

An aerial architectural sketch of a residential development, showing a dense arrangement of houses with gabled roofs, interspersed with trees and winding paths. The sketch is rendered in a light orange line-art style against a solid orange background.

FORMER MARCHON WORKS, Cumbria
Design and Access Statement

Prepared for Persimmon Homes & Whitehaven Developments Limited

RevB

AUGUST 2025

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared in support of a hybrid planning application seeking full planning permission for the erection of 139 residential dwellings (C3), new vehicular accesses off High Road, public open space and ancillary infrastructure and outline planning permission for residential development, retail (E(a,b,c,e,f), F2(a) and ancillary infrastructure with all matters reserved other than access at the former Marchon Chemical Factory, High Road, Whitehaven.

The DAS outlines the evolution of the scheme, which now comprises: Up to 139 residential units within the initial (Phase 1) development area; A revised commercial parcel repositioned to the south-east corner of the site; Retained and enhanced landscaped buffers and open spaces;

Associated infrastructure, pedestrian and cycle routes, and two vehicular access points from High Road.

This submission supersedes earlier proposals which had included development across the wider northern greenfield area. That portion of the site, west of the historic Wagon Way, is now excluded from the development footprint.

The DAS explains how site-specific constraints, including historical contamination, below-ground voiding, fault lines, and known mine shafts, have shaped the updated masterplan. It demonstrates how the proposals continue to respond positively to the local context, policy framework, and community aspirations.

The document should be read in conjunction with accompanying technical reports including the Environmental Statement, Ecology Report, Visual Impact Assessment, and Transport Assessment. The masterplan remains within the previously submitted red line application boundary.

1.2 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The revised proposals for Marchon seek to transform a challenging but well-located brownfield site into a distinctive coastal neighbourhood that builds on Whitehaven's regeneration ambitions.

The key objectives of the development are to:

Deliver a residential-led development of 139 homes, forming Phase 1 of a wider regeneration vision, while respecting geological and environmental constraints;

Provide a robust framework for green infrastructure, open space, and ecological enhancement across the wider site;

Create a Local Centre/Retail in the revised south-eastern location, bringing services and potential employment space into walking distance of new homes. It could also accommodate retail and ancillary uses to serve both the new development and the surrounding residential communities.

Establish a clear sense of place by drawing on the site's unique topography, its proximity to the coast, and the legacy of its industrial past;

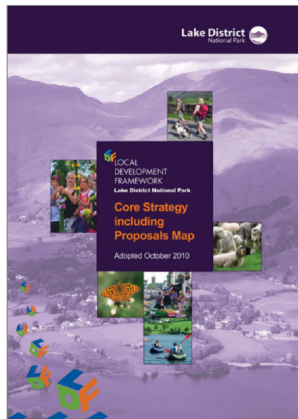
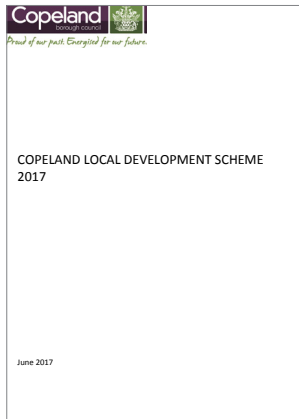
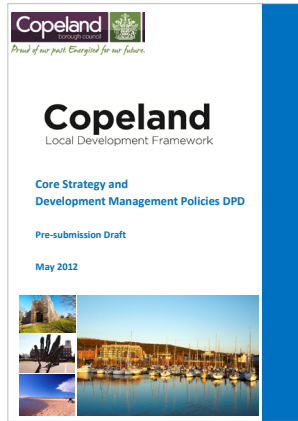
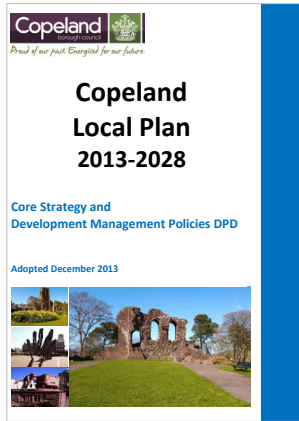
Facilitate safe and legible access, integrating new routes with existing footpath and cycleway networks, and reinforcing connections to Whitehaven town centre;

Avoid and mitigate risks associated with subsurface instability, including historical contamination and mine-related features.

In doing so, the development aims to make meaningful progress toward delivering sustainable growth, high quality design, and local economic uplift, all while respecting the sensitive physical context of the site.

