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3rd December, 2021

Dear Mr. Grygiel,

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2038: CONSULTATION DRAFT (REGULATION 18) SEPTEMBER 2021
REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF ABBEY DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED

We write on behalf of our client, Abbey Developments Ltd., in response to the above consultation undertaken by Gosport Borough Council.

The representations relate to Abbey's land at Stokemead in Alverstoke, Gosport, a small proportion of which is promoted for residential development in order to facilitate the delivery of the majority of the site as high quality, publicly accessible open space.

We trust that the enclosed representations are duly made and we look forward to receiving confirmation of their receipt. Please do not hesitate to contact the writer on [REDACTED] should you have any queries or require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
MICHAEL KNOTT
Partner

Encs.

cc. L. Fraquelli, Esq. - Abbey Developments Ltd.
L. Stimpson, Esq. - Abbey Developments Ltd.

Gosport Local Plan 2038 Regulation 18 Consultation Document

Prepared by Barton Willmore LLP
on behalf of Abbey Developments

December 2021

**Gosport Local Plan 2038
Regulation 18 Consultation Document**

**Prepared by Barton Willmore LLP
on behalf of Abbey Developments**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of Abbey Developments in response to Gosport Borough Council's Regulation 18 consultation of the Gosport Borough Local Plan 2038. Abbey Developments own land at Stokesmead to the west of Alverstoke Creek, to the north of Clayhall Road and to the south of Little Anglesey Road. The land is identified in full in the location plan at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 Paragraph 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) states that plans should, inter alia, be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, and be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable. Paragraph 35 of the NPPF sets out that Local Plans are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are "sound". In order to be "sound", plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- 1.3 For the reasons which are set in these representations, we recommend that modifications should be made to strategic and non-strategic policies in the emerging Local Plan 2038, including the allocation of a modest part of the Stokesmead site for housing to facilitate the delivery of new high quality, publicly accessible open space across the remainder of the site.
- 1.4 In summary, unlocking the majority of the site as publicly accessible open space could result in direct heritage benefits to the Anglesey Conservation Area. Flood risk and Ecology are other environmental considerations which are currently being assessed to establish whether there is potential for part of the site to be developed for housing. Collectively, if feasible, these surveys and assessments will inform the preparation of a proposal for the site, with a layout for the open space and a residential scheme on the remainder.
- 1.5 Upon completion, anticipated in early 2022, we will seek to engage with the Council to discuss the proposal, with the objective of a positively prepared, justified and effective strategy for the Stokesmead site in the Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2038.

2.0 PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

- 2.1 The site is approximately 1.2 hectares and currently consists of overgrown and unusable space. It has been identified through previous Local Plan preparations and discussions that the local community's preference and the long-held aspiration for the site is for its availability as public open space. Abbey Developments are willing to provide the majority of the site for public open space subject to the remainder being allocated for residential development.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that the proposed public open space will be accessible and of a high quality, multi-functional. Park furniture, facilities and areas for children's play will be provided as well as open green park space with defined, planted boundaries ensuring the potential of the site in terms of its benefits to the local community is maximised.
- 2.3 The Open Space Monitoring Report (2021) prepared by Gosport Borough Council divides the Borough into Wards and assesses the availability and quality of existing public open space whilst identifying potential initiatives to provide more. In the Alverstoke ward, Stokesmead is identified as a proposed initiative that could be used as a park and garden with opportunities provided for local children and the local community.
- 2.4 As required by the NPPF, the Open Space Monitoring Report (2021) sets out quantitative and qualitative deficiencies of open space. The realisation of Stokesmead as public open space will help meet the Council's target of 1.6 hectares of open space per 1,000 residents (excluding sports pitches and allotments) as set out in the Monitoring Report.
- 2.5 The provision of the site for public open space will enhance the quality of the local environment whilst contributing positively to the setting of the Anglesey Conservation Area and nearby Listed Buildings as set out in section 5.0.
- 2.6 The provision of high quality, multi-functional public open space will have a positive impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the local community. In order for the extensive community benefits of the public open space to be realised there will need to be a modest amount of housing on the remaining parcel of land. This pragmatic solution will unlock the land for community use and benefit whilst simultaneously contributing to the Councils housing need.

