

THE FURZE VISION DOCUMENT

On behalf of

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

The purpose of this document is to provide a strategy for the promotion, planning and delivery of a site in Layer de la Haye, known as 'The Furze' ('the site').

This document has been prepared by Walsh and Associates Limited on behalf of The Furze Partnership and in conjunction with Ceres Property. The document highlights how we envisage the potential for the site to support a residential development of around 5 new homes in the context of the surrounding village and other development.

It is anticipated that the proposals will evolve through engagement with Colchester City Council and other key stakeholders, including Layer de la Haye Parish Council, together with further technical work to be undertaken by our expert team of consultants.

1.2 Document Structure

Section 1: Introduction

Describes the purpose of the document, content and scope.

Section 2: Site

Characteristics of the site and description of the development.

Section 3: Context

An assessment of the area's history, character, transport links and facilities that inform the design process.

Section 4: Technical

Review of technical information available for the site, culminating in a combined opportunities and constraints plan.

Section 5: Masterplan

Setting out the vision process, explaining the concept and design principles before introducing the masterplan.

Section 6: Conclusion

Justify and confirm why the site is available, suitable and deliverable and should be considered for development.



Satellite view of Site

2. Site

2.1 The Site

The site is located on the eastern side of Layer de la Haye. It sits to the west of The Folley, which is a 30mph road running North to South, connecting the B1026 with Abberton Road. The three roads form a triangle which comprises the majority of the residential development within the village.

The site measures 0.66 hectares. The site is currently vacant but maintains a gated access from The Folley. The site is bounded to the north by a public right of way, beyond which is a single residential dwelling. To the south, the site is bounded by a further single residential dwelling. To the west, the site is bounded the The Folley, which also has a ribbon of residential development. To the east is a residential development site which is currently under construction.

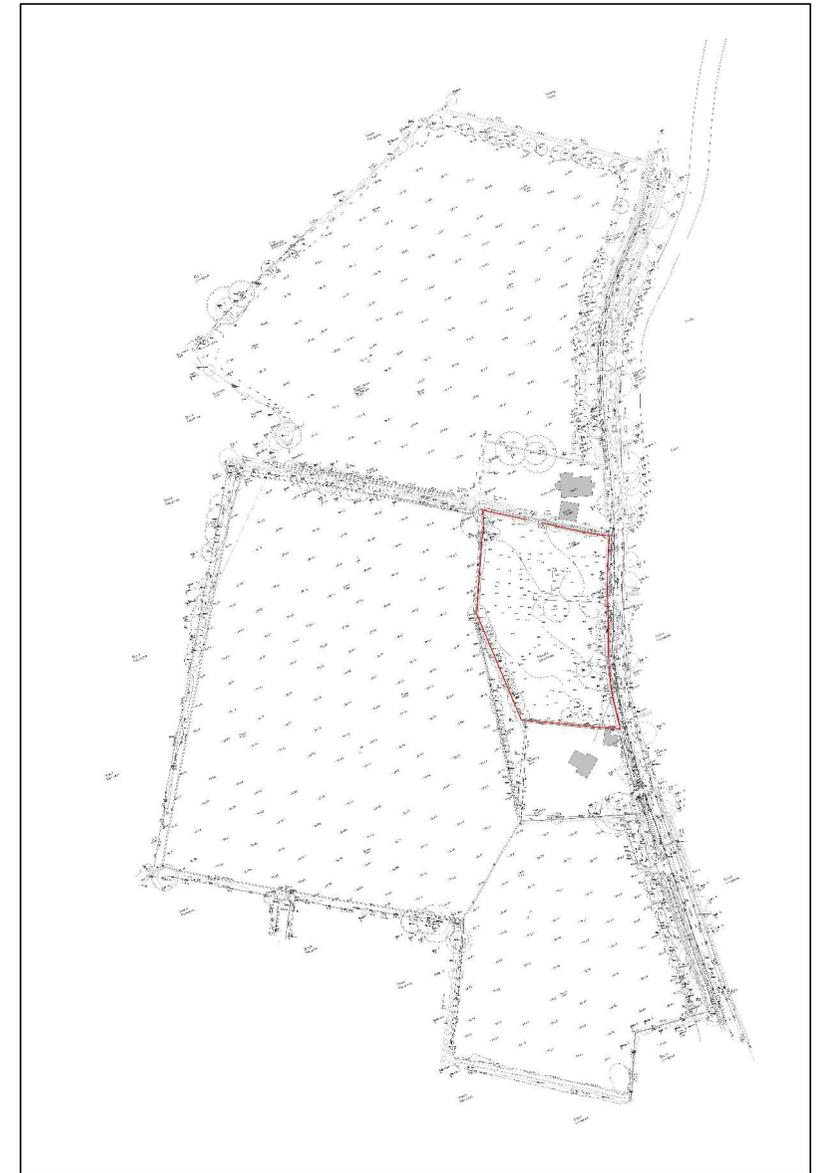
Key features of the site include:

- Trees and hedgerows which bound all sides of the site.
- The site is generally fairly level but slopes up from the north to the south.
- Views of the site from the road are restricted by dense hedgerow and mature trees.