2.0 DESIGN CONTEXT

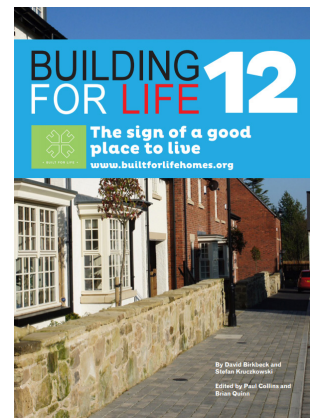
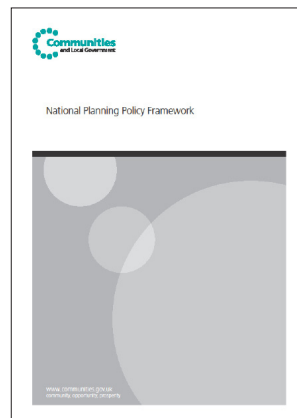
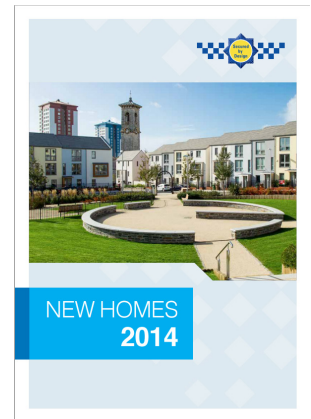
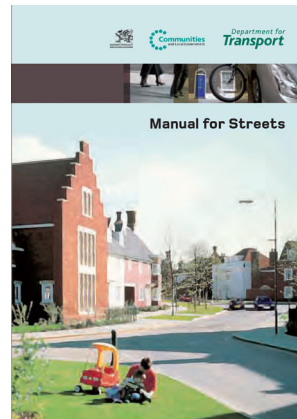
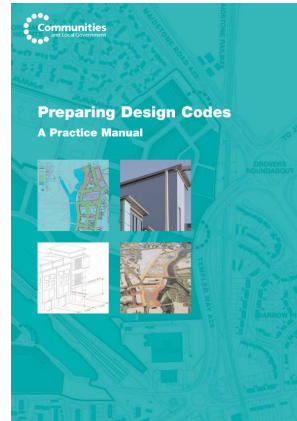
2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT



The Marchon site lies within the settlement boundary of Whitehaven and forms part of the strategic framework for growth identified by Copeland Borough Council. Historically designated as an “Opportunity Site” (ref. PD2021), the area is recognised for its potential to deliver new residential and mixed-use development, responding to local housing need and supporting wider regeneration objectives.

The site was formerly associated with heavy industry, most notably the Marchon chemical works, and adjoins land previously earmarked for the proposed West Cumbria Mining (WCM) facility. However, in late 2024, plans for the UK’s first deep coal mine in more than 30 years were formally abandoned following a successful legal challenge and High Court ruling. This marked a significant shift in the long-term development prospects for the area.

The withdrawal of the WCM proposal removes a major industrial use from the local planning landscape. It reinforces the importance of sustainable placemaking and climate-conscious regeneration, aligning with national policy objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and local policy direction under the emerging Copeland Local Plan.



The Marchon masterplan has evolved accordingly. It now reflects a reduced and more focused development footprint, with residential and commercial uses sensitively integrated within a retained green and coastal landscape. This approach is consistent with the national climate agenda, biodiversity enhancement goals, and the principles of Building for a Healthy Life.

2.2 SITE LOCATION



LOCATION

The site lies approximately 1.6 miles (2.5 km) south of Whitehaven town centre, within the administrative boundary of Copeland Borough, Cumbria. Whitehaven is a coastal town on the edge of the Solway Firth, approximately 38 miles (61 km) south-west of Carlisle.

The site occupies an elevated and highly prominent position on the south-western edge of the town, offering long-range views towards the Irish Sea, the Solway Coast AONB, south-west Scotland, and the Isle of Man. It is located immediately west of High Road, a key route linking Whitehaven with settlements to the south.

The land forms part of the former Marchon chemical works and was historically used for industrial purposes, but has since become largely vacant and overgrown. Though significantly altered by previous uses, the site retains a strong natural setting, with a distinctive topography and proximity to a designated coastal Heritage Strip.

The Marchon site is well positioned in relation to existing infrastructure and services. A number of bus routes operate along High Road, and a network of local footpaths, including the Wagon Way and the Cumbria Coastal Path, offer good pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY

The red line boundary for the application remains consistent with the previously submitted Hybrid Planning Application and encompasses the full extent of the former Marchon site.