3.0 OTHER SITE OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1 The area of the site and the scale of the housing which could potentially be accommodated on the site has not yet been determined and will be informed by environmental surveys and assessments, and discussions with Gosport Borough Council.
- 3.2 For the residential development on the site to be considered deliverable, the NPPF states it must be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable (with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years).
- 3.3 In order to demonstrate the site's suitability for residential development and in response to the identified constraints on site in regard to flooding, ecology and heritage we recognise that a range of environmental surveys and studies will be required. To inform the preparation of a proposed site layout and concept design for the open space Abbey Developments have commissioned the following surveys and assessments:
- Flood risk
 - Ecology
 - Heritage
- 3.4 The site is available now and is located within a built-up area in Alverstoke close to existing and well-established infrastructure. The site is well-connected to the wider area by road, footpaths and public transport links including regular buses to Gosport and Fareham from Anglesey Road. Fareham train station is 6 miles from the site and offers trains into Portsmouth multiple times per hour. There are a number of existing retail and employment facilities within close proximity to the site confirming the suitability and sustainability of the site.
- 3.5 Subject to the findings of the surveys and assessments being undertaken, it is anticipated that a parcel of land on the site will be mutually suitable across each of the constraints for residential development.
- 3.6 It is expected that an indicative proposal for the site will be ready to discuss and share with Gosport Borough Council in early 2022.

4.0 POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENTS TO THE SETTING OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

4.1 A Preliminary Heritage Assessment has been undertaken for the Site which is provided at **Appendix 2**. It identifies that the following designated heritage assets are considered to have the potential to be affected potential development on the Site:

- Anglesey Conservation Area
- Alverstoke Conservation Area
- Church of St Mary - Grade II Listed Building
- Old Rectory Undercroft - Grade II* Listed Building
- Stables at rear of Alverstoke Rectory - Grade II Listed Building

4.2 The Heritage Assessment determines that the Site has the potential to accommodate some carefully positioned development accompanied by a robust and detailed soft landscape scheme.

4.3 The Heritage Assessment sets out how a carefully designed, high quality development on site could offer enhancements to the existing historic environment in accordance with section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the NPPF. Potential enhancements identified at this preliminary stage are as follows:

- The opportunity to clear the Site and provide public access would be a clear public benefit that could be successfully facilitated in any proposed scheme.
- The opportunity to include interpretation in relation to the former Kickergill Tower to the south-east of the Site and sea wall to the eastern boundary which would also result in direct heritage benefits.
- The opportunity to create new views towards St Mary's Church from within the Site.

5.0 MEETING THE AREA'S HOUSING NEED

- 5.1 Policy D2 of the Local Plan aims to ensure that sustainable development is achieved in the Borough by focusing development in locations which can be served by sustainable transport modes and where residents are served by appropriate facilities and employment opportunities. This overall approach sets a housing requirement of 3,500 net additional dwellings during the plan period (206 dpa during 2021-2038).
- 5.2 The National Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20190220) states that local housing need should be calculated using the Standard Method which, based on the latest affordability ratios, is 328 dpa. Therefore, the housing requirement proposed in Policy D2 will result in a shortfall of approximately 2,074 homes over the plan period.
- 5.3 The Council has recognised the shortfall of proposed homes in the Housing Background Paper (2021) and agreed to consider additional sites coming forward as part of the consultation process. In this context, the delivery of housing from this site will contribute towards reducing the significant shortfall in housing currently proposed.
- 5.4 The two key considerations set out in the introductory section of the Draft Local Plan are to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and to address the impacts of climate change through exploring new initiatives and planning policies.
- 5.5 The Stokesmead site presents an opportunity for sustainably constructed and well-designed housing, alongside publicly accessible open space, contributing positively towards the aims set out in policy D2 by providing more houses within the existing, established local community. Building more homes within Alverstoke will improve the health and wellbeing of residents by allowing them to live close to their places of work and existing support networks. As well as providing mental and physical benefits, this also reduces the need to travel and encourages the use of public transport which in turn helps to address the impacts of climate change and affordability.