Previously, the site was occupied by a single residential dwelling which was constructed in the 1930s.

There have been a number of planning applications for the site as follows:

- K/COL/04/1512 – 10.08.2004 – Proposed Access – Application Refused
- F/COL/051627 – 04.10.2005 - Form road entrance in front of gates already erected – Application Permitted
- 110592 – 29.03.2011 - Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and provision of new replacement dwelling including garaging and car port, landscaping and modify existing access – Refused and Appeal Dismissed
- 111611 – 26.08.2011 - Revised planning application for the provision of a new replacement dwelling including garage and car port, landscaping and modify existing access. (Resubmission of planning application 110592) – Application Refused
- 130686 – 04.04.2013 – Replacement Dwelling – Application Permitted



Site Location Plan

2. Site

2.2 Planning Context

The Colchester City Local Plan 2017-2033 comprises of two sections. The first provides a shared strategic policy context and addresses cross boundary matters for North Essex. The second part of the Plan provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the Borough up to 2033. This was adopted by Colchester Borough Council in 2022.

Colchester is a diverse and growing borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next fifteen years the Borough will face many challenges, such as population growth and change, and the need for more sustainable transportation. The Local Plan addresses these challenges to meet the needs of current future generations while also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

The Local Plan considers Layer de la Haye as a sustainable settlement and suitable for additional residential growth.

The land to the south of the site was identified for residential growth. The plan states that this site is in a location which integrates well with the existing settlement by utilising existing screening features and new open space can be delivered without detrimental impact on neighbouring residents and the surrounding landscape.

The adjacent rural exception site was brought forward as a part of the approved masterplan for this area. The application references for these approvals are 211392 and 211393. Reserved matters was approved in July 2024 for 70 dwellings (application ref. 231600).

The proposed site would provide infill development between the new development site currently under construction and the existing established ribbon development along The Folley. The Local Plan also states that new development will be required in Layer de la Haye to contribute to local infrastructure to mitigate the impact of additional residents in the village. Consequently, an appropriate level of growth would assist in further sustaining and supporting the community within the village and in particular allow for the provision of additional community benefits and improved facilities.

To date, draft iterations of the new local plan have proposed the site for allocation, recognising its suitability for development.

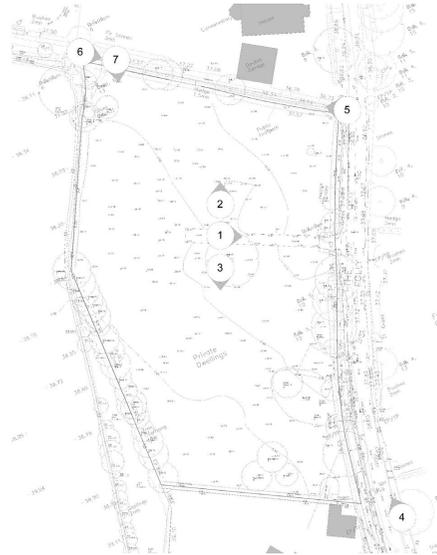


Approved Reserved Matters Site Plan – Adjacent Site

2.3 Visual Tour of the Site

The following are a series of site photographs which highlight the key characteristics of the site and its immediate context. Photograph descriptions are provided as follows:

1. View from inside the site, looking back towards the existing vehicle access.
2. View from inside the site, looking North towards the boundary with the Public Right of Way.
3. View from inside the site, looking South towards the boundary with the neighbouring dwelling.
4. View looking North down The Folley, close to the most southerly point of the boundary.
5. View along the Public Right of Way, from The Folley./
6. View along the Public Right of Way from the North-west corner of the site.
7. View from the Public Right of Way looking into the site.



