet. At this stage we are bringing forward the principle and location. More detail will be required through the planning application process and the funding stage. The detail and delivery will emerge during the 20 year plan period.

Ken Stokes:

- How many people have said they want Travellers? Most attendees are against. A show of hands at Broadwaters and Cookley meetings showed that most people were against these sites coming forward.

Adrian Sewell:

- Indicated that he was not against Travellers per se but Sion Hill is not a suitable site because of the deprivation within the area and the highways issues. Questioned why the Sutton Park site was removed from the consultation.

Trevor:

- Questioned what would happen to new sites suggested through the consultation process. The response form asks people to support, object or comment, how can people do this on additional sites which come forward? Mike Parker responded stating that they would be reported to LDF Panel, Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet. Both

Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet are open to the public to attend. Indicated that if significant additional sites come forward which are viable a further consultation stage may need to be undertaken however, we need to be time efficient.

Chris Nicholls:

- Questioned whether there was any point suggesting alternative sites when Mike Parker's response had suggested that there would not be an additional stage of consultation on these sites. Suggested that the process will not be fair because the Baker Report put forward 15 sites and only 7 are being consulted on. 4 of the 5 preferred sites were rejected by Cabinet. Feels that the consultation is a sham.

Barry MacFarlane:

- Cookely Parish Councillor – Felt that it was not fair that a show of hands demonstrated that people are against both of these sites but the 5 Cabinet Members will decide on the sites.

Vince Smith:

- Requested a truthful answer as to why the sites were removed. In response to this Mike Parker referred people to the Cabinet minutes.

**Meeting closed at 9.05pm**

**Appendix 4 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Former Lea Castle Hospital Site as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site**

**Location:** Cookley Village Hall

**Date:** 26/10/2011

Meeting chaired by Parish Council Chairman Dean Cox with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be finished by 9.00pm.

**Presentation by Mike Parker**

Mike Parker, Director of Planning and Regulatory Services gave an introductory presentation that set out the current situation with regards to planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in terms of national planning policy and also local planning policy. He also outlined how the current consultation had occurred as well as identifying how this particular topic fits in with the rest of the future planning of Wyre Forest District.

Following the presentation a number of speakers addressed the audience.

**Peter Ashcroft**

- Residents were united in their response – this was a people issue and not a political issue.
- Concerned that the consultation letter had not covered a wide enough area and that the first people knew about what had occurred was at the start of the consultation.
- There was real concern about the property blight that would occur over a long period of time. From the moment the proposal was identified there could be 7 year blight, with figures suggesting that in the Crescent alone, the devaluation could be £1.5million pounds. Concerned that the proposal is incompetent and commercially unaware.
- Why are we producing a long term plan when other authorities aren't?
- The comments are public knowledge and not racism – Worcestershire has the second highest number of gypsy sites in the country
- Lea Castle is the Jewell in Wyre Forest's crown and needs a high value use, otherwise it will cost the rate payers a fortune in terms of clearing asbestos and underground pipes and sewers
- Site should be used for a nursing home or extra care village for the elderly, which would provide a good return on rates
- Concerned that Wyre Forest will be known as a soft touch and that control of the wider site would be difficult

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- The consultation letter had followed standard practice, following the Development Control process
- Local Plans have always had a long time period, plan for 10-15 years, the current Government consultation identifies the need to plan for a 15 year time-frame
- Property Valuations – Government guidance indicates what can be used as a 'material planning consideration' when looking at proposals, and this does not cover the impact on house prices
- Cost of Clearance – District Council won't be running the site. The Council's role will be in allocating and facilitating development. There is grant funding available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to help develop sites
- By looking to allocate sites we would be in a better position in terms of removing unauthorised encampments

Harold Keeling

- The site was a former Hospital complex that was a major employer for the area – it is an idyllic location
- Over the years planning constraints have made the site unattractive to developers resulting in an eyesore. These are the same regulations that are now considering this site for Gypsy and Traveller use
- Currently the HCA control access to the site but if this proposal were to go ahead then control could be difficult and the site could become a beacon for the travelling community
- The HCA, the current owners, currently allow horses on the land as they can't afford to cut the grass and so they are not going to have the money to carry out evictions of unauthorised sites
- Concern about the property devaluation, which could be 30%, reducing the value of the Crescent by £1.5million
- Potential for the site to be an employer once again with incentives and relaxed planning regulations. Or alternatively, there is a shortage of high end properties with in this area, £1million+ houses could be a good use for the site
- The response to the Cabinet members is that the community don't want to see the site developed for Gypsy and Traveller use

Mr D J Coultas

- A retired engineer, who worked at the Lea Castle Site
- Surprised that the Secretary of State for Health would have divided up the site
- Most of the other sites in the consultation meet the Government guidelines but this site does not
- There are no services on site which are not privately owned
- Gas mains – at the top of the site is metered and is private property
- Electricity –privately owned
- Water – travels round the site in asbestos mains



- Sewerage – private property until it meets the Wolverhampton crossroads
- Storm water and drainage – travels down to pools at Broadwaters
- Roads don't meet current adoptable standards and it would cost a lot of money to get them to a standard that the County Council would adopt
- Concerned about a Travellers site devaluing properties in the area
- Unless the site is fully developed and enclosed then we could have a situation like Dale Farm
- Just today there are reports from Wales that a Travellers site is objecting to a right of way passing their site due to the invasion of privacy

#### Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- With regard to evictions from unauthorised encampments – we need to have authorised sites so that we can take enforcement action
- The redevelopment of the wider site is an important point and it will be a challenge for officers and members to balance the considerations for the site and identify the right mix of uses, taking into account the need to demolish the buildings and the issues surrounding this
- With any redevelopment of the site, appropriate services will be a key component
- With regard to ownership of the site, the HCA own approximately 90%, with the Secretary of State for Health 1% and the final 9% belonging to Warwickshire NHS
- Unsure as to what Government guidelines Mr Coultas was referring to but consider that the site does satisfy criteria set out in current consultation

#### Gill Hill

- Lives in the Crescent, which bounds the Lea Castle Site
- Concerned about the meeting date, being half term, which meant that many residents are away on holiday
- Also concerned about the meeting on Monday, which is Halloween
- Concerned about the boundary used for the basis of the consultation, as it only covered one house in Axborough Lane and didn't go to houses in Hurcott
- Offered help to anyone who wanted to fill in objection forms
- The Council's proposals will blight property value, at one of the other sites in the consultation a buyer has recently pulled out of purchasing a house adjacent to the site because of the proposal
- Concern that there is no natural boundary to Lea Castle and there would be nothing to stop the site expanding
- Concern about services – Cookley School is full (and some of the £60million made available for Gypsy and Traveller Sites might have been better spent improving the school).
- The GP surgery is full and access to services is difficult – across the busy A449
- Concerned about the current state of the site and the presence of asbestos.



- Polecats have been seen on the site, which are a protected species
- Concerned about collapsing buildings, tunnels and derelict houses, which could cause issues for Gypsy children and could be unsafe
- This is another fiasco which follows the Icelandic Banks fiasco
- Employment is wanted on the site and that is what should be provided
- Concerned about a conflict of interest as the HCA are the owners of the site and are also the body that administer the grant funding to help deliver new sites
- Called for a vote of 'no confidence' in the Cabinet, the chief planning officer and all of the planning policy department

District Councillor Chris Nicholls

- Welcomed people to the meeting, including the Cabinet members that were present
- Concerned that a number of sites had been withdrawn from the consultation and questioned the validity of the Baker report
- Concerned that Baker's did not know the area well and some of their suggested sites were totally inappropriate, such as Westhead Road North, Cookley
- Bakers had originally identified 5 sites as being 'preferable' but 4/5 of these were removed from the consultation, which now means Lea Castle is in the preferred shortlist, when before it wasn't
- Identified that 240 people turned up to their meeting on Friday night and the message was clear that the people of Cookley felt that the site was inappropriate
- The community had discussed the possible redevelopment of the Lea Castle site during the Site Allocations Preferred Options consultation. The views were that they wanted to see the site developed for a variety of different purposes, which could be sheltered housing for the elderly or a hospice as the grounds are calming. A Gypsy and Traveller site was not one of the options the community put forward.
- Provided some information about Cookley from the OCSI (Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion) to the panel. The information identified that Cookley is the most deprived rural LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) within Worcestershire in terms of employment, education and health. This is an important point as the site could be developed for multiple uses which could help tackle these inequalities
- The community also agreed about potential leisure uses and thought that this site could provide for this type of development
- Cookley Action Group has been set up and they can help fill in objections and get responses in to the consultation
- A session was to be held on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October in the computer suites at Cookley Village Hall to help people fill in response forms
- The message to the Cabinet is that Cookley does care
- Asked why Wyre Forest was the only District in Worcestershire undertaking this exercise and whether other authorities were watching to see how it shouldn't be done
- Confusion had arisen after a meeting with the MP as he has questioned the amount of pitches that we need to find within the District

- Asked as to whether or not a petition was a good or bad idea and said that although travellers have a right, this isn't the right location and they would fight the proposals all the way

#### Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Apologised for the half term date and said that a lot of effort was made to avoid a meeting during this week but because of room availability and short lead in time that this was the only date available
- Reiterated that the consultation letter had followed standard practice, following the Development Control process
- With regards to services in terms of schools/gp – the District Council would rely on external partners to provide comments back to us to consider as part of the consultation
- With regard to the cost of bringing the site forward, this would not be borne by the District Council
- The Baker report is valid and the reasons why the other sites weren't taken forward can be seen via the minutes of the Cabinet meeting that took place on September 20<sup>th</sup>
- The £60million funding available is not just for Wyre Forest District and bids would have to be submitted to gain funding on a case by case basis
- The site would need to be looked at for comprehensive redevelopment and the challenge for the authority will be to balance all the considerations and come up with the right solution
- In terms of the petition – the response was to do what was easiest/best for the community as responses can be received in any form

#### R.Whiston

- The proposal is going against Adopted Local Plan policies which identify the site is for Employment Use (Emp.4)
- Concerned how you can go against an Adopted Plan
- The proposal is against the wishes of the general public within the area
- Development of the site breaches serious planning considerations such as the fact that there is no safe and convenient pedestrian access to and from the site
- Deeply concerned that the site has not been marketed for employment use and that no effort has been made to redevelop for economic use

#### S.Randle

- HCA publish a list of disposal sites and Lea Castle is identified as an asset that they want to get rid of within the next 2 years, which therefore brings into question the validity of identifying it as a potential Gypsy and Traveller site
- Concerned that local people have been put through stress and strain and the site may not be available
- If identified as a Gypsy site it will be impossible to attract developers for the wider site development

- Raised a question over sustainability and as the site was identified as not being sustainable for housing then it shouldn't be considered as sustainable for Gypsy and Traveller use

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- The proposals would not be contrary to the Local Plan as the Local Plan is currently being replaced by the Local Development Framework and therefore allocations for sites are currently being re-considered
- Unsure as to the commercial marketing of the site
- The site would need to be looked at on a comprehensive basis, taking into account issues surrounding sustainability

N.Simpson

- Concerned about asbestos and the environmental disturbance in cleaning up the site
- Has any research been done in terms of insurance payout for asbestos related illnesses?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- We are at the early stage of planning and more detailed work would come through via a planning application
- If there are environmental concerns currently then these will need to be followed up with the HCA

Question from the floor: How will you stop unauthorised encampments – it hasn't worked in Stourport?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

The previous Local Plan identified 'tolerated' sites and now we need to allocate sites. We need to be in a position where we have enough allocated sites so that we can refuse unauthorised developments

B.McFarland (Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council)

- We have heard cogent arguments about the site and in line with the new Government's agenda, this should be a local decision made by local people, and they are saying that this is an inappropriate use for the site
- Baker Associates were not familiar with the area as we have heard that the site could be sold off within 2 years
- The cost of the clearance of the site would fall on the developer and in order for this to happen we need jobs and employment
- Earlier in the year we provided a list of sustainable/realistic ideas for the site which would bring jobs into the area and these local ideas appear to have been dismissed
- We have a legal and moral obligation to provide facilities/sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, but we can't tell them where to live and we need to be sensitive to their traditional travelling roots within the District, which aren't in the Lea Castle area. Have we consulted the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople about these plans?

- This should be a public consultation and not a Cabinet consultation
- What are the current plans for Lea Castle? Is the Baker Report flawed? As there has been no take up on the site, can you identify how it has been marketed?

Unknown Speaker

- Corrected a few statements made by Mike Parker. Firstly, that it was English Partnerships before it was known as the HCA and not English Estates and secondly, that the meeting had been arranged jointly with Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council and not just Wolverley Parish Council.
- Criticised the Council's website in terms of ease of use and the references to the various committees

G.Webb

- Apparently the footpaths on the site have been closed off (This comment was considered to be untrue according to other members of the audience)

Ryan Tilley

- Need to give weight to the practical issue of the openness of the site and the need to ensure comprehensive redevelopment and the costs that this will incur. Create demand and need.

Jackie Bell

- If not a suitable site for housing why is it suitable for Gypsy and Traveller use

Cllr Dixon Shepherd

- Member for Stourport and we have our debate next week
- Figures provided by the MP currently show the following split of gypsy sites across Worcestershire – Wychavon 50%, Wyre Forest 30% and Malvern Hills 6%, which doesn't appear to be equitable

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Many of the comments have been answered through the course of the evening
- In terms of a site for allocation for housing – we have other, more suitable sites available to meet our 4,000 dwelling requirement. There are other considerations to take into account which are different to new housing sites
- Worcestershire Districts will have to go through the same process and the difference is that we are further ahead of them in terms of planning and replacing the Local Plan

Gill Hill

- The Crescent used to have swings and a cricket pitch but these have long since disappeared. The guidance for developing new sites suggests the provision of play equipment for the Travellers children.

How can the council consider giving a play area to the Travellers children when ours has been taken away?

K.Ludwick

- Confused by the process and concerned that if the Baker Report was considered to be valid, why did the Cabinet reject some of the sites included within it?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Details of site construction/design would come through a planning application
- With regards to the decision on the short listed sites, the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> September can be seen on the Council's website

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm

**Appendix 5 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Manor Farm, Saiwen, The Gables Yard and land adjacent Nunn's Corner as Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites**

**Location:** Stourport Civic Centre

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

Meeting chaired by Mayor of Stourport-on-Severn Cllr David Little with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by introducing himself and the thanking people for attending. He then set out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be closed by 8.30pm.

**Presentation by Mike Parker**

Mike Parker began by offering an apology for Manor Farm being labelled as redundant within the Baker Report. He then gave a presentation setting out why we need to plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, the number of sites required, the background evidence which has been used to inform these figures and how we have arrived at the sites for consultation.

**Tim Barnes:**

- Identified that unlike the opposition to other sites, he and his wife were coming at this from the angle of safeguarding their home and businesses and the livelihoods of their employees.
- Pointed out that they were upset that the farm has been referred to in a number of ways but should only ever have been referred to using its correct title - Manor Farm.
- Set out the history of Manor Farm, the farm is 190 years old and is on the local list. It has been there twice as long as British Sugar. The farm has been affected by many changes since 1957 when the Barnes family took over the farm. They have lost land to many new developments.
- In 1991 the tenanted farm was reduced to 17 acres.
- Three businesses currently operate from the farm and all operate within profit even during these difficult times. The businesses employ three full time staff.
- Identified that if this policy was applied across the Country there would be around 55,845 new pitches by 2022 – Mr Barnes stated his belief that there was not a need for this level of provision.
- Argued that Travellers were causing trouble and giving Gypsies a bad name.
- Referred to Dale Farm pointing out that the land there was sold to the Gypsy community and occupied illegally. If Manor Farm is occupied by Gypsies then the land adjacent to the site will become vulnerable.
- Made a plea to full Council to reject this site as real people are involved.

- Offered thanks to Mark Garnier MP, and Jon Campion and Ian Miller for their time as well as the other Councillors who have given their support.

Leander Walton:

- Pointed out that Manor Farm has been her home for over 10 years and that it is not a redundant farm but a diversified working farm.
- Identified that the Baker Report contains some inaccuracies and flaws, however, the Council have accepted the report and tax payers have paid for it so should use it.
- The report acknowledges that the development of a Gypsy site at Manor Farm would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. It also identifies that there are other sites where such development could be accommodated more successfully in Green Belt terms.
- Referred to the Core Strategy vision which outlines the triangle of three towns each with their distinct identities separated and maintained by the Green Belt between them.
- The Baker Report identifies that the relief road, during its construction, could have an impact. Pointed out that once a plan has been approved and accepted for an area new plans cannot be approved over the top of that. The line of the relief road is safeguarded.
- Pointed out that the Barnes family have been legal and trustworthy tenants and that there is strong protection for agricultural farmers. All buildings on the farm are currently utilised, part of the farm can not be taken, the whole farm would need to be taken to terminate the tenancy agreement.
- Aware that we are in the early stages of the identification of sites but if Manor Farm is taken forward businesses would cease and people would be made redundant. These are strong businesses which are continuing to grow despite the recession. Asked how can we plan for the future of these businesses with this hanging over our head?
- The Government refer to small enterprises as the future of the economy. We have worked all our lives for this, how can it be justified to cease this.
- We also own land adjacent to the tenanted 17 acres which is a haven to wildlife.
- The site is the gateway to Stourport, if the farm was lost there would be no distinct character.
- Thanked the public for their overwhelming support and urged them to send their comments in before the deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> November and sign the petition which was available at the meeting.
- Asked the Council to give Manor Farm the future it deserves.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Thanked the speakers for raising some important points and welcomed these to be submitted through the consultation.
- Acknowledged that the Green Belt issue is a difficult one and that decisions will need to be made.



- Pointed out that the relief road line is indicative only at this stage and the exact line will not be known until detailed designs are produced and this will not be undertaken until funding is confirmed.
- Ecology and wildlife will be considered in detail at the planning application stage if this stage is reached.

Mr Frizzle:

- Spoke against Manor Farm on the basis that it is in the Green Belt. Any development in the Green Belt is deeply regrettable and inappropriate in planning terms.
- Quoted DOE circular on Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople which identifies that sites in the Green Belt should not be allocated for this purpose.
- Identified that four sites had already been rejected because they are in the Green Belt, called for Manor Farm to also be rejected on this basis.
- The Green Belt here is a narrow ribbon which separates two towns and is needed to maintain the character of the town.
- Encouraged the recycling of derelict land – there are other suitable sites.
- Finds it incredible that Manor Farm has been considered and called for it to be rejected now.

Alison Frizzle:

- Objected to the Manor Farm site. Pointed out that this was not a racist issue and that cultural diversity should be welcomed. Not prejudiced against Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople and appreciates their different lifestyles.
- Manor Farm is not suitable for development. It is still the home and livelihood of the Barnes family. The land is lower lying than the neighbouring land and would be overlooked. It is impossible to screen because of the change in levels and would lead to privacy issues, most noticeable when people are using outdoor space.
- Highway safety concerns – pedestrian and cyclists are already at risk because the road is narrow and has no pavement. Children use this route to walk to Stourport High School and additional traffic will place children in significant danger.
- It should be very explicitly set out in the final documentation that the site is not suitable for this use.
- Questioned where the entrance to the site would be and what investigations have been carried out into highway safety and how much the highways solutions would cost.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Set out that the District Council would seek detailed advice from the County Council on these issues. The County Council have been consulted as part of this consultation process. Identified that the whole junction may look different in the future and that access may be achieved directly from the relief road.



Cllr Jim Parish:

- Introduced himself as leader of Stourport Town Council and provided feedback on the meeting of the Town Council the previous evening.
- Highlighted that the Town Council had put a holding response to the District Council on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011 stating that they would object to any further provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the town.
- The only authorised sites are within Stourport. Could be over 100 already in Stourport. Bakers consulted with Gypsies and Travellers and their preference was for sites within the Sandy Lane area close to existing sites. We cannot set long term site provision based around today's preferences. We should make choices available to the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- In examining the issue it is desirable to consider overall and wider provision of caravan sites for holiday and leisure uses to increase caravans for whatever purpose can change the character of the area. There has been a great deal of recent investment in preserving the Georgian heritage of the town. Caravans are in conflict with the nature of the town.
- There is no element of choice for Gypsies and Travellers; Stourport-on-Severn is the only provider of authorised sites within the District.
- Manor Farm – the Baker Report identifies the farm as redundant and concludes that the site is suitable for Romany Gypsies or Travelling Showpeople. The report deals with landscape issues. Although the site is owned by Wyre Forest DC it is considered reckless and flawed to state that the farm is redundant. It remains in agricultural use and is located in a vulnerable part of the Green Belt. It should be deleted and receive no further consideration.

Gordon Taylor:

- Objected to Manor Farm from an ecological point of view. Tim and Leander completed a full ecological survey of the farm where people actually walked around the farm rather than looking at it from Google Earth which it appears is what Bakers have done.
- Farm is in the Green Belt and should not be developed; other brownfield sites should be developed. This is a valuable piece of Green Belt, home to a diverse range of species of wildlife and bordering corridors occupied by protected species.
- Referred to policy NC.7 of the Adopted Local Plan which seeks to protect species.
- Badgers and bats are protected species, both of which are present at the farm. A licence is required to disturb a badger sett. There are also small pockets of acid grassland on the site. The whole site is home to a range of habitats and species.
- Biological records at WCC note protected species in the Manor Farm area. A 2km radius of the site has been assessed to identify protected species.

- Asked the Council to recognise that the Barnes family have been prey to the Council for years. Say no to this development. Leave the family alone.

Tracy Vallor Jones:

- Read a letter on behalf of Mrs Jane Taylor which was a heartfelt plea on behalf of Tim and Leander. She supported them in their efforts to save Manor Farm as her husband had received care from Prospect Physio based at the farm.
- Whilst Mrs Taylor appreciated the need for sites she felt it was unfair to close existing businesses for the proposal to go ahead.

Ian Wright:

- St. John's Road resident.
- Questions:
  - Who will pay for it to be developed?
  - MP responded: the role of the Council is as a facilitator, the Council will not bring forward or operate any of the sites. We would work with partners including the County Council and RSLs to bring sites forward offering support for funding bids.
  - Ian Wright: This is only a small part of the bigger picture, there are 6 District Councils in Worcestershire and the Core Strategy covers all of them. WFDC has the most caravans per square mile, question why Malvern Hills don't do their bit as they have the least. Ask other Councils to do their bit. Furthermore, a site has just been approved by Conhampton in Wychavon District, these 35 pitches will encroach on Stourport's infrastructure. Consider this before jumping ahead with more pitches.
  - Ian Wright: When do the Travelling Showpeople need to vacate their site by and why?
  - MP: The Core Strategy only covers Wyre Forest District. The other districts are currently at different stages with their Core Strategies but they too will need to consider how they provide for Gypsies and Travellers. MP was unable to comment specifically on the Wychavon approval but offered to find out more information. With reference to the Travelling Showpeople, the site owners wish to reclaim the land and we are working with them to ensure a seamless transition.
  - Ian Wright: If you don't know where the relief road is going to go how can you shortlist the Manor Farm site? You are taking someone's land to build the site; he will accept the relief road but not this use. Guidance states that Gypsy and Traveller sites should not be adjacent to a landfill site or a reclamation site. This site goes against the recommendations.
  - MP: We are planning over a long period. The indicative line of the relief road is preserved within the Local Plan. The detailed line will only become clear when the funding is in place and detailed proposals are progressed. The Gypsy and Traveller site would be to the South of the relief road and therefore away

from the landfill site. Assumptions have been made due to the long timescale.

- Ian Wright: The Baker Report states that sites should be in keeping with the landscape character. He also referred to compensation for planning blight and stated that should the site go ahead he would look into this and if all his neighbours did too the cost could be significant. Stated that he is not against development or racist but felt that this site needed to be kept green. Drew attention to the fact that the Baker Report concluded that there were other sites where development can be accommodated more satisfactorily.
- MP: Acknowledged that landscaping is a problem on the site and will need to be considered as part of the decision. The site is not a perfect site but given the difficulties in finding sites we need to consider sites which do not tick all the boxes.

Ann Taylor:

- Asked for confirmation that the Council is looking at moving the Travelling Showpeople onto a working farm as she could not see the logic in that. Questioned why the area was considered let alone shortlisted.

Cllr John Holden:

- Thanked people for making well researched comments.
- Offered condolences to Tim and Leander and thanked them for his visit to the farm.
- Stated that he had received some information in writing from the District Council setting out that there are 75 legal pitches on Sandy Lane with a further 23 in the planning system. Stated that the ward members would fight to make sure that Manor Farm is delisted.

Chris Rodgers:

- Manor Farm came into existence as a horse farm and its principle business is still equestrian. Despite the recession there is growth in the equestrian industry. This is an immense facility to people in the District and it would be a travesty to take it away.

Cllr Dixon Sheppard:

- Introduced himself as a District Cllr and Town Cllr and the former Mayor of Stourport.
- Endorsed the Manor Farm comments.
- Currently 50% of the pitches in Worcestershire are in Wychavon and 30% are in Wyre Forest. Malvern Hills has 6%.
- WFDC first of Worcestershire authorities to consult on additional pitches, raised concern that the whole need for Worcestershire would end up being met in Wyre Forest District.
- Gypsies and Travellers are separate communities and they do not always get on with each other.