6.0 RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO DRAFT POLICIES

Draft Policy D2: Development Strategy

- 6.1 The explanation of Policy D2 sets out the difficulties the borough faces in terms of ecological and environmental constraints, its geographical peninsula location, employment density and housing site allocations. It is identified that there will be a significant unmet housing need on the basis of the proposed housing requirement in Policy D2 of the Draft Local Plan. The Council is working with its sub-regional partners through PFSH to consider Strategic Development Opportunity Areas (SDOAs) to meet the unmet need of Gosport Borough as well as other local planning authority areas. However, first consideration should be given to maximising the potential delivery of housing within the borough.
- 6.2 We consider that Stokesmead should be included in table 2 (page 45) of the Draft Local Plan as an allocated site in the Regulation 19 Submission Draft, subject to discussions with Gosport Borough Council following the completion of the commissioned environmental surveys.

Draft Policy A4: Leisure, Community Uses and Open Spaces

- 6.3 Policy A4 sets out areas in the borough to be developed for leisure, community uses and open spaces. Policy A4 states that Stokesmead should be provided as a public park.
- 6.4 We consider that the tables and maps should be amended to allocate the majority of Stokesmead as a public park whilst leaving the remainder for housing.
- 6.5 The explanation of policy A4 (paragraph 4.5.2) sets out why built development is inappropriate on the Stokesmead site and our response is set out below.
- 6.6 *'It is a high value open space due to its waterside location, is an important feature of the Anglesey Conservation Area and provides a setting for a number of important buildings in the adjoining Conservation Area'*. The preliminary Heritage Assessment concludes that carefully located development on this site could be acceptable whilst setting out a number of potential enhancements that could be provided by the development of the site (as summarised in section 5.0).

