

Subject: Beacon Business Park Extension Masterplan & further feasibility work

Report to: Economic Development Committee

19 November 2018

Report by: Head of Planning and Growth
Director of Development

SUBJECT MATTER

Beacon Business Park Extension Masterplan & further feasibility work

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Economic Development Committee:

- 1. Endorse the principle and detail of this Masterplan**
- 2. Endorse the further committed detailed feasibility work for the extension to Beacon Business Park to be undertaken.**

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Following the significant commercial development of the existing Beacon Business Park site in recent years (which is nearing full occupancy) and a successful bid to the Norfolk Business Rates Pool fund, the Council commissioned (in August 2018) Hudson Architects to produce a high-level masterplan for the development of an extension to the Beacon Park Enterprise Zone. The masterplan currently in production will identify an indicative layout, the potential opportunities and constraints that may impact on development.

1.2 The Business Rates Pool (BRP) bid was successful for a total spend of up to £80,000, half of which is match funding provided by the Council's Enterprise Zone funding stream (the funding split for any BRP bid is always 50:50). The masterplan work only consumes a relatively small amount of this total, with more detailed feasibility and evidence studies (such as on utilities) necessary to progress the site towards a planning application stage. The BRP funding is constrained to feasibility work for the extension site, but also with a deadline to spend by the end of March 2019.

1.3 This report seeks member endorsement of the draft masterplan document. Further detailed studies are committed through the BRP funding and will be commissioned shortly. It is intended that the extension to the business park will be a major step closer to a planning application, and will also present and support potential investment opportunities.

2 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

2.1 The existing business park at Beacon Park is located south of Bradwell (west of the James Paget University Hospital) and was awarded Enterprise Zone (EZ) status in

2012. The link road connecting the A47 and A143 was completed in December 2015 and since its delivery the site has grown from strength to strength and is now recognised as one of the most successful EZs in the country. A number of key employers are located on the business park including Proserv, Probe Oil Tools, and Pharos Marine Automatic Power. The Borough Council maintains an active list of enquiries and is in regular discussion with potential new occupiers. The existing business park is now over two thirds developed.

2.2 In September 2015, the Borough Council applied to the Government for an extension to Beacon Business Park Enterprise Zone (along with South Denes) following the success and take-up within the existing business park. The extension to the South Denes EZ was agreed and went live in April 2017. In November 2015, the Government awarded an additional 10ha of land EZ status located to the immediate west of the existing business park. The primary focus of the EZ is to cluster offshore energy related industries with higher value technology and research and development uses and activities locating at Beacon Park, with port and logistic operations locating at South Denes (with access to the Outer Harbour), which also benefits from EZ status. Accordingly, the extension will build on the success of the existing site with broadly similar uses.

2.3 The business park and its expansion is strategically important and this is reflected in the Borough Council's visions, plans and objectives. Within the Corporate Plan, as one of the economic priorities, Beacon Business Park "will further develop and extend, Beacon Park, building on its success". The Borough Council's Annual Action Plan for 2018-19 under 'Economic Growth' identifies the action to prepare a masterplan for new employment land at Beacon Park Enterprise Zone.

2.4 The adopted Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (December 2015) sets out through Policies CS6 and CS18 the intention to allocate new employment land by extending Beacon Business Park. The emerging Draft Local Plan (Part 2) builds on this ambition by defining the 20 hectare (within which 10 hectares will be for the Enterprise Zone) extension area on its Policy Map with a draft detailed policy clarifying the expected uses of the site. The draft policy is flexibly worded to encourage cleaner, higher-standard employment uses, but with particular encouragement to uses associated with the offshore energy industry or technology/research and development. This will ensure that there remains a focus on strengthening Great Yarmouth's existing offshore/energy industries, but not to the exclusion of other occupants that may be well suited to locate on Beacon Business Park.

2.5 The extension site unlike the existing business park (which is in Council ownership) is in two private ownerships, each representing approximately half of the site. The Borough Council is engaging with the landowners discussing potential options and the future development opportunities of the site. As a strategic employment allocation, it is important that the site is developed comprehensively, phased where necessary.

2.6 In March 2017 a bid was approved for Business Rates Pool funding for the

Beacon Business Park Extension masterplan and feasibility work. The Business Rates Pool gives a spend of up to £40,000, matched by the Enterprise Zone funding stream to the Council of £40,000. The Business Rates Pool funding is constrained to feasibility work for the extension site, but also with a deadline to spend by, which has been recently extended to the end of March 2019.

3 Beacon Business Park feasibility work

3.1 Following a tender process which commenced in July 2018, the Council appointed Hudson Architects to produce a high-level masterplan for the development of a 20 hectare extension to Beacon Park Enterprise Zone in August 2018. This is now well advanced with a draft document (attached to this report). The masterplan will identify an indicative layout, the potential opportunities and constraints that may impact on development.

3.2 More detailed feasibility studies need to be commissioned to progress the site towards a planning application stage. It is intended that further, more detailed, studies would likely include: a topographic survey, an ecological survey, a highways study, a report on establishing utilities connections, a potential detailed layout/design scheme and an archaeology survey. Once in place this feasibility package will provide an infrastructure delivery plan, to inform planning applications (and a potential Local Development Order extension for simplified planning), and could be used as evidence to support bids to external funding sources (e.g. through New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership).

3.3 As part of the further feasibility work, it will be expected that the implications for the Borough Council in terms of financial considerations and potential delivery options will become more apparent as such work progresses. It is likely that overall the feasibility work will make significant steps to support a later planning application for the site. It is anticipated that these studies will be tendered for by the end of November 2018; with the surveys being completed by the end of March 2019 (the exception might be the ecological survey, some parts of which may only be able to be completed later in the spring).

3.4 Following the success of the existing Local Development Order (LDO) which has been in place at the existing Beacon Business Park site since April 2012 the Council should consider extending the LDO to include the extension site. The LDO essentially provides permitted development rights, removing the requirement to apply for planning permission, subject to meeting the development parameters set out in the LDO and associated design code via a 'self-certification' application. The process for amending the LDO is the same as if it was newly established, and therefore provides a chance to review the existing parameters (if considered desirable). Feedback from recent new occupiers at Beacon Business Park and South Denes has been that the LDO process, which greatly streamlines the planning process, with the reduced costs and timescales and increased certainty, was a significant "draw" to encourage them to develop.

4 Next stages

4.1 The Borough Council will continue its work on establishing the feasibility of the extension site to support a potential planning application. The Borough Council will also continue to discuss future plans and delivery options of the extension with the landowners.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Economic Development Committee:

- 1. Endorse the principle and detail of this Masterplan**
- 2. Endorse the further committed detailed feasibility work for the extension to Beacon Business Park to be undertaken.**

6 ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Draft Masterplan

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	N/A
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Early discussions with finance have taken place on the implications of the potential broader development costs.
Existing Council Policies:	Great Yarmouth Borough Council Corporate Plan Great Yarmouth Local Plan Core Strategy (Policy CS6, CS18) & emerging Draft Local Plan Part 2.
Financial Implications:	Covered in the report. Further implications may be identified through further feasibility work and subject to delivery options.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	None at this stage
Risk Implications:	None
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	None
Crime & Disorder:	None
Every Child Matters:	None

MASTERPLAN REPORT

EXTENSION TO BEACON BUSINESS PARK, GORLESTON



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL



NOVEMBER 2018

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Aerial Photography on Front Page, page 3, and page 7 courtesy of Mike Page.