- Sandy Lane has major problems and the Council need to sit down with the residents and businesses there to sort out their differences before authorising more sites.
- These people are settled not Travellers. What will happen when Travellers come and all of the pitches are taken with permanent residents?
- There is a hidden population of travellers in housing and on holiday caravan sites. This all adds to pressure on local services and facilities.
- Tim Barnes and his family have been treated appallingly by Wyre Forest District Council. The site should not have been shortlisted.
- This is the second major problem in Stourport. Last year we were fighting to retain the Civic Centre.

Stephen Brown:

- Thanked Tim and Leander for their speeches and argued that we should thank them for providing employment.
- It is a disgrace that Tim and Leander have been treated appallingly by the District Council.
- Stated that he is a green activist and will be making a submission based on Green Belt, ecology and safety issues.

S Glover:

- Stated that he had attended all of the meetings and heard all of the points raised. The Stourport meeting has been the most passionate and he asked the Council to consider this when making their decisions.
- Identified that there are flaws in the Baker Report and argued that it is ludicrous to take away someone's home and business for this.

J Lawson:

- Questioned the timescale for the Travelling Showpeople leaving Longbank. The owner has stated that he wants them to leave but can not afford to take legal action to move them on.
- There was a £5million legal bill for Dale Farm which was met by tax payers. This is disgusting.
- Questioned why the British Sugar site could not be used as one large site. It already has infrastructure and the new road will open up access. Would only upset one lot of residents instead of smaller sites dotted around upsetting lots of groups of people.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Cllr Oborski is right to call for other sites to be put forward.
- Clarified that Lloyds Garage was not compulsorily purchased for the relief road but to open up pedestrian access to the Basins.

C Morton:

- Wyre Forest is not a Kingdom and we are not your obedient servants. You were elected by us to run Wyre Forest in our best interests. This is a clear message for you to stop these proposals. No reference has

been provided to any national legislation that makes this necessary. Mark Garnier has been quoted stating that Wyre Forest does not need any more pitches.

- Urged Council to wait and see what the other Districts do.
- Put energy into regeneration not blight.

Open Questions:

Neville Farmer:

- It is obvious that Manor Farm is not a suitable site. Bakers did not visit all of the sites. The site at Blakedown is locked and no-one was asked to open it.
- Suggested site adjacent to Zortech Avenue – large area which already has facilities and services. How come Bakers did not see this on their Google search?
- The consultation is the wrong way around. The Council owes the whole District an apology.

Cllr Smith:

- Have Bakers consulted schools, doctors and highways?

Mike Parker's Response:

- This was not in their brief. This is being undertaken through the current consultation process.

Cllr Vi Higgs:

- Manor Farm is not a preferable site. 15 sites were recommended through the Baker Report, why was Sutton Park Rise taken out and not Manor Farm?

Mike Parker's Response:

- Referred people to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September to explain why the 7 sites out to consultation came forward.

Tim Barnes:

- If the relief road route is not known can I take the metal pegs out of my field that have been there for over 15 years?

Cllr Graham Ballinger:

- Baker Report – the consultants claim to have visited all of the sites but they clearly just looked on Google. The Manor Farm site is totally inappropriate.

Tim Hollis:

- Had Baker Associates have visited Manor Farm it would have been clear that it was not redundant.
- Questioned whether the District Council had requested a refund of money paid to Bakers.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Whilst Bakers were incorrect in referring to Manor Farm as redundant, the methodology used for the report is sound.

Jonathan Cooper:

- Why were Baker Associates appointed when the District Council should know the area better than anyone. How did it get to the point where the District Council did not realise that this was an operational farm?

David Morer:

- The site is inappropriate because of its position. It is on the relief road land and adjacent to the new crematorium.

Cllr Nigel Thomas:

- District Councillor for Areley Kings. Stourport Cllrs fight long and hard for Stourport. Kidderminster have more Cllrs so ultimately they will decide what happens in Stourport.

Phil Jones:

- Stated that Cabinet has destroyed his faith in the Conservative Party and if one single pitch was put in Stourport he would never vote Conservative again.

Janet Langford:

- Stated that she is totally against anymore pitches anywhere in Wyre Forest District.
- Questioned the financial incentives for developing new pitches.
- Questioned where the funding comes from when people can not afford homes and nothing is done for them.

Mike Parker:

- With reference to cash incentives, MP clarified that there were none to his knowledge.
- Clarified that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople paid Council Tax and paid for their utilities in the same way as all other residents do.

Unknown:

- If the Baker Report methodology is sound how come the Cabinet were able to visit sites and dismiss them?
- Mike Parker referred people to the Cabinet meeting minutes from 20<sup>th</sup> September.

The chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting.

**Meeting closed at 8.40pm**

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

Site Number (Baker Ref where applicable)	Alternative Site Suggested through consultation	Baker Report Coverage	Comments made through consultation (if any)	Officer Comments
ALT 1. (STO0020)	Land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate	Yes. Ruled out due to concerns about flood risk	Since the Assessment has been undertaken the site has been given temporary permission for 2 years for a total of 8 pitches. Through the planning application concerns about flood risk were identified and solutions to the potential risk provided by the applicants.	The site has been given temporary permission for 2 years and therefore a longer term allocation could be considered for the site. It is available and deliverable and is in a location that is popular with the District's existing Gypsy community.
ALT 2. (STO0017)	1A Broach Road, Sandy Lane, Stourport	Yes. Considered that at the time there would be no room for further expansion or intensification	Architect suggests that if this existing site for 3 caravans is re-planned in accordance with site licence an additional 1/2 units may be available.	This site could be considered to deliver another pitch subject to the agent providing further details on how this would be accommodated in line with licensing. This is an existing permitted site that therefore could provide further accommodation.
ALT 3.	28-29 Sandy Lane, Stourport DY13 9QB	No	Site highlighted through a representation	Application for 6 pitches 10/0680/FULL submitted but withdrawn due to further information required relating to marketing and the EA required additional info. The site is currently the subject of a re-submitted planning application (11/0711/FULL) and therefore the potential suitability of this site may be determined prior to the allocation of sites through the Plan Making process. The site is considered to have the potential to provide approximately 6 pitches to meet gypsy and traveller needs.

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Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

ALT 4.	Land off Wilden Lane, Stourport adj Industrial Estate.	No.	Site put forward for potential Travelling Showpeople use by a respondent.	This is a Green Belt site but constitutes previously developed land. It is currently fenced with hardstanding already present. The site is also in active use and therefore ownership considerations may be an issue. It may be suitable for Travelling Showpeople given current permitted use if availability can be established.
ALT 5. (STO0002)	R/O Household Waste Site, Minster Road, Stourport.	Yes. Ruled out due to inconsistency with Green Belt.	A number of respondents have put this site forward as an alternative and still consider it has merit for pitch provision.	Inconsistent with Green Belt purposes. Site is also adjacent to a household waste site and so the potential residential environment is considered to be inappropriate
ALT 6.	Land off Birmingham Road, off Hurcott Lane Kidderminster	No	A respondent put this site forward as an alternative.	Green Belt. Agents have previously submitted representations in relation to this land forming an urban extension to Kidderminster, particularly during the last Local Plan Review. It is therefore unlikely to be available for this use. Would require a larger mixed use development to be implemented in order to bring a site forward. However, urban extensions are not currently being considered due to the recent Adoption of the Core Strategy which has identified sufficient deliverable land and sites to deliver the 4,000 dwellings by 2026 and therefore it is not considered to be appropriate. It is also located within a sensitive area of the open green belt.
ALT 7.	Land off Sandy Lane opp Equimix Feeds Stourport-on-Severn	No	A respondent put this site forward as an alternative.	The site is located within an existing industrial estate and is a cleared, flat parcel of previously developed land. The site lies within flood zone 2 but there are caravans that exist to the south of the site which



Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

				suggests that it could be considered a suitable location in flood risk terms. Site is quite prominent within the Industrial Estate and has remained on the Council's Employment Land Availability for a number of years. The ownership and therefore availability of the site is unknown but it is understood that it is unlikely it would be available for this particular use, meaning that it would not be deliverable.
ALT 8.	Romwire Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster	No.	A number of respondents have put this site forward as an alternative. They consider it already has existing services.	The site is not considered to be achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople use. This is due to recent planning permissions for alternative uses, which are due to be implemented in the near future as well as aspirations for other higher value uses for the site to be developed. The site also forms an important element to the District's employment land portfolio and is identified in the Site Allocations and Preferred Options paper as an important parcel of land to help provide space for new business.
ALT 9. (BEW0001)	Habberley Road, Bewdley	Yes. Identified as potential site to be considered	Respondent considers it would be an ideal Travelling Showmen's site and request that it be looked at again.	Site is disconnected from the edge of Bewdley and Kidderminster and is unmanaged and overgrown. The site lies in a Greenbelt area and justification for exceptional circumstances would be required in order to demonstrate why a development should be carried out. Highways comments in relation to this area in the past have indicated concern as the road and its close proximity to the junction with the Hotel are an accident blackspot.

**Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**  
**Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses**

ALT 10. (WR104463)	Land off the Kingsway, Stourport. To r/o Torridon Close	Yes – This area is inappropriate in terms of landscape impact and openness of the Green Belt.	Respondent considers it could be looked at for a Travelling Showmen's site. Land owned by Wyre Forest District Council.	Site is in an elevated position and the Baker report ruled it out due to its inappropriateness in terms of landscape impact and openness of the Green Belt
ALT 11. (STON0001)	Stone Depot	Yes – Identified as potential site to be considered	Respondent considers it could be suitable as a travelling showmen's site	The site has poor vehicle access and is not appropriate for towing caravans. A consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller communities has indicated that they would prefer the edge of urban developments.
ALT 12. (KID0002)	Land opposite VOSA testing station, Worcester Road Kidderminster	Yes. The Site was ruled out due to its location in the Health & Safety Executive zone and the fact it was inconsistent with Green Belt purposes.	Respondent considers it could be suitable as a travelling showmen's site	Inappropriate due to Green Belt location and HSE zone (from adjacent Summerfield plant)
ALT 13. (WVY0001)	Wolverley Camp, to r/o Brown Westhead Park	Yes. Would be inconsistent with Green Belt purposes.	Respondent considers it could be suitable as a travelling showmen's site	The site is within a Green Belt location and the site was rejected due to the inappropriateness. Comments from WCC Highways will be particularly important here.
ALT 14. (KID0010)	Former British Sugar Site, Stourport Road Kidderminster	Yes. Rejected as not considered to be available/deliverable.	A number of respondents identified this as a potential site	Not deliverable. Currently subject to consultation on a comprehensive masterplan for redevelopment. Landowners are not prepared to put forward for pitch provision.
ALT 15.	Land on Burlish Top, to r/o Gould Avenue Kidderminster	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	This site is unsuitable for pitch provision as it is very sensitive being designated as a Special Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve. It forms a major element of the Burlish Top Nature Reserve and has a prominent location within the Green Belt.
ALT 16.	Former Settling Ponds, Wilden Lane Kidderminster	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	Site was put forward as a suggested housing site as part of the Core Strategy Examination in Public. The inspector considered that the site would not be required during the plan

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

				period. The site is, however, likely to have hope value for higher return uses and is therefore unlikely to be available for other uses. It is also a sensitive location within the Green Belt and there are potential drainage issues that would require further investigation. Would require a larger mixed use development to be implemented in order to bring a site forward. However, urban extensions are not currently being considered due to the recent Adoption of the Core Strategy which has identified sufficient deliverable land and sites to deliver the 4,000 dwellings by 2026 and therefore it is not considered to be appropriate.
ALT 17.	Duke House Clensmore Street Kidderminster	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	Not considered to be deliverable. The suggested site forms part of a wider regeneration initiative that is seeking a wide variety of uses to be developed within this area of Kidderminster. The inclusion of a Gypsy or Traveller site is not one of the uses that forms part of the masterplan and therefore it is not considered to be a suitable or achievable alternative.
ALT 18.	Land at Finepoint adj Zortech Avenue, Kidderminster	No	A number of respondents have put this forward. They consider it has been disused for many years so clearly no business interest.	Site is fairly narrow and would not be suitable for provision given the size constraints. The site would be unable to accommodate static caravans and meet government guidance requirements in relation to design standards for traveller sites.
ALT 19.	Finepoint. Stourport Road Kidderminster	No	A number of respondents have put this site forward.	Forms an important parcel of land for strategic employment purposes (lies within the Stourport Road Employment Corridor) and is identified in Site Allocations and Policies Preferred Options as one of the sites

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

				to meet employment targets. There are planning approvals for the site and it is likely to be developed out for employment uses in the near future. It is therefore considered to be unavailable.
ALT 20.	Ex Yieldingtree Packing Site, Nr Churchill	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	The site is located in the Green Belt although the site in question is a previously developed area and is a former packing site; it falls within an elevated area of the landscape. The site is, however, located in a fairly isolated area with access to services fairly difficult. There may be the option to consider this as a potential site for the Showpeople but availability and achievability is currently unknown. On balance, therefore it is considered that this site should not be progressed.
ALT 21.	Fenced land off Hillary Road, Wilden	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	Site is currently in active use (soil extraction) and has steep topography. It is therefore not considered to be suitable
ALT 22. (KID0009)	Site adjacent Fountain Court, Low Habberley, Kidderminster	Yes. Although a very small section of the site could be suitable for Gypsy and Traveller use, these parts would only be available if part of a wider mixed use development on land which is currently deemed unsuitable for development.	Respondent considers it is potentially suitable as a travelling showmen's site	Not considered to be viable. Would require a larger mixed use development to be implemented in order to bring a site forward. However, urban extensions are not currently being considered due to the recent Adoption of the Core Strategy which has identified sufficient deliverable land and sites to deliver the 4,000 dwellings by 2026 and therefore it is not considered to be appropriate.
ALT 23.	Land at Shatterford	No.	Respondent seeks allocation for 1 pitch. Recent application refused due to it being inappropriate development in	The site has recently been subject to a planning application for the use of the land for one static caravan (Gypsy use). This application was refused by planning

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

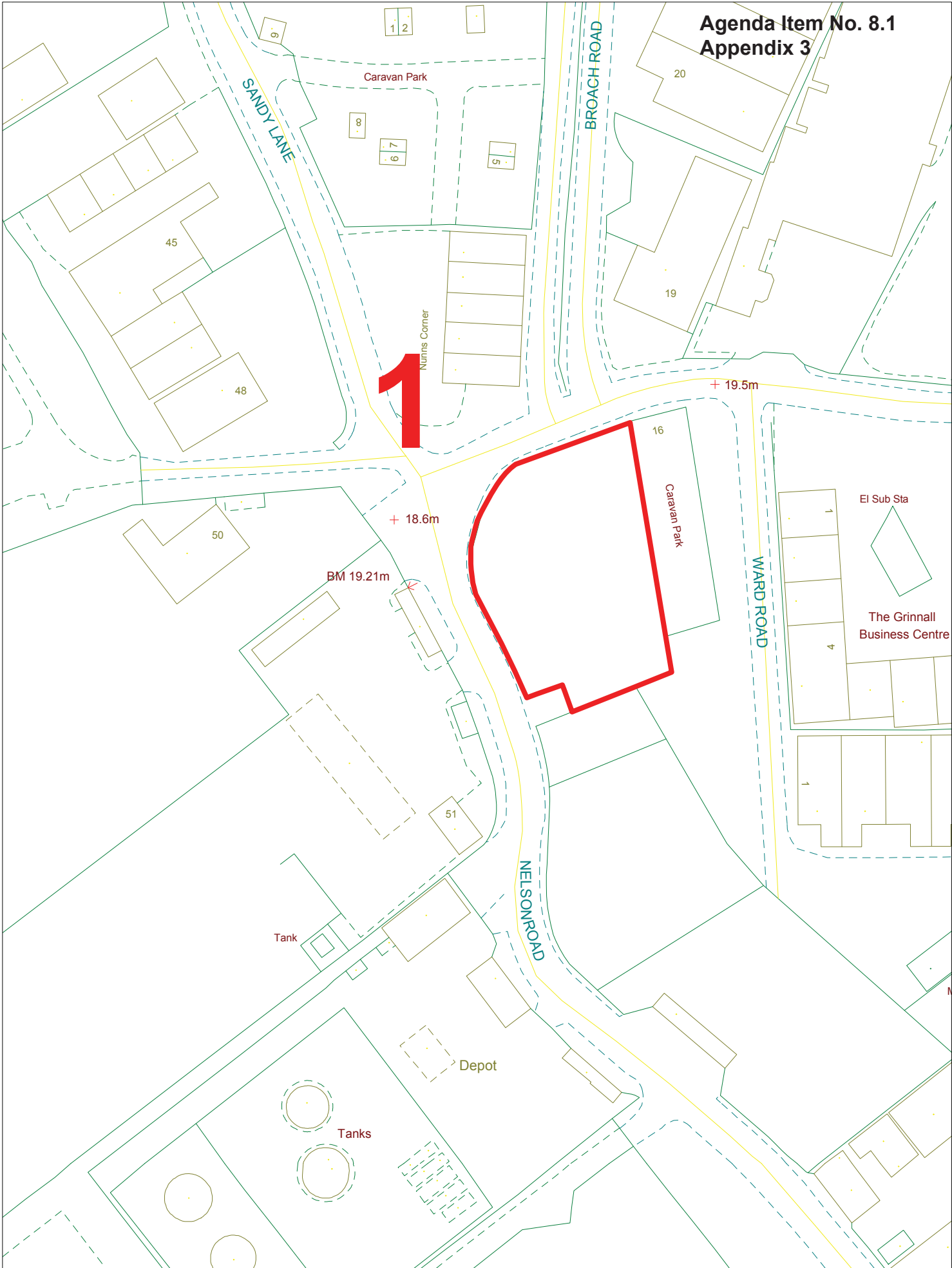
			the Green Belt and it having a detrimental impact on the landscaper character	committee in October 2011 and is currently awaiting appeal. Notwithstanding the outcome of the appeal, it is considered that the site is inappropriate as a Gypsy site due to its location and potential detrimental impact on the landscape character of the area and poor access to services.
ALT 24. (CLO0001)	Clows Top Garage Site	Yes. Unknown costs for cleaning up potential contamination and access onto the A456 is poor, although a lapsed permission identified access from the south east of the site. Site has hope value for housing but Gypsy and Traveller/Travelling Showpeople uses could be delivered on the rear land if the frontage land were to be developed for market housing.	Representation from agent suggests that the site is allocated as a reserve site should site delivery not be forthcoming or the Clows Top Garage site is not developed for residential purposes	The site is at the heart of a remote rural village and there is poor public transport links to local urban centres and it does not fit in with the requirement of the Core Strategy.
ALT 25.	Hoobrook Trading Estate Kidderminster		May be suitable for Travelling Showpeople	The site falls within an area identified for employment use. It also falls within the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park Area. This area could be suitable for Travelling Showpeople but this site is considered to be too small for their requirements (0.37 acres) and therefore it is not considered to be suitable

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

ALT 26.	Hoobrook Trading Estate Kidderminster	No	May be suitable for Travelling Showpeople	The site falls within an area identified for employment use. It also falls within the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park Area. This area could be suitable for Travelling Showpeople but this site is considered to be too small for their requirements and therefore it is not considered to be suitable.
ALT 27 (KID0005)	Site to rear of Lisle Avenue, Kidderminster	No	May be suitable for Travelling Showpeople	Site is considered to be difficult to develop given the location and topography and the impact on the Canal Conservation Area. The site is also considered to be too small to meet the requirements of the Showpeople. Ownership is unknown and it is unlikely that it would be deliverable and therefore is not considered to be a viable alternative to be progressed.
ALT 28	Land to Rear of Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn	No	A respondent identified this as a potential site.	The site in question is a mix of open space and car parking. The site is extensively used by residents and visitors to the town and it is considered that a development in this location could have a detrimental impact on the landscape character given the fairly open views into the site. It is therefore not considered to be an appropriate or suitable location for further pitch provision.
ALT 29	Potters Scrap Yard, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn	No	Site is up for sale	The site in question is an existing business site on Sandy Lane. It is understood that the site is currently up for sale but it is considered that it is for a higher value than would allow for a Gypsy or Traveller site to be developed. It is therefore not considered to be suitable.

Appendix 2 - Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople  
Table of Alternative sites put forward through consultation responses

<b>Sites put forward that are not within the Wyre Forest District</b>				
N/a	Dudmaston Estate	N/a	N/a	This falls within Shropshire Council's administrative area.
N/a	Crossway Green, DY13 9SH	N/a	N/a	This falls within Wychavon Council's administrative area.
N/a	Land at Hartlebury	N/a	N/a	This falls within Wychavon Council's administrative area.
N/a	Land adjacent to former quarry workings - Clee Hill	N/a	N/a	This falls within Shropshire Council's administrative area.

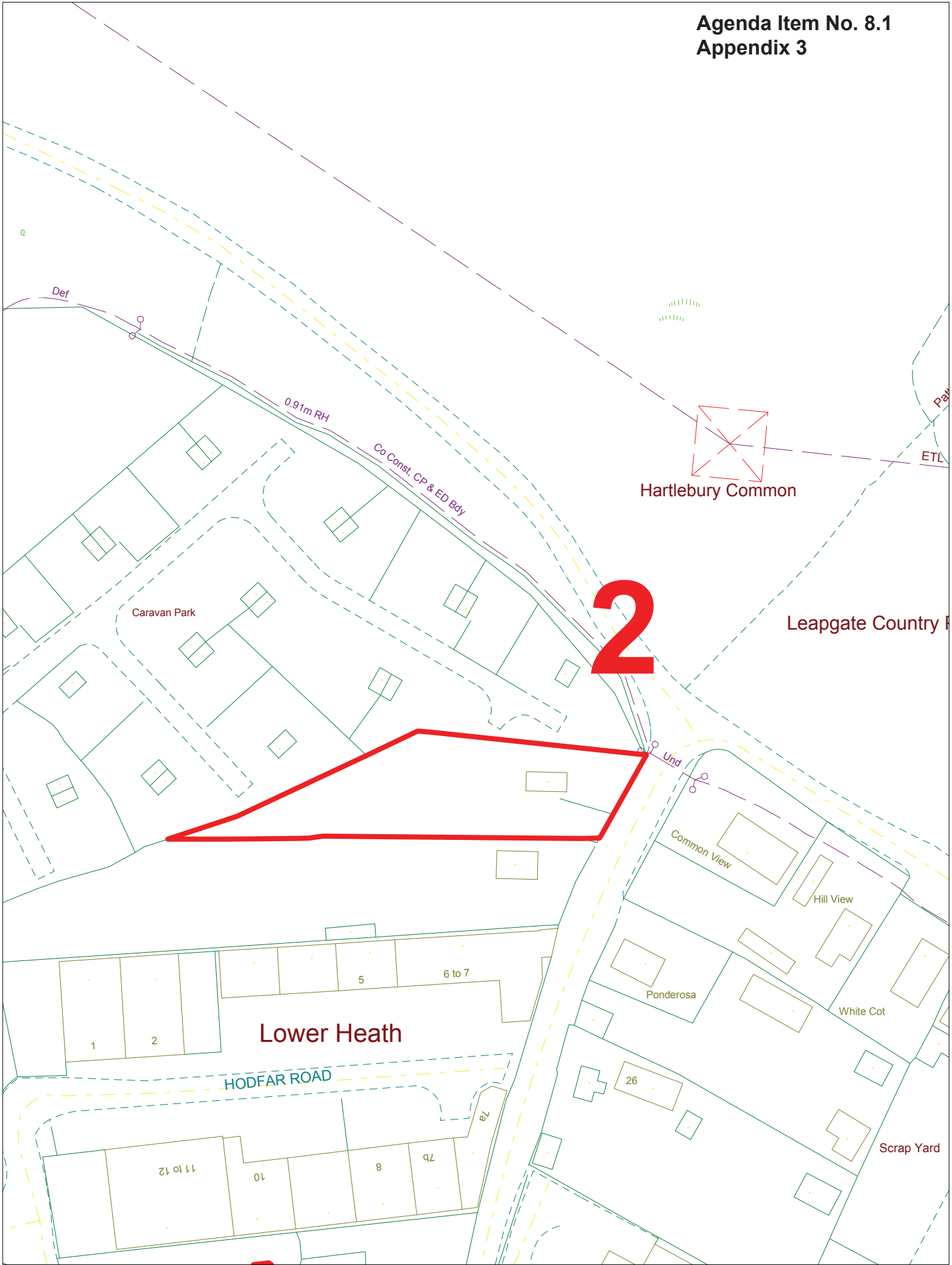


ALT 1 - Land Opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane



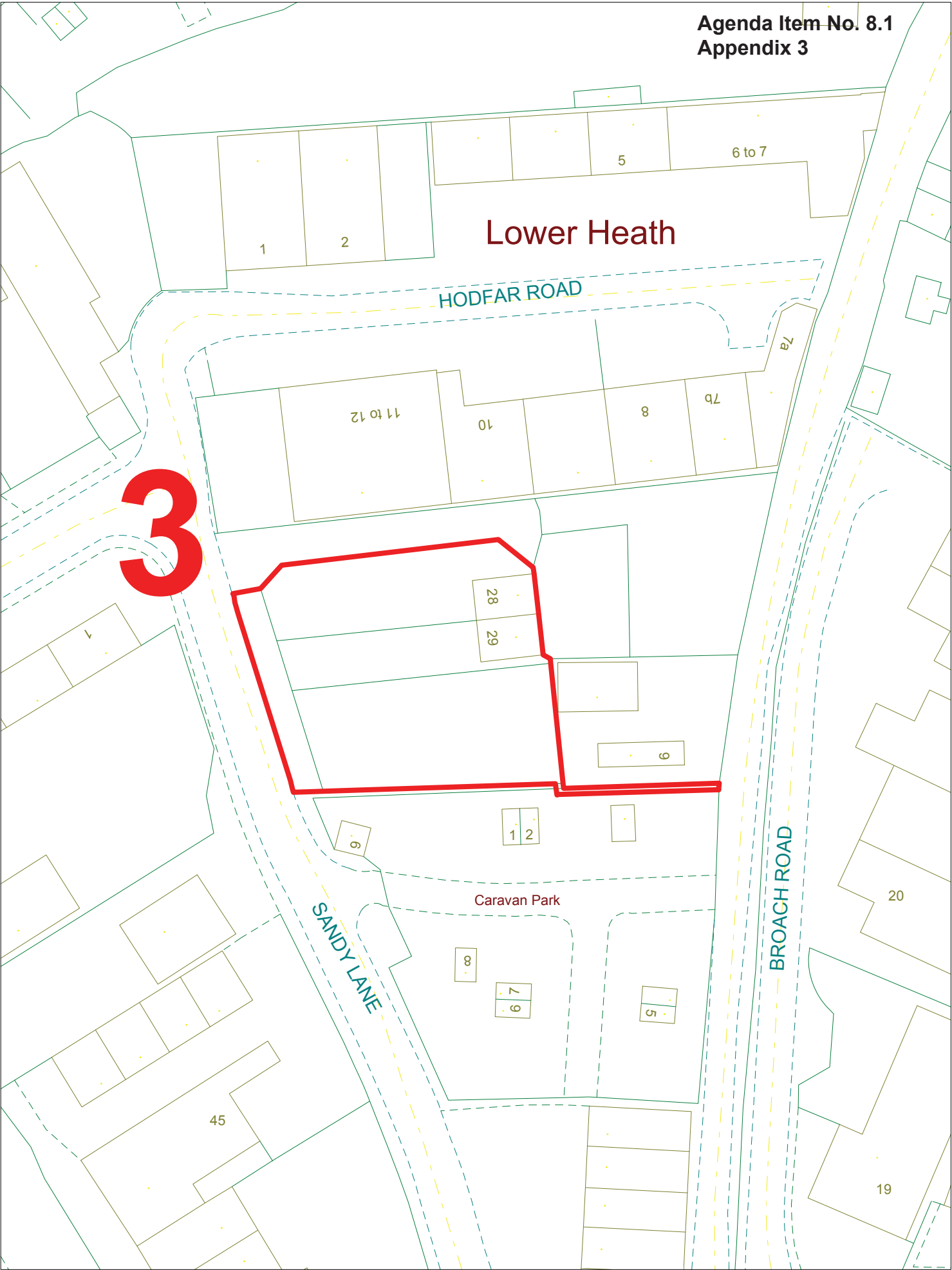
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ALT 2 - 1a Broach Road, Sandy Lane



