

Folkestone Racecourse and surrounding area

Site capacity and initial options

CONFIDENTIAL



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Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design

Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Planning Policy Issues**
- **Development Principles**
- **Initial Capacities**

Introduction

BBP Regeneration has been appointed by Shepway District Council to advise on bringing land forward for employment to meet identified needs in the district. As part of this work, BBP has identified that the former Folkestone Racecourse and the area around it may have potential for a strategic allocation including residential and employment.

This high level report provides an initial view on the potential of the area for development, setting out the current planning policy context, principles as to how the area could be brought forward for development and two board options. No discussion has taken place with the landowners or Shepway District Council at this stage, and this report is confidential.

The plan opposite indicates the broad 'area of search' - the red line is not a site boundary. The area primarily comprises the former Folkestone Racecourse and is located to the north-west of Folkestone just south of the M20. The study area identified is bounded by the small settlement of Barrow Hill to the west; the M20 and High Speed railway to the north (with the Kent North downs beyond); the A20 and Sandling Park House to the east; and the substantially open countryside with the settlement of Lympe to the south. Within the heart of the site area is the existing racecourse, the small settlement and station at Westenhanger, the Scheduled Ancient Monument and listed buildings at Westenhanger Castle and a large motorway service area off the M20.





Plan showing area of search

Planning Policy Context

Shepway District Council's Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on Wednesday 18th September 2013. Key current planning policies affecting the site are as follows:

Area A (Area bounded by Railway A20/Stone Street)

- Policy LR5: Covers most of the area. The District Planning Authority will permit proposals for the intensification of uses at Folkestone Racecourse involving the development of additional leisure, recreational, tourism and exhibition facilities subject to proposals meeting all of the following criteria :
 - i. amenity, environmental and highway considerations and compliance with countryside conservation policy
 - ii. provision of a flood risk assessment
 - iii. Proposals protect the nationally important historic buildings, archaeological remains and setting of the Westenhanger castle complex.
- Westenhanger Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and there are 2 listed buildings within the site

Area B (Area bounded by the railway and M20)

- Channel Tunnel Safeguard Area and Area at risk from tidal/fluviial flooding

Area C (Area bounded by Stone Street and A20)

- Policy CO4 Special Landscape Area: Proposals should protect or enhance the natural beauty of the Special Landscape Area. The District Planning Authority will not permit development proposals that are inconsistent with this objective unless the need to secure economic and social wellbeing outweighs the need to protect the SLAs countywide landscape significance.

- Policy U4 - Protection of Ground & Surface Water Resources: Development will be permitted unless it is demonstrated that it would lead to an unacceptable risk to the quality or potential yield of surface or ground water resources or lead to an unacceptable risk of pollution. Groundwater resources most sensitive to development are indicated on the Proposals Map as Groundwater Source Protection Zones.

Area D (Open area to east of A20 within Sandling Park House)