Photograph Location Plan



Site Photograph 2



Site Photograph 3



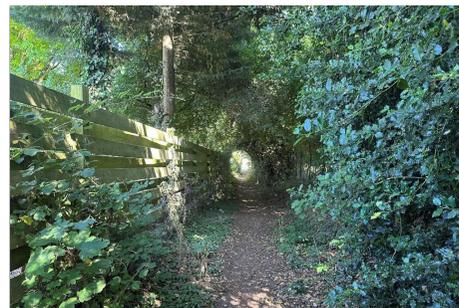
Site Photograph 4



Site Photograph 5



Site Photograph 6



Site Photograph 7



Site Photograph 8

3. Context

3.1 Borough Context

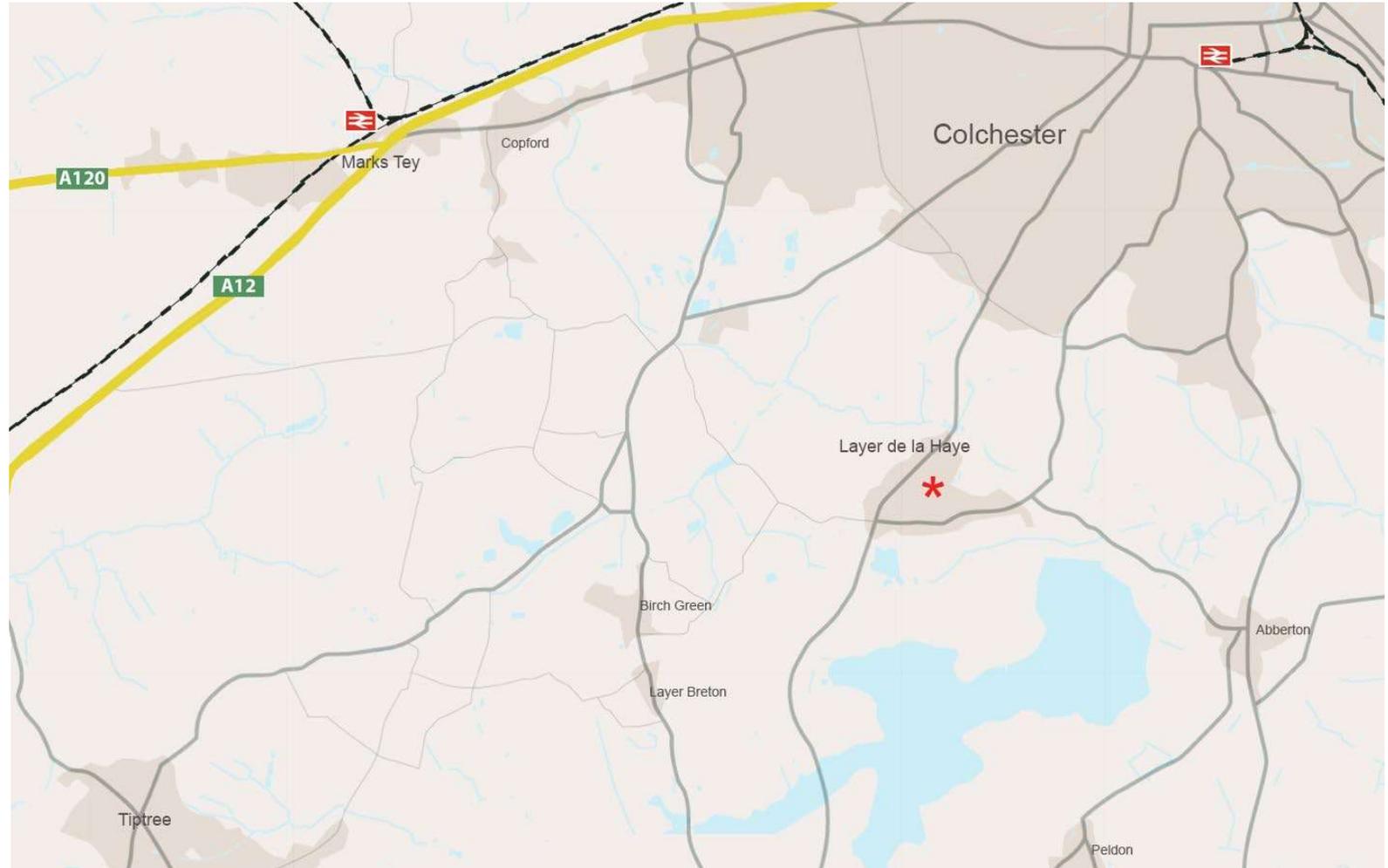
Layer de la Haye is located approximately 2.5km southwest of the Colchester urban area and is one of the larger satellite villages.