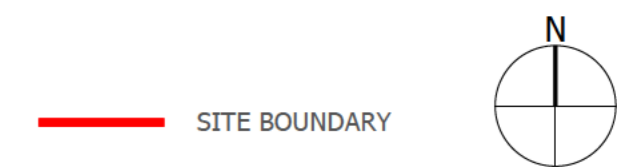
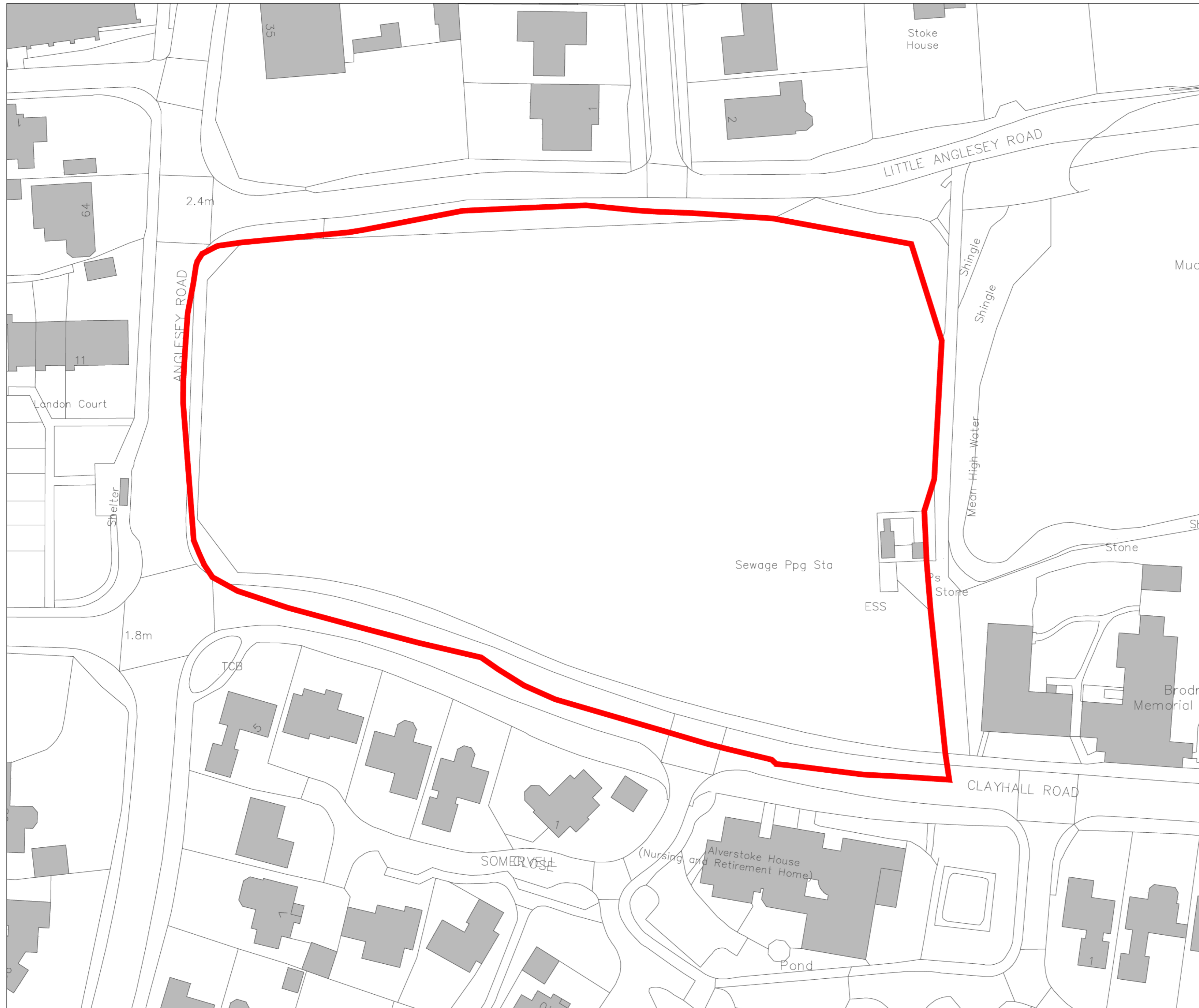
- 6.7 *'The site is located within an area of established residential development and is an ideal position to provide an area clear of built development'*. The proposals are for the majority of the site to remain as undeveloped land and to be provided for public open space. It is anticipated that any parcel of development will be accommodated to the periphery of the site, potentially on the southern edge fronting Clayhall Road, leaving a large proportion of the Site clear of any built development.
- 6.8 *'The site can help meet identified open space deficiencies'*. We agree that the Site can help meet identified open space deficiencies and this will be realised by the majority of the site being provided as high-quality public open space.
- 6.9 *'The site is adjacent to an internationally important habitat and provides a useful buffer between the protected area and the residential area'*. As stated above, an assessment is currently being undertaken to establish whether the allocation of a modest part of the Site could result in any significant adverse impacts. If acceptable in principle, this assessment will also provide advice on the most appropriate location within the Site for housing in order to minimise or avoid any potential adverse impacts.
- 6.10 *'Most of the site is in an area at a high risk of flooding'*. Advice is being obtained regarding whether part of the Site could be made suitable for residential development. This includes taking account of any beneficial effects arising from the Alverstoke Coastal Defence Scheme which is due to be completed by June 2022.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposal will deliver the local long-held aspiration to secure Stokesmead as a high-quality and accessible public open space.
- 7.2 The Open Space Monitoring Report (2021) summarises that priority should be given to increasing the provision of open spaces, particularly within built up areas.
- 7.3 These representations set out the principle that, subject to ongoing surveys and assessments, Stokesmead is available, suitable, achievable and a deliverable site, considered against the definitions contained in the NPPF 2021.
- 7.4 The site that would provide expansive public open space with the opportunity to enhance the existing setting and helping to meet the area's housing need and identified housing shortfall in the plan period to 2038.
- 7.5 Abbey Developments reserve the right to make further comment on the emerging plan and policies, including the evidence base, as the Plan preparation progresses.
- 7.6 We look forward to engaging positively with Gosport Borough Council with the aim of further informing the preparation of the Local Plan review.