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL BY:

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urbandelivery



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

In November 2015, the Government awarded an additional 10ha of land Enterprise Zone (EZ) status within a 20ha site area, building on the existing business park site, at Beacon Park, Gorleston, which is one of the most successful EZs in the country. The primary focus of the EZ is to cluster industries with an offshore energy focus, with higher value technology and research and development uses and activities locating at Beacon Park; and port and logistic operations locating at South Denes (with access to the Outer Harbour), which also benefits from EZ status. Accordingly, the extension will build on the success of the existing site with broadly similar uses.

The Council has developed the existing business park, with demand for units/space direct from companies moving in, and some speculative development. The existing business park is largely built out with a small part of the site still under construction. The existing business park benefited from the incentive of business rate relief which running over a five year period has now expired, and is no longer available for new businesses.

The Council's Local Plan Part 1, the Core Strategy (adopted 2015) supports the extension site through Policy CS6, setting out the ambition to extend employment land at Beacon Park. The emerging Draft Local Plan part 2 defines the extension area on its policy Map with a draft detailed policy clarifying the expected use of the site. The draft policy is flexibly worded to encourage cleaner, higher standard employment uses, but with particular encouragement to uses associated with the offshore energy industry or technology/research and development. This will ensure that there remains a focus on strengthening Great Yarmouth's existing offshore/energy industries, but not exclusively to allow other occupants that may be well suited to locate on the business park. The appropriate uses should not be restricted to just office space, but should avoid large areas of 'dead space', i.e. large areas of storage or warehousing.

The aims of the masterplan document are to show how the site could be developed in accordance with the Borough plan policies and identify anticipated development zones and layout opportunities that could be implemented to support a planning application.



Aerial site view showing Beacon Park.

1.2 The Existing Site & Usage

The site is located southwest of Great Yarmouth, on the western fringe of Gorleston/Bradwell. The existing business park benefits from access to the A47 to the east, and a relatively recently constructed road connecting through to the A143 to the west.

Part of the extension site (the northern half, approximately 7ha) is captured under the outline planning consent, ref. 06/13/0652/O (approved in August 2014) for employment uses, which was allocated in the Core Strategy under Policy CS18 (a residential-led urban extension but providing for approximately 10-15ha of employment land). The residential element of this site is under construction with around 150 units already completed, and detailed planning applications are being submitted as the residential element of the site continues to develop in phases.

The extension site is in two private ownerships, each representing approximately half of the site. The Council engages regularly with the landowners discussing potential options and the future development opportunities of the site. As a strategic employment allocation, it is important that the site is developed comprehensively, and when completed will appear as a single large high-quality business park.

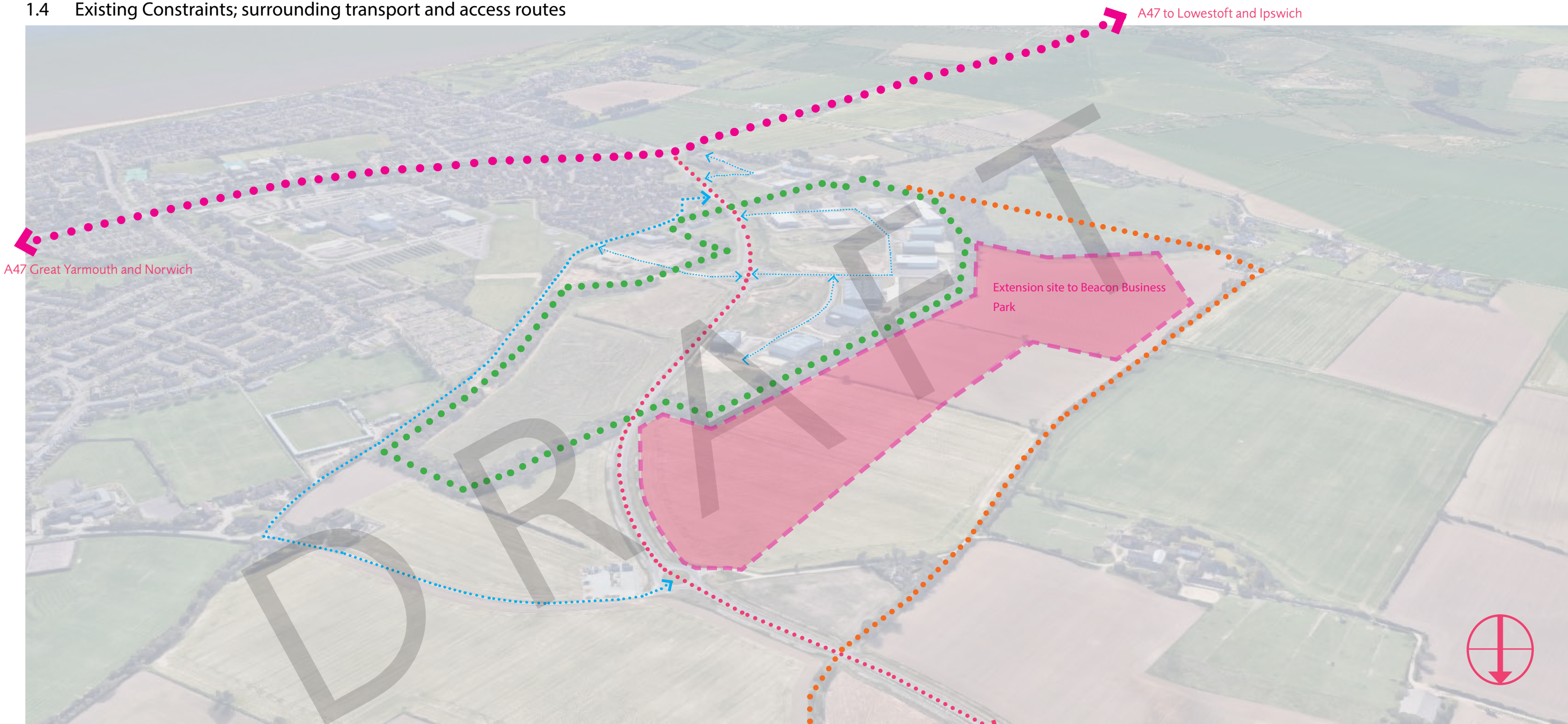
The land is greenfield and therefore relatively free of constraints. Further details will be required later at the planning application stage, and Section 4 within the following document identifies any extraordinary or significant constraints with potential solutions should any arise.