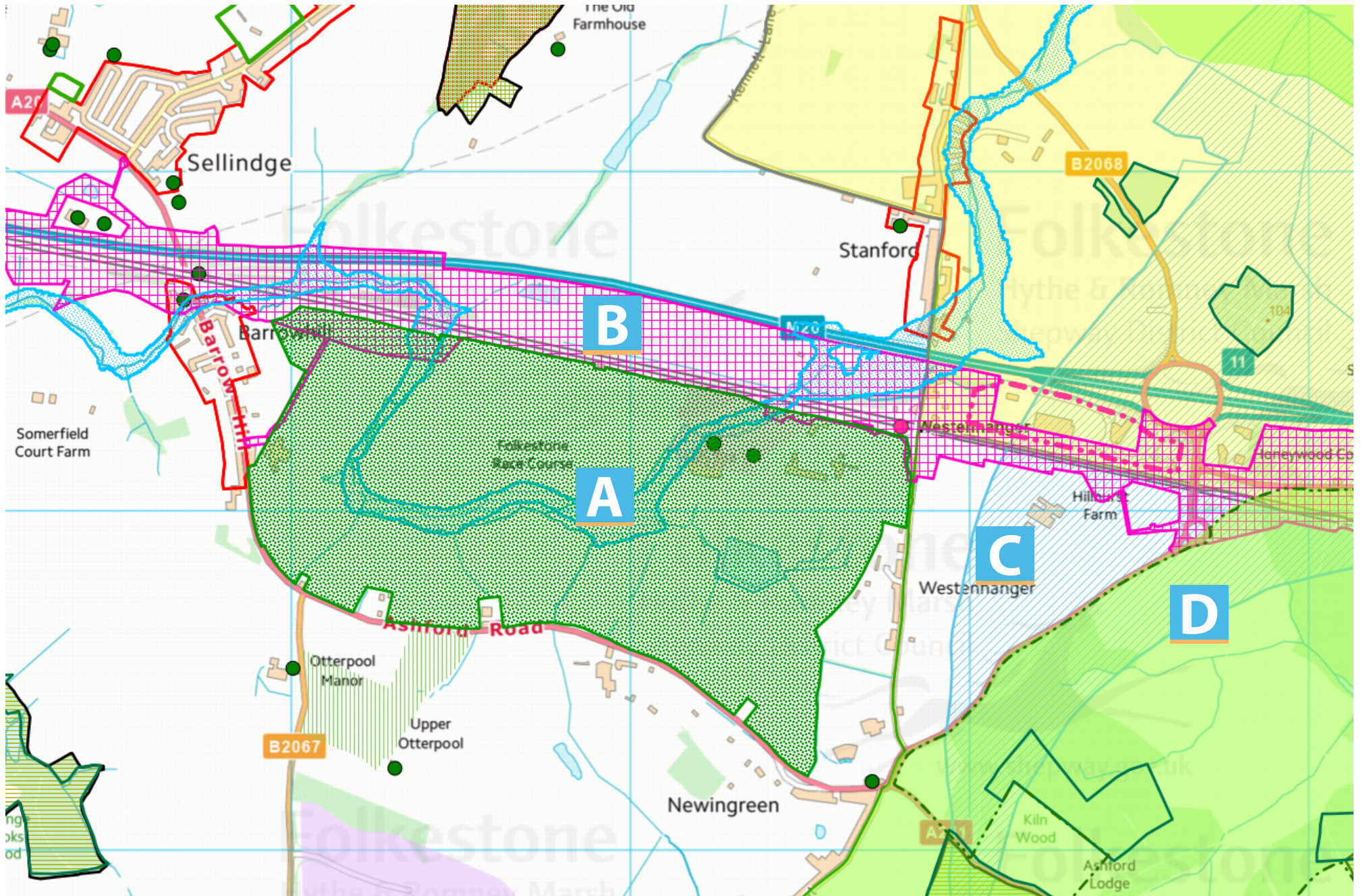
Constrained by landscape designations -

- Policy BE18 - Historic Parks & Gardens
- Policy CO3 - Landscape - Kent Downs AONB
- Policy CO4 - Special Landscape Area (as above)
- Policy U4 - Protection of Ground & Surface Water Resources (as above)

Conclusions

The current planning policy context would not support residential and employment allocation at Folkestone Racecourse. Even with the removal of Policy LR5, there are considerable landscape sensitivities that mean that development would require very sensitive design (and would be likely to mean that development densities are at the lower end of the scale).

Representations were made to the Core Strategy Review seeking the allocation of the site for some 800 dwellings along with the retention of the racecourse. This was rejected, and the racecourse closed in 2012.