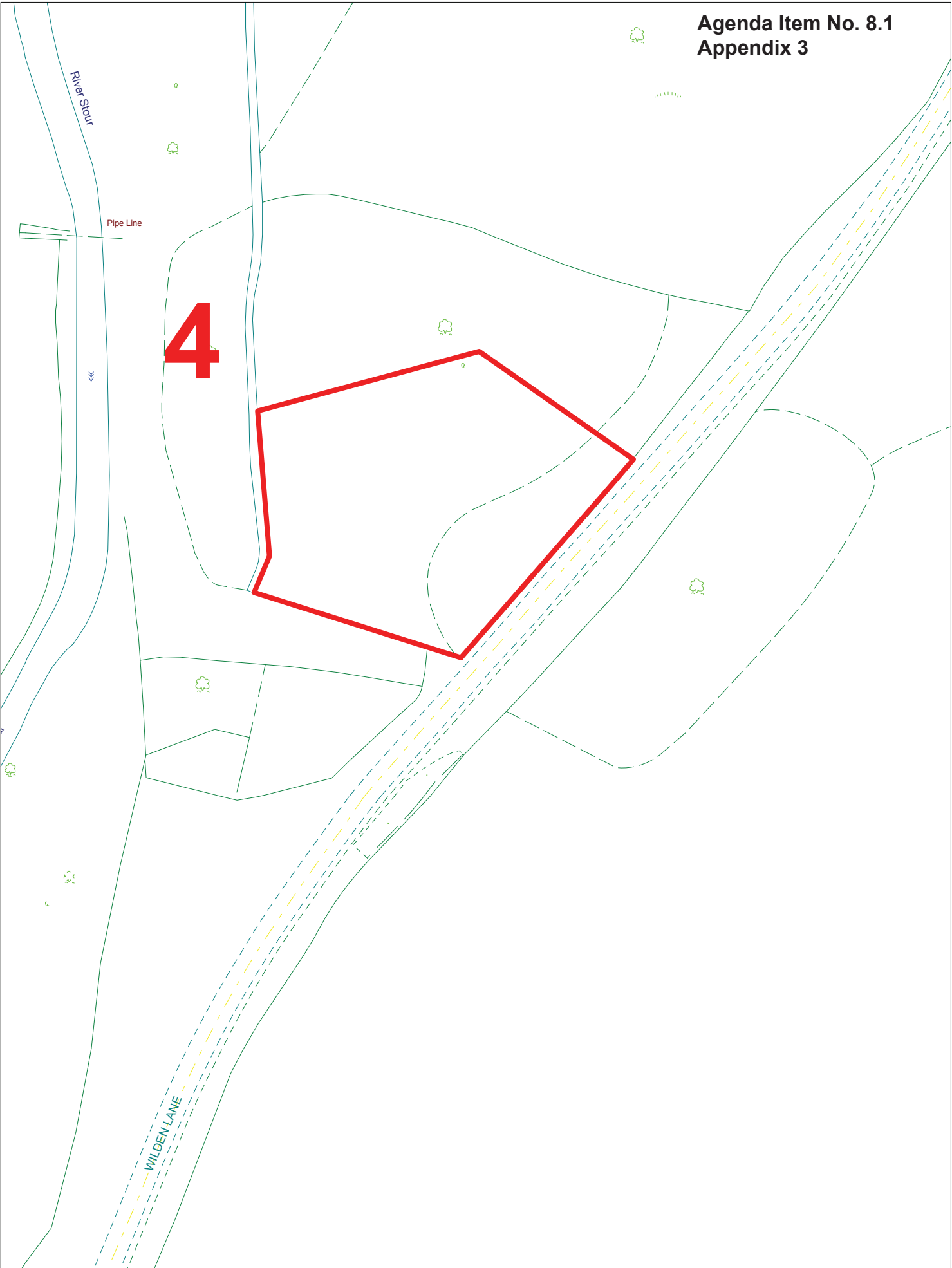


ALT 3 - 28-29 Sandy Lane



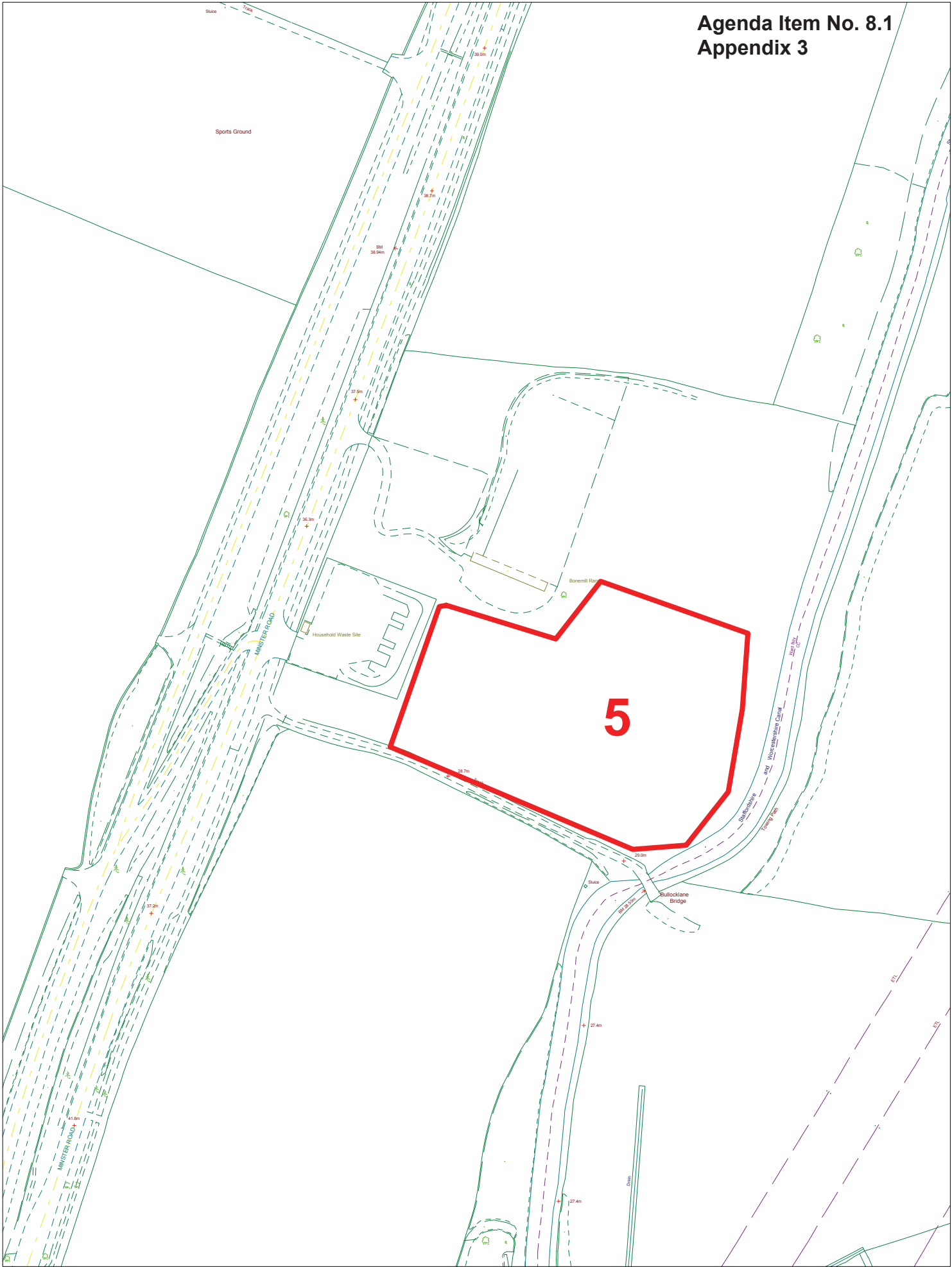
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ALT 4 - Land off Wilden Lane



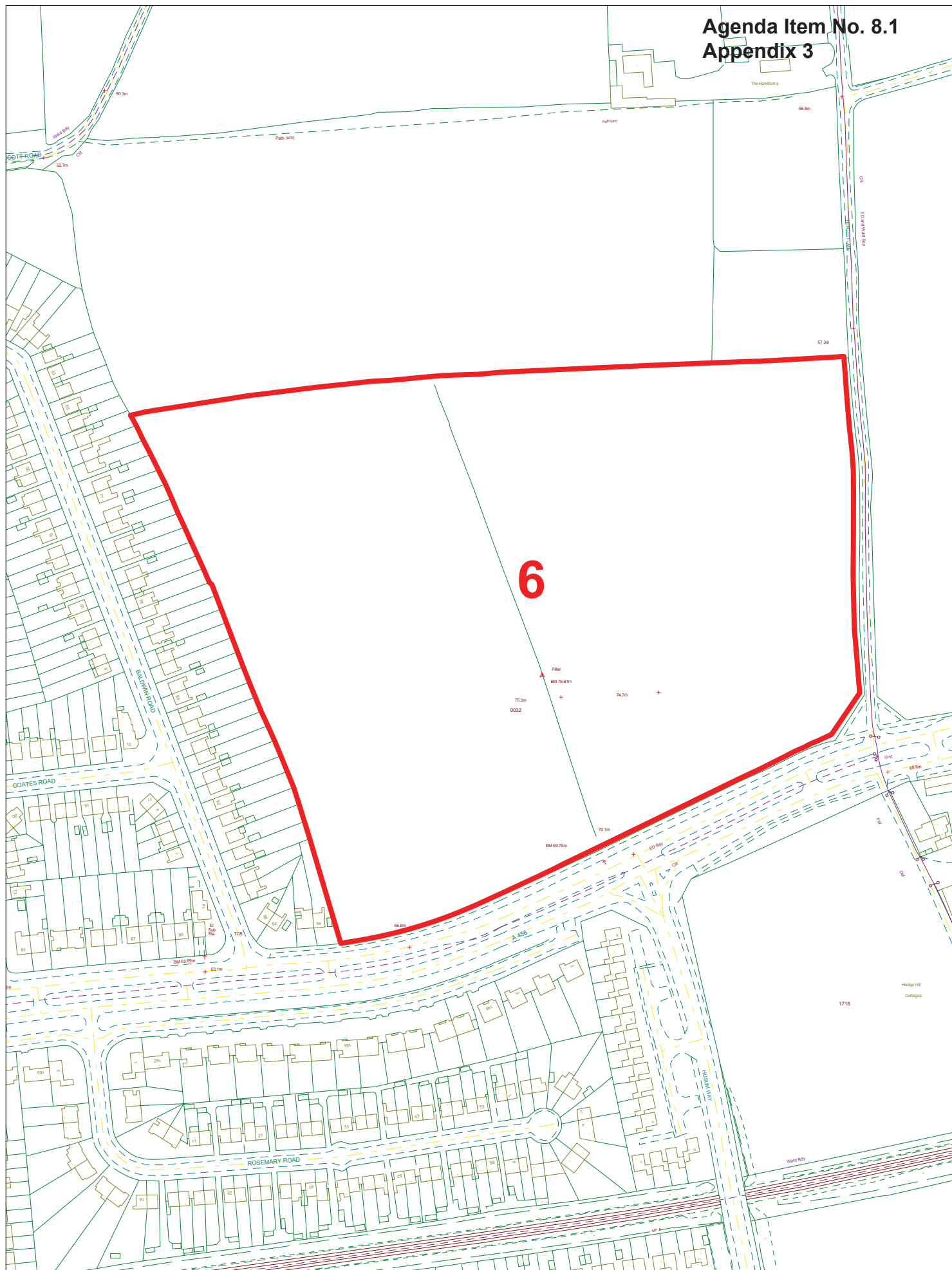


ALT 5 - R/o Household Watsse Site, Minster Road, Stourport

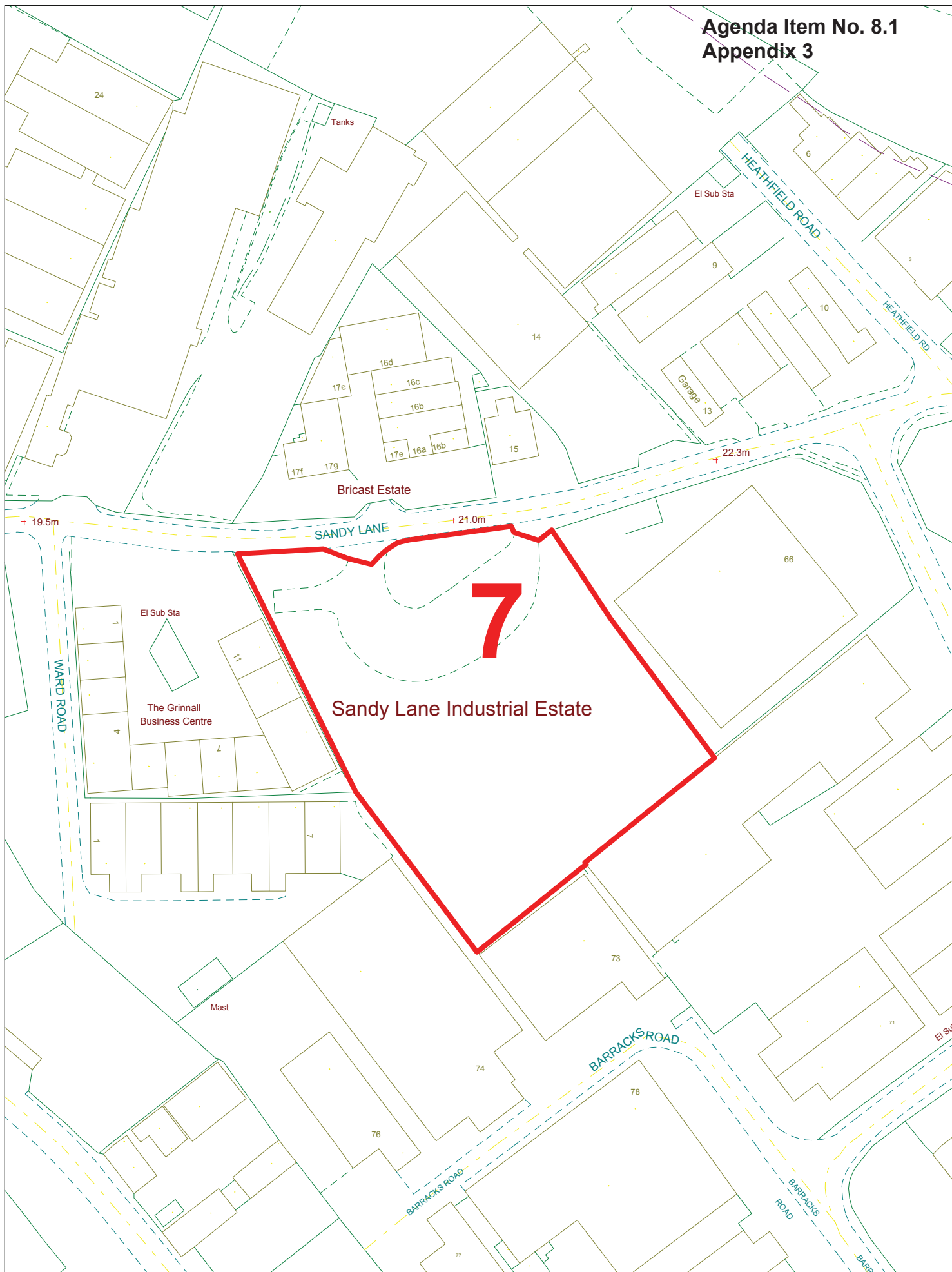


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ALT 6 - Land off Birmingham Road, Kidderminster



