

3.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

3.4 LANDSCAPE

The majority of existing on-site trees and boundary hedges will be retained, with hedges punctuated where necessary at entrances. All trees and hedgerows are intended to be preserved with space given around them to allow for growth and maintenance.

New landscaping is to be provided in the form of street tree planting where space for growth is provided, larger trees in the open space areas and low-level frontage planting to front gardens.

Refer to arboricultural report and landscaping proposals for further details.



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3.5 ECOLOGY

The site location comprises of a grazed parcel of grassland, with areas of bracken and scrub, buildings, and treelines/hedgerow which border the site. The site is adjacent Ancient Woodland, known as Wandleys Copse, at the south-east. Boundary habitats provide linear connectivity to this ancient woodland.

Protected species surveys have identified the presence of:

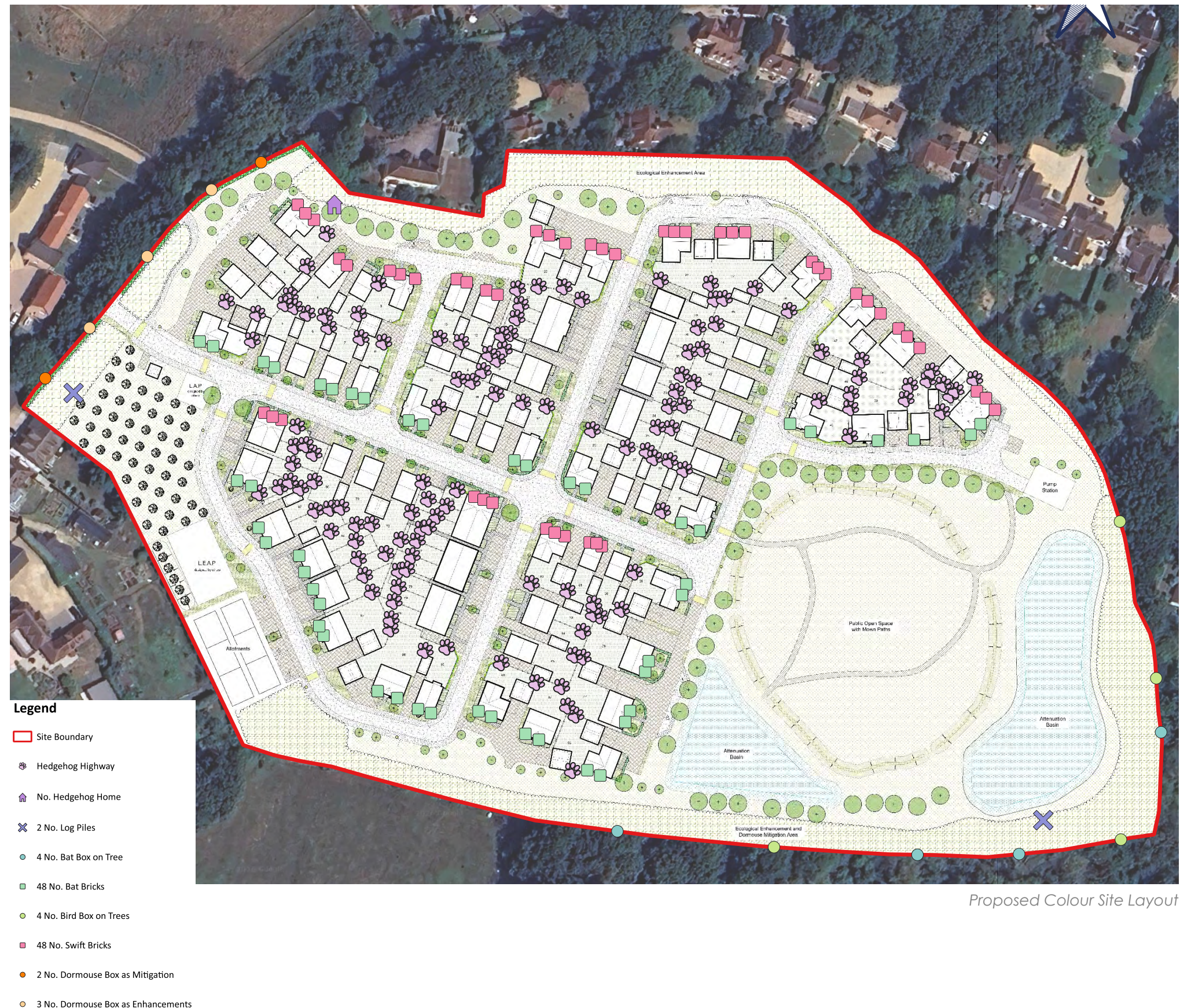
- Hazel Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*);
- Common Reptile species;
- Various bat species using the site, including the Annex II species Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*).