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1.3 Existing Constraints; aerial view of the site highlighting adjacent land uses (refer to Section 2, item 2.19 for further detail of planning permissions)

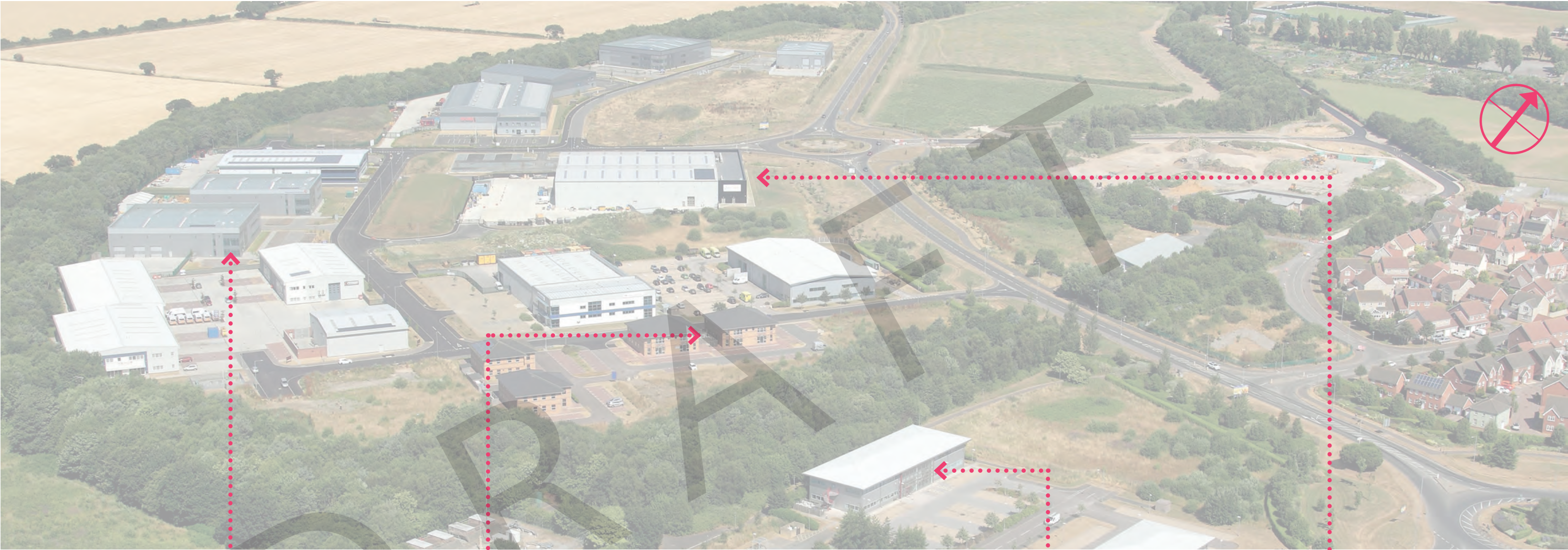


1.4 Existing Constraints; surrounding transport and access routes



- Primary Routes
- Secondary Routes
- Green Corridor 'Beacon Park Woodland Walk'
- Public Right of Way

1.5 Existing Site Context



SITE 14B - 2 Lancelot Road



SITE 8 - Wellington Park



SITE 7 - Minerva House



SITE 12A - Proserv

2. RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AND EMERGING PLANNING POLICY

2.1 Introduction

This section provides a review of the current and emerging planning policy framework relevant to the extension to Beacon Park Business Park, to ensure future development is in accordance with planning policy.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)

At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies the economic objectives to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring sufficient land of the right type, location and availability supports growth and innovation, alongside the coordination of infrastructure provision (paragraph 8). In summary, the NPPF seeks to:

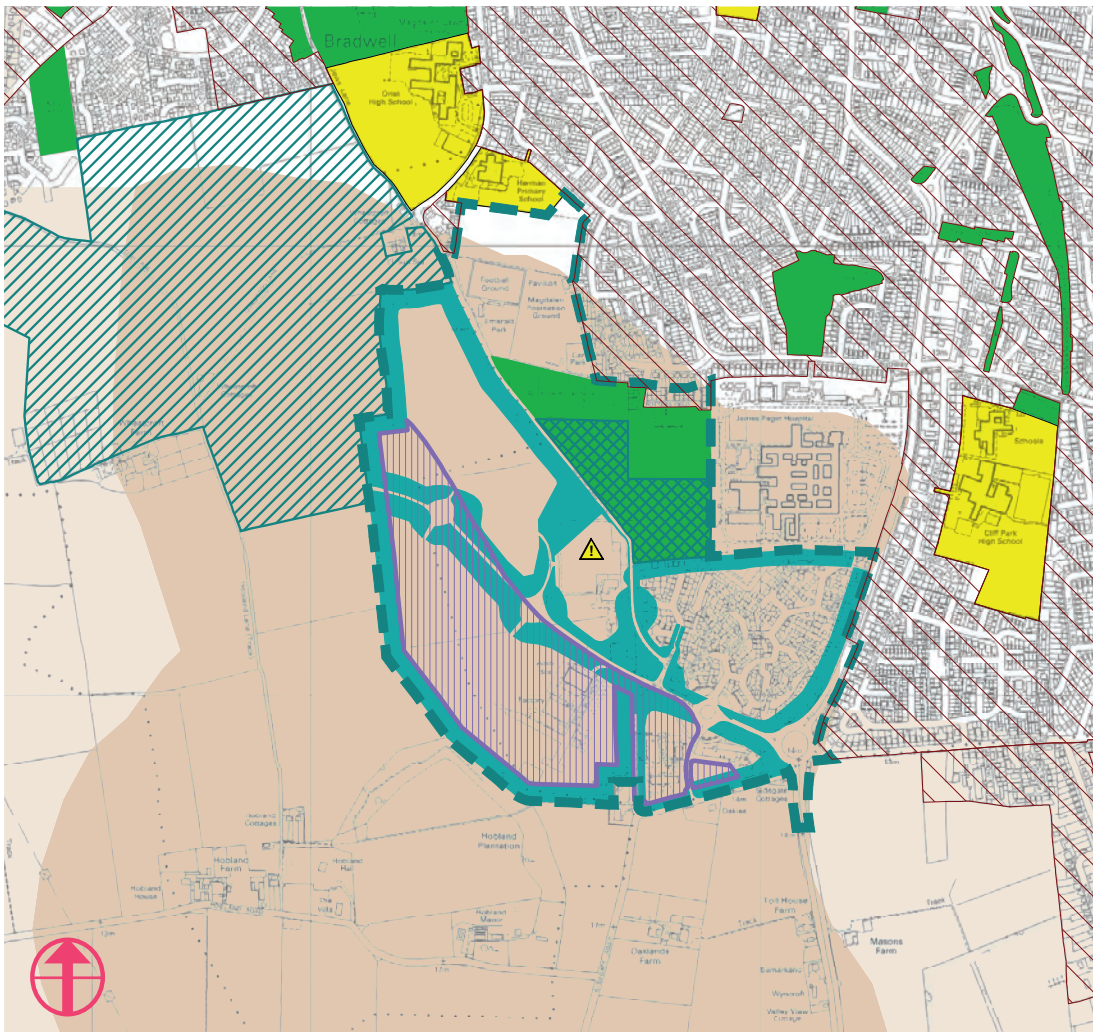
- create the conditions for businesses to invest, expand and adapt, taking account of local business needs, strengths and future challenges (paragraph 80);
- identify strategic sites to meet local and inward investment needs (paragraph 81), and
- considers the locational requirements of different sectors (paragraph 82).

2.3 The Development Plan

At the local level, the relevant adopted Development Plan is comprised of the following:

- Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy 2013-2030 (December 2015)
- Great Yarmouth Borough-wide Local Plan (2001) (saved policies)
- Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies DPD (September 2011)
- Local Development Orders (LDOs) for South Denes and Beacon Park

The Council are in the process of preparing the Draft Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Revised Housing Target (August 2018). This document will replace the saved policies and updates part of the Core Strategy.



Great Yarmouth Local Plan; Core Strategy (Adopted December 2015)



Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy 2013-2030 (December 2015)

The Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (December 2015) Policies Map identifies the extension land, subject of the masterplan study, as follows:

- Grade 1 Agricultural Land (Policy CS6j)
- Beacon Park Extension (Policy CS18) – northern part of the masterplan area only.