Appendix 1

Site Plan



— SITE BOUNDARY

Project
**LAND AT STOKESMEAD
 GOSPORT**
 Drawing Title
SITE LOCATION PLAN

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
FEB 2018	1:500@A2	JT	ST
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
24118	SL-01	-	



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Appendix 2

Preliminary Heritage Assessment

LAND AT STOKESMEAD, GOSPORT
PRELIMINARY HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Introduction

1. This appraisal has been prepared to support early discussions with Gosport Borough Council in respect of the development potential of land at Stokesmead ('the Site'). This document seeks to advise on the heritage significance of assets potentially affected by any future development, focussing in particular on the sensitivity of their setting.
2. This document sets out the key heritage constraints pertinent to the Site and provides a high-level assessment of significance. It then seeks to identify the key opportunities and constraints with reference to the historic environment.
3. Paragraph 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guides that plan-making should set out a positive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment recognising 'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits' conservation can bring as well as the 'opportunities the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place'. This Note follows the guidance set out by Historic England in The Historic Environment in Local Plans (GPA1, 2015), The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3, 2017) and Site Allocations in Local Plans (HEAN3, 2015).

The Site

4. The Site is located within Stokesmead and is bounded to the north by Little Anglesey Road, Anglesey Road to the west and Clayhill Road to the south and Stoke Lake is to the east of the Site. The Site boundary is shown on Figure 1 below.

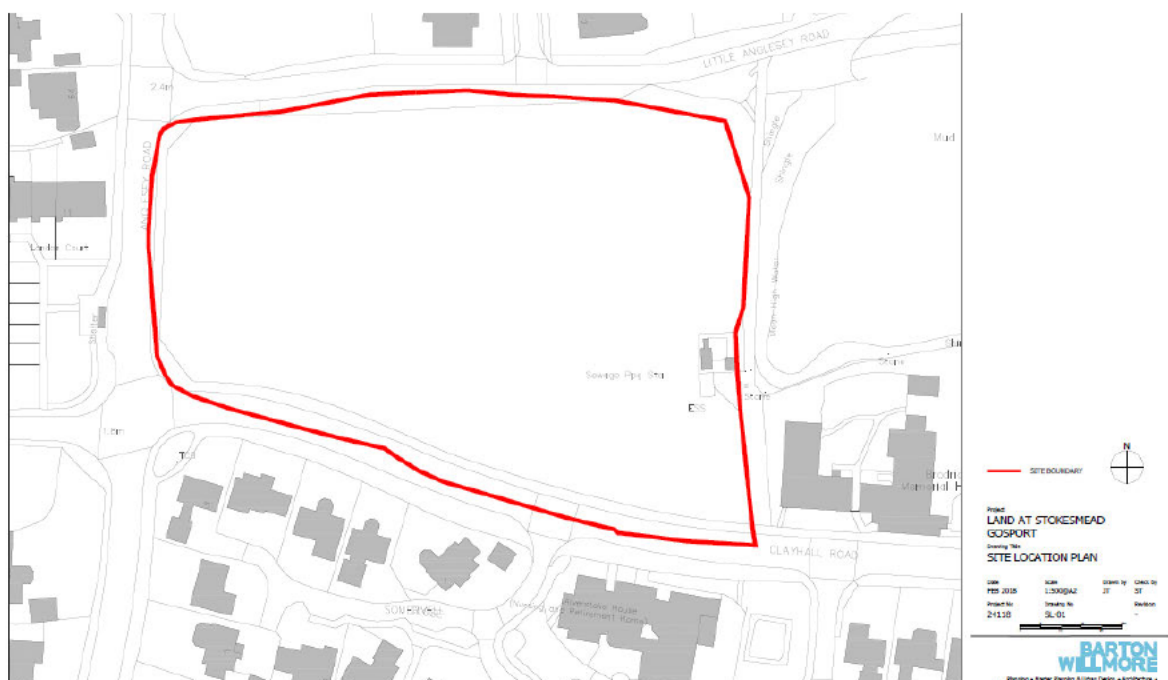
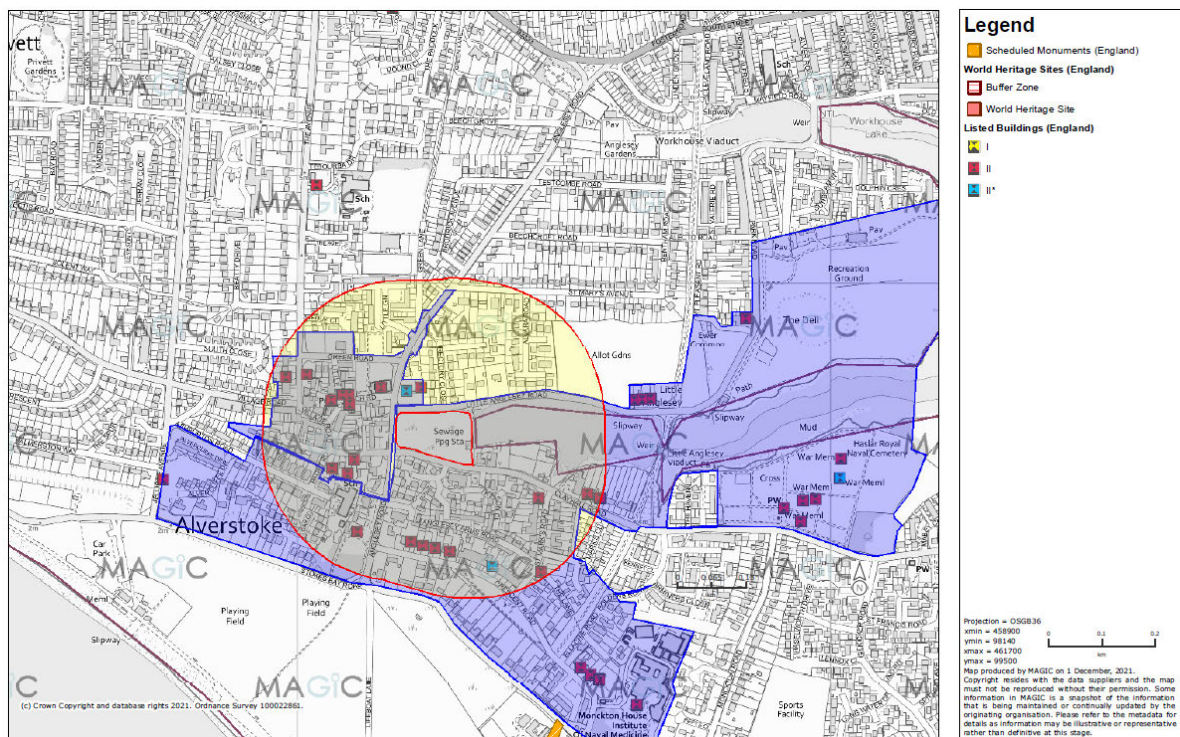