The village is well located with good connectivity to Colchester to the northeast and Tiptree and Maldon to the southwest. It serves as a key route into Colchester from the surrounding, smaller villages.

Buses

The closest bus stop to the site is located on the B1026, at the junction with Les Bois. This can be accessed via the Public Right of Way, about a 300m walk. This bus stop is served by the 50 service, connecting Tollesbury and Colchester and the 69 service which runs between East Mersea and Colchester City Centre.

Highways



Site Location Plan

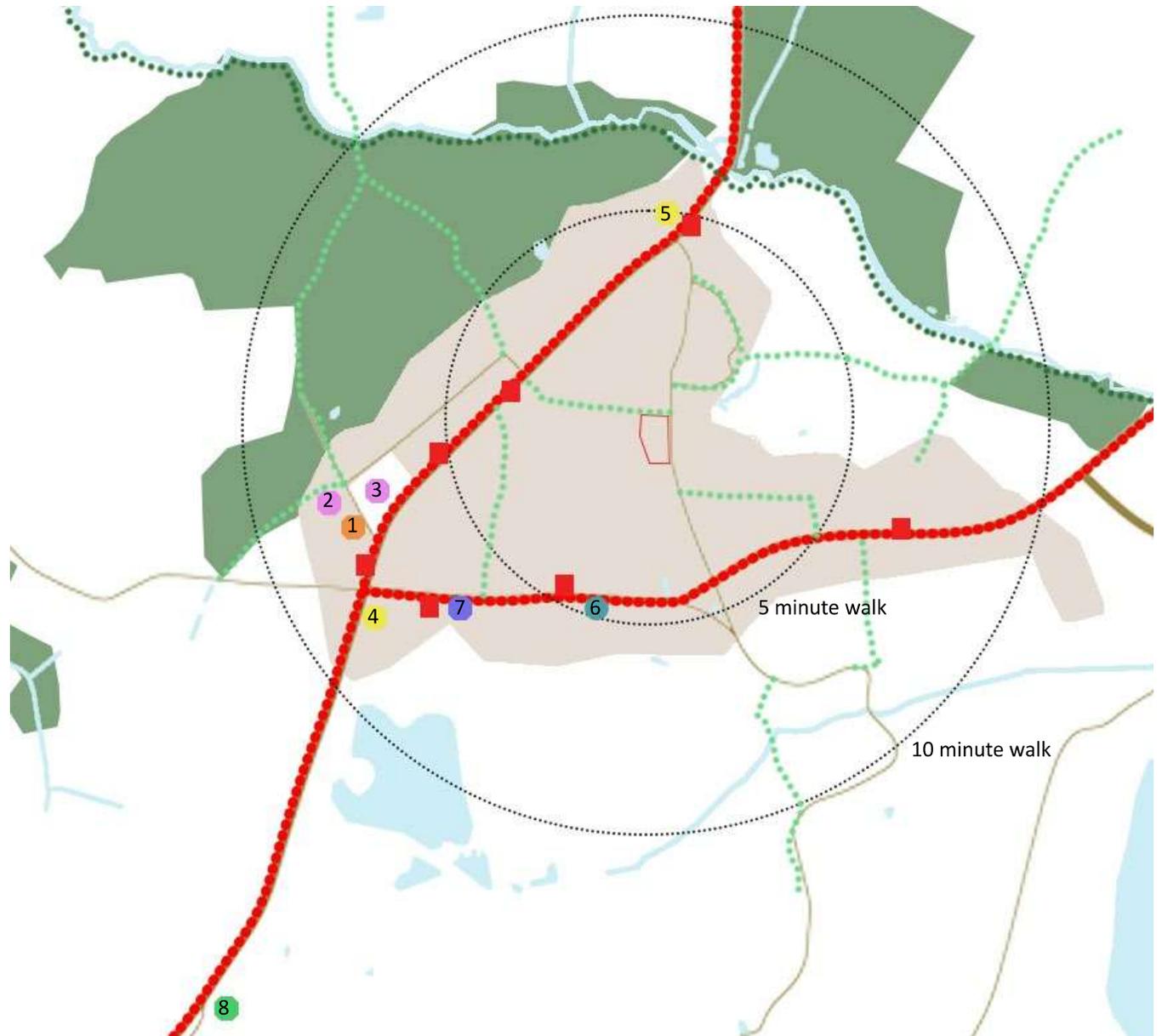
3.2 Community Facilities

The site is well located to take advantage of existing facilities in Layer de la Haye. Additionally, good bus routes provide a convenient connection to Colchester City Centre and the many facilities there.