The existing Beacon Park Business Park is identified as:

- Safeguarded Employment Area and Grade 1 Agricultural Land (Policy CS6)
- South Gorleston Development Area (Policy SG1)
- South Gorleston Development Area - Amenity Landscaping (Policy SG11)

The Plan identifies the importance of the energy and engineering, and port and logistics sectors to the local, regional and national economy and outlines a vision to strengthen the local economy by ensuring an appropriate employment land supply to meet current and future needs.

The Borough wide economic Policy CS6 supports the growth and development of higher value technology and energy-based industries, and allocates at part c) an extension to Beacon Park (approximately 10-15 hectares of employment land), subject to site specific Policy CS18 (see below). Part j) of the policy seeks to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land but does not restrict development at such designations.

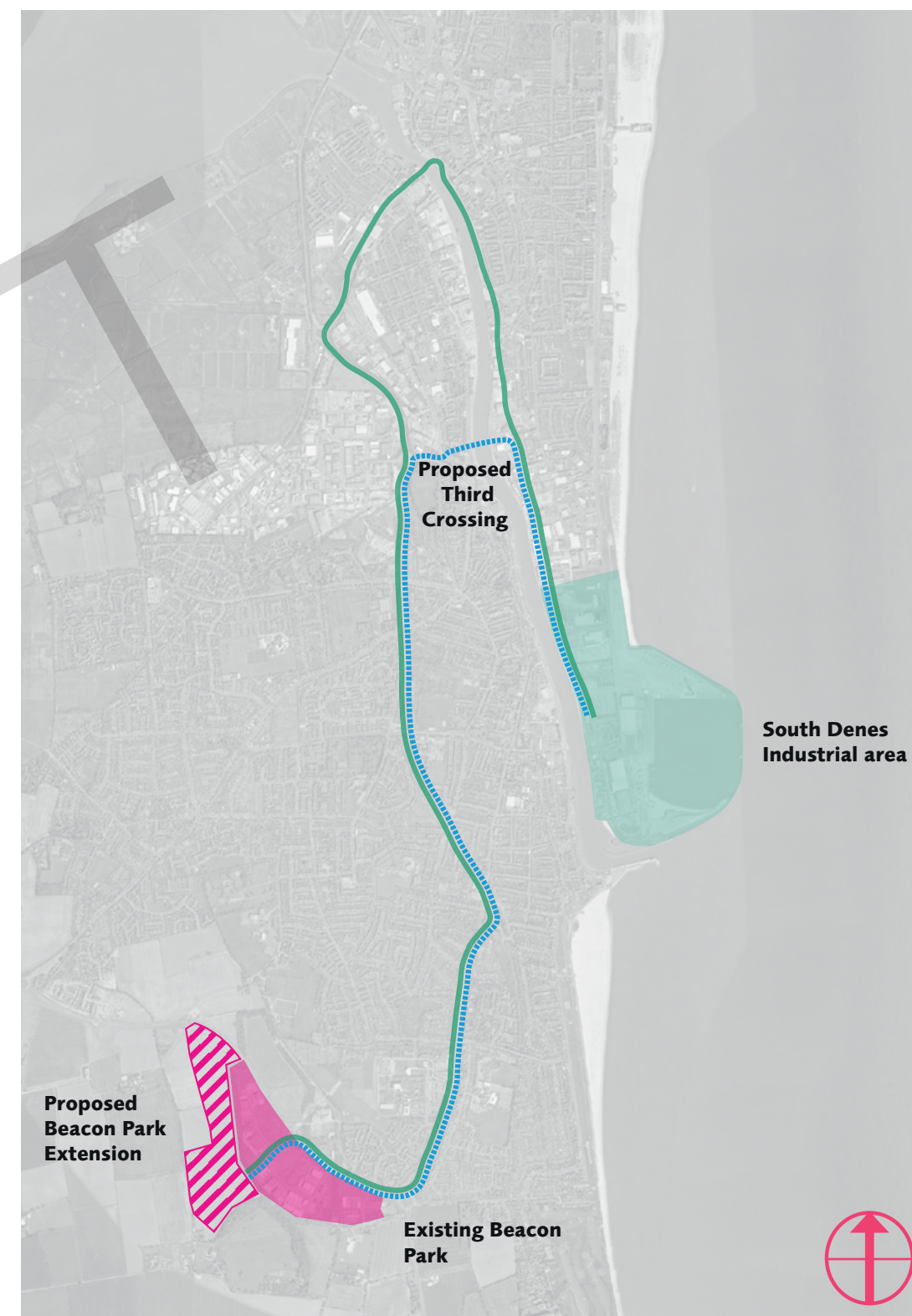
In this case, the existing business park is well-established and largely built out with options to extend limited. Furthermore, whilst it is surrounded by Grade 1 agricultural land, there is no alternative available land of lower value to provide an extension, and the strategic value of the employment site provides an overriding sustainability benefit to justify the loss of high-grade agricultural land.

The supporting justification to Policy CS6 identifies the role of Beacon Park (together with South Denes) as Enterprise Zones in the Borough, which both benefit from Local Development Orders (LDOs). These sites are considered integral to supporting the growth and expansion of the key sectors with the principle of an extension to Beacon Park firmly established in the Plan. The strategic importance of Beacon Park is specifically identified in Policy CS2 which identifies the site as one of two key strategic mixed-use development sites in the Borough.

Further detail is provided in site specific Policy CS18 which seeks to deliver the objectives of Policy CS6). The northern part of the extension land is subject to Policy CS18. This policy proposes a sustainable mixed-use urban extension to the existing Beacon Park, to include under Policy CS18e) approximately 10-15 ha of new employment land to the west of the existing Beacon Business Park, focused on office and light industrial uses within Use Class B1 and B8. The Plan envisages that the additional employment land should deliver a seamless extension to the existing business park and meet future needs, in support of the offshore energy industry.

By comparison, the Core Strategy identifies South Denes as oriented directly towards port and logistics related activities, particularly those associated with the offshore energy, and a focus for general industrial uses. This clear differentiation in location and planning policy ensures that Beacon Park is promoted for higher value technology, and research and development uses compared to heavier industrial and port related uses at South Denes. Overall, this complementary offer focused on the energy sector, may offer opportunities for Beacon Park to attract light industrial and office uses from South Denes which do not require a port location.

The Beacon park and South Denes Enterprise Zones are accessed via the A47 and South Quay (A1243), providing a route reasonably well suited to larger vehicles. This will route will be shortened by the proposed third crossing, making the travel distance shorter and potentially further improving access for HGVs.



Location map showing accessibility connections between the South Denes EZ and Beacon Park EZ, in the context of the third river crossing.

2.4 Great Yarmouth Borough-wide Local Plan (2001) (saved policies)

More strategic policies have largely been replaced by the Core Strategy although a number of policies remain relevant to the existing Beacon Business Park. This includes saved Policy SG1 related to the South Gorleston Development Area which is supportive of high quality, high tech, R&D and office uses at Beacon Park together with saved Policy SG11 related to amenity landscaping along the link road in the Development Area.