Figure 1: Site location plan

Heritage Designations

5. A desktop review of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) identified several designated heritage assets within the 250m study area (fig.2 below). However, only the following are considered to have the potential to be affected potential development on the Site:

- Anglesey Conservation Area
- Alverstoke Conservation Area
- Church of St Mary – Grade II
- Old Rectory Undercroft – Grade II*
- Stables at rear of Alverstoke Rectory – Grade II



6. Gosport Borough Council have an adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets. However, none of the entries would be impacted should development come forward on the Site.
7. An online search of the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER) identified several entries within the site and close proximity. Those outside the site boundary primarily relate to already identified designated heritage assets or archaeological deposits. The entries within the Site include:
- Green Pastures (HER Record ID: 52143)
 - Stokesmead Field (HER Record ID: 52058)
 - Sea Wall, Little Anglesey Road (HER Record ID: 69906)
 - Kickergill Tower (HER Record ID: 68539)
8. The scope of this report does not include consideration of the known or unknown archaeological potential of the Site. As such, only the Green Pastures and Stokesmead Field have been considered at this time.

Significance Appraisal

9. The NPPF defines the significance of heritage assets as “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting”.
10. Historic England’s ‘Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (GPA3, 2017) makes it clear that setting is not a heritage asset and can only contribute towards the significance of a heritage asset. This document sets out a series of attributes that it may be appropriate to consider when assessing significance: the physical surroundings of the assets, including its relationship with other heritage assets; and the way that the asset is experienced.
11. There is currently no adopted Conservation Area Appraisal for either of the adopted conservation areas. Historic England undertook an Historic Urban Characterisation Study which was published in 2014 in which the area surrounding the Site was identified as falling within the Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA) ‘HUCA26: Anglesey’ and ‘HUCA28: Alverstoke and Gromer’. The document provides a summary of the key characteristics of each area.