Key facilities are highlighted in the plan opposite, including:

1. Layer de la Haye Primary School
2. Layer Village Hall
3. New Cut Recreation Ground
4. The Layer Fox Public House
5. Donkey & Buskins Public House
6. Winstree Medical Practice and Malting Green Surgery
7. Premier Layer Village Store
8. St John the Baptist's Parish Church

	Site Boundary		Bus Stop
	Roads		Doctors Surgery
	Bus Route		Convenience Store
	Public Footpath		Public House
	Public Right of Way		School
	Existing Development		Community Facilities
	Woodland		Church
	River / Water Body		



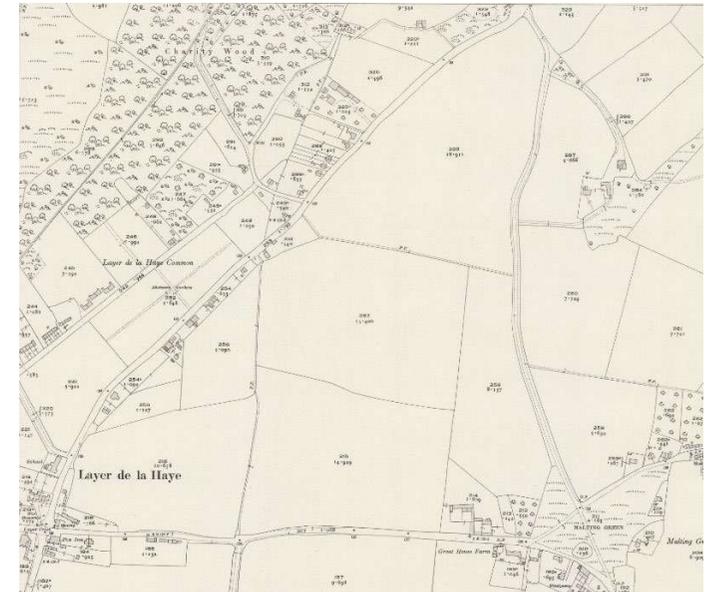
Local Facilities & Services Plan

3.3 History

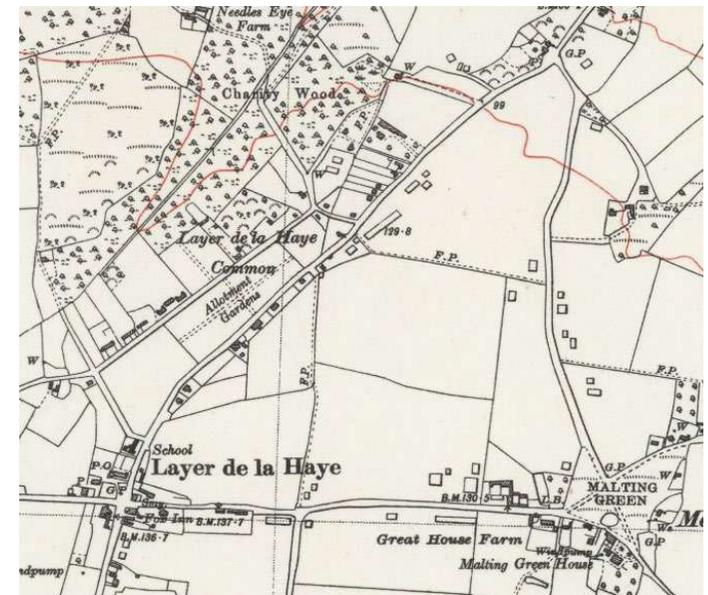
The history of Layer de la Haye dates back to Saxon times, known originally as Legra, meaning 'Lookout' due to its elevated vantage point. During the time of the Norman Conquests, the village was owned by the de la Haye family and as such its name then changed.

The village has experienced population growth during the latter half of the 20th Century. In 1950, the population was around 700, by 1975, it was over one thousand and in 1990, close to two thousand.

Historic maps show that the site itself was not built upon until the early 1930's at which time there were a number of properties constructed along The Folley, including a bungalow on this site – The Furze. The house was demolished some 10 years ago, and the site currently stands empty.