Other Relevant Considerations

2.5 Draft Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Revised Housing Target (August 2018)

The emerging draft Local Plan Part 2 has recently been consulted on and sets out to deliver the Part 1 Core Strategy. Importantly, it identifies a number of draft employment allocations for Gorleston, including the extension land. In summary, the draft policies map identifies the following designations for the site:

- Beacon Park Business Park Extension (Policy GN5-dp)
- Development Limit (Policy G1-dp)
- Beacon Park Mixed Use Extension (Core Strategy Policy CS18)

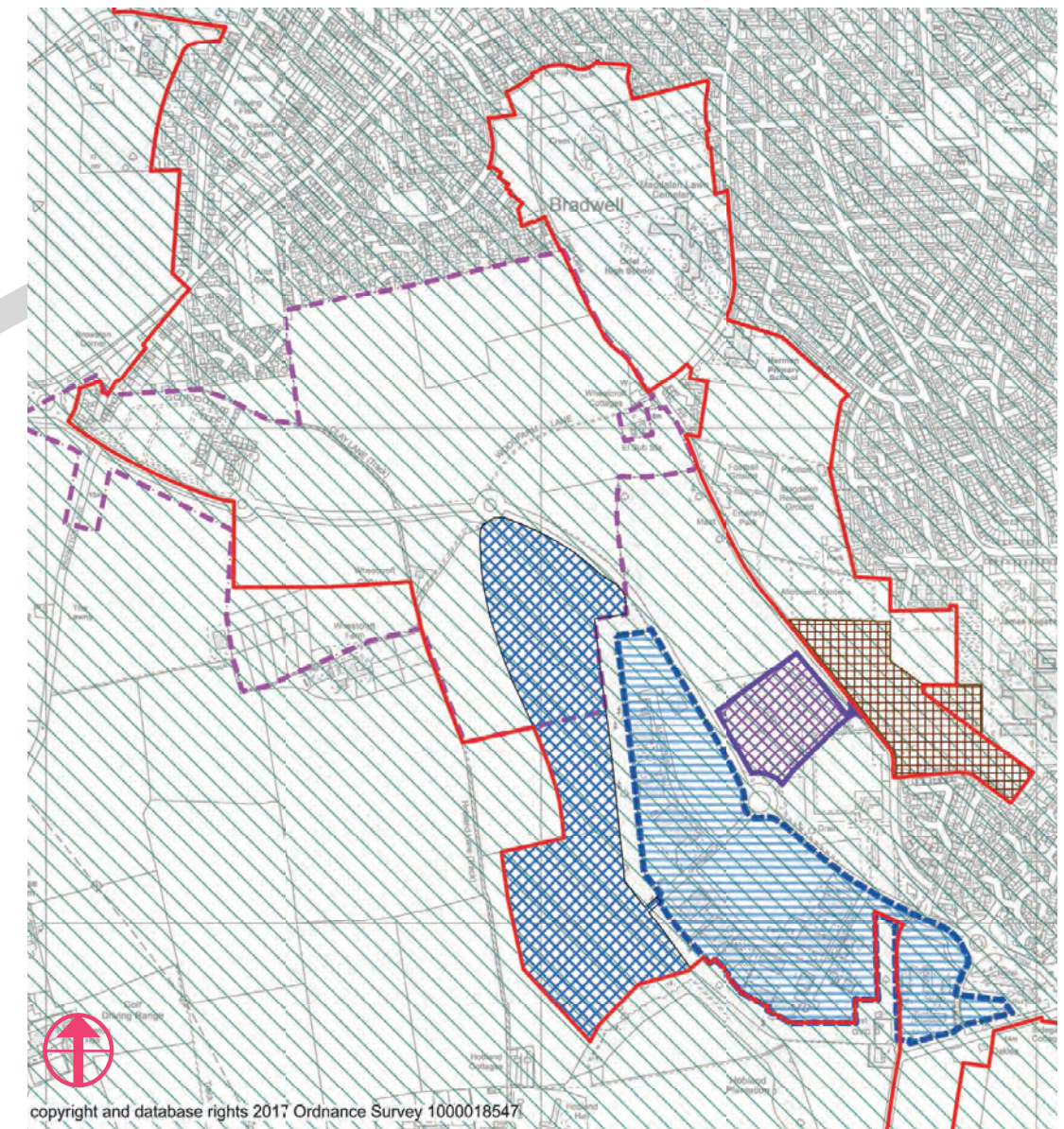
The masterplan site is specifically allocated and defined as the Beacon Business Park Extension by Policy GN5-dp. The draft policy states:

Particular encouragement will be given to uses associated with:

- The offshore energy industry;
- Higher value technology and employment (directly or supporting in the locality); and
- Research and development activities.

High standards of design quality and distinctiveness for both buildings and landscaping will be required.

Residential development will not be permitted. Other business uses and premises (such as heavy industry, large scale storage and distribution) will be permitted only where they can satisfactorily demonstrate they will not unacceptably erode the environmental, amenity and design standards intended for this business park. (The Council will generally seek to facilitate accommodation of these in other locations).



Great Yarmouth Emerging Plan Part 2

- Beacon Park District Centre (BL1-dp)
- Beacon Park Business Park Extension (GN5-dp)
- Beacon Park Business Park (GN4-dp)
- Beacon Park (Mixed Use) Extension (CS18)
- Affordable Housing Sub-market Area 1 (CS4)
- Affordable Housing Sub-market Area 2 (CS4)
- Safeguarded Employment Area (CS6)
- Development Limits (G1-dp)

The draft policy identifies a larger area of employment land to that outlined in adopted Policies CS6c and CS18e (but that which matches the approved Enterprise Zone extension site). Furthermore, the emerging policy provides further flexibility in employment uses while maintaining a general focus on the requirements for this strategic employment site but states that heavy industrial uses would not be compatible with the uses encouraged at the extension site.

By contrast, draft Policy GN4-dp relates to the existing Beacon Business Park which remains supportive of Class B1 and B8 uses. Accordingly, the policy does not support development that would undermine the strategic function of the site – that being residential development and Class B2 (and related sui generis) uses, or those uses which would cause excessive disturbance on existing occupiers.

Other emerging allocations with implications for the site include Beacon Park District Centre (Policy BL1-dp) which is a draft allocation to support worker and resident needs of the Beacon Park growth area (also addressed under Core Strategy Policy CS7), and the Hospital Landing Area (Policy G3-dp) for James Paget hospital, both located to the east of the extension site. In addition, the Development Limits have been reviewed and revised to incorporate the allocation/permitted development sites. The details and extent of the District Centre identified is, however, being reviewed through the emerging Local Plan.

2.6 Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies DPD (September 2011)

The site is underlain by a defined Mineral Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel and subject to the requirements of Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS16 which seeks to safeguard mineral resources to the satisfaction of the Mineral Planning Authority.

2.7 Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Enterprise Zone Local Development Order for Beacon Park (April 2012)

The majority of the existing Beacon Business Park is subject to an adopted Local Development Order (LDO) which offers a simplified form of planning via self-certification (subject to meeting criteria, conditions, and the Design Code) for office, research and light industrial uses for a 10 year period.

The LDO is supported by the Beacon Park Design Code (April 2012) which sets parameters to guide development but does not fix architectural style or detailing. It further sets a vision for Beacon Park alongside building scale parameters including maximum and minimum heights. High quality landscape and building design objectives underpin the Design Code, which is further confirmed by the existing and emerging policies for Beacon Park Business Park.

It is anticipated the LDO, subject to meeting the legislative requirements, may be extended to the Beacon Park Business Park extension land.

2.8 Great Yarmouth Economic Growth Strategy (2017-2021)

The Council's Economic Growth Strategy outlines an objective to provide land and premises for energy sector development and identifies the extension of Beacon Park.

2.9 The Plan 2015-2020

The Council's corporate plan identifies economic growth as one of its priorities and specifically identifies the extension of Beacon Park as a key objective.

2.10 Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy (2017)

The New Anglia Local Economic Partnership (LEP) identifies Beacon Park as part of the Lowestoft-Great Yarmouth Enterprise Zone, to help support energy related development.