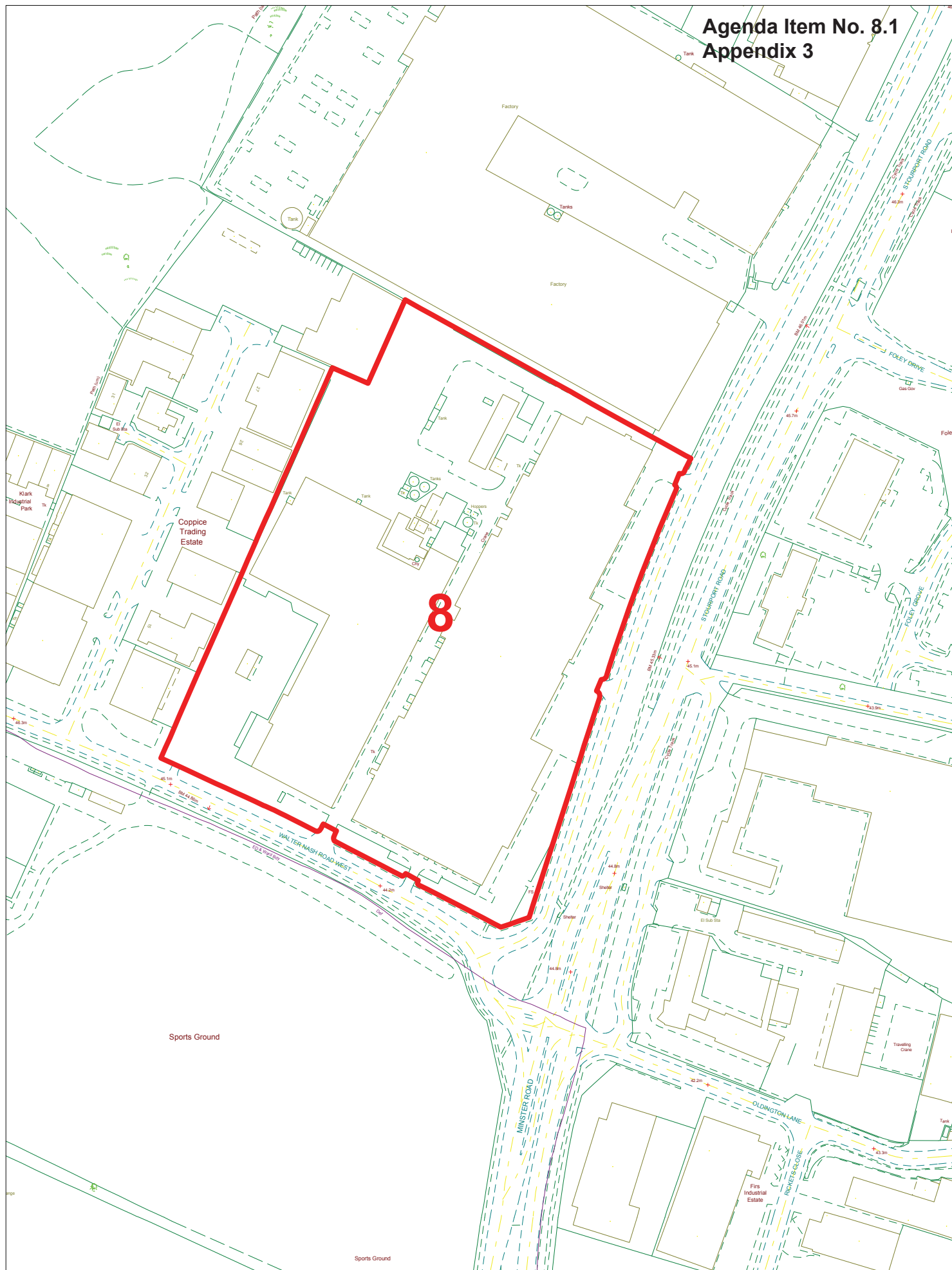
Sandy Lane Industrial Estate

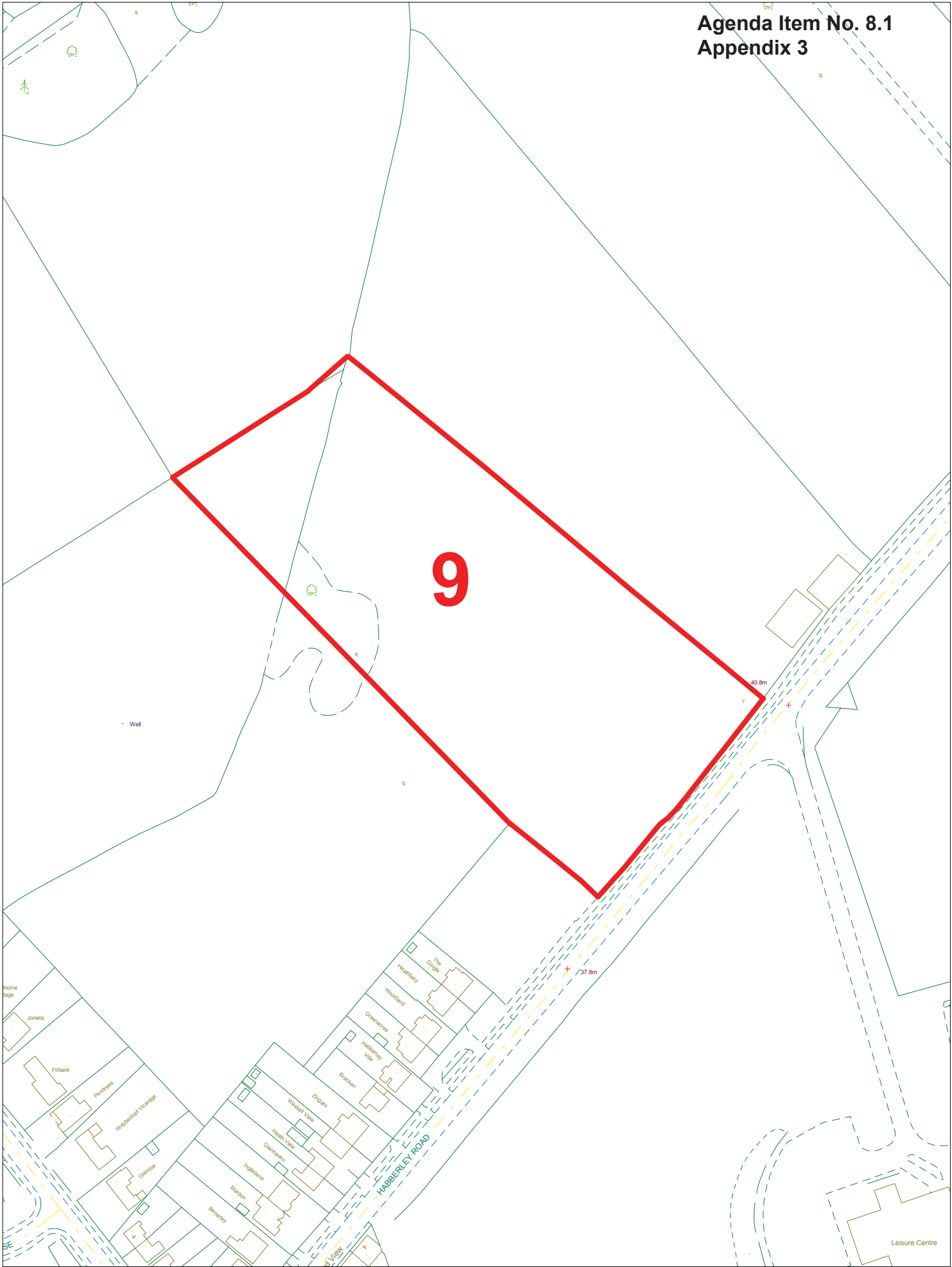
7

ALT 7 - Land off Sandy Lane, Stourport









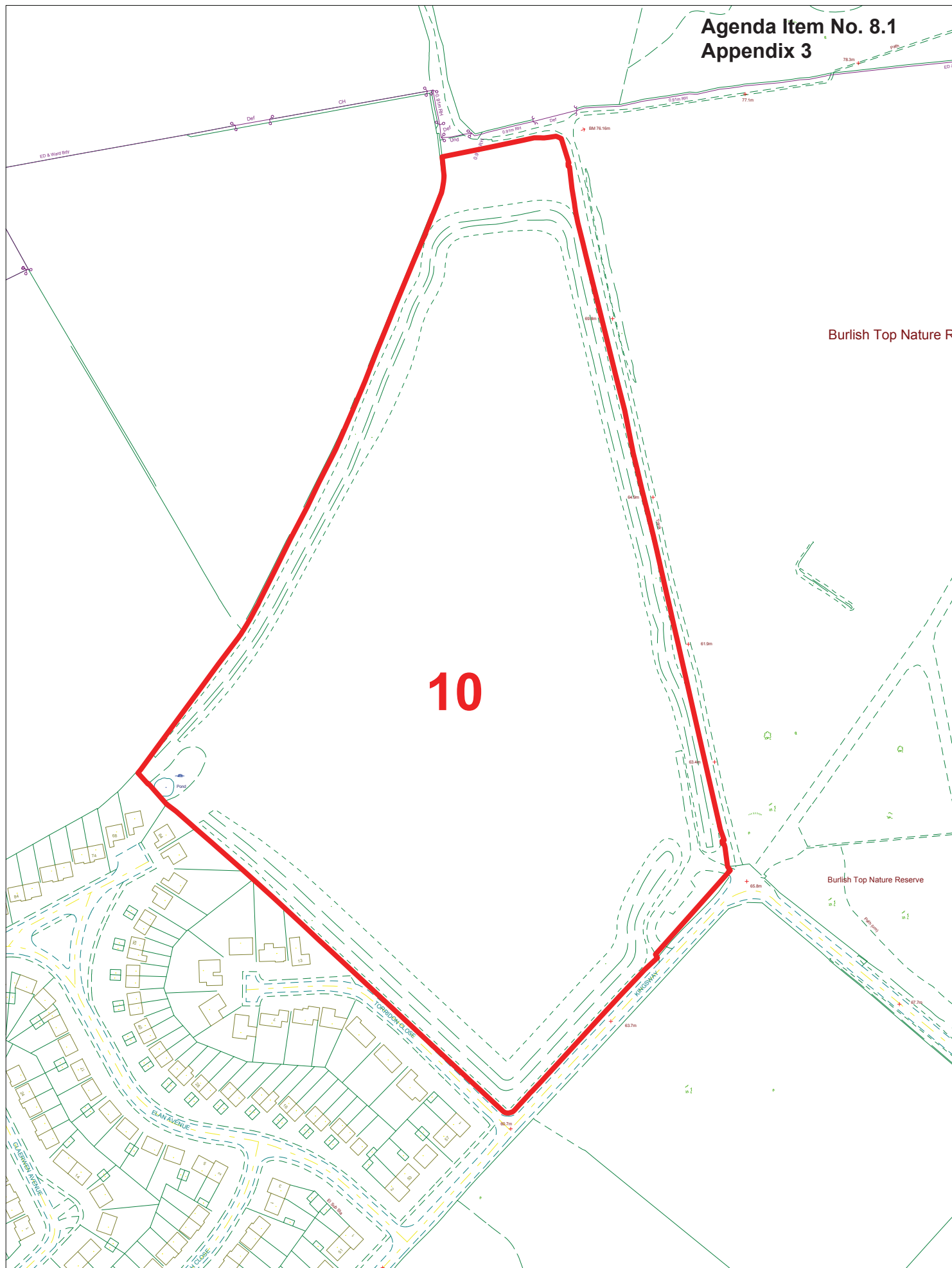
ALT 9 - Habberley Road, Bewdley



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10

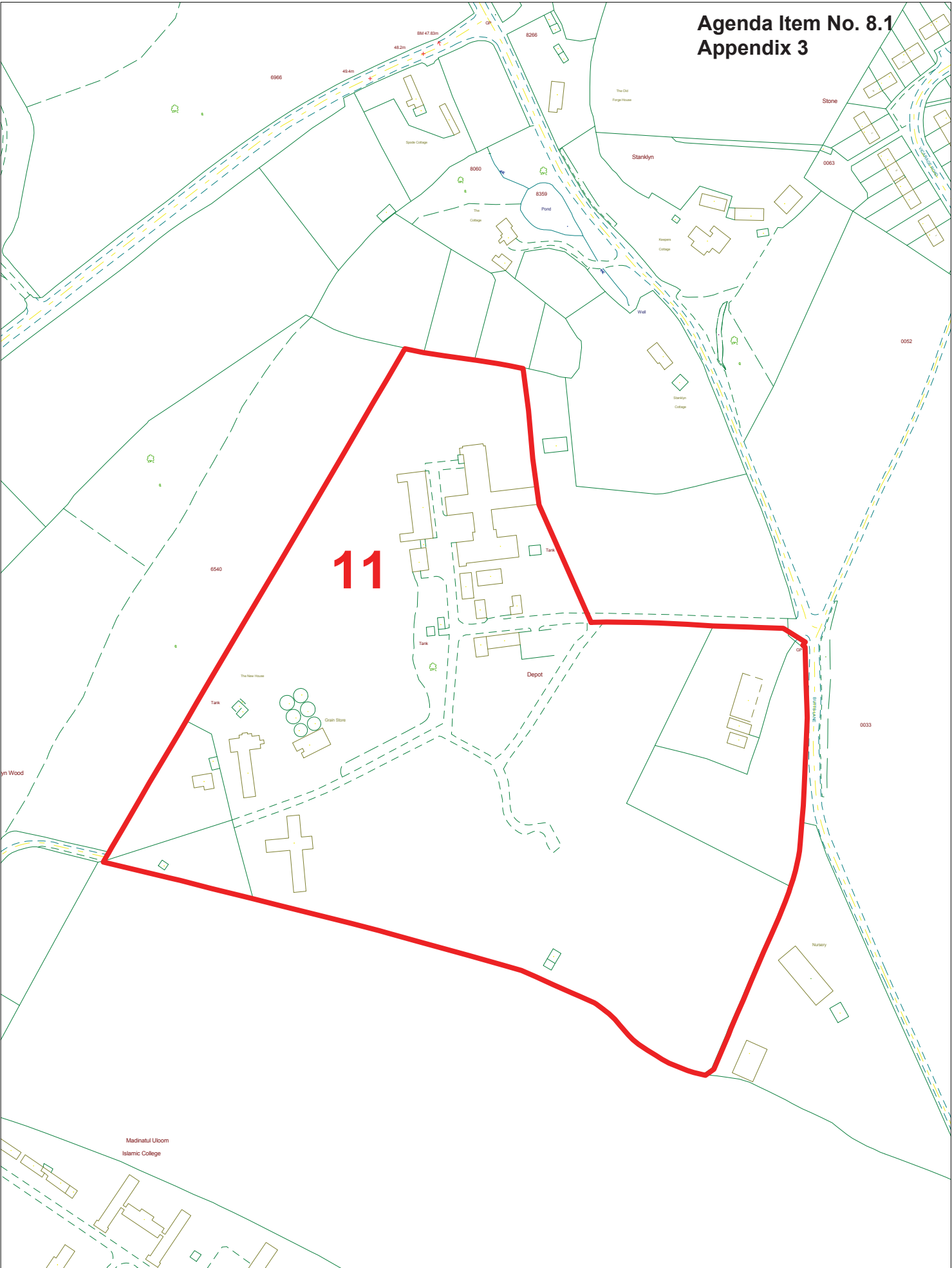
Burlish Top Nature R

Burlish Top Nature Reserve



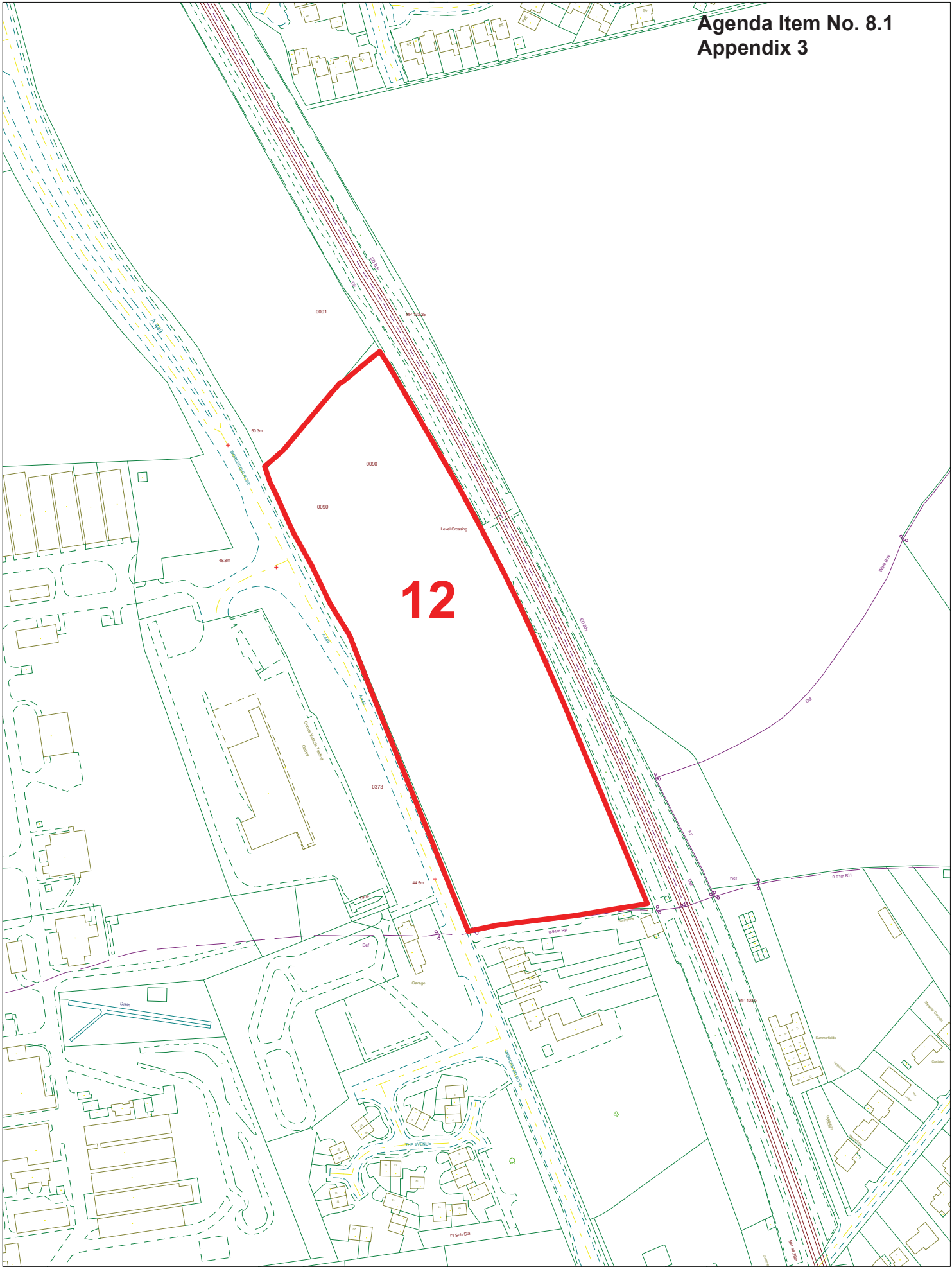
ALT 10 - Land off Kingsway, Stourport





Stone Deopt



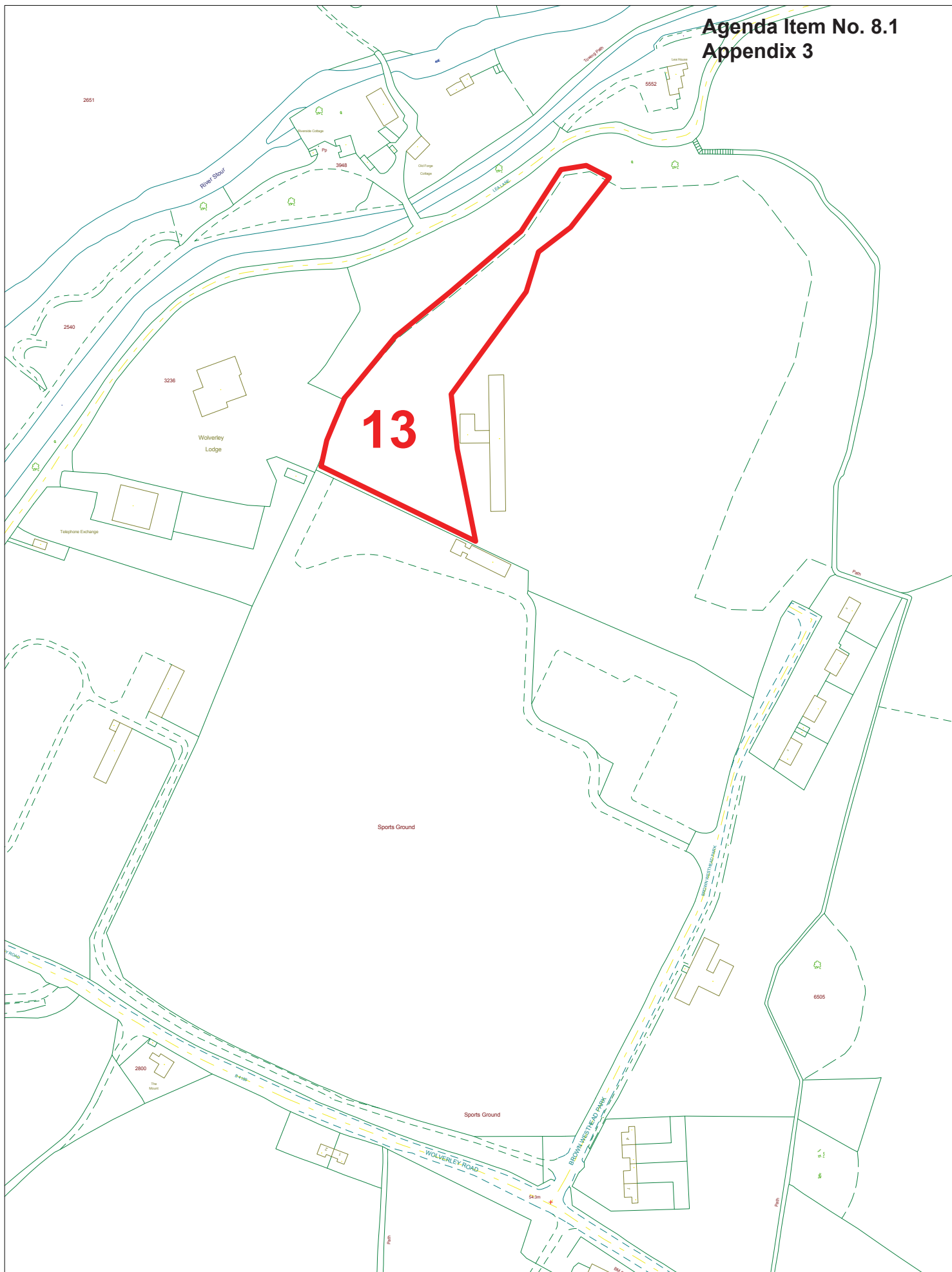


ALT 12 - Land opposite VOSA Testing Station