Map of Layer de la Haye in 1923



Map of Layer de la Haye in 1938

4. Technical

4.1 Technical Studies

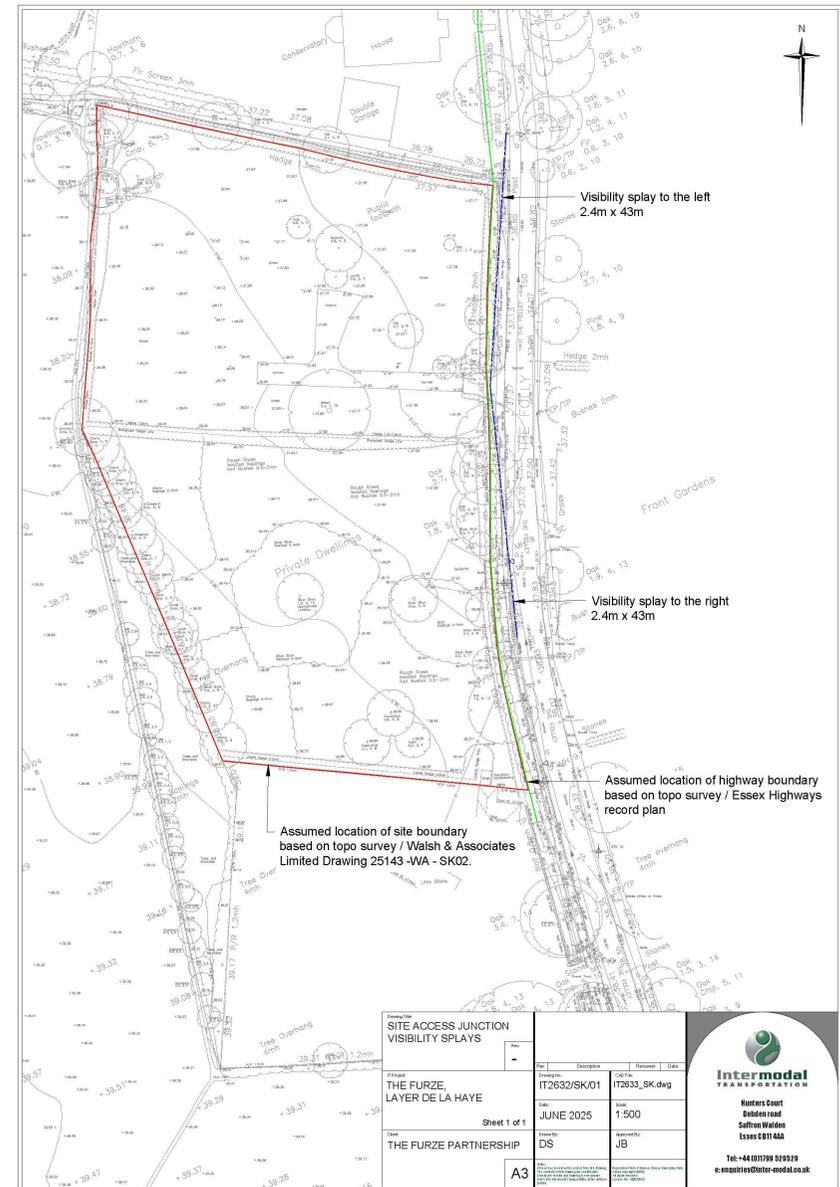
4.1.1 Highways

The speed limit on the Folley is 30mph within the vicinity of the northern and southern sites. In accordance with the Manual for Streets (MfS) standards, visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m would be required at the site access junctions.

With trimming of vegetation, visibility splays in excess of 2.4m x 43m would be achievable within highway land / land within the site to the left and right respectively from the location of the existing gate. Trimming of vegetation would also be required on both sides of the access in order to achieve the 2.4m x 43m splays.

To accord with the EDG the access should be 5.5m wide for at least the first 6m.

The Local Authority refuse vehicle is unlikely to enter the smaller site and therefore residents would be required to leave their bins within 25m of the roadside on collection days. A communal refuse point close to the access would be the ideal solution taking in to account the fact that residents should not need to move their bins further than 30m.