Anglesey Conservation Area

12. The Anglesey Conservation Area was designated in 1975 and the Council, as part of the Heritage Action Zone program, is in the process of preparing new Conservation Area Appraisals for each of their Conservation Areas.
13. The 2014 Historic Urban Characterisation Study noted in relation to HUCA26 that this area is characterised by residential development, primarily laid out in the 19th century and featuring large, detached dwellings set in expansive plots. The architecture in the central area is Regency with later post-war housing becoming prevalent as you move east and west out of the central areas.
14. The area contains a large number of listed buildings which reinforces the architectural quality of this part of Gosport and its importance during this period when Gosport was attempting to establish itself as a seaside resort. The area around Stokesmead contains evidence of former waterways and infrastructure from this time and the conservation area includes many of the buildings and infrastructure that were created as part of the development of the ‘resort’.
15. The significance of the Anglesey Conservation Area is primarily derived from its architectural quality and remnants of the development of the 19th century seaside resort. The area around Stokesmead Fields is acknowledged to contain evidence of the historic development and historically has formed part of the tidal landscape in this area.
16. The Site is located to the western boundary of the conservation area, where it meets the Alverstoke Conservation Area along Anglesey Road. Views within the conservation area are linear and primarily focussed along the primary routes running east and west. Views across the Site are only possible from the north eastern corner where the boundary

planting is lower. However, this view would be considered to be low in value as it does not include any townscape features of note.

17. Whilst the field is partially owned by the Council and is regarded locally as an important area of local space, it currently has an unkept appearance with and is heavily screened from the surrounding development by mature trees and hedgerow planting. The green and verdant nature of the Site is characteristic of the surrounding streets; however, in its current condition it would be considered to have a somewhat negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. There does not appear to be any defined public access to the Site at this time. A public right of way extends along the eastern boundary of the Site and is used as part of the recreation associated with Stoke Lake.

Alverstoke Conservation Area

18. Again, designated in 1975 the Alverstoke Conservation area is focussed on the former medieval layout of the old hamlet that once stood here. Many of the medieval lanes and building plots survive but the buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries. The Grade II listed Church of St Mary is a landmark feature within the conservation area and is located at the core of the historic village. The surrounding area is defined by post-war development which now surrounds the historic core.
19. The Site is located to the east of the conservation boundary forming part its wider townscape setting. As noted previously Stokesmead Field is regarded locally as an important area of local space which in its current condition detracts somewhat from the high-quality architecture that defines the eastern part of the conservation area. From within the conservation area, there is no sense of Stoke Lake beyond the site to the east and the extent of boundary planting directs views north and south along Anglesey Road towards the church.

Church of St Mary

20. The Grade II listed church is located to the northwest of the Site, on the corner of Church Road and Anglesey Road. The heritage significance of the building is derived from its architectural and historic interest as an example of 19th century ecclesiastical building. The present church dates from 1865 when it replaced an earlier structure which was believed to date from the Medieval period. The church was designed by Henry Woodyer in the Decorated style with stone walling and a crown post roof.
21. Set within an enclosed churchyard to the north and west the church is bounded by a low masonry wall with railings. Despite the boundary fencing, the church has an open feel within the streetscene. The Site is located c. 36m from the churchyard and its closest point and has no associative or functional relationship with the church.
22. As noted previously, historically the Site comprised water meadows before the river was diverted via a culvert. At this time the Site would have positively contributed to the wider townscape setting of the church. However, the dilapidated and overgrown state of the Site today would at best be considered to make a neutral contribution. Views looking southeast from the church towards the Site give no appreciation of the open space

beyond and the site is entirely screened by the existing boundary planting which contributes to the verdant character of the streetscape along Anglesey Road.