Scale: 1:2500

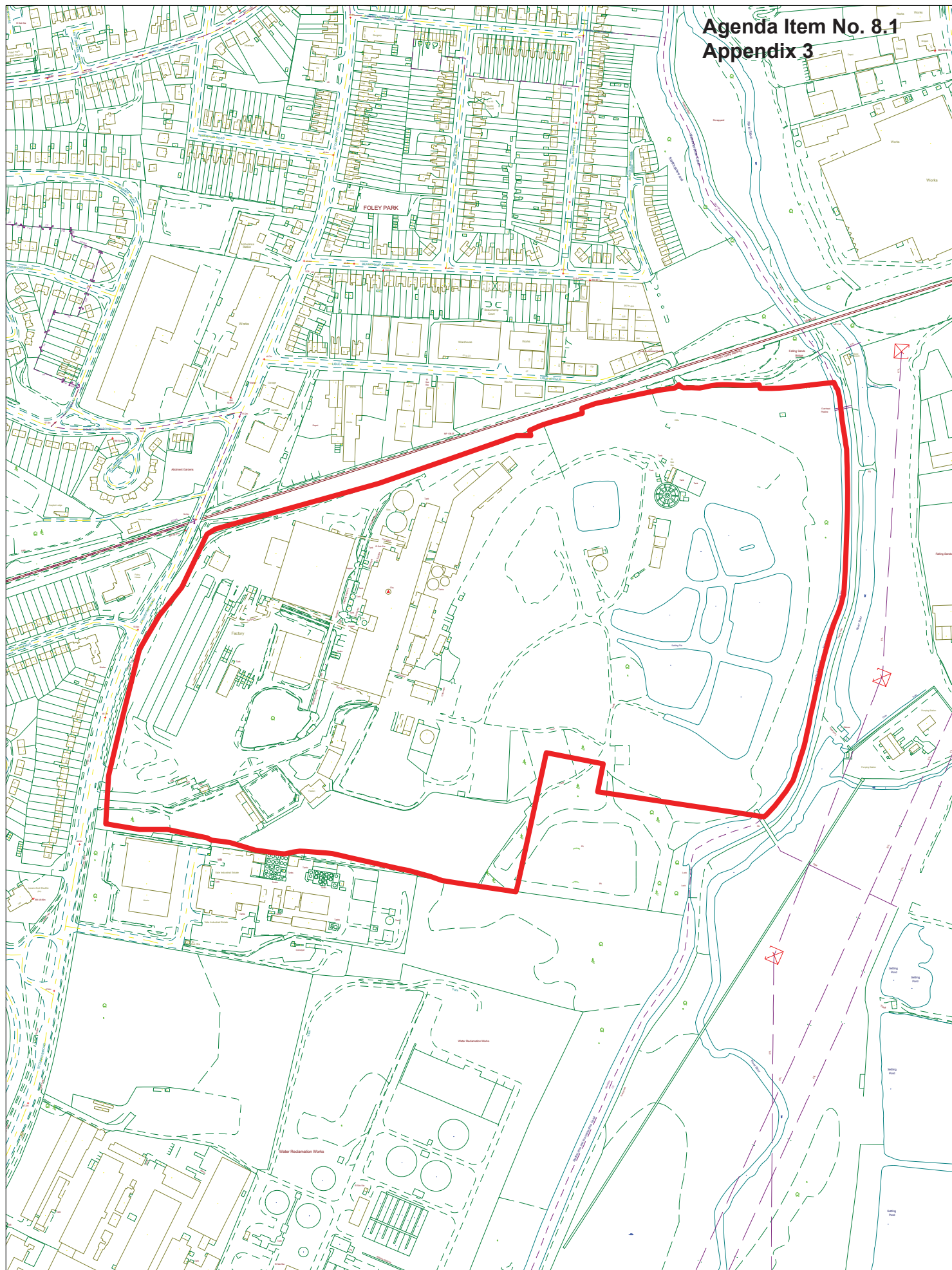




ALT 13 - Brown Westhead

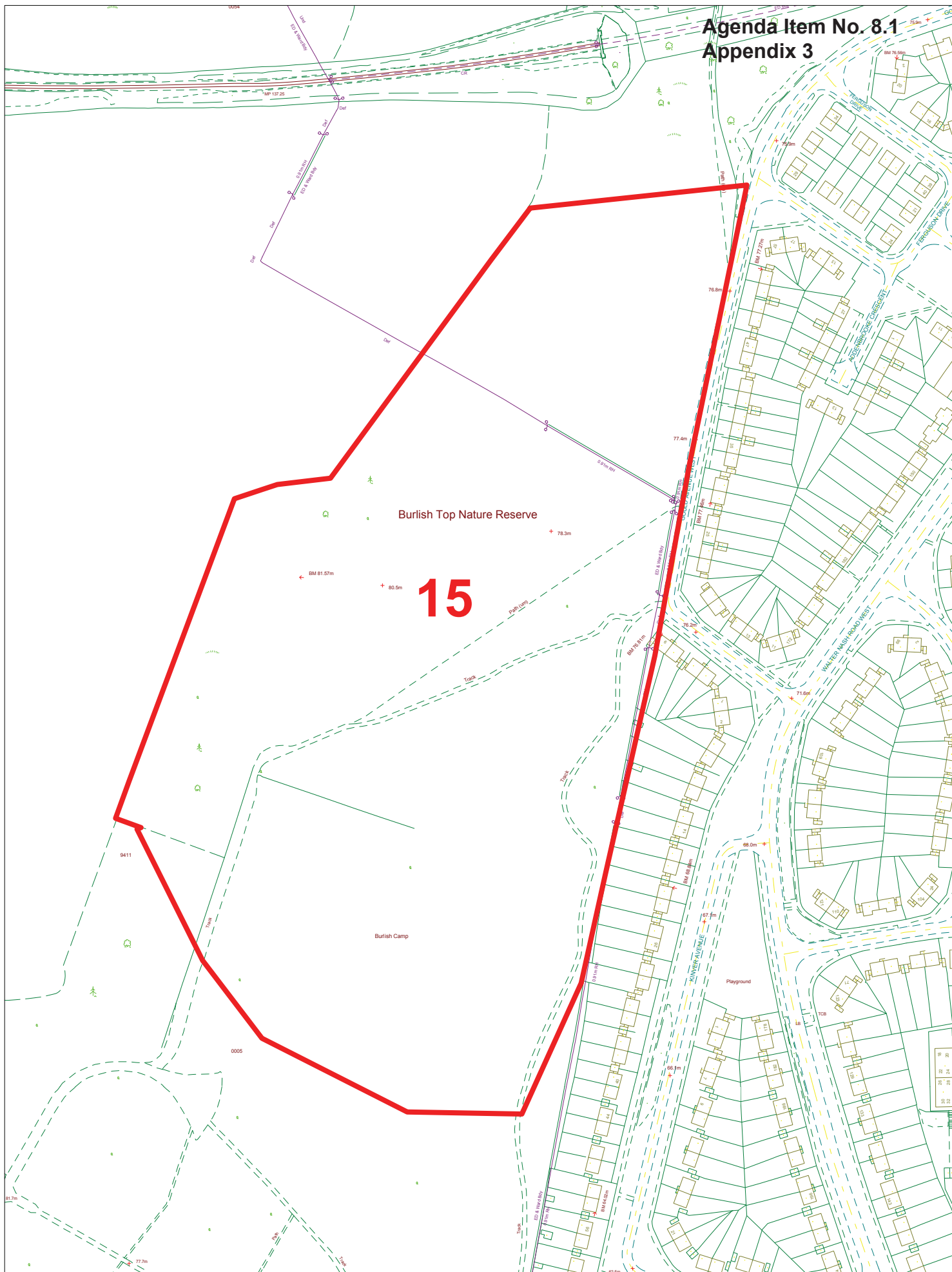






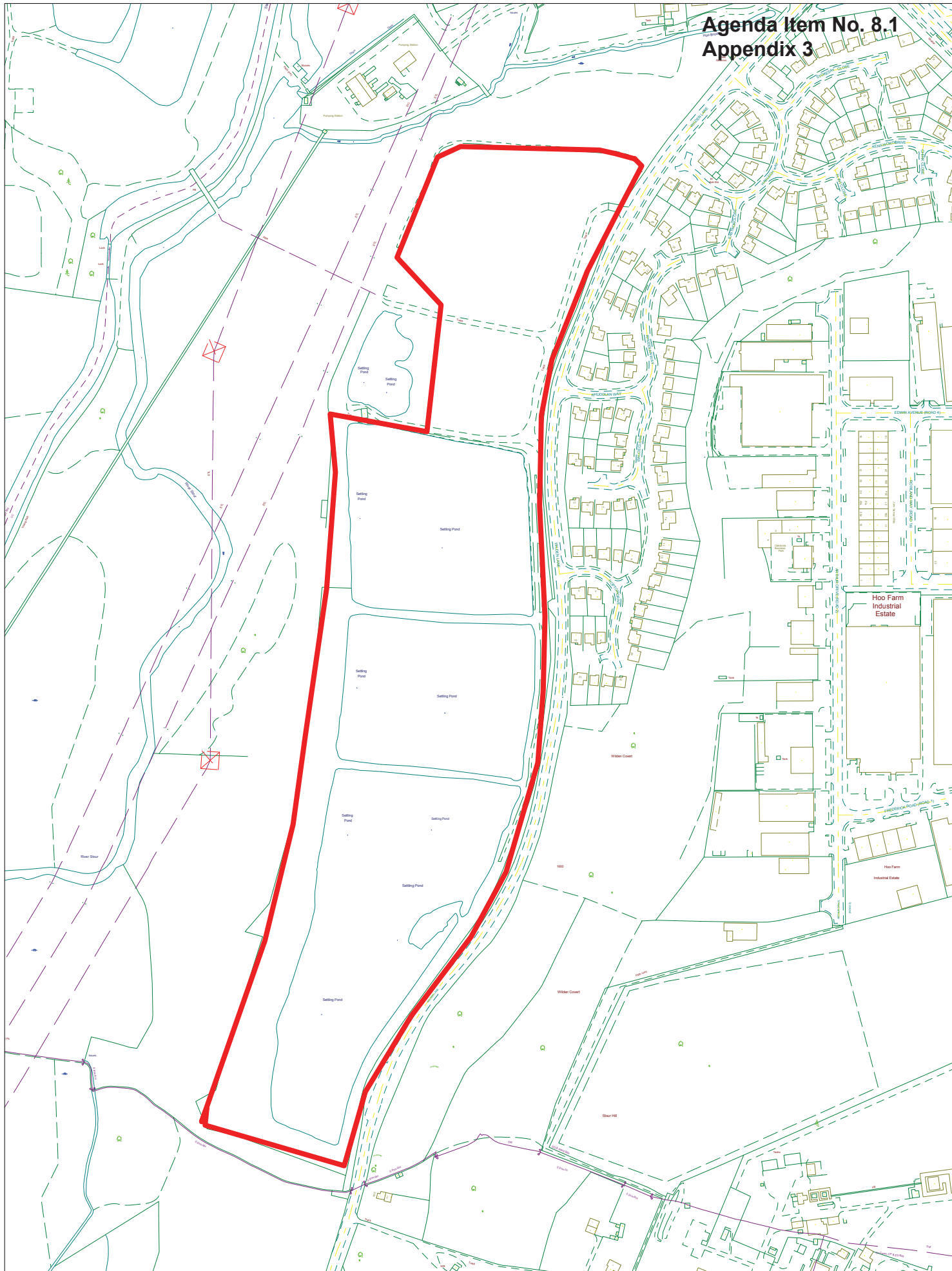
ALT 14 - - Former British Sugar Site





ALT 15 - Land at Burlish Top

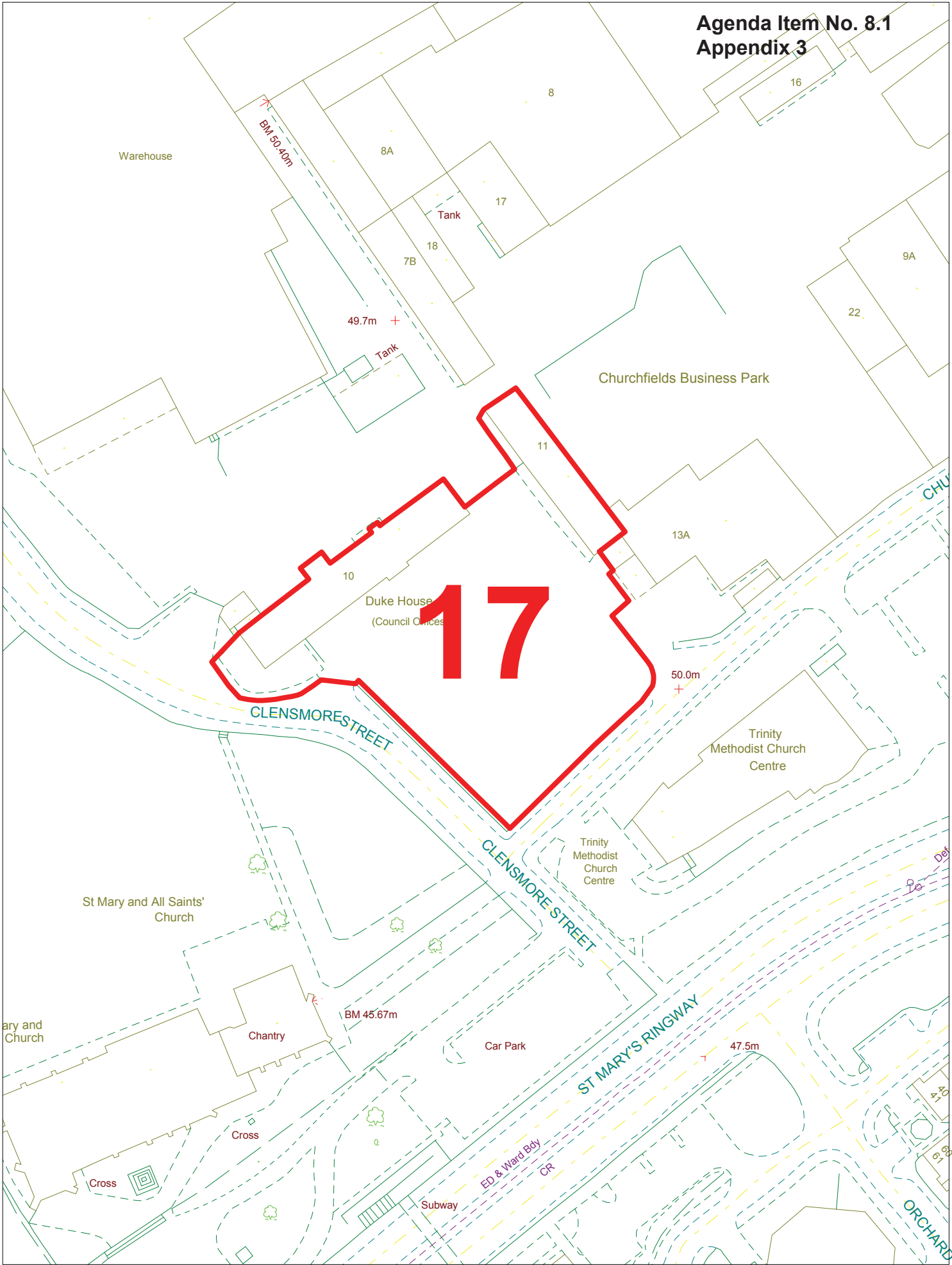




ALT 16 - Former Settling Ponds





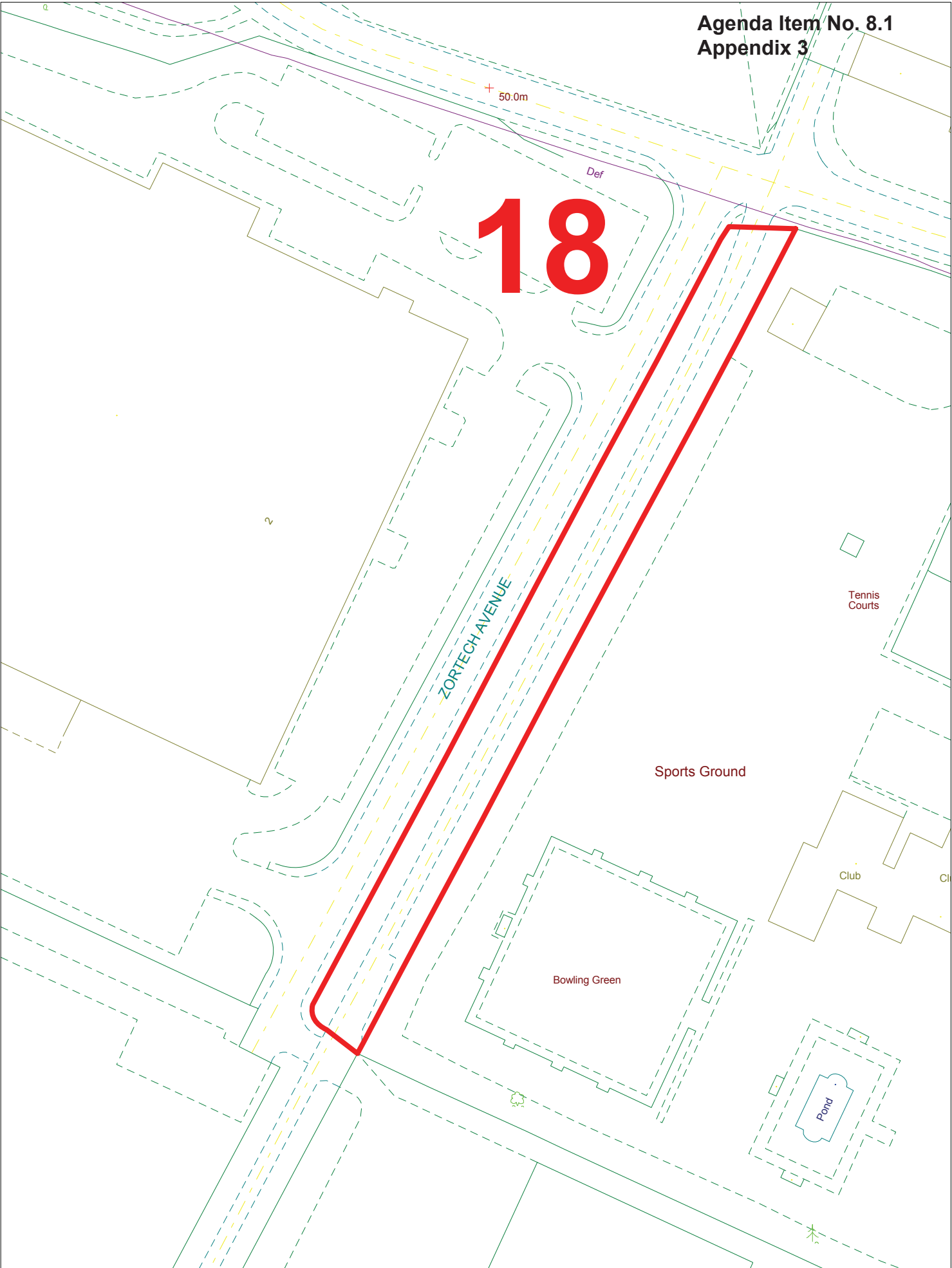


ALT 17 - Duke House



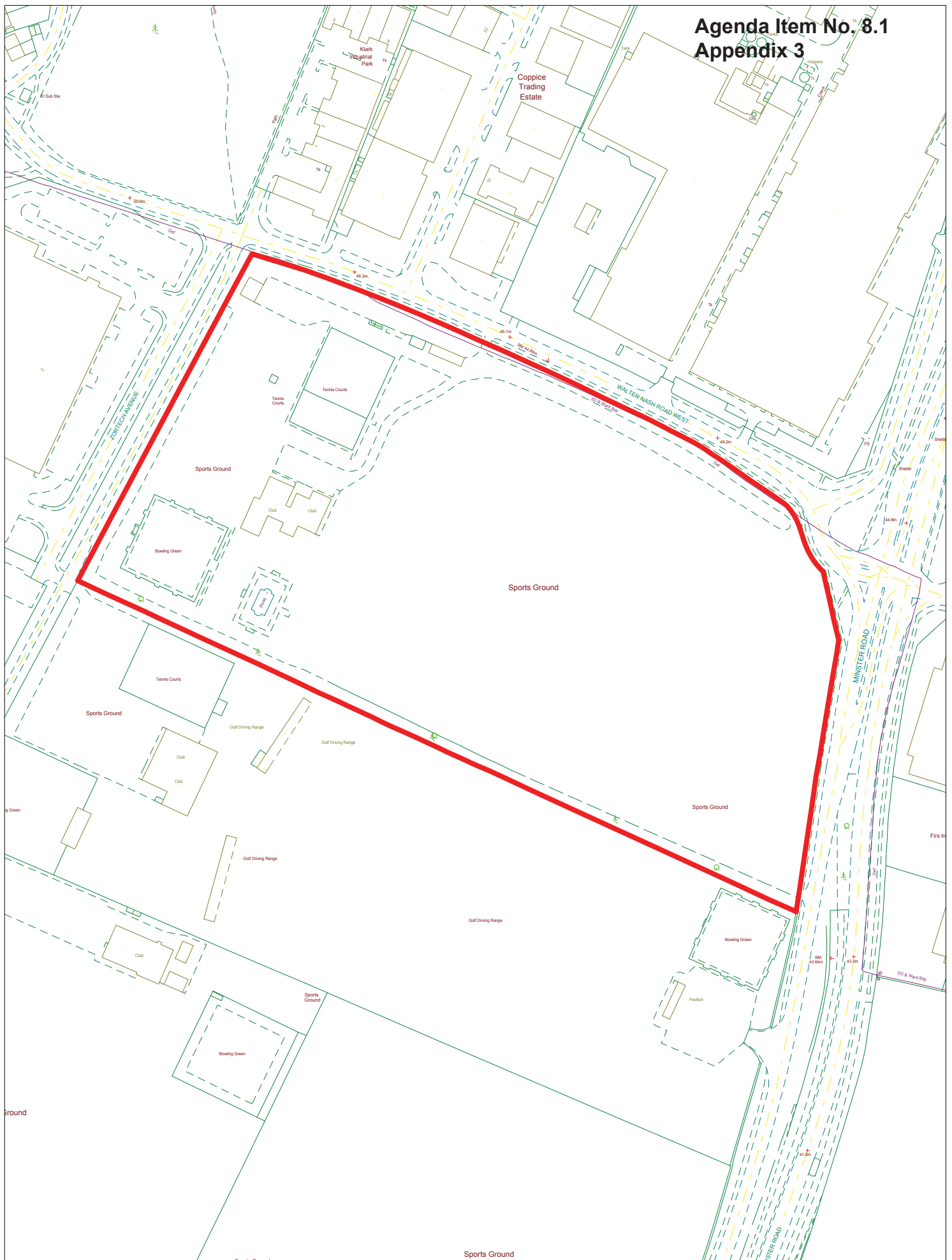
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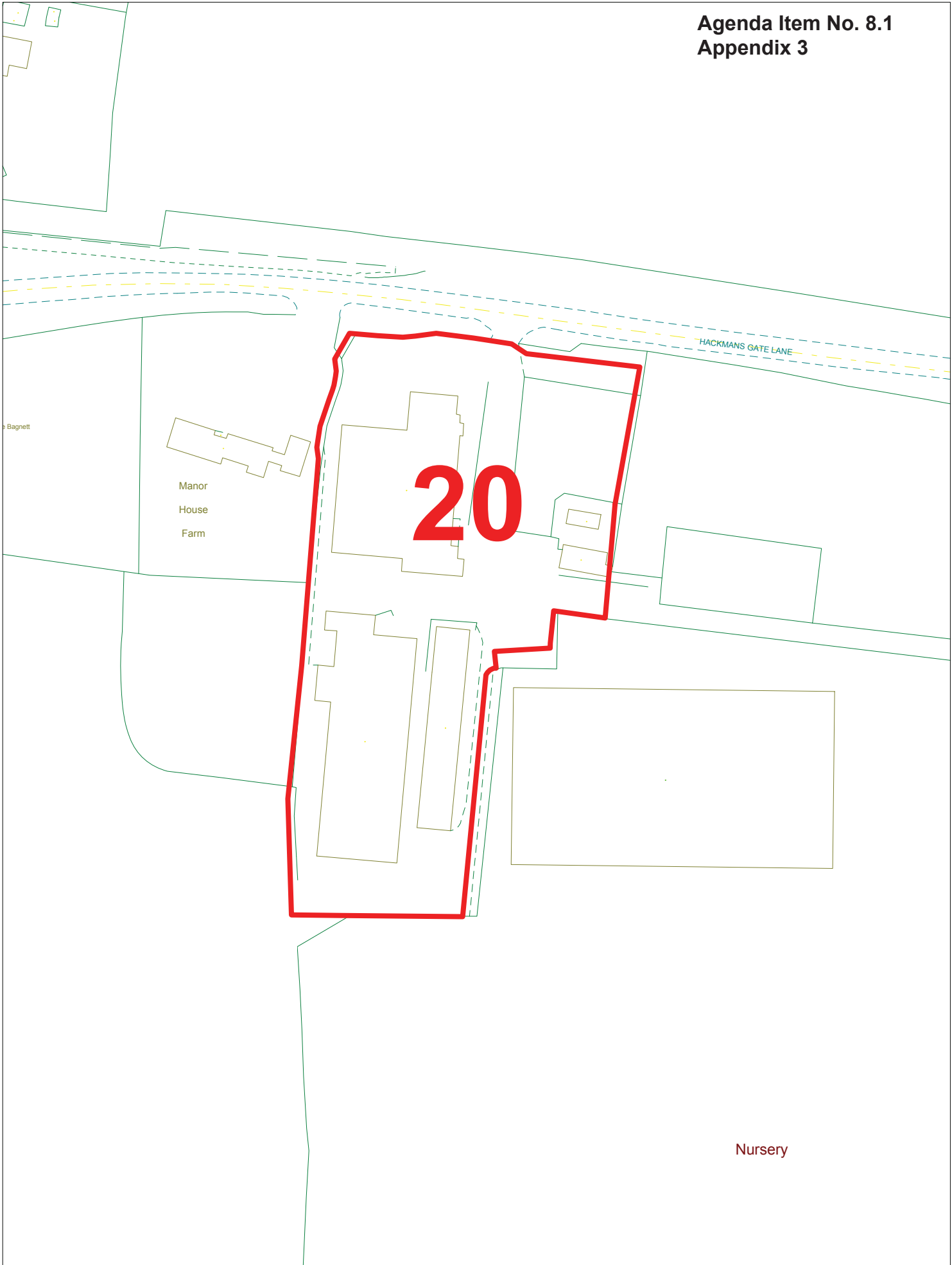
ALT 18 - Land Adj to Zortech Avenue