2.11 Planning Applications and Permissions

Whilst this section is concerned with the relationship to existing and emerging planning policy, a number of planning decisions are directly relevant to the study area. These relate to the following planning applications:

- Planning application 06/13/0658/SU – planning permission granted on 13 June 2014 for the construction of a new link road from the A47 to the A143 Beccles Road. The road is built and incorporates a roundabout, located at the north of the subject site, which provides an access opportunity.
- Hybrid Planning application 06/13/0652/O – full planning permission for Phase 1 of residential development of 150 houses, and outline planning permission for 700 dwellings, commercial mixed use consisting of B1,B2,B8, local centre (A1-A5,B1,D1 & other community uses); primary school and open space, approved on 11 August 2014. The consent relates to the Beacon Park extension strategic allocation subject to Core Strategy Policy CS18.

Of that Hybrid Planning application, approximately 150 residential units have been completed, and further detailed planning applications are being submitted to bring forward the phased development of the residential element. The approved masterplan prepared by Persimmon Homes identifies the southern area of the consented site for employment uses although the extent of land shown includes land which is not defined in the emerging Policy GN5-dp for the business park extension. The outline consent also includes Class B2 uses which differs to that of the preferred commercial uses at Beacon Park

- Hybrid Planning Application 06/16/0391/SU – full planning permission for phase 1 of residential development of 56 units and outline planning permission for up to 231 residential units. The first phase of the site is under construction and is being developed by Equinox Enterprise Ltd, the Borough Council's trading company

2.12 Summary

In summary, the review of existing and emerging planning policy confirms the following:

- The objective to extend Beacon Business Park is firmly supported in the adopted Core Strategy through Policies CS6 and CS18 which supports land for Class B1 and B8 uses.
- Whilst the extension land is identified as Grade 1 agricultural land, Policy CS6j allows for development in such locations in appropriate circumstances.
- The extension land is allocated in the emerging Local Plan Part 2 through draft Policy GN5-dp which maintains flexibility on end uses alongside continued support for targeted sectors.
- The vision for the extension to Beacon Park is a high quality, well designed business park.
- The key employment sites for the Borough, Beacon Park and South Denes, provide different offers with South Denes focused on general industrial uses and port related activities which are not suitable at Beacon Park.
- A District Centre is allocated for Beacon Park on a separate but nearby site which will minimise any need for ancillary uses at the extension site.
- The extension of Beacon Business Park is identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and Economic Growth Strategy, and forms part of the LEP's Norfolk & Suffolk economic strategy.

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3. FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT USES

3.1 Introduction

This section provides a review of the employment uses in relation to the current and emerging planning policy framework to set the context for the extension to Beacon Business Park and to ensure future development is in accordance with planning policy and the local demand.

3.2 Employment Uses at Beacon Park

Existing adopted Plan policy (Policy CS18) and the LDO, is focused targeting the high value technology and research and development sectors, especially the offshore energy industry. Class B1 and B8 is specifically identified under Policy CS18, and specific reference to starter units and managed workspace.

The emerging policy for the extension site, identified under Policy GN5-dp, is less restrictive, reflecting its flexible approach to accommodating suitable employment uses. Indeed, residential development is the only identified use that is not permitted. In contrast to the existing Beacon Park, the draft policy does not discount potential for general industrial uses (Class B2) although the suitability of such proposed uses would need to be demonstrated to ensure that they do not undermine the high-quality environment of the business park..

The key issue here is that the extension site is seeking to capture a wider range of employment uses, although what those future end uses will be, will be determined largely by market requirements but are positively targeted at the key sectors of offshore energy; higher value technology and, research and development.

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4. IDENTIFICATION OF CONSTRAINTS

5.1 Highways

The completion of the A47 to A143 link road provides a main connection which includes a number of roundabout junctions allowing for future access to other future development. This includes a roundabout located at the north of the extension land. This road was planned to integrate the mixed use development at Beacon Park in a corridor with James Paget University Hospital, and provides a new northern access opportunity into the site. The road also includes a signalised roundabout to the south. A shared cycleway and pedestrian footway runs parallel to the road on the north side.

The principle of development from a highways perspective is considered acceptable reflecting the approval of planning permission for the delivery of the Beacon Park mixed use allocation, with residential development well advanced. Notwithstanding this, detailed consideration for the extension land will need to be undertaken with Norfolk County Council Highways Authority and Highways England as statutory consultees at a future planning application stage. The proposed road would need to be constructed to adoptable standards.

Initial discussions with Norfolk County Council Major and Estate Development would indicate that a connection from the existing Beacon Park road network would be acceptable.

With regard to public transport links, there is a current serviced route along Beaufort Way, but with the nearest stop being at the James Paget University Hospital. Future service provision will need to be subject of further discussion.

5.2 High Speed Broadband Connections

Provision for two ducts exists to ensure high speed broadband connectivity is maintained. It is understood Openreach are the current provider and that new connections will need to be established to serve the extension site.

5.3 Other Utilities Connections

The provision of services to the site will require detailed discussions with each service provider. However, electricity, gas, water and telecommunications infrastructure are all present at the existing Beacon Park Business Park development. It is considered that the extension of such infrastructure will deliver a service to the site albeit groundworks will be required.

5.4 Water Resources and Flood Risk

The Environment Agency online Flood Map confirms the extension site is located in Flood Zone 1.

Whilst there is good provision of drainage on the existing site, additional survey information related to site drainage (surface water and foul), contamination and geo-environmental conditions would need to be prepared to support any planning application for the extension land.

5.5 Ecology

The extension site is not subject to any specific environmental designation identified in the adopted Development Plan and is currently in agricultural (arable) use. Given the nature of its managed state, the site is unlikely to be sensitive from an ecological perspective.

The Habitat Regulations Assessment (2012) and Integrated Environment Assessment (2012) prepared to inform the Local Development Order for Beacon Park, identifies a number of statutory designated sites in the wider area (Breydon Water SPA and SSSI, Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA and SSSI, Outer Thames Harbour SPA, Broads SAC, and Halvergate Marshes SSSI). All of the sites are some distance from the extension land and would be unlikely to have significant impacts on the designated sites of particular conservation importance.

The western boundary of the extension land is subject to an established treeline buffer, which is of local ecological value and would largely be retained.

It will be necessary for a future planning application for the extension land to be supported by an updated ecological appraisal of the site.

5.6 Amenity

The current and emerging Local Plan allocate the focus for local community services and facilities at Beacon Park District Centre, and is located beyond the extension land to the east and to the east of Beaufort Way. This designated district centre represents the Plan's objective for serving the residential and commercial needs of the Beacon Park growth area.

Given the intent of the dedicated district centre, the provision of ancillary support services at the extension land would conflict with Plan strategy.

5.7 Landscaping

With the exception of the treeline buffer to the eastern boundary with the existing Beacon Park Business Park, the extension land is relatively open and in arable agriculture use. The landscape objectives are to retain this as an important landscape features at the boundary, and build upon this on the Western boundary of the extension site. The principle trees and hedgerows will be retained, given that the extension site outline does not extend onto the existing, established boundaries of the ownership boundary. New planting will include denser trees and hedging on the Western boundary of this extension site, towards the South. Towards the North, along the same boundary the trees will become less dense, and more sporadic to open up views from the approaching A143 link. Within the plots, planting will be used to soften frontages and provide enclosure of vehicle parking and manoeuvring areas.