The site has been sympathetically designed to avoid features of high value. Boundary vegetation within the development is focused within areas of low-value modified grassland.

To mitigate potential adverse impacts during construction and operational phases, the following will be implemented:

- A European Protected Species Licence will be obtained of Hazel Dormice. A translocation of common reptile species will be undertaken to protect species from harm.
- A minimum 15-metre buffer zone is provided to the Ancient Woodland from the southern boundary.
- Orchards will be created on site, which will include species-rich grassland and fruiting trees, this will benefit invertebrate species on site and further improve foraging resources for bats.
- Numerous enhancements for various species such as Dormice Boxes, Swift and Bat Boxes.

Refer to ecology report for further details.



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3.6 DRAINAGE

The drainage strategy utilises a range of SuDS features, including permeable paving, attenuation basins and rain gardens, which work together to manage surface water runoff in a sustainable and integrated manner.

The surface water drainage system has been designed to accommodate all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100-year storm event with an appropriate allowance for climate change. This design standard ensures that the development remains resilient to both current and future rainfall conditions, reducing the risk of flooding to residents, neighbouring properties and downstream receptors.

The SuDS strategy also delivers significant water quality benefits through the use of permeable paving, rain gardens and vegetated basins. Improving water quality is an important objective of sustainable drainage as it helps protect receiving watercourses, groundwater resources and local ecosystems.

The proposed SuDS network provides a range of wider benefits beyond flood risk management. These include enhanced biodiversity through the incorporation of landscaped drainage features, improved visual amenity and placemaking, opportunities for urban greening, reduced pressure on existing drainage infrastructure, improved water quality, groundwater recharge where appropriate, and increased resilience to climate change.

Foul drainage from the development will be discharged to the existing Southern Water sewer network via a pumped connection. Discussions and capacity assessments have confirmed that the receiving sewer has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed foul flows generated by the development.

Refer to drainage report for further details.



Proposed Colour Site Layout

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3.7 ARCHAEOLOGY

The area of potential archaeological interest was initially treated as a key constraint, shaping the early design approach for the site. Through ongoing dialogue between the project's archaeological consultant and the Council's Archaeology Officer, a strategy was agreed that avoided fixed built development within this zone of interest. Instead, the layout was designed to incorporate flexible uses such as public open space and landscaping, ensuring and respecting any potential heritage assets where necessary. This early integration of archaeological considerations into the masterplanning process allowed the scheme to respond sensitively to uncertainties at the time.

As the project progressed, archaeological investigations were undertaken to better understand the significance of the site. Although the findings were inconclusive, emerging theories regarding possible historic activity provided an opportunity to positively influence the design. Rather than being a limitation, the archaeological potential informed the landscape strategy, allowing creative interpretation of the site's past. Features such as landform modelling, planting, and potential bunding have been incorporated to subtly reflect this heritage narrative, helping to embed a sense of place and identity within the development.

The approach demonstrates how archaeological constraints can be transformed into place-making opportunities. The scheme includes provision for interpretative signage and physical features to communicate the site's potential history, cultural and community value to future users whilst creating a well-informed and distinctive environment.