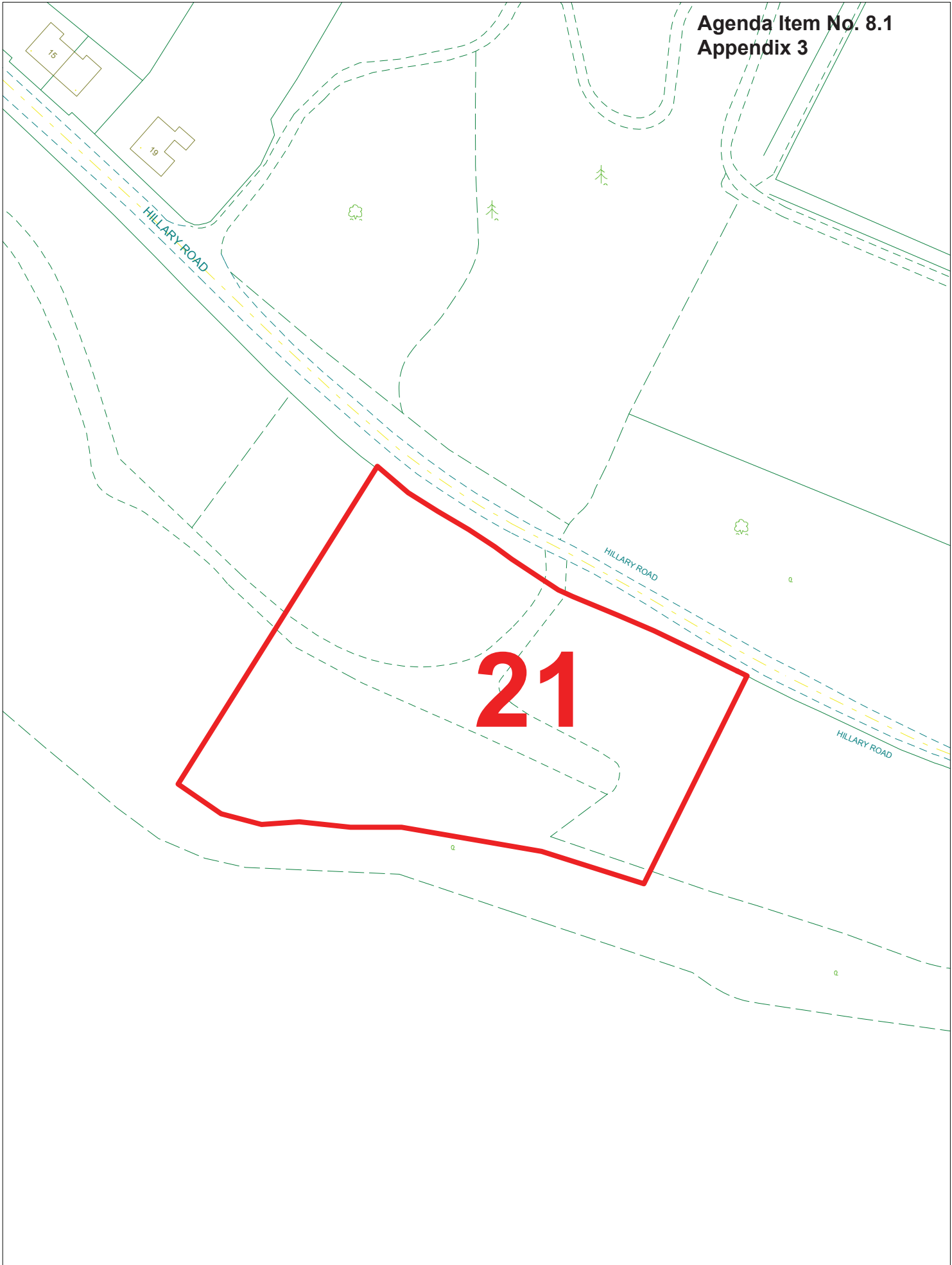
ALT 19 - Finepoint



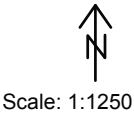


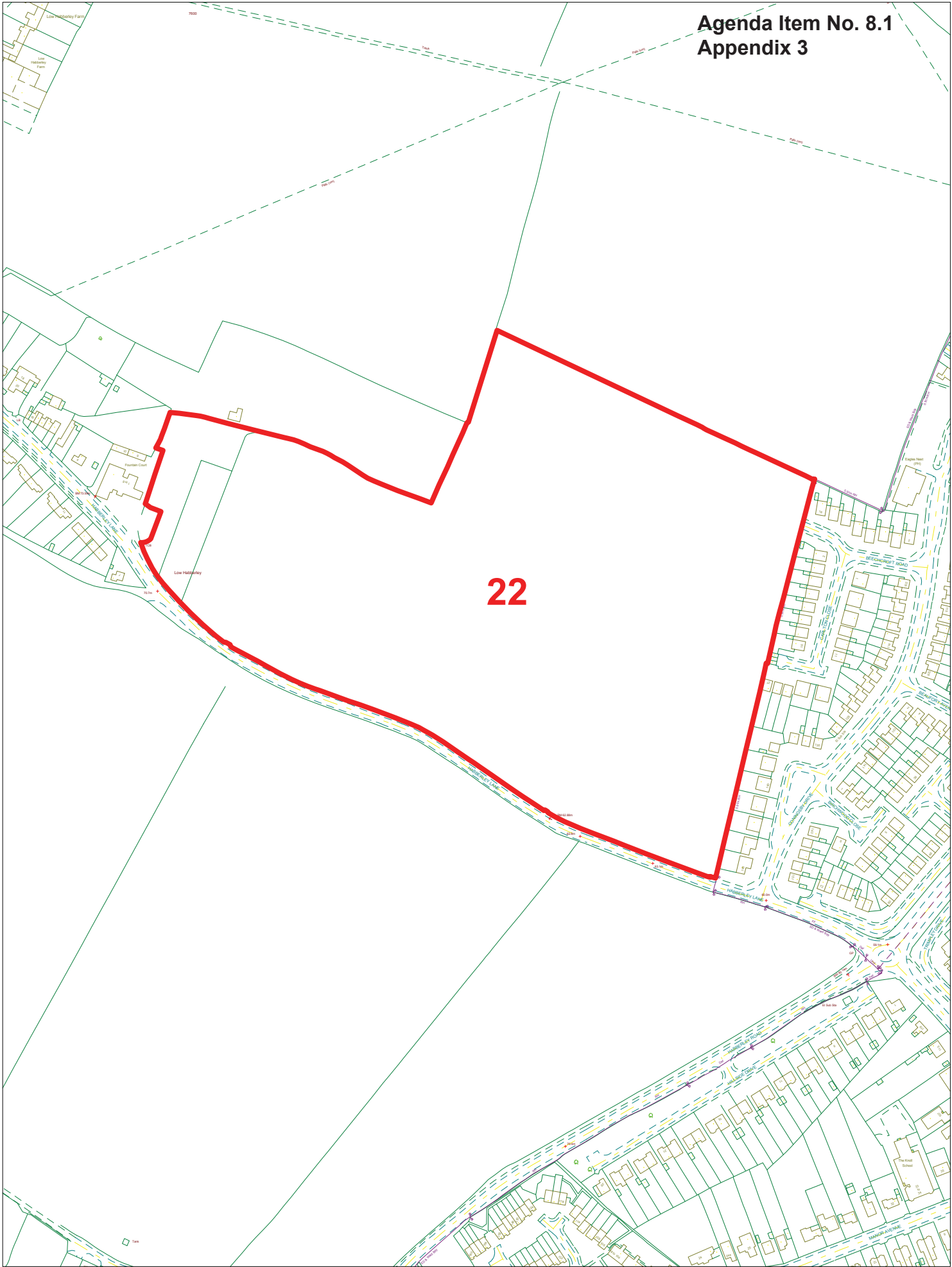
ALT 20 - Ex Yieldingtree Packers Site





ALT 21 - Fenced Land off Hilary Rd

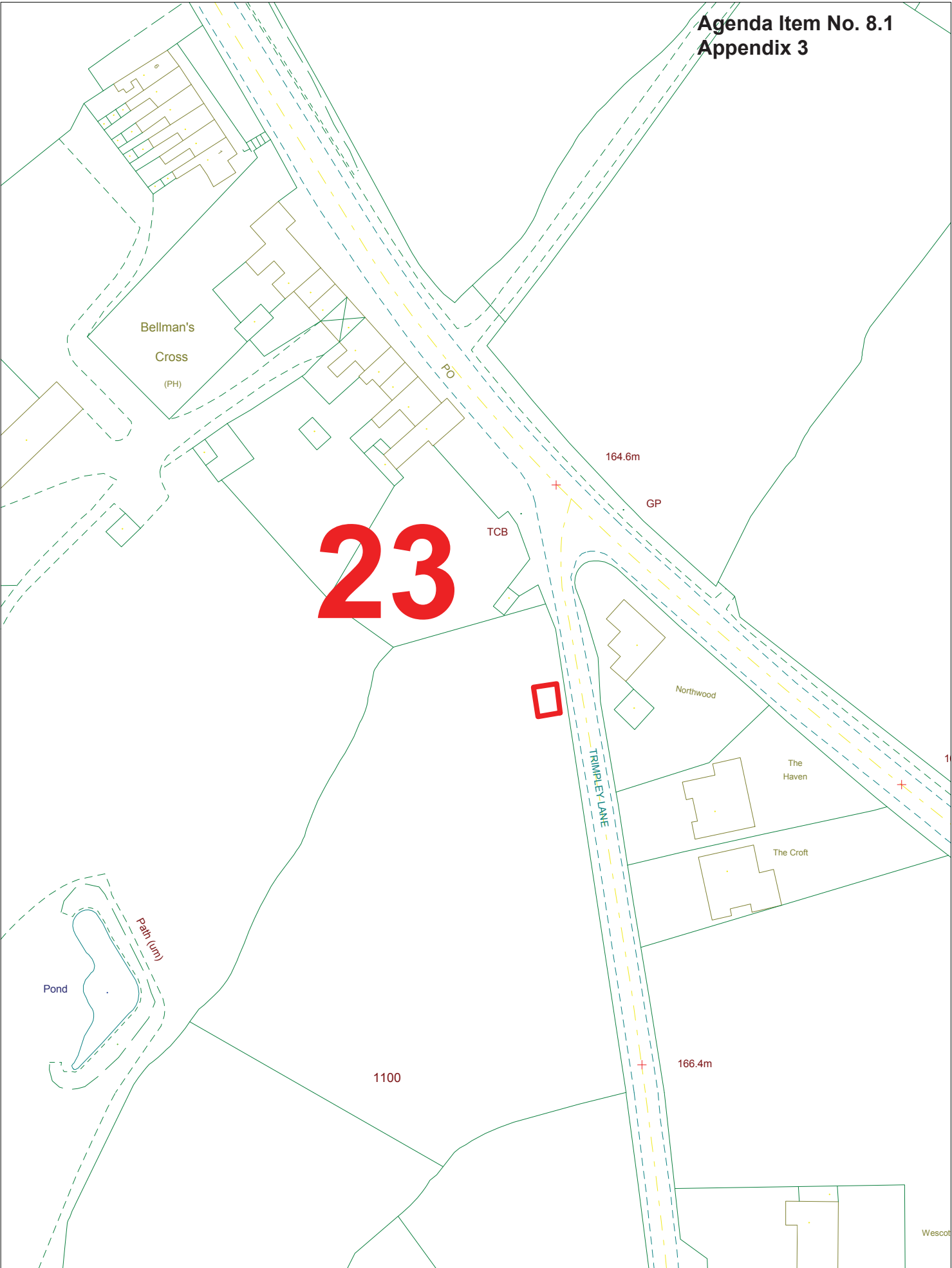




ALT 22 - Land adj Fountain Court, Low Habberley

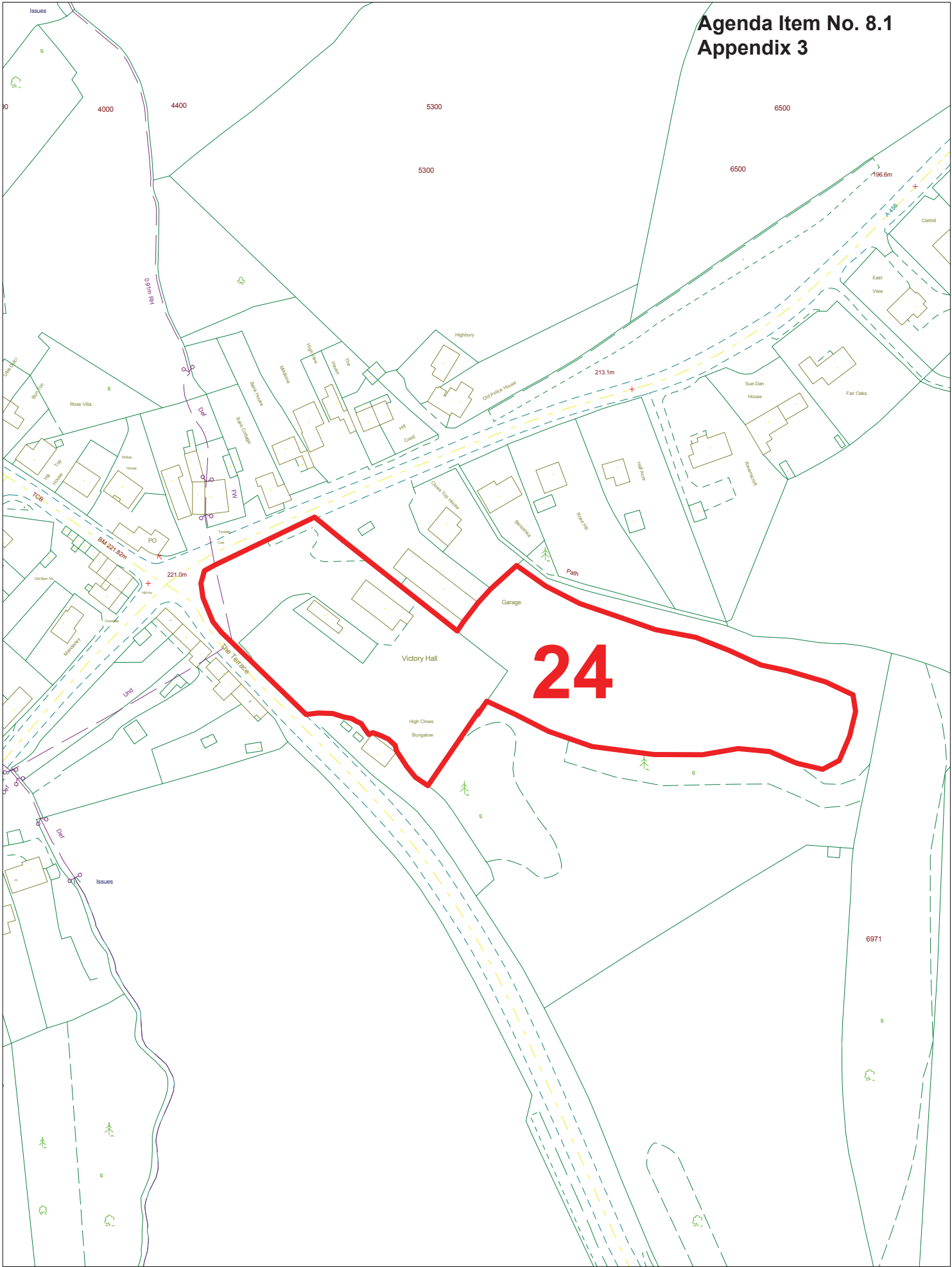


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ALT 23 - Land at Shatterford





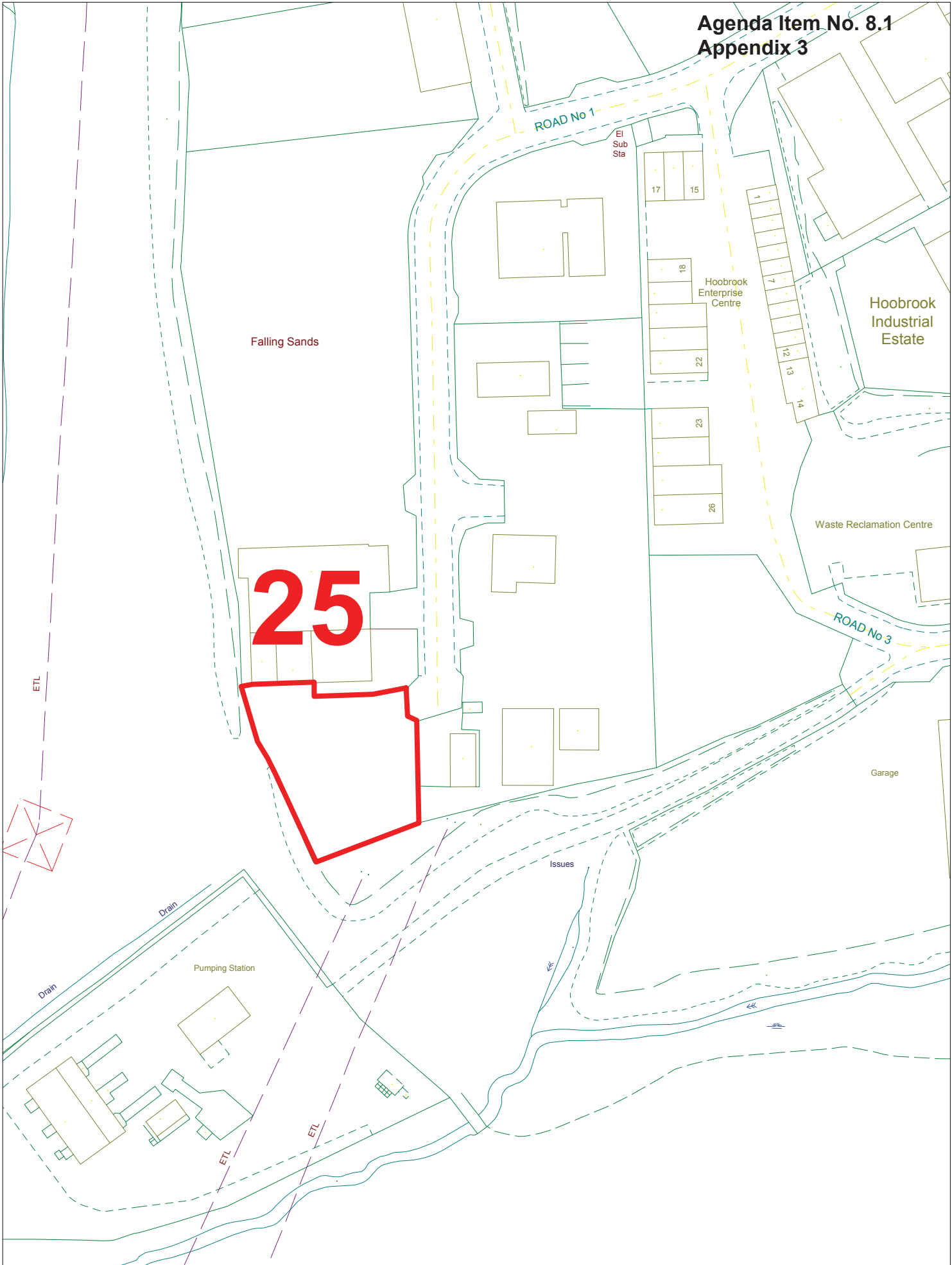
ALT 24 - Clows Top Garage Site



Scale: 1:1750ALT 24







ALT 25 - Hoobrook Trading Estate



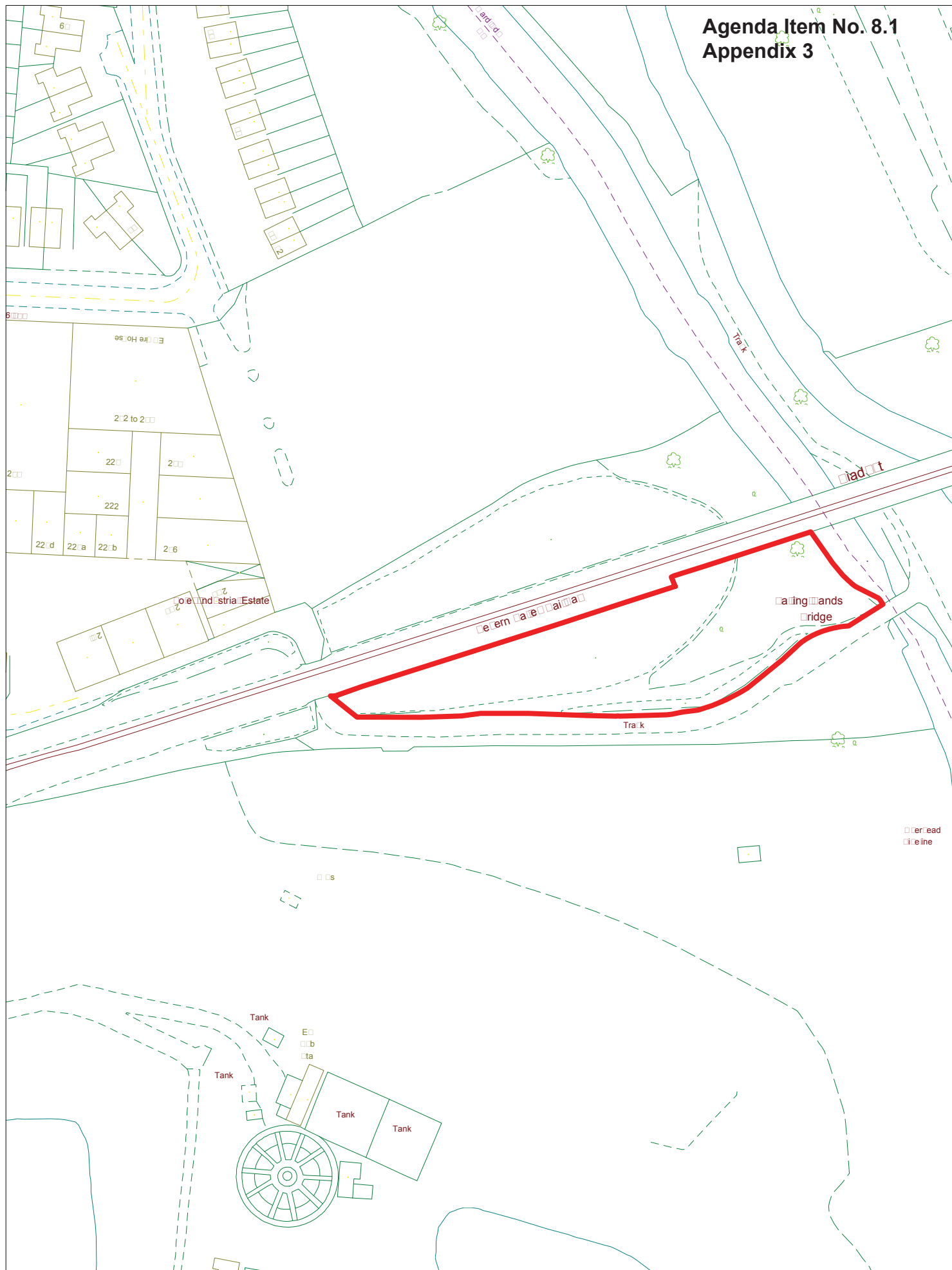


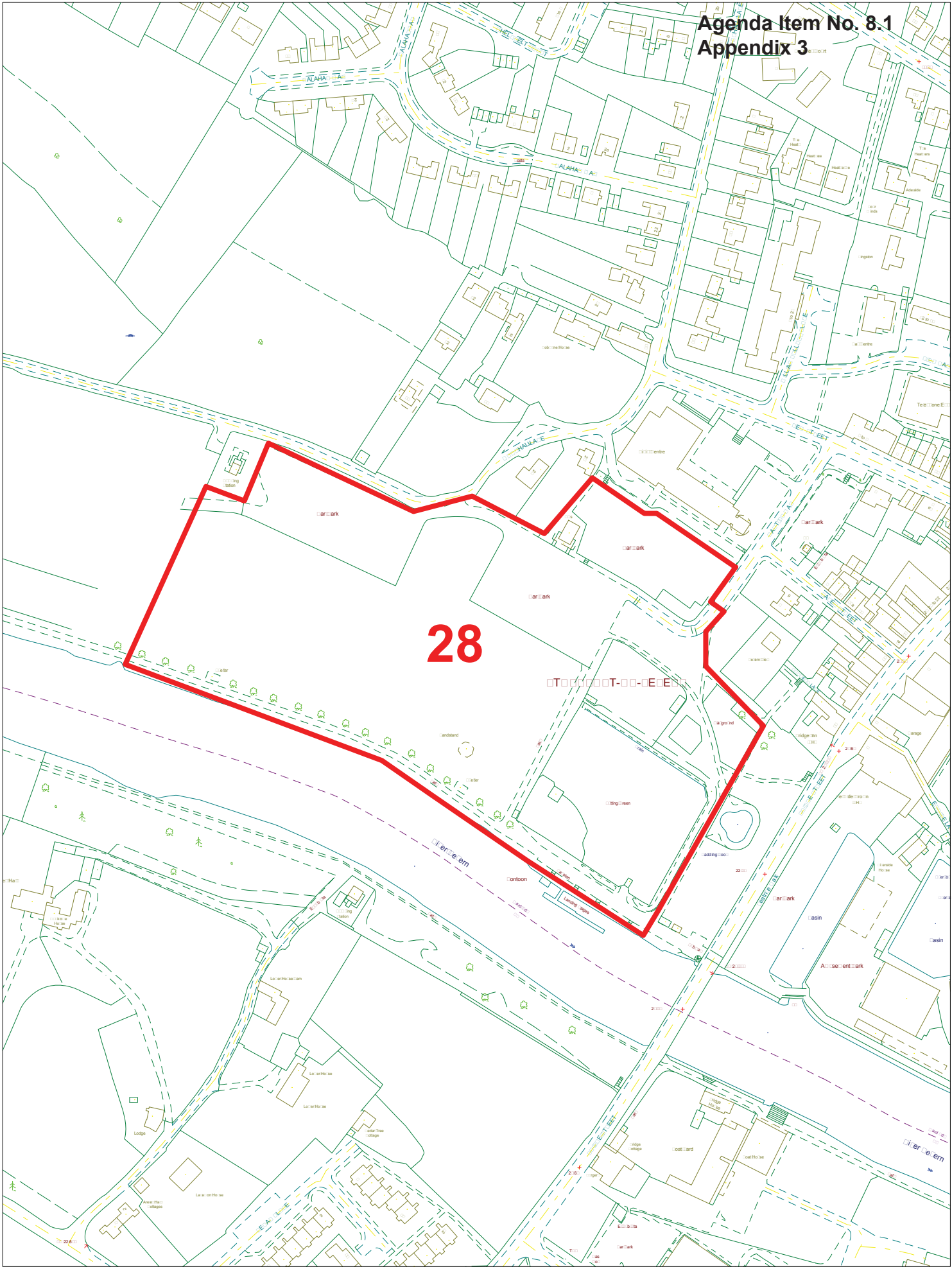


ALT 26 - Hoobrook Trading Estate

## Agenda Item No. 8.1

### Appendix 3

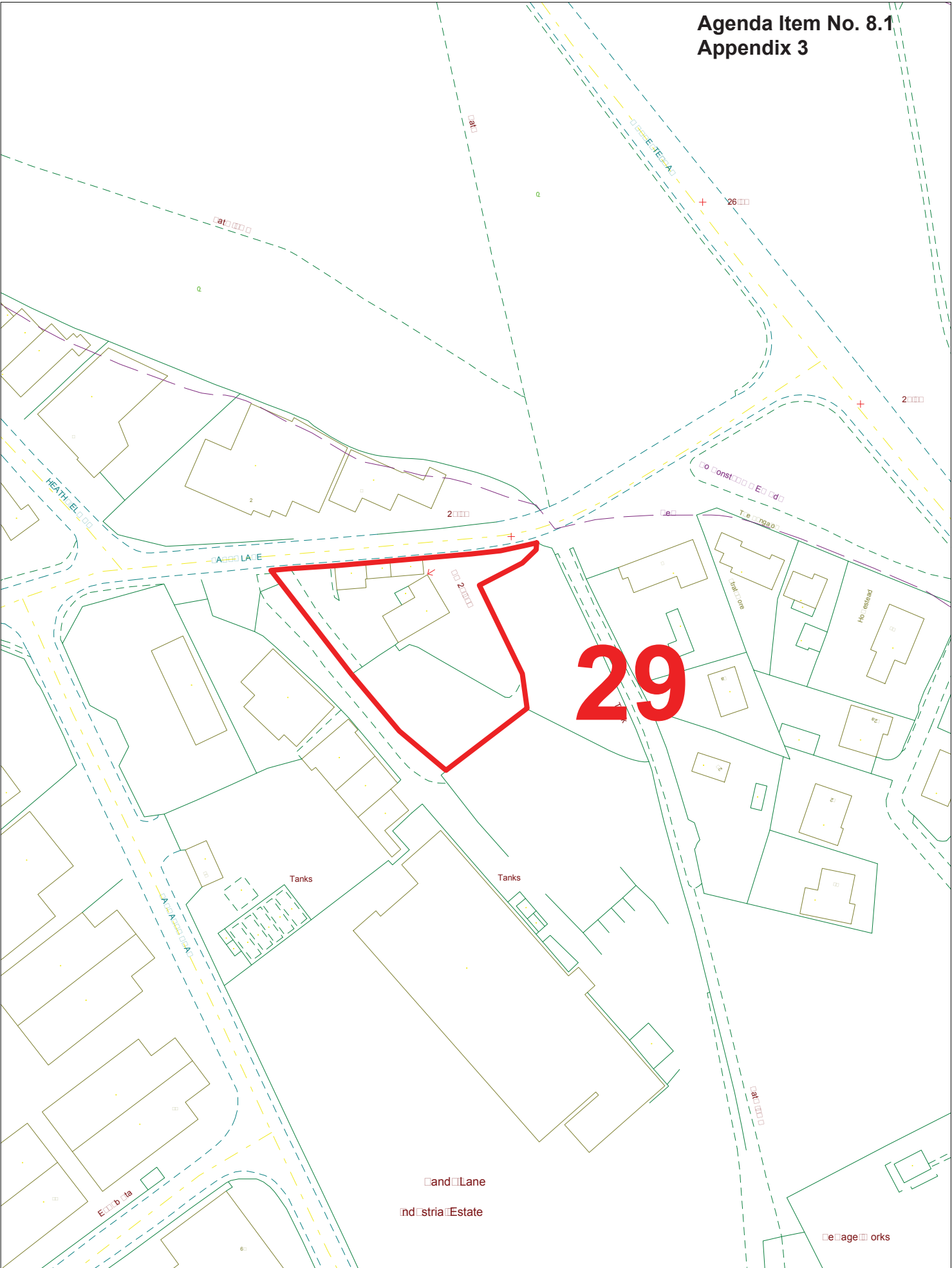




28

ALT 28 - Land to rear of Civic Centre





ALT 29 - Potters Scrap Yard, Stourport



**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**  
**31ST JANUARY 2012**

**Future Arrangements for the Management of Sports and Leisure Centres**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	Improving Health and Well Being
<b>CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:</b>	Delivering Together with Less Improving Community Well Being
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor T L Onslow
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	Director of Community & Partnership Services
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Kay Higman Ext. 2902
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<p>Appendix 1 Site appraisal  Appendix 2 Financial detail  Appendix 3 Procurement options  Appendix 4 Report on Community Asset Transfer (CAT)  Ken Watkins</p> <p><i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.) Please note appendices 1 and 2 contain exempt information.</i></p>

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To enable the Cabinet to make a decision on the future arrangements for the management of the sports and leisure centres in light of the “delivering together for less” corporate priority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet is asked to **DECIDE** that:

- 2.1 In order to meet the future needs of the District as this is the most affordable and sustainable option a new leisure centre based on Option 3, including a swimming pool, should be progressed,
- 2.2 Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre should be closed in order for a new leisure centre to be built to serve the district. Closure will be the earliest of:
- (a) when a new leisure centre is complete; or
  - (b) if the site needs to be vacated in order to allow its development by any purchaser of the site; or
  - (c) the end of the 2 year extension to the current contract in March 2015;



- 2.3 **Stourport Sports Centre will cease to be operated by Wyre Forest District Council when the new leisure centre is complete or at the end of the 2 year extension to the current contract in March 2015 if an asset transfer has not been possible;**
- 2.4 **The transfer of Bewdley Leisure Centre and playing fields should be secured and a negotiated withdrawal from the dual use agreement;**
- 2.5 **the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services and the Director of Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Well-being be authorised to enter into negotiations for the acquisition of the preferred site for the new leisure centre identified in Exempt Appendix 1.**
- 2.6 **Following acquisition of the site the appropriate Directors in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Well Being, commence the procurement exercise using the restricted procedure for a Design Build Operate Maintain (DBOM) contract for the build and operation of the new leisure centre.**
- 2.7 **That the Capital and Revenue Budgets associated with Option 3 as set out in Section 5.3 of this report and Exempt Appendix 2 be approved and included in Cabinet's final budget strategy proposals in February (exact phasing to be confirmed together with final costs following site acquisition and competitive procurement).**

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Wyre Forest District Council operates three Leisure Centres, situated in Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport. They attract over 500,000 visits per year and are managed by DC Leisure on behalf of the Council.
- 3.2 The current leisure management contract with DC Leisure ends in March 2013. The leisure centre buildings and facilities are coming to the end of their useful life and costs to the Council will increase because the facilities require investment to keep them fully operational and fit for purpose. Usage figures will start to decline further as the quality of the facilities declines.
- 3.3 In January 2011 Cabinet agreed to carry out a full strategic options appraisal with the aim that future provision after March 2013 would cost the Council less than the current annual subsidy.
- 3.4 A Member scrutiny review panel, which was representative of the whole District, was established in March 2011 which met to consider a number of options available to the Council including closing the centres, refurbishment or a new centre. The Review Panel findings were reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2011. The Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed to recommend the findings to Cabinet.
- 3.5 The Cabinet met in June 2011 to consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee where these were noted.
- 3.6 The Cabinet also agreed to endorse the Overview and Scrutiny recommendation that a public consultation exercise be carried out between July and September 2011 and

that the results be reported back to the meeting in October 2011 to enable key decisions to be made.