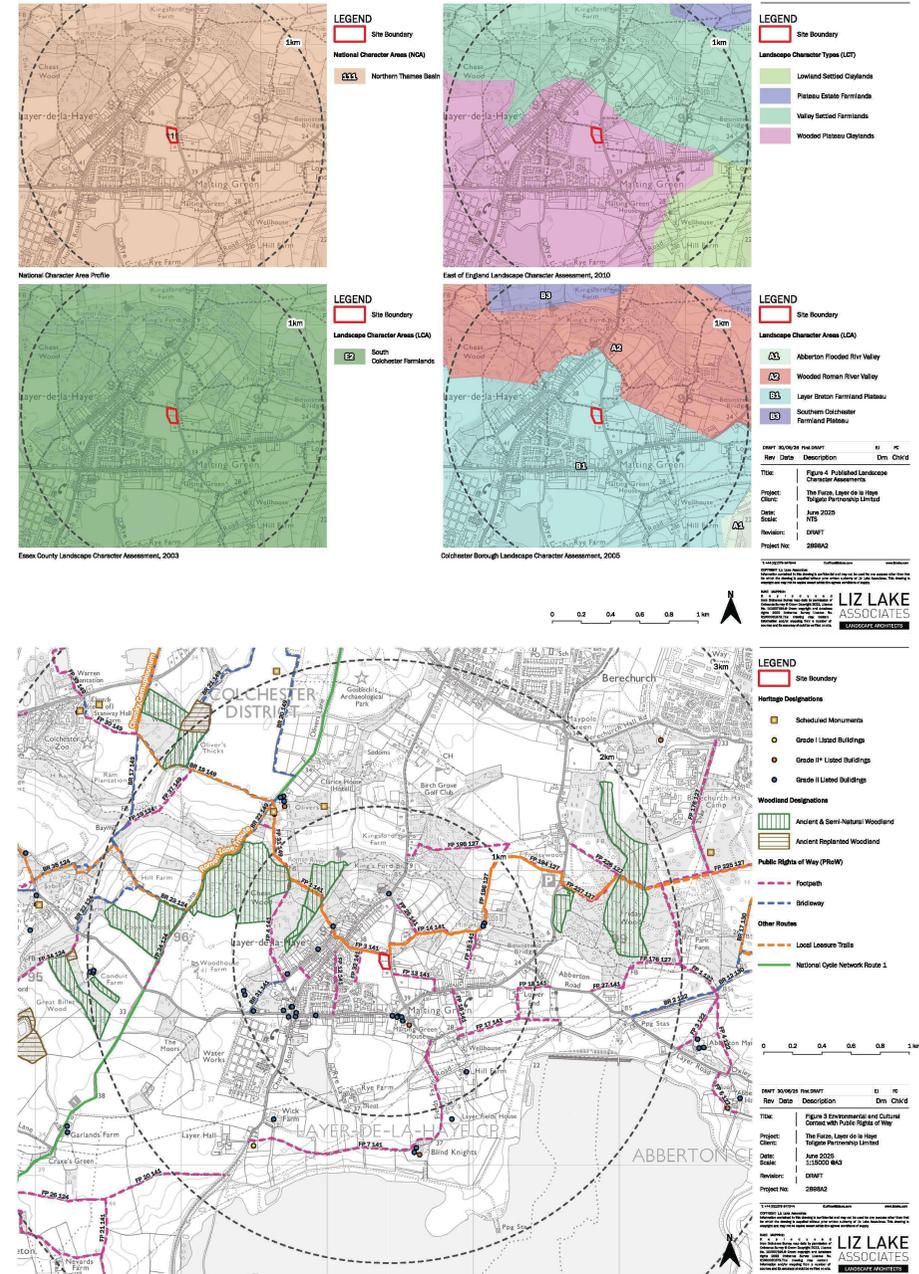
Intermodal sketch indicating visibility splays to site entrance

4. Technical

4.1 Technical Studies

4.1.2 Landscape

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by Liz Lake Associates and is appended to this document.