A landscaping report would need to be prepared to accompany a future planning application for the site. The strategy for this would be formulated to ensure consistency with existing nature and species of the planting currently used, and native species would be encouraged wherever possible. Particular care will be taken where trees are removed as part of the proposed development.



Location map showing accessibility connections between the South Denes EZ and Beacon Park EZ, in the context of the third river crossing.

5.8 Archaeology

There are no known archaeologically significant features within or adjoining the extension land. A detailed archaeological report would need to be prepared to accompany a future planning application for the site. There are no scheduled ancient monuments in close proximity to the extension site.

5.9 Use of Agricultural Land

The extension land is classified as Grade 1 agricultural land.

Policy CS6(j) is applicable which seeks to minimise the loss of the best/most versatile agricultural land but does not restrict development on such classifications. Whilst it is surrounded by Grade 1 agricultural land, there is no alternative available land of lower value to provide an extension, and the strategic value of the employment site provides an overriding sustainability benefit to justify the loss of high-grade agricultural land.

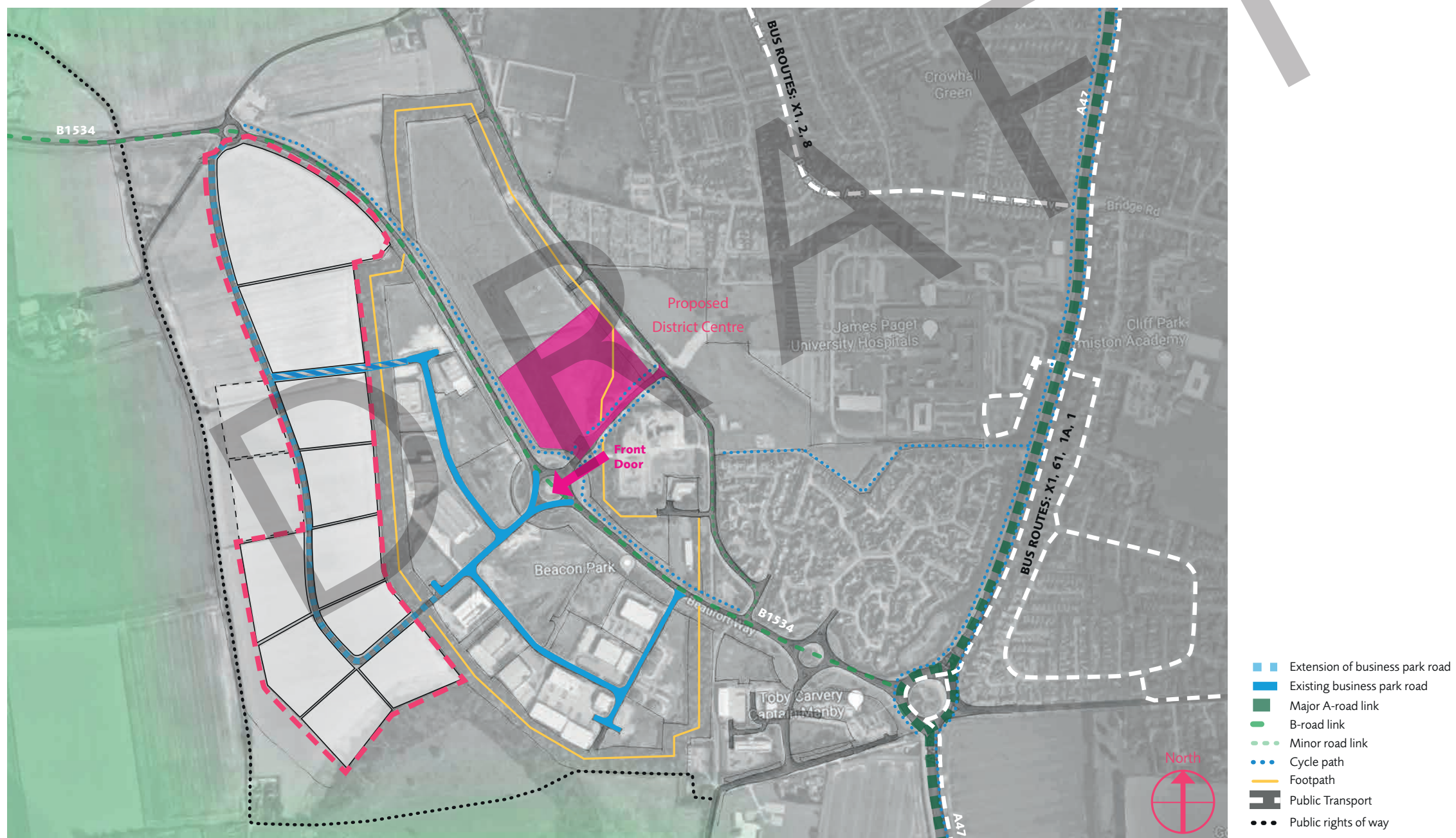
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5. INDICATIVE SITE LAYOUT

5.1 Connection to Existing Transport Infrastructure and Reinforcing Existing Amenity

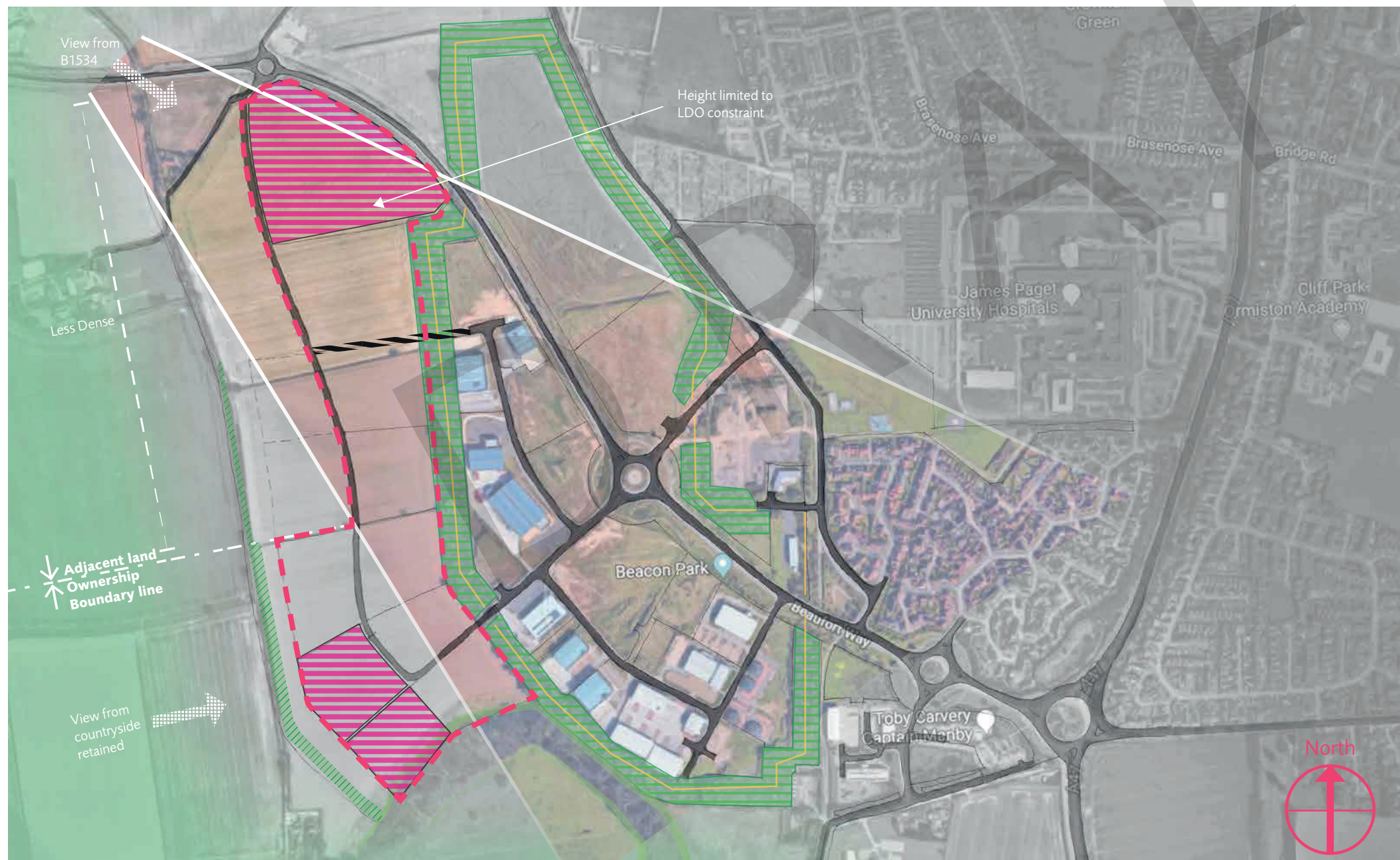
A key part of the design strategy is for the masterplan to connect to the existing provision of amenity and transport links. As ancillary uses are unlikely to feature on the extension site, a focus towards the Beacon Park District Centre should be reinforced to help establish a front door. The indicative layout shows a potential road layout within the extension site, along the western boundary that connects to the existing road network within Beacon Park. Delivering the access road and plot entrances in a flexible way is important to allow the development to respond to demand as it arises.