- 3.7 At the Cabinet meeting in October 2011 it was agreed that further work would be carried out on a range of new build options (Option 2, Option 3 and Option 4); the CAT for Stourport Sports Centre and Bewdley Leisure Centre was to be investigated further; investigations for a potential site would continue and further financial appraisal work to be carried out for these options.
- 3.8 It was also agreed at the Cabinet meeting in October 2011 to extend the current leisure management contract with DC Leisure for 2 years from March 2013 with an option to terminate at 6 months notice by either side. This would enable procurement and build of a new centre which should take approximately 3 years from a final decision to progress and with an available site. The contract extension would be an extra cost to the Council (subject to formal negotiation with DC Leisure).
- 3.9 In addition to the annual management fee for Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre and Stourport Sports Centre, DC Leisure has agreed to provide a figure for future management of Bewdley Leisure Centre if a negotiated withdrawal from the dual use arrangement with the High School cannot be achieved and DC Leisure has advised that this would be in line with current costs.
- 3.10 A negotiated withdrawal is being pursued which would involve Bewdley High School taking on responsibility for the Leisure Centre and the associated sports pitches. However, a withdrawal cannot be guaranteed at this stage.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

##### **Facility mix**

#### **4.1 New Build Options**

- 4.1.2 In accordance with the Cabinet decision on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011 the new build options developed are as follows:

<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Option 4</b>
<b>£9.185m</b>	<b>£10.135m</b>	<b>£11.265m</b>
Reception/offices/ staff/café/kitchen	Reception/offices/ staff/café/kitchen	Reception/offices/staf f/café/kitchen
4 Courts Sports Hall	6 Courts Sports Hall	6 Court Sports Hall
6 lane 25 metre pool plus learner pool	6 lane 25 metre pool plus learner pool	6 lane 25 metre pool plus learner pool plus leisure water (1 flume and small splash water area)
Wet and Dry change	Wet and Dry change	Wet and Dry change
70 station fitness suite/studio	80 station fitness suite/studio	90 station fitness suite/1 studio
5 aside	5 aside	5 aside
		Climbing wall

## **4.2 Site options for a new build**

4.2.1 A desk top site analysis of a number of identified potential locations for a new sports and leisure centre was carried out by the Planning Policy and Regeneration teams.

4.2.2 A total of 8 sites were assessed in terms of suitability against general criteria, which included the following considerations;

- Site Size (approx 4.5 acres to accommodate facility mix and car parking on a single site)
- Accessibility (good access, including public transport and parking arrangements)
- Availability & Viability (ideally on public sector owned land, minimising costs)
- Planning Policy Implications (a suitable use for the location)
- Infrastructure Requirements (any major costs associated with delivery)

4.2.3 From this a number of sites were identified for further investigation and initial discussions with landowners before a more detailed level of analysis. The initial summary of findings provided in Exempt Appendix 1 remain commercial in confidence so as not to compromise the Council's negotiating position to ensure best value.

4.2.4 A key factor will be availability and delivery to ensure that if a new facility option was decided upon it could be implemented as soon as possible and to maximise the regeneration opportunities that may present themselves on the Eastern Gateway.

## **4.3 Procurement options**

4.3.1 There are various contract options available for a new build leisure centre, which are detailed in Appendix 3 of this report. The ideal option for a new leisure centre would be Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM). The successful management company would be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the centre for a set period following the construction of the building. This option gives the contractor liability for the maintenance and repair of the building and therefore the Council would not need to meet these costs whether planned or unknown. A feature of DBOM is that the management of the facility returns to the client after a specified period of time, for example 25 years. The operator would be required to maintain the building throughout this period.

4.3.2 Two procurement routes are available to the Council which are the Restricted Procedure (RP) and the Competitive Dialogue Procedure (CD). The pros and cons of both are set out in a table in Appendix 3. Both procedures would achieve the desired outcome of the project. These options have been examined in detail and the Competitive Dialogue route although more expensive could realise savings when the tenders are received, however weighing up the risks associated with both methods and that any potential savings with the Competitive Dialogue route cannot be quantified it is recommended that the Restricted Procedure would be the most appropriate.



#### **4.4 Community Asset Transfer (CAT)**

##### **Stourport Sports Centre**

- 4.4.1 The Cabinet at the meeting in October 2011 decided that discussions should be pursued with any interested parties regarding the potential for a Community Asset Transfer for Stourport Sports Centre. A further study was commissioned and completed by Ken Watkins Associates (see Appendix 4) which concluded that a CAT was unlikely given the financial liabilities of the building.
- 4.4.2 Discussions took place with seven organisations during the process as well as the current sports centre leisure management company (DC Leisure) and Halo leisure (management company for Herefordshire leisure centres). Each of the organisations concerned have reached the conclusion that it is not financially viable to pursue a CAT. Wyre Forest swimming club has provided a list of desirable facilities they would like to see in any potential new centre and would rather any capital money was spent on a new facility than invested in the current site.
- 4.4.3 If any other interested party approaches the Council to asset transfer Stourport Sports Centre then this would be considered.

##### **Bewdley Leisure Centre**

- 4.4.4 Bewdley Leisure Centre is under a separate agreement with Bewdley High School and the County Council. Discussions have taken place with the school regarding the transfer of this asset, including the playing pitches, to either the school or another interested party. Information is currently being prepared to be provided to the school in order for a decision to be made on the way forward. If a negotiated withdrawal is not possible the Council cannot terminate this agreement early. The agreement regarding Bewdley Leisure Centre commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1989 and is for a period of 125 years. The earliest break is at 40 years which would be in 2029; at this break the Council could terminate the agreement and the County Council would be obliged to pay to the District Council a proportion of the capital costs incurred by the District Council from the date the centre was constructed. It is therefore recommended that the transfer of Bewdley Leisure Centre and the playing fields to Bewdley High School be pursued by a negotiated withdrawal.
- 4.4.5 DC Leisure has agreed to operate Bewdley Leisure Centre at the same management fee as the current budgets (plus RPI uplifts) if negotiations do not achieve a withdrawal from the site. Bewdley Leisure Centre is excluded from the financial appraisals and the associated revenues budgets are still available and would therefore be budget neutral.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This section sets out summarised financial costs and affordability of the preferred new build options presented to Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011, summarised on section 4.1 of this report. The detailed report of the financial analysis work is provided in Exempt Appendix 2.
- 5.2 The financial analysis is based on development of the new build options, with the closure and sale of the existing leisure centre at Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre

(WFGLC). The site falls within the Bromsgrove Street area of the 'Eastern Gateway' to Kidderminster town centre and a concept feasibility report for the redevelopment of this area was reported to Cabinet in November 2011. For Stourport Sports Centre (SSC) the options for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) have been separately reviewed and are excluded from this affordability assessment.

- 5.3 The affordability based on current information and assumptions is summarised in the table below.

Options considered – for Site Assumptions see Exempt Appendix 2	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Maintain Current All
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
<b>Total Capital Spend *</b>	9,185	10,135	11,265	2,250
Management Fee payable to the Council p.a.	-40	-100	-67	
Running Costs p.a. (including management fee)	42	42	42	888
Lifecycle Costs**	60	68	76	
Capital Financing Costs p.a.	734	809	899	180
<b>Total Revenue Spend p.a.</b>	796	819	950	1,068
<b>Budget 2011/12 original</b>	857	857	857	857
<b>Affordability Cost/(Saving) compared to current revenue budget</b>	<b>- 61</b>	<b>-38</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>211</b>
<b>Affordability 30 Years Cost/(Saving) compared to current revenue budget</b>	<b>-1,830</b>	<b>-1,140</b>	<b>2,790</b>	<b>6,330</b>

\* Capital spend includes cost of new build, fit out costs, land acquisition, site investigations, project costs and fees and is net of capital receipts for land sale of existing centres.

\*\* Lifecycle costs, to cover the replacement and upgrade of assets over and above operational maintenance.

#### Key Assumptions and Caveats

The key variables have been set out in the body of the report, and are substantially subject to national factors. The main local variables are around the site. For this it should be noted that no contingency has been included for highways, access, infrastructure, ground conditions or car parking issues at the site or created by the development.

- 5.4 Fit out costs have been assessed as part of the financial appraisal; whilst most contractors would agree to pay these costs as part of the tendering exercise these have been included in the costings in Section 5 - Financial Implications, based on a worse case scenario. New build costings have been obtained by our leisure management partners DC Leisure and are based on a competitive square meterage rate which is currently being achieved in the market place through a competitive tendering process.
- 5.5 Prudential borrowing is the assumed form of funding for this Options Appraisal. Alternative sources of funding, such as leasing, have been considered and evaluated by the project team. As these have been proven to be more costly than Prudential Borrowing over the estimated life of the contract these are not recommended and have not been included in the figures now presented.
- 5.6 The only sale proceeds taken into account in these appraisals are for the disposal for the existing Wyre Forest Glades site.

- 5.7 It is recommended that Option 3 for a New Build to serve the whole district, based on the facility mix set out in 4.1 and preferred site as identified in the Exempt Appendices be approved. This option provides savings of £38,000 pa against the current cost of service provision; however it also represents a saving of £249,000 over the status quo as costs are forecast to increase in the future.
- 5.8 The Financial Appraisal costings are full-year effects and do not allow for the costs of any overlap between continuation of the existing facilities and completion of any New Build. If approval is made to retain existing facilities until the new leisure centre is operational a one-off revenue budget of £350,000 will be required to fund costs of borrowing the majority of which is envisaged for use in 2014/15 of £300,000, with the remaining £50,000 in 2013/14.
- 5.9 The Council will continue to investigate any sources of external funding, such as Sport England which may contribute to a new build.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The current contract with DC Leisure is due to be extended until March 2015, however, no further extension is permitted within the existing contract. A formal procurement exercise would therefore be required to provide a leisure centre management contract at the current centres if required beyond March 2015.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been undertaken and the economic, social and accessibility factors have been identified and will be accounted for in terms of access to any future leisure provision.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 Whilst it is not a statutory requirement to provide leisure centres, these facilities provide valued community assets which improve the quality of life and well being of many residents. The ongoing appraisal project is seeking to achieve a sustainable and affordable option for the future.
- 8.2 The affordability assessment is based on cost estimates and indicative assessments of variables. Actual affordability will depend on the actual outcomes, which could vary significantly, favourably or unfavourably. These can be viewed as risks and opportunities, but they also need to be managed, for instance in terms of stop/go decisions and phasing. Some of the risks/opportunities are detailed below:
- 8.3 Market Risks/Opportunities
- 8.3.1 Build costs – This is a relatively specialist market, and may be prone to significant market fluctuations dependent on supply/demand, the general building market, and the market players.
- 8.3.2 Site values – The specific requirements for the site may mean there is a cost and a delivery risk.

- 8.3.3 Interest rates – Interest rates have fluctuated and are at a period of uncertainty. Similarly the short and long term rate differentials have similar fluctuations. This may present a significant opportunity or threat to the project. A 1% change in interest rates for example would add £10k per £1m of capital expenditure to the interest cost.
- 8.3.4 Management fee – Until the project goes out to competition the management fee for a new build will remain indicative, and subject to market conditions. If Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre has to close earlier than the new centre being open for reasons outlined in 2.2b) there is potential for a loss of client base to transfer to the new centre and therefore a potential contractor may view revenue neutral as being difficult to achieve.

#### 8.4 Delivery Risks/Opportunities

- 8.4.1 Current provision – There are delivery risks and opportunities associated with the current provision. For Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre, a seamless transition to the new facility and sale of the site, could realise the site asset proceeds and minimise other change over costs (such as redundancy, overlap of provision, operational costs, and mothballing), but any project phasing issue will have cost impacts.
- 8.4.2 The Site - The condition, location, remedial/infrastructure requirements and timing of availability is a major risk which cannot be readily assessed until site search and condition assessment is concluded. A significant unknown at this early stage is the costs of highways infrastructure for access to the final site. There is also the risk that the contingency allowance within the New Build costs will prove insufficient and that an additional separate project contingency will be required increasing overall costs.

#### 8.5 Funding Risks/Opportunities

- 8.5.1 Budget settlement – Affordability in the long term will be dependent upon the budget funding available for this service. National budget settlements and economic political issues will impact this.
- 8.5.2 Funding options – Prudential borrowing is the assumed form of funding for this Options Appraisal .

#### 8.6 Economic/Demographic Risks/Opportunities

- a) Price inflation
- b) Demographic changes

### 9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Options 2 and 3 at a preferred site are affordable at current prices, at circa £61k and £38k p.a. under available budget. Although option 4 is likely to be unaffordable compared to current budget, it could be affordable depending on the level of any capital receipts generated.
- 9.2 The new build options are also deemed more affordable than extending the life of current centres. This is primarily because the management fee, repair and maintenance costs are likely to increase, while continued capital investment is required to maintain minimum facility operational standards.

- 9.3 It is concluded that a new build (option 3) would provide the best outcome for the Council on the basis of both affordability and from a strategic leisure perspective. This is reflected in the recommendations which are outlined in section 2 of this report

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 Corporate Management Team/Cabinet.  
10.2 Cabinet Member for Community Well Being.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Cabinet Report 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009.  
Cabinet Report 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011.  
Cabinet Minutes 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011.  
Cabinet report 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011.
- 11.2 Scrutiny Scoping Paper and Scrutiny Meeting Minutes 16<sup>th</sup> March, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011.
- 11.3 Scrutiny review group information.
- 11.4 Consultation results.
- 11.5 Existing Contract with DC Leisure.

## **PROCUREMENT**

### **Contract Options**

There are various contract options available, summarised as follows:

#### **Design – Bid – Build**

This is the traditional construction route where either in-house or appointed architects design the building and specify the exact requirements in the tender documents. The advantage of this option is that the Council would have control over the design. The procurement process is simplified as all contractors are clear of the requirements. The disadvantage and main reason that construction projects have moved towards a Design Build approach is that a large amount of the risk remains with the client. The more detail that is specified the less risk there is for the contractor. This can lead to difficulties in identifying responsibility for faults and to a situation where it is easy for the contractor to blame the Council for design faults.

If the Council were to choose this route for the build of a leisure centre, further arrangements will need to be made for the operation of the service and the on-going maintenance of the building.

#### **Design Build**

The Design Build model puts the responsibility on the contractor to design the building thereby providing the client with a clear point of responsibility. The disadvantage of not being able to specify requirements can be reduced by a well managed procurement exercise. Outline details of requirements would be set out in the tender documents but the detail left to the contractor. As with Design – Bid – Build the Council would need to separately procure a provider of the operation and maintenance services using this model.

#### **Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM)**

This is the option which is recommended for the leisure facility. It builds on the Design Build model by including the operation and maintenance services for a set period following the construction of the building. Giving the contractor responsibility for all functions should provide a more cohesive solution and is more likely to achieve a service which is independent of revenue subsidy. Through the design and build the contractor should be able to incorporate efficiencies and elements to the building and services on offer to give the best chance of making the operation economically viable.

A feature of DBOM is that the management of the facility returns to the client after a specified period of time, for example 25 years. The operator would be required to maintain the building throughout this period.

Whilst the ideal scenario is that all risks transfer to the contractor, Members should be aware that the final outcome (following the tender process) may be that the Council adopts some ongoing risk to ensure the capital payment or any revenue subsidy is within budget.

### **Procurement Options**

Members will be aware that the value of the proposed contract for the design, build, operation and maintenance is over the EU Threshold and the Council is therefore required to follow one of the procedures set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. The main element of the work is the build; the Works threshold of £4.3m therefore applies. The procurement options available are:

#### **Open**

This procedure allows anyone interested in the contract to submit a tender. It is not felt that this is a suitable route for this project due to the potential number of contractors and the officer time it would take to evaluate these.

#### **Restricted**

The restricted route allows the Council to limit the number of tenders by conducting a pre-qualification questionnaire to assess the financial standing and previous experience of contractors before they are asked to submit their tender. With both the Open and Restricted route negotiation is not permitted, once tenders are received only clarification discussions are permitted. It is therefore essential that the specification within the tender documents is clear enough to ensure tenders provide workable solutions.

#### **Competitive Dialogue**

This process provides an alternative option to the Negotiated procedure. With Competitive Dialogue tenderers submit an initial bid and then enter a period of dialogue with the authority to allow the authority to input into their bid and for them to create a solution which meets the authority's needs. Unlike the negotiated procedure which focuses on the 'preferred bidder' more than one tenderer enters the dialogue (usually three) so the competition element remains throughout the process. Once the authority is satisfied that at least one of the bids can provide a satisfactory solution it calls an end to the dialogue and the tenderers must all submit a final tender. Following this point all dialogue ends and the authority evaluates the tenders in the usual way (evaluation criteria must be established at the outset of the process).

This procedure can only be used where the authority is unable to define the technical means, the financial make-up or the legal make-up of the contract and where the restricted and open procurement route would not allow the award of the contract.

### **Negotiated**

The Public Contracts Regulations only allow use of the negotiated procedure in very limited circumstances. It is not felt that this procedure is available for use in this project.

In summary therefore the two procurement routes available are the Restricted Procedure (RP) and the Competitive Dialogue Procedure (CD). The pros and cons of both are set out in the table below:

	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<b>Restricted Procedure</b>	Shorter timeframe than CD. On average a RP can be completed within 6 to 9 months.	The Specification and Contract Terms need to be finalised at outset of the procedure, intensifying time input in initial stages
	The cost of external project management and legal advice would be significantly less than the CD route.  Estimate £180k for legal and project costs	Once tender received no negotiations are permitted leaving the choice of accepting a tender or starting the process again.
	Provided a proper procedure is followed the risk of a challenge under this route likely to be less than CD.	The process is fairly rigid potentially leading to a less competitive price than CD.
	Some flexibility for innovation available by allowing an alternative bid. This allows the tenderer to move away from the specification and provide an alternative option to their main proposal. Any such proposal would need to be evaluated using the set evaluation criteria.	Any alternative bid is set as proposed by the tenderer and again negotiation is not permitted.



**Agenda Item No. 9.1**  
**Appendix 3**

<b>Competitive Dialogue</b>	The process allows dialogue with tenderers for the Council to input into their proposals increasing the chances of satisfaction with the final result.	The timeframe is longer than RP, it is estimated that the process would add from 4 to 6 months to the timetable. This could be longer if there are not sufficient resources available to adequately manage and focus the dialogue.
	Because of the flexibility of the dialogue there is the potential that the cost of the contract could be driven down through the process.	The costs of external project management and legal advice would be significantly higher than RP. The dialogue allows the commercial terms to be discussed as well as the tender and it is likely this would lead to a need for significant legal input.  Estimate £355k for legal and project management costs
		The cost for tenderers of preparing the tender and going through the CD process is high which could impact on the price of the contract. In addition, the unsuccessful tenderers will have invested significant resources into their tenders and there is an increased risk of challenge.
		There is a requirement to legally justify the use of the procedure as 'particularly complex' and that the contract could not be awarded under the RP.

It is felt that there is sufficient clarity as to the Council's requirements of the build and management that the contract could be awarded by using the Restricted Procedure.

**Recommendations**

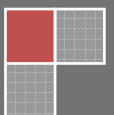
That upon the acquisition of a site the Director of Legal and Corporate Services and the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Community and Partnership Services, commence the procurement exercise using the restricted procedure for a Design Build Operate Maintain contract for the build and operation of the proposed leisure centre.

2011

**Stourport**  
  
**Forward**

**STOURPORT SPORTS CENTRE  
COMMUNITY ASSET  
TRANSFER VIABILITY REPORT  
Part 2 - For Wyre Forest DC**

Ken Watkins  
KW Associates  
22/12/2011



## **2.1) Executive Summary – part 2**

### **Purpose**

2.1.1 This report has been commissioned by Wyre Forest District Council to investigate and provide information for the viability of a potential Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of Stourport Sports Centre from Wyre Forest District Council to a Community Management Vehicle.

2.1.2 Following an earlier report from KW Associates for Stourport Forward Facilities Project Board one recommendation was to consult further with relevant potential partners giving additional sports groups the opportunity to be involved in the management of a community sports facility.

2.1.3 This report highlights the outcomes of interviews and discussions with groups and associations, not previously included in formal consultation regarding the opportunity for community management of Stourport Sports Centre and further examines the positions of groups initially involved with the original viability review.

2.1.4 This report should be read as an addition to and in conjunction with the original Sports Centre Asset Transfer Viability report dated 20/07/2011 produced for Stourport Forward.

### **2.2 Report Conclusions**

2.2.1 Conclusions have been formed through various discussions with local bodies and groups to ascertain the actual commitment to undertaking an asset transfer of the sports centre.

2.2.2 A selection of the findings is shown below with the full list of conclusions contained within the main body of the report in section 2.8:-

2.2.3 Seven Groups have been interviewed during this process of which all seven have confirmed that they will not be pursuing an interest in community management of the sports centre.

2.2.4 There are no financial implications regarding a CAT to report.

### **2.3 Report Recommendations**

2.3.1 Following this further investigation into the viability of a CAT of the Stourport Sports Centre there are no community groups, clubs or associations interested in progressing such a management transfer.

2.3.2 It is recommended, that Wyre Forest District Council continue to progress its plans for a new leisure facility keeping to their existing timeframe with regard to options for design and appropriate financial modelling.

2.3.3 Setting key decision milestones within the planning timeframe for a new district facility will allow for decisions to be made without the influence of a community asset transfer and its financial impact.

2.3.4 However, Wyre Forest District Council will need to make a final decision on the future of the Sports Centre following the decision to extend the current management operators contract until such time as a new facility is delivered. This decision will have a financial implication, but not with the same financial impact as if a CAT was to take place.

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## 2.5) Background

2.5.1 The initial viability report dated 20/07/2011 examined a number of elements which demonstrated the feasibility for potential transfer to community management and included the following key issues;

- a) Condition of the facility and capital expenditure required to ensure the facility is fit for purpose, detailing essential plant and equipment requirements
- b) Income and expenditure performance plus addendum
- c) Statistical usage information
- d) Staffing and volunteer operational support structure
- e) Current management operator DC Leisure position with regard to Community Asset Transfer
- f) Potential funding support
- g) Understanding of Sport England West Midlands position with financial legacy support for Stourport

2.5.2 Attention is drawn again to the understanding of the sensitive nature that prevails around existing user groups, the community in general, the employees of DC Leisure and the company's commercial sensitivities and is intended to compliment and finalise the current cultural options review being undertaken by Wyre Forest District Council with regards to new sports and leisure provision.

2.5.3 Reminder: It is important to remember that a feasibility process is just that - to see if a project is feasible - and it may not be! It will have to consider carefully if the asset to be transferred is a risk, a liability or has potential to progress and potential to attract funding. The important thing is not to pursue a hopeless cause and try to balance being optimistic with being realistic and prudent and focus on answering the following questions:

- Is the project desirable?
- Can the project be accomplished?
- Is the project viable?

2.5.4 Community sports organisations should not allow external pressures to force them into agreeing to something if they are not convinced of a project's potential to be viable and manageable.

2.5.5 Current policy guidance from Government via the Department of Communities and Local Government encourages the transfer of property assets to the third sector where clear community benefits can be identified. Any such course of action would however need to be rigorously evaluated and scrutinised in terms of value for money, long term community benefits and the risk to both transfer parties.

2.5.6 A full business case must be submitted by the third sector organisation in support of its proposal to transfer assets to the third sector.

2.5.7 The Council will not guarantee to provide additional funding to the third sector organisation, except as part of an agreed contract for service provision.

2.5.8 The Council will not accept responsibility for the running of the facility if the third sector organisation should fail or go into administration/insolvency.

2.5.9 If transfer is by way of a lease, the Council will be entitled to recover possession of the property should the third sector organisation go into administration/insolvency or be in material breach of the terms of the lease. If freehold transfer is contemplated, similar forms of safeguard such as a covenant or other restriction on use may be applied.

2.5.10 Reporting timeframe has been time constrained to a completion for end December 2011

## **2.6) Introduction**

2.6.1 Following the initial report commissioned by Stourport Forward regarding the viability of asset transfer within the community of the sports centre, Wyre Forest DC wished to expand the investigation to all clubs and associations with the potential ability and willingness to take on such a scheme.

2.6.2 Wyre Forest DC is very supportive of Stourport Forward and its sub group The Facilities Project Management Group in the progression of the government pilot scheme for the introduction of Community Management of public assets. They continue to be transparent and responsive in this support giving additional opportunity to potential groups, independent of Stourport Forward, to investigate the possibility of transferring assets into community management and should be applauded for their forward thinking.