B

A

C

D

Sellindge

Stanford

Westennanger

Westennanger

Hilliers Farm

Newingreen

Kiln Wood

Asford Lodge

Somerfield Court Farm

Otterpool Manor

Upper Otterpool

The Old Farmhouse

A21

B2068

B2067

A21

M20

11

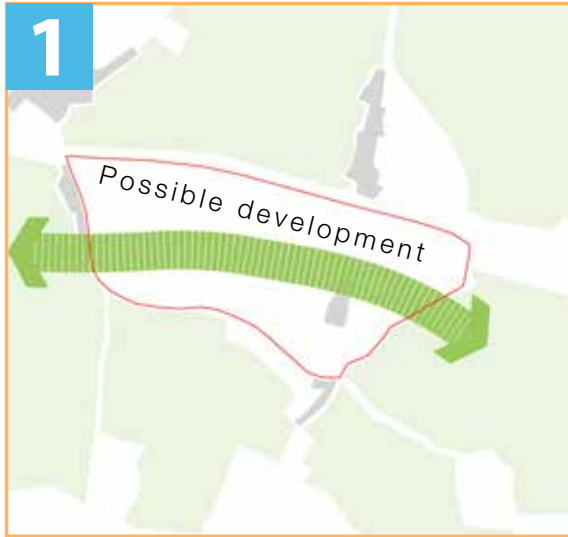
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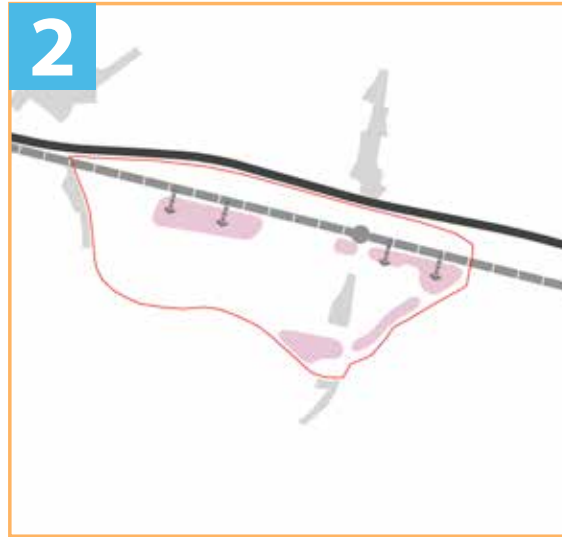
Folkestone
the
Marsh

WATER



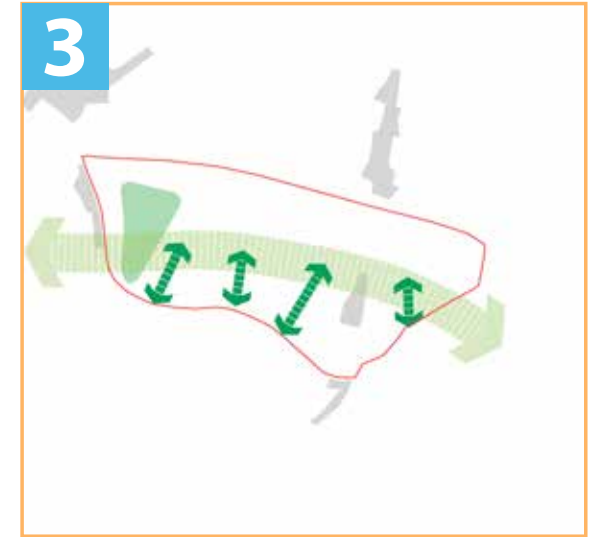
Green links through the site

Connecting the countryside and accommodating flood risk areas within a green swathe through the centre of the development



Using employment uses as a buffer

Employment areas as a buffer between noise-sensitive residential uses and the high speed railway and surrounding busy roads



A green network

Further connecting the development to the open countryside and maintaining green gaps between the neighbouring settlements



Improving connections

Providing key links to the station at Westenhangar through new roads. This would maintain the character of Stone Street, by avoiding increasing traffic along this narrow and historic road.



Providing social infrastructure

Providing new facilities for the new and existing communities, possible including schools and open spaces/parks based around good public transport links and the strategic road network

Option 1:

Looking only at the land to the west of Stone Street bounded by the M20 and the A20:

Key principles:

- Green Gap between Barrowhill and any new development;
- Green link through the site accommodating open spaces, river walks and any potential flooding;
- Central Park with Lake
- Mixed uses around the railway station, new station square and parking;
- Residential development in the centre of the site and adjacent to the existing houses at Westenhanger;
- Improved views and links to the SAM at Westenhanger Castle;
- Employment uses along the railway line and at the busy road junction.
- Lorry parking within the railway/M20 island.

Initial capacities

Gross Site Areas:

Main site - 175ha (approx)