4. Technical

4.1 Technical Studies

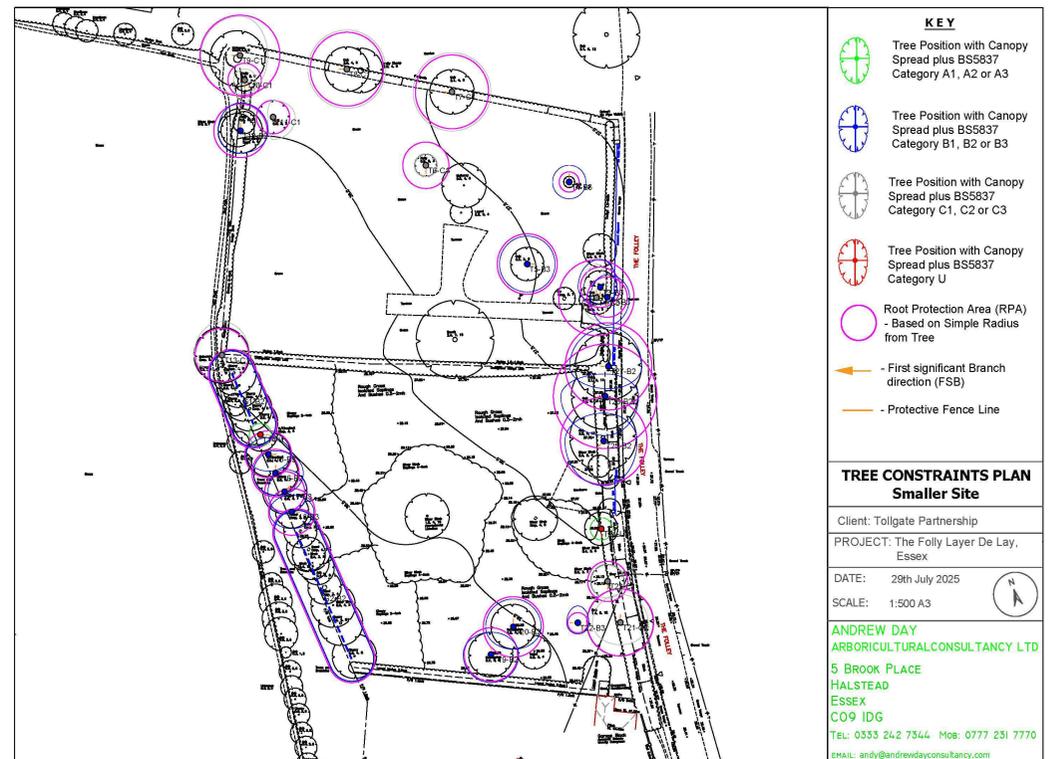
4.1.3 Ecology

Significant ecological features include boundary native hedgerows (with mature trees) along the north, east and west boundaries of the site. These hedgerows can be enhanced through supplementary native species planting (north boundary) and implementing a sensitive ecology management regime, which will result in benefits for biodiversity.

The southern border has a non-native hedgerow (cherry laurel) along its length. This could be removed and replaced with a native hedgerow with tree standards. Scrub buffer planting and the creation of a transitional habitat would serve to provide additional benefits to the site's biodiversity value. Further habitat assessment is ongoing and shall inform further surveys in due course.

4.1.4 Arboricultural

Trees on the site are generally limited to the site boundaries. An arboricultural survey and proposal will be prepared to support the application.



4. Technical

4.1 Technical Studies

4.1.5 Drainage and Utilities

Full utility searches have been completed, including for electricity gas and water assets. These confirmed there were no existing apparatus that would cause any constraints within the site and should provide opportunities for future connections subject to further correspondence with the utility providers.

It is anticipated the proposed foul drainage will drain to the existing adoptable network in The Folley via gravity subject to capacity checks and section 106 sewer connection approvals with Anglian Water.

For surface water disposal The British geological mapping illustrates that the existing geology could be suitable for infiltration therefore it is assumed that all surface water runoff from site will drain to the ground via infiltration in compliance with building regulations and ECC LLFA hierarchy. Further infiltration tests will be completed at the appropriate time and the surface water disposal strategy will be adapted to suit these results accordingly.

4.2 Opportunities and Considerations

The plan opposite summarises the site's physical constraints. Subject to further detailed technical work the following are considered key considerations and opportunities to inform the composition of the high-level concept plan.

The key technical considerations are:

- There is a gentle slope up from North to South.
- Mature trees and hedgerow bound the site, creating a natural boundary.
- New development to the West creates a sensitive boundary, with new houses positioned fairly close to the shared boundary.
- An existing property to the South with a back garden on the boundary.
- A Public Right of Way to the North, running the full northern boundary of the site.
- An existing access to the site from The Folley.



Site Boundary with existing vegetation



Existing Public Right of Way



Site contours



Sensitive boundary



Existing site access



5. Masterplan & Conclusion

5.1 Development Concept

The early concept for the development is to split the site into 5 plots, each housing a single storey detached dwelling, a mix of 3 and 4 bedrooms and each with a detached garage.

The proposal retains a single point of access to the site, utilising the existing access from The Folley. A small cul-de-sac road runs north to south within the site, with each property accessed from this.

A new access to the Public Right of Way is proposed, to facilitate improved pedestrian access to and from the site.

The building line of development for the road is maintained, with the proposed dwellings facing The Folley. Rear gardens facing the new development maintain a good level of privacy, with the same for the plot nearest the existing dwelling to the South.

Existing boundary planting is maintained and enhanced.

5.2 Conclusion

The site sits directly between existing, established ribbon development of The Folley. To the rear of the site is extensive new development. Considering the location of the site, this provides a natural opportunity for infill development to deliver much needed new build, sustainable housing.

The location has been shown to be sustainable and accessible and has previously been developed.

Density of the proposal has been kept low to ensure an appropriate level of development for the location.





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