Old Rectory Undercroft and stables to rear

23. The Grade II* listed Old Rectory Undercroft comprises two elements: the medieval undercroft, and 18th century house above. The current house dates from 1775 when the medieval hall was converted to a high-quality Georgian residence with the principal elevation fronting Little Anglesey Road. In the early 19th century, the building was extended to the north with a new finely proportioned elevation to the rear, giving the appearance of two separate buildings when viewed from the west along Anglesey Road.
24. The building is a well-proportioned architectural design which reflects the wealth and importance the church held within the historic settlement. Set within a large plot, the building forms a group with the adjacent church and together they are a positive feature within the townscape.
25. The Grade II listed stables are located to the northeast of the rectory building which is contemporary to the 18th century house on the site. The functionality of the building is evident in its simple architectural style. The stables have more recently been converted to residential use and as such the associative links to the rectory have been eroded somewhat.
26. The HER entry for Stokesmead Field notes the undercroft to the Alverstoke Rectory was originally constructed as a merchant's house and the undercroft which survives would have been used to store goods being imported into the area.
27. The Site is located to the south of these assets and whilst historically, the rectory would have overlooked the Site, the boundary planting and extensive planting within the Site means that there is limited appreciation of the open space. Historically, once again the Site would have been considered to make a positive contribution to the setting of the listed buildings, but it makes a limited contribution to its heritage significance.

Development Potential

28. The Site had previously been put forward as a potential allocation in the previously Gosport Borough Council Local Plan; however, it was not taken forward in the preferred options.
29. The Inspector set out a detailed reason as to why the Site should not be taken forward, paragraph 22 of the Inspector's Report notes *"Stokesmead Field is...an important feature of the Anglesey Conservation Area and provides a setting for a number of important buildings within the adjoining Alverstoke Conservation Area."* As noted above, it is considered that Site makes a limited contribution to the heritage significance of the Alversoke Conservation Area, the Grade II* Old Rectory, Grade II listed stables, and Church of St Mary other than forming part of their wider townscape setting.
30. The Site is located within the Anglesey Conservation Area, and it is acknowledged that the verdant character of the Site is an important characteristic of the conservation area and in that regard the Site makes some contribution to the character and appearance of

the conservation area. However, the overgrown and dilapidated condition of the Site does detract from the quality of the space and there are clear opportunities for enhancements.

31. In light of the high-level assessment above it is considered that the Site has potential to accommodate some development, but that this would need to be carefully positioned on the Site and should be accompanied by a robust and detailed soft landscape scheme. The opportunity to clear the Site and provide public access would be a clear public benefit that could be successfully facilitated in any proposed scheme. There may also be an opportunity to include interpretation in relation to the former Kickergill Tower to the southeast of the Site and sea wall to the eastern boundary which would also result in direct heritage benefits.
32. There are no views across the Site to any key landmarks or townscape features that would need to be considered in any layout at this time. However, development of the Site presents opportunities to create new views towards St Mary's Church from within the Site. An element of planting and mature trees should be retained to the boundaries of the Site as these contribute positively to the character of the surrounding conservation areas.
33. The open space around the Church of St Mary and Old Rectory was identified as a positive feature of their setting by the Inspector during the previous Local Plan Examination, however the indicative proposals and land use were for a much larger quantum of development and a significant reduction in the open space within the Site.
34. Development proposals should position the built form to the centre, northeast and southeast of the Site in order to respond positively to the surrounding built form. To the south, properties which front the road would be in keeping with the existing character of the conservation area.
35. The western portion of the Site should be retained and repurposed as public open space in order to retain the open character of the Site immediately adjacent to the listed buildings. This would be a positive feature within any scheme and will ensure that the Site continues to make a positive contribution to the setting of these buildings.

Conclusions

36. Any potential impact to the heritage significance of the identified heritage assets would arise through the introduction of built form within their wider landscape setting, with the exception of the Anglesey Conservation Area in which the Site is located.
37. At this stage there is no formalised scheme, but the assessment set out above considers that the Site has capacity to accommodate a lower density of residential development, set within a high-quality landscape. The opportunities to secure meaningful enhancements and increased public amenity space, will result in direct heritage benefits to the Anglesey Conservation Area creating an area that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area as well as to the setting of those adjacent heritage assets.
38. In principle, it is proposed that the Site could be developed, subject to detailed design, layout and landscaping proposals, with some enhancements and minimal harm to the

significance of the identified heritage assets, such that it is considered possible for the Site to be developed in a manner which would meet the legislative tests set out in the 1990 Act and the principles of the NPPF.