Lorry Park - 25ha

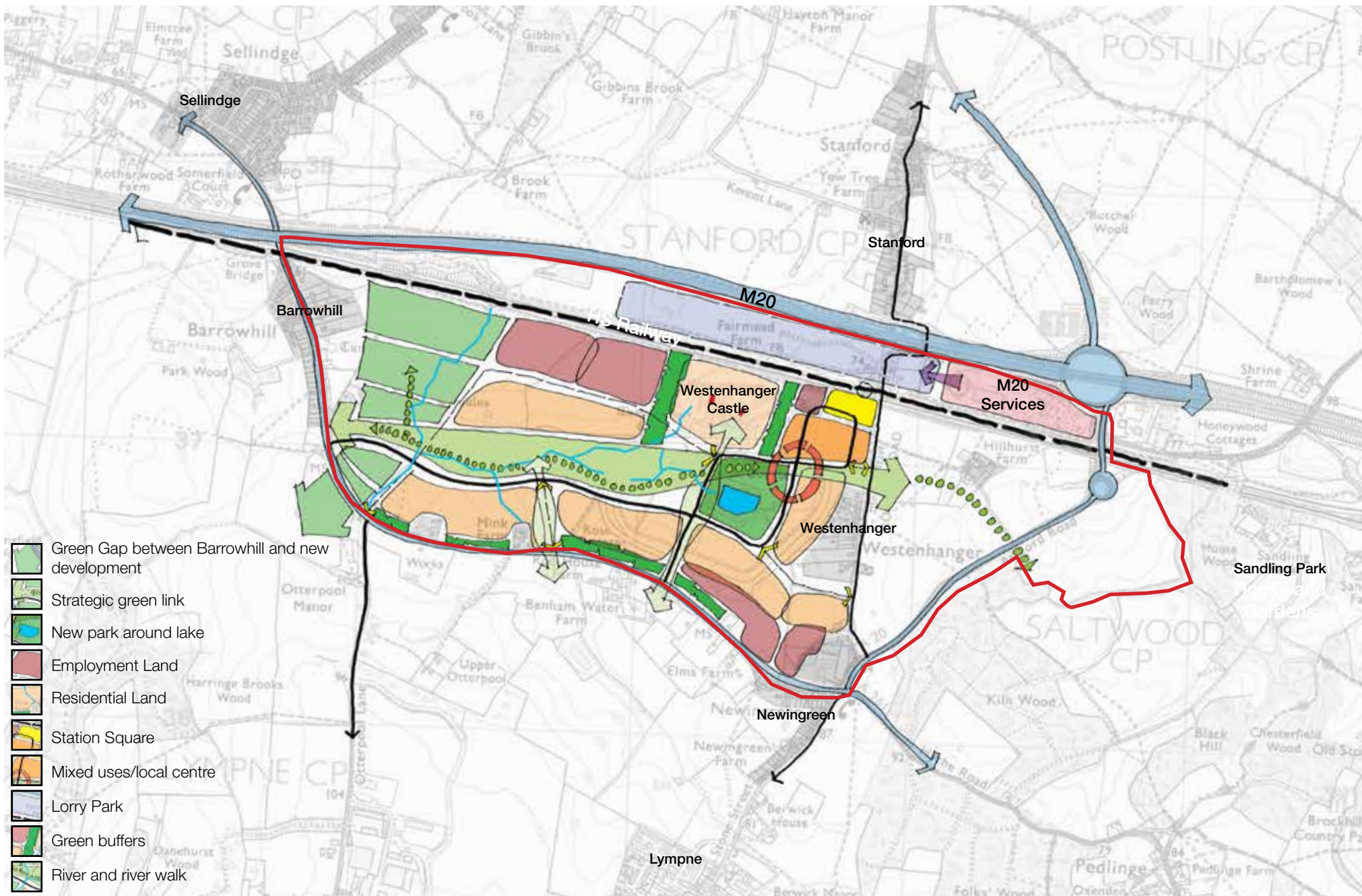
Residential Land - 45ha - Approx 1125 units at 25 u/ha)

Mixed Use/Station area - 8ha

Parkland and open space - 35ha

Employment - 20ha

Westenhanger Castle - 11ha



-  Green Gap between Barrowhill and new development
-  Strategic green link
-  New park around lake
-  Employment Land
-  Residential Land
-  Station Square
-  Mixed uses/local centre
-  Lorry Park
-  Green buffers
-  River and river walk

Option 1:

Looking only at the whole of the study area:

Key principles:

- Green Gap between Barrowhill and any new development;
- Green link through the site accommodating open spaces, river walks and any potential flooding;
- Central Park with Lake
- Mixed uses around the railway station, new station square and parking;
- Residential development in the centre of the site and adjacent to the existing houses at Westenhanger;
- Improved views and links to the SAM at Westenhanger Castle;
- Employment uses along the railway line and at the busy road junction.
- Lorry parking within the railway/M20 island
- Potential for development to the east of the A20 at Sandling Park due to the road connections to the M20

Initial capacities

Gross Site Areas:

Main site - 175ha (approx)