2.6.3 The transfer of assets will reduce maintenance and management costs to the Council, enable community organisations to support public service delivery, offer a base for neighbourhood based service delivery, as well as contribute to the Council's community leadership role.

2.6.4 The report provides information on the potential commitment from community groups and partnerships to take on the challenge of asset transfer through community management.

2.6.5 Five additional sports groups have been interviewed during this process (detailed below in 2.11 Consultation) as well as the current sports centre leisure management operator, Wyre Forest Swimming Club, Stourport High School and the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Partnership Director.

2.6.6 It was felt necessary to ascertain the nature and type of support and policies that may be in place by those who could influence and support a potential transfer.

2.6.7 It is fair to say that the organisations involved in the original report have had further time to explore their positions and gain a better understanding of the effect of a CAT for their organisation.

2.6.8 Groups interviewed in this second phase of viability have needed to come up to speed in a much shorter timeframe and have responded quickly in the knowledge required to understand how such a scheme could affect their memberships and operations.

2.6.9 The viability report and group discussion approach focused all parties on identifying and managing the potential risks prior to and not after transfer and therefore should a potential management vehicle arise time should be given to allow such a group to develop its plans to fruition. Only then can an informed decision be made by the community group as to whether to progress its interest into actual plan.

## **2.7) Key Findings**

2.7.1 The outcomes of consultation undertaken in regards to pursuing community management of the sports centre are detailed below and will form the report conclusions and recommendations.

2.7.2 Details of particular outcomes of each individual club, association or organisation will not be exposed to public scrutiny. The sensitivities of reason and forward plans of each organisation must be respected and as such only a top line outcome will be produced.

2.7.3 The Stourport High School having fully considered their position and future plans for the school will not be entering into community asset transfer of Stourport Sports Centre.

2.7.4 The Stourport Sports Association (SSA) having fully discussed the potential for community management are content with their current partnership with Wyre Forest DC, which runs to 2072 and will not be furthering their interest in CAT management.

2.7.5 The Stourport Boat Club is a member of The SSA and will not pursue independent interest on their own behalf.

2.7.6 The Stourport Cricket Club is a member of The SSA and will not pursue independent interest on their own behalf.

2.7.7 The Stourport Swifts Football Club is a member of The SSA and will not pursue independent interest on their own behalf.

2.7.8 The Stourport Rugby Club is a member of The SSA and will not pursue independent interest on their own behalf.

2.7.9 The Wyre Forest Swimming Club will not be furthering their interest in a community asset transfer of the sports centre.

2.7.9.1 The Swimming Club feel that the current building liabilities are too great a risk to undertake and to their credit were concerned that any expenditure required to support the aging facility would result in reduced facilities being provided in a proposed new leisure facility currently being financially modelled and designed by the Council. Additionally;

2.7.9.2 The Wyre Forest Swimming Club will support a new build leisure facility and have detailed their desired design provision as an 8 lane 25m swimming pool, competitive timing equipment provision that is a non permanent fixture, but that can be installed for competition only,

teaching/warm down pool and spectator gallery provision of 300 seats, officials poolside facility to include positioning of electronic timing and PC equipment.

2.7.9.3 The Club's minimum requirement for provision would be a 6 lane 25m pool, electronic timing equipment, 200 spectators seating and officials room adjacent to poolside.

2.7.9.4 The Club will also provide to Council Officers a summary of their aspiration for the future of the club, numbers of members, their ages, standard of competence and the levels of competition and leagues currently performing within around the region and nationally.

2.7.10 The Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire is an alliance of the eight Local Authorities and two Primary Care Trusts of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, University of Worcester, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport. They have been established to be the strategic lead for Sport & Physical Activity across the two counties and their primary focus is around increasing participation. They are funded by contributions from the key partners and act on behalf of the partnership to maximise investment from other sources into the area. The organisation is not an operator of facilities.

2.7.10.1 The Partnership Director has indicated his support to any community body that achieves a transfer by way of training and coach development. They do not give grant funding but will help link to funding initiatives as appropriate. The Sports Partnership will endeavour to support a CAT as far as they are able to through training, development of club supporting structures, linkage to Governing Bodies, legislation and Government funding initiatives.

2.7.11 Current leisure management operator, DC Leisure Business Development Director was interviewed (via the telephone) with regard to potential company direction and involvement should a CAT of the sports centre take place. Attached below is a statement received from The BD Director, Mr Tim Hewett;

"DC Leisure (DCL) has commented on the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) at paragraph 5.5 of the initial report produced for Stourport Forward Facilities project Board, which clearly sets out its position. DCL acknowledges that CAT is still in its infancy, and whilst these types of transfers may work in other sectors, leisure facility management is fraught with operational issues, health and safety obligations, legislation, financial and property risks. The public leisure management contractors/sector including DCL is now highly professionalised and experienced to meet these challenges/issues. DCL has invested significantly into its Management Support structure which means that we are able to support our Staff on site in every facet of leisure management. It is these resources and expertise that enables us to deliver a high quality and viable leisure service. In addition, with the significant amount of capital investment we have made in facilities, ICT and the training and development of our Staff, this means that we are in a strong position to meet the challenges that this ever changing industry/market presents."

"DCL operates three facilities on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council and receives a significant level of subsidy to offset the pricing structure, programming, opening hours, specification outputs and contractual requirements dictated by the Council. DCL would only be interested in operating the Stourport Leisure Centre if the revenue subsidy required to meet its contractual obligations and financial objective/viability was guaranteed as currently."

"DCL may be in a position to help a potential community management vehicle by providing various support services and access to its highly regarded Quality Management Systems. In addition there

may be an opportunity for DCL to provide management support to ensure that the CAT is successful in achieving its objectives. However, for the CAT to be successful and viable, long term funding is required particularly if they are to take on full repairing and insurance responsibilities for what is an ageing facility.”

“DCL remains willing to discuss future options should the CAT of Stourport Sports Centre go forward.”

## **2.8) Conclusions (inc financial implications)**

2.8.1 Following further interviews and investigations with Stourport Sports Clubs, Associations and High School it is clear from the findings above that there is no appetite for the progression of a community asset transfer within the community.

2.8.2 The groups interviewed represented the most likely associations to have the management ability to progress such a transfer.

2.8.3 At this stage of the viability report there are no financial implications to report.

2.8.4 Financial implications of a new facility arising from the design requirements of the Wyre Forest Swimming Club will be modelled into future options for design as a new project progresses. This report has not been requested to provide such information.

2.8.5 It must be said that Wyre Forest District Council is fully responsive to the concept of asset transfer from within the community and expressed its desire to support any such group to achieve their goals. The effect of requested financial support and the sustainability of a potential management vehicle business plan will not now be subject to financial planning decisions through the democratic process in place at Wyre Forest District Council.

## **2.9) Recommendations**

2.9.1 There is no viable option available to progress a CAT of Stourport Sports Centre

2.9.2 There will be no financial implications arising from a CAT and as such Wyre Forest District Council should proceed with the option to develop, solely, a new leisure facility within its district.

2.9.3 It is recommended that Wyre Forest District Council continue to progress its plans for a new leisure facility keeping to their existing timeframe with regard to options for design and appropriate financial modelling.

2.9.4 Setting key decision milestones within the planning timeframe for a new district facility will allow for decisions to be made without the influence of a community asset transfer and its financial impact on financial calculations, design and effect on fiscal borrowing.

2.9.4 Finally, Wyre Forest District Council will need to make a final decision on the future of the Sports Centre following the decision to extend the current management operators contract until such time as a new facility is delivered. This decision will have a financial implication, but not with the same financial impact as if a CAT was to take place.



## **2.10) Acknowledgements and background papers**

2.10.1 The following material has been used in reference whilst compiling this report;

Sport England Community Asset Toolkit

The Development Trust Association – To Have and to Hold, a guide to community asset development

The Asset Transfer Unit – Performance in Public Services

2.10.2 The report author would like to thank all people involved for their time and quick responses to meeting requests and information provision.

## **2.11) Consultation**

The following people, groups and bodies have been consulted during the process of compiling this report and their time and contribution is very much appreciated;

Kay Higman	Culture Services Manager Wyre Forest District Council
Liz Quinn	Head Teacher Stourport High School
Mike Humphreys	Deputy Head (Growth) Stourport High School
Diane Magee	Head of Finance and Administration Stourport High School
Steve Brewster	Director Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Partnership
Peter Barnett	Chairman Wyre Forest Swimming Club
Becki Rowley	Wyre Forest Swimming Club
John McDonald	Secretary Stourport Sports Association (SSA)
Andy Hough	Chairman Stourport Boat Club (Member SSA)
Julian Farmer	Stourport Rugby Club (Member SSA)
James Cook	Stourport Cricket Club (Member SSA)
Chris Reynolds	Chairman Stourport Swifts FC (Member SSA)
Tim Hewett	Business Development Director DC Leisure

## **2.12) Appendices**

None

## **2.13) Report Author**

The author of this report is Ken Watkins FCIMSPA; Inst. Mangt. Dip of KW Associates and can be contacted by Mobile: 07854 147 326 Phone: 01384 442211 Email: [kenwatkins59@msn.com](mailto:kenwatkins59@msn.com)

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**  
**31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2012**

**Write Off of Sundry Debtor Amounts Outstanding**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	Stronger Communities
<b>CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:</b>	Delivering Together with Less
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor J-P Campion
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	Director of Resources
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	David Buckland Ext. 2100 david.buckland@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	None

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To enable the Cabinet to give consideration to writing off the sum of £12,723.80 in respect of Oldington and Foley Park Community Network.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:**

- 2.1 **That the total of £12,723.80 relating to outstanding Sundry Debt for Oldington and Foley Park Community Network be written off.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Financial Regulation 9.7 authorises the Director of Resources to write off individual debts up to the value, in each case, of £1,500.00. The Cabinet is authorised to write off debts in excess of that figure.
- 3.2 The Constitution, under Responsibility for Functions (Non Cabinet) and Scheme of Delegation then authorises the Director of Resources to write off debts up to £10,000 for any individual account, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources for amounts between £5,000 and £10,000.
- 3.3 Due to the involvement of the Cabinet Member for Resources in the Network, he has not been involved in the preparation of this report.
- 3.4 Oldington & Foley Park Network is no longer operating and there is no likelihood of the debt being settled. It is therefore necessary for consideration to be given to the write off of this debt.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 Procedures are in place to ensure that Sundry Debtors debts are recovered as efficiently and effectively as possible. Debts are put for write off only as a last resort.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This debt will be written off against the Provision for Bad Debts; this provision is reviewed annually and any increase or reduction reflected against Corporate Costs.

**6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None.

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 This is a financial report and there is no requirement to consider an Equality Impact Needs Assessment.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 There are no risk management issues relating to this report.

**9. CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 The Sundry/Property Debt position is subject to detailed scrutiny and monitoring. Action is taken to recover monies as speedily and efficiently as possible.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 Legal and Corporate Services.  
10.2 Corporate Management Team.  
10.3 Leader of the Council.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Request for write-off from Director of Community and Partnership Services.

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**  
**31<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2012**

**Pay Policy Statement**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	Stronger Communities
<b>CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY:</b>	Delivering Together, with Less
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor N J Desmond
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	Director of Legal & Corporate Services
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Ann-Marie Lockley, Ext. 2773 annmarie@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Appendix 1 - Pay Policy Statement

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Cabinet of the requirement in the Localism Act 2011 for the Council to adopt a pay policy statement.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that:**

- 2.1.1 The pay policy statement in the appendix is adopted for the financial year 2012-13 and each subsequent financial year (until it is amended by Council);**

- 2.1.2 The delegations to the Appointments and Appeals Committee be amended in line with the pay policy statement;**

- 2.1.3 The policy statement on the exercise of the Council's powers under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 be approved.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act requires English and Welsh local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement ('the statement'). The Act requires the statement to range over disparate aspects of remuneration policy.

- 3.2 The statement must set out policies relating to—

- (a) the remuneration of its chief officers,
- (b) the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees, and
- (c) the relationship between—
  - (i) the remuneration of its chief officers, and
  - (ii) the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

- 3.3 The statement must state the definition of “lowest-paid employees” and the authority’s reasons for adopting that definition.
- 3.4 The statement must include policies relating to—
- (a) the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer,
  - (b) remuneration of chief officers on recruitment,
  - (c) increases and additions to remuneration for each chief officer,
  - (d) the use of performance-related pay for chief officers,
  - (e) the use of bonuses for chief officers,
  - (f) the approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under or to be employed by the authority, and
  - (g) the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of chief officers.
- 3.5 The statement is required to be approved by full council, and the statement must be adopted before 31 March for the financial year 2012-13. Section 41 of the 2011 Act provides that the council must comply with its pay policy statement in determining the remuneration of a chief officer. The definition of “chief officer” in the Act is much wider than the Corporate Management Team and includes deputy chief officers as defined in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 i.e. managerial staff who report to chief officers.
- 3.6 The provisions within the Localism Act bring together the strands of increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of local pay. Linked to this statement therefore is the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency which was published in September 2011. The Council complies with that guidance through the Council website under [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/resources/transparency.aspx](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/resources/transparency.aspx).

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 In large part, the statement draws together factual material and reiteration of extant policy. There are some new elements which are explicitly mentioned here.
- 4.2 The draft statement clarifies that the Appointments and Appeals Committee takes decisions on remuneration of directors and chief executive on recruitment, within the parameters of the policy (paragraph 11) and that it take decisions on any compromise agreements (paragraph 19). Council’s formal agreement to these delegations will be required.
- 4.3 The policy statement has been drafted with a view to not having to update it every year, for example because of annual pay increases. In order also to provide some leeway for the Appointments and Appeals Committee in undertaking recruitment, the pay for the most senior posts is stated as falling within a pay range (see paragraph 9). This does not undermine the current arrangements of spot pay but allows the Council

flexibility to make some adjustments in future without the need to have to amend its pay policy statement.

- 4.3 The relationship between the pay of chief officers as defined in the Act and staff who are not chief officers is set out as a pay multiple (paragraph 16). The pay policy statement also includes a policy about the maximum multiple the Council would operate.
- 4.4 The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 require the council to adopt a written statement of policy about the exercise of discretions under the regulations. The regulations provide powers for councils to make payments to individuals who suffer an injury or die as a result of work. The payments are outside those available in the Local Government Pension Scheme and have to be funded by councils, not by the pension scheme. The Council has not made any such payments in the past. For staff who are members of the local government pension scheme, there are arrangements for pensions to be paid in the case of ill-health (whatever the cause) and for death grants. Staff who choose not to join the pension scheme can make their own arrangements for life insurance or insurance for loss of earnings. Where any member of staff suffers an injury or death as a result of the Council's actions, a claim can be made against the Council's insurance. Having regard to these factors, the recommendation is that the Council's written policy should maintain past practice and that, normally, no payments would be made under the 2011 regulations (paragraph 18).
- 4.5 In adopting the policy statement, the Council will need to have regard to any guidance issued under section 40 of the 2011 Act. While draft guidance has been issued for consultation, at the time of preparation of this report the guidance has not been finalised and issued. If the guidance is confirmed, there are two matters that are drawn to members' attention. The draft guidance says that pay policy statements should explain policies towards the reward of former chief officers who received a severance or redundancy payment and are later engaged as chief officers under a contract for service; and also policies about chief officers who are already in receipt of a local government pension. It is not considered necessary to include provisions on these matters as the Council does not employ chief officers in these circumstances. The draft guidance also says that the statement can include information on policies of pay of staff working for external contractors. This goes outside the terms of the legislation, which relates to employees of the council (not employees of other bodies) and therefore no provision has been included in the statement.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposals are necessary to comply with the 2011 Act.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An impact assessment has been carried out and there is no adverse impact.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 No significant risks have been identified from the adoption of the Statement.

**9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 This Statement meets the statutory requirements of the Localism Act and is commended to members for consideration and adoption.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 Corporate Management Team.  
10.2 Senior Consultation Group - meets 23<sup>rd</sup> January: any comments will be reported orally.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Localism Act 2011 Sections 38 – 43.  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/1/chapter/8/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/1/chapter/8/enacted)
- 11.2 Draft statutory guidance in respect of pay policy statements.  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/draftguidancelocalpay>
- 11.3 Code of recommended practice on data transparency.  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/transparencycode>
- 11.4 The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011.  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/2954/contents/made>

Appendix

**DRAFT**

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

**Introduction**

- 1 This pay policy statement under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 shall apply for the financial year 2012-13 and each subsequent financial year, until amended.
- 2 The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees by identifying;
  - the methods by which remuneration of all employees are determined, including the remuneration of its most senior staff;
  - the arrangements for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council.

**The Council's policies for setting remuneration**

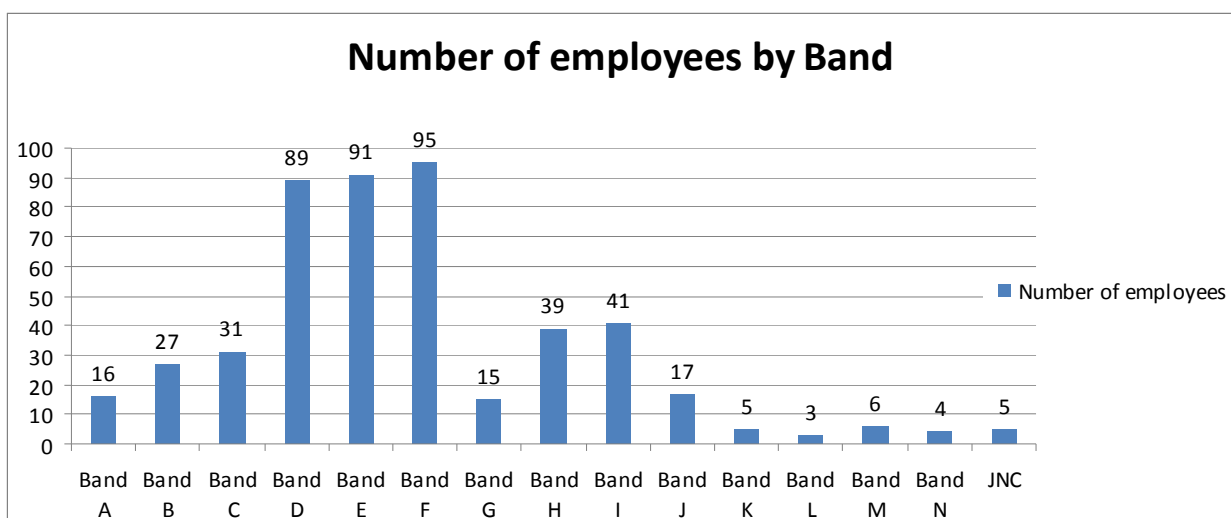
- 3 In determining its grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community, delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.
- 4 With the exception of JNC Chief Officers and the Chief Executive, the Council uses the nationally negotiated pay spine as the basis for its local grading structure. The grade of a post is determined by application of an agreed Job Evaluation process. The value of scale points changes in line with national agreements, including any "cost of living" increases. At the time of preparation of this policy, there have been no such increases in the national pay spine since April 2009.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Salary Band (value at time of preparation of this statement)</b>	<b>NJC Scale points</b>
BAND A	£12,145 to £12,489	4-6
BAND B	£12,787 to £13,874	7-10
BAND C	£14,733 to £15,444	11-13
BAND D	£15,725 to £16,830	14-17
BAND E	£17,161 to £19,126	18-21
BAND F	£19,621 to £21,519	22-25
BAND G	£22,221 to £23,708	26-28
BAND H	£24,646 to £26,276	29-31
BAND I	£27,052 to £30,011	32-36
BAND J	£30,851 to £33,661	37-40
BAND K	£34,549 to £36,313	41-43
BAND L	£37,206 to £38,961	44-46
BAND M	£39,855 to £41,616	47-49
BAND N	£42,543 to £44,404	50-52



- 5 All other pay-related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having been determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery and/or as determined by Council Policy.
- 6 New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade, although this can be varied where necessary to secure the best candidate. From time to time it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where possible, the Council will ensure the requirement for such approaches is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.
- 7 There are a number of pay points within each band. For staff not on the highest point within the band, there is a system of annual progression to the next point on the band, subject to satisfactory performance. Faster progression is possible under the Council's policy on merit increments.
- 8 With regard to the equal pay requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the Council ensures there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of equality proofed Job Evaluation mechanisms which directly relate salaries to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.
- 9 For JNC Chief Officers and the Chief Executive, the Council uses spot pay rates. They are increased in line with any national agreement for JNC Chief Officers and Chief Executives about "cost of living increases". At the time of preparation of this policy, there have been no such increases since April 2008. In order to provide some flexibility in future decisions about recruitment or adjustments to pay of serving staff without the need to amend this policy statement, the statement sets a range within which salary for these posts will fall.

Grade	Range	Spot pay rate (value at time of preparation of this statement)
JNC CHIEF OFFICER	£70,000 - £80,000	£71,920
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	£100,000 - £110,000	£106,500



## **Chief officers**

- 10 The definition of “chief officer” in section 43 of the Localism Act means that it includes many posts falling within the main pay scales. At the time of preparation of this statement, they include posts that range from Band H to Band N (although not all employees in those bands fall within the definition of “chief officers”).
- 11 The Council’s policy and procedures with regard to recruitment of chief officers are set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Section 13 of the Council’s Constitution. The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed chief officer will be in accordance with this pay policy statement and other relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment. In the case of recruitment of JNC Chief Officers and the Chief Executive, the decision on remuneration will be taken by the Appointments and Appeals Committee. Where the Council is unable to recruit to a post at the designated grade, it will consider the use of temporary market forces supplements in accordance with its relevant policies.
- 12 Where the Council remains unable to recruit chief officers under a contract of service, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a vacant substantive chief officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider engaging individuals under ‘contracts for service’. These will be sourced through a relevant procurement process ensuring the council is able to demonstrate value for money from competition in securing the relevant service.

## **Additional payments**

- 13 In addition to the basic salary for the post, staff are or may be eligible for other payments under the Council’s existing policies. Some of these payments are chargeable to UK Income Tax and do not solely constitute reimbursement of expenses incurred in the fulfillment of duties:
  - reimbursement of mileage. At the time of preparation of this statement, the Council pays an allowance of 40p per mile for all staff, with additional or alternative payments for carrying passengers or using a bicycle;
  - professional fees. The Council pays for or reimburses the cost of one practicing certificate fee or membership of a professional organisation provided it is relevant to the post that an employee occupies within the Council. This is relevant to some chief officers;
  - long service awards. The Council pays staff an additional amount if they have completed 20 years of service. This is available only to staff on incremental pay Bands A to N;
  - honoraria, in accordance with the Council’s policy on salary and grading. Generally, these may be paid only where a member of staff has performed a role at a higher grade;

- Fees for returning officer and other electoral duties, such as acting as a presiding officer of a polling station. These are fees which are identified and paid separately for local government elections, elections to the UK Parliament and EU Parliament and other electoral processes such as referenda;
- Pay protection – where a member of staff is placed in a new post and the grade is below that of their previous post, for example as a result of a restructuring, pay protection at the level of their previous post is paid for the first 12 months. In exceptional circumstance pay protection can be applied for greater than 12 months with the prior approval of the Chief Executive.

### **Performance-related pay and bonuses**

- 14 The Council does not operate a scheme of performance-related pay or bonuses for its staff.

### **Lowest-Paid Employees**

- 15 The Council's definition of lowest-paid employees is people employed in Band A of the Council's grading structure. This is because it is the lowest pay band operated by the Council for permanent staff who are not undergoing an apprenticeship. From time to time, the Council employs apprentices who are paid at a rate lower than Band A.

### **Relationship between remuneration of chief officers and remuneration of employees who are not chief officers**

- 16 The pay levels within the Council define the multiple between the median salary of staff who are not chief officers and the average chief officer. At the time of preparation of this policy statement, the ratio was 1:2.1 meaning that the average chief officer was paid 2.1 times more than the average member of staff who are not chief officers. The Council's policy is that this ratio should remain at or below 1:3.

### **Payments on termination etc.**

- 17 The Council's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment is set out within its Redundancy Policy which includes the written statement in accordance with regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006. At the time of preparation of this policy statement, the policy is:
- to pay statutory redundancy payments in accordance with the Employment Relations Act 1998, which provides for a maximum calculation of up to 30 weeks' pay. The payment will be based on an employee's actual weekly salary rather than the figure set by the Government;
  - not to make discretionary lump sum payments or to make payment in lieu of notice in cases of termination of employment.
- 18 The Council's policy is normally not to make any awards under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011: this constitutes its written policy statement under the regulations.

- 19 The Council's decisions on use of powers to enter any compromise agreement under section 203 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 will be taken by the Appointments and Appeals Committee.

**Publication of information**

- 20 This statement will be published on the Council's Website [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk)
- 21 In accordance with regulation 7 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, for posts where the remuneration in a year is £50,000 or more, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts will include a note setting out the total amount of
- salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable by the person in the current and previous year;
  - any bonuses so paid or receivable by the person in the current and previous year;
  - any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax;
  - any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination;
  - any benefits received that do not fall within the above

The statement of accounts is available on the Council's website.

- 22 The Council also publishes information about remuneration of the Chief Executive, JNC Chief Officers and staff in the transparency section of its website.  
[www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/resources/transparency.aspx](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/resources/transparency.aspx)  
This information is updated from time to time and includes a list of "chief officers" as defined in the Localism Act 2011.