5.2 Design

Another key aspect of this proposal is the enhanced view approaching from the A143. The existing LDO suggests that buildings within a certain view range could be restricted in terms of exceeding the height parameters specified in the adopted Design Code. Outside of the restricted height zone, a controlled relaxation of the parameters to encourage certain businesses could be considered, dependent on the ability to vary the LDO criteria.

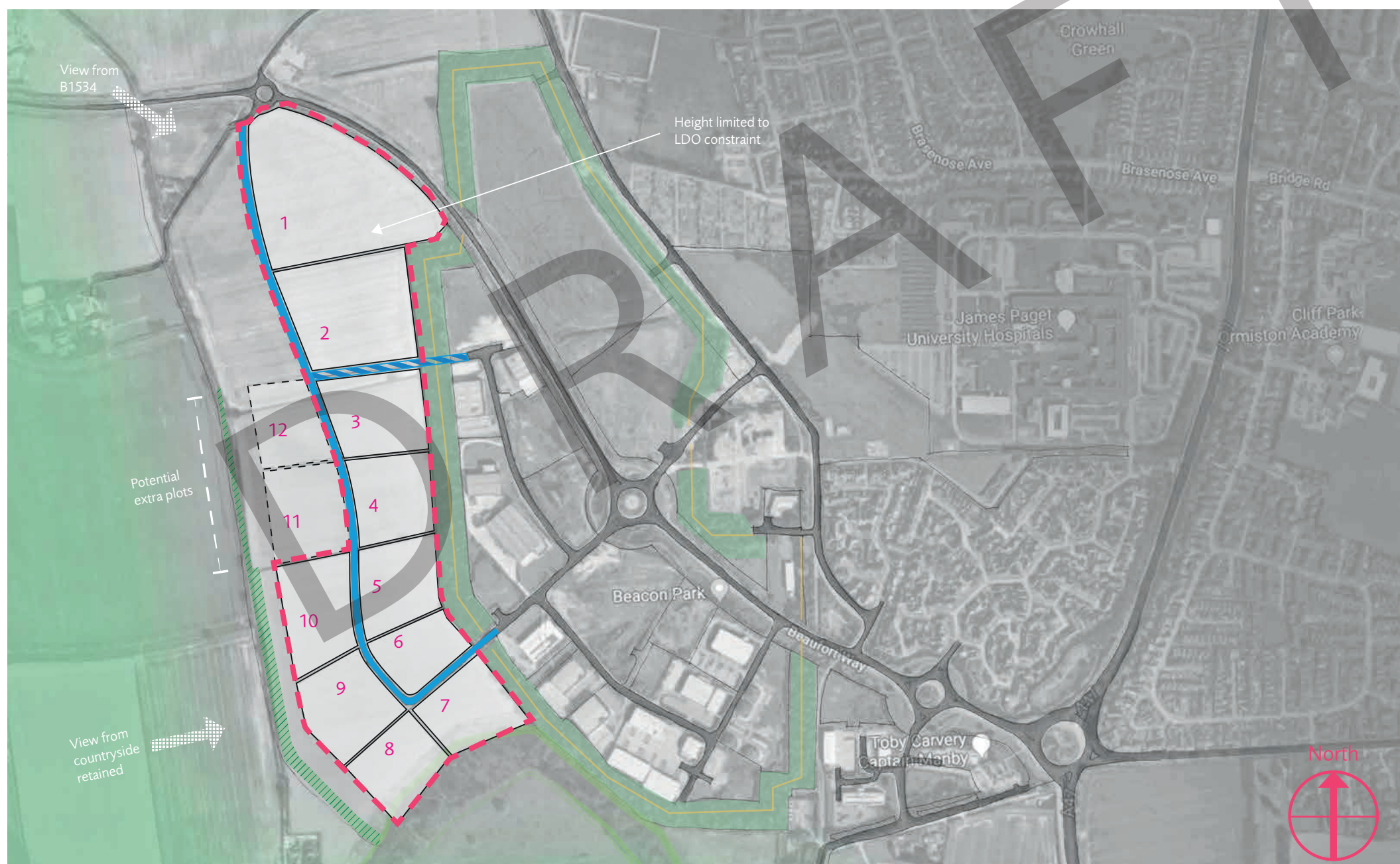
Establishing a prominent, landmark site at the Northern aspect of the site will also help reinforce the identity of the park from the approaching A143. It is also proposed that a another landmark site could be located at the South Western corner of the site, to help promote access and permeability from the surrounding access routes.



5.3 Indicative Site Layout

An indicative layout of the scheme and the proposed road alignment is shown below based upon the planning policy assessment and identification of constraints. The proposal will build upon the existing amenity, creating a well landscaped business environment with a range of plot sizes to meet market demand and the varied needs of businesses. There is an existing tree lined screen to the East, which forms part of the 'green gym' and is of some ecological value. It is proposed to replicate this screening on the Western boundary of the extension site, with a reduced density.

The layout has been developed to allow for phased delivery. While the focus for new occupiers is potentially on the energy sector, research & development, and high-tech; the exact level of demand and size of plots will only become clear as the project is delivered. Therefore the strategy for the site overall should be to create flexible plots and carefully planned phased infrastructure so that demand can be accommodated to optimise financial viability.



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6. DESIGN SUMMARY

6.1 A 'Connected' Masterplan Development

The proposed development of the extension site at Beacon Park should be designed to ensure that the current site and extension area are well connected. Supporting the transfer of the existing LDO would ensure a consistent approach to the architectural design, together with a similar landscaping approach. By integrating the new access roads into the existing infrastructure this will also help support the overall vision, with landmark developments and large plot sizes strategically positioned to give the entire site a clear sense of connection.



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