Lorry Park - 25ha

Land to east of Stone Street (inc Sandling Park) - 55ha

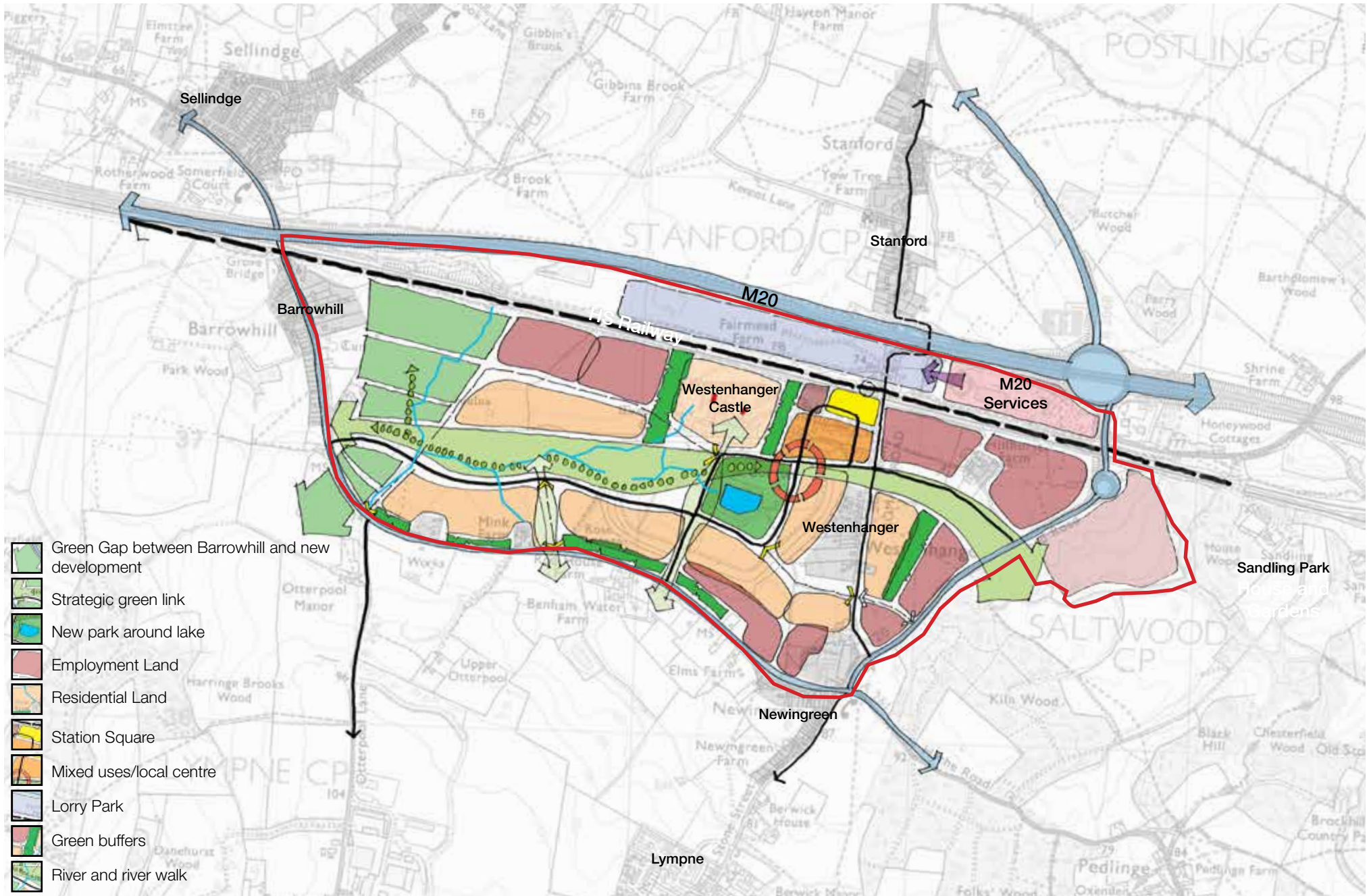
Residential Land - 50ha (1250 units at 25u/ha)

Mixed Use/Station area - 8ha

Parkland and open space - 44ha

Employment - 45ha + 15ha at Sandling Park

Westenhanger Castle - 11ha



-  Green Gap between Barrowhill and new development
-  Strategic green link
-  New park around lake
-  Employment Land
-  Residential Land
-  Station Square
-  Mixed uses/local centre
-  Lorry Park
-  Green buffers
-  River and river walk