However, the developable footprint within this boundary has been substantially refined to reflect updated site investigations and ground condition assessments. The current masterplan proposes:

Development focused entirely east of the historic Wagon Way, excluding the northern greenfield area from the layout;

A first phase residential area comprising 139 homes, forming the central and southern part of the site;

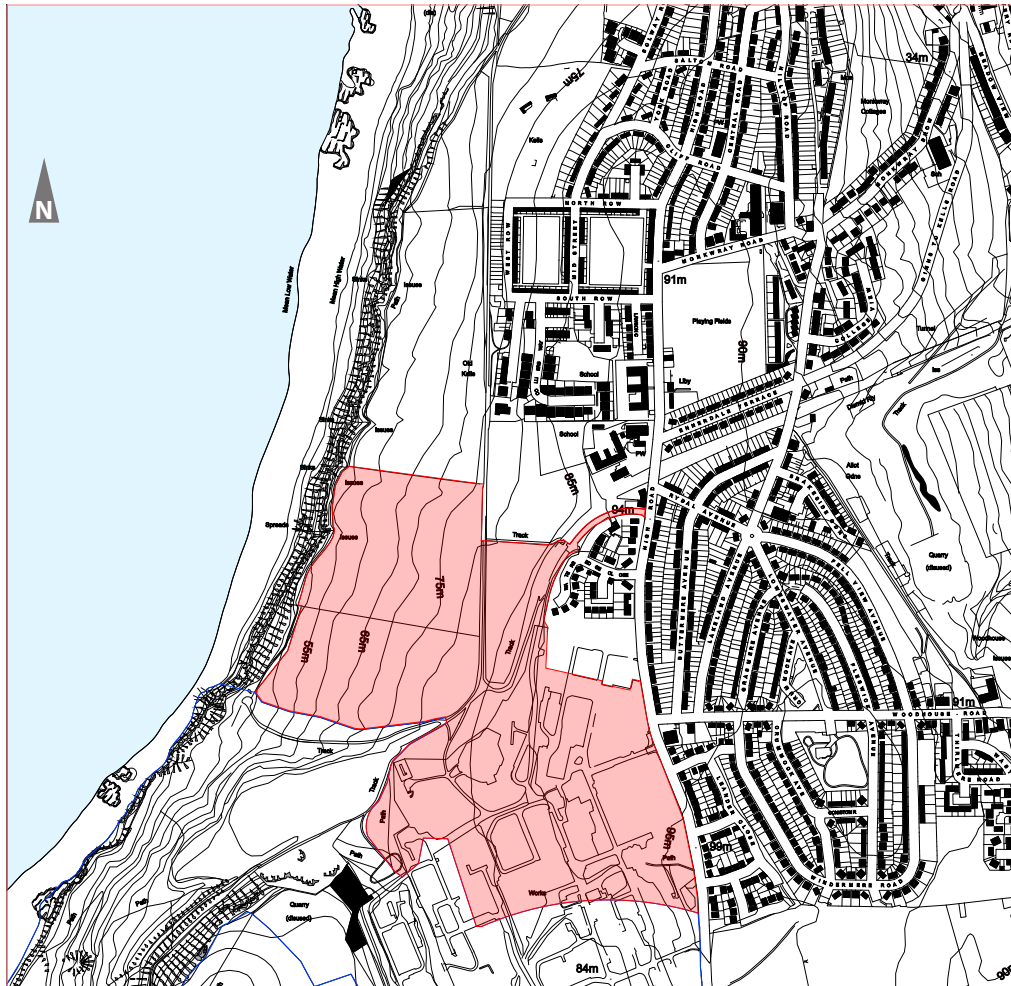
A repositioned commercial parcel in the south-east corner, located over ground identified as unsuitable for residential development but viable for employment uses;

Strategic green infrastructure corridors and public open space throughout the site;

Areas identified as undevelopable due to faulting, historical mine shafts, or sub-surface voiding retained as open space or ecological buffer zones.

This updated approach reflects a responsive and evidence-led strategy to land use, balancing development potential with environmental responsibility and long-term site safety.

2.3 APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY



Key:

Land Proposed for Residential Development

Land Proposed for West Cumbria Mining Ltd.

Red Line Application Boundary and landownership Blue Line

2.4 SITE CONTEXT



LOCAL AMENITIES

The Marchon site sits at the interface between the urban edge of Whitehaven and a dramatic coastal landscape. While formerly used for chemical processing, the site has now largely reverted to scrub-land and regenerating grassland, giving it a transitional character between industrial brownfield and naturalised open space. Key contextual features include:

Local Amenities: A modest range of services and facilities, including shops, a post office, and a community centre, are located within walking distance along High Road. Further amenities are accessible in Whitehaven town centre to the north.

Connectivity: Existing bus services operate along High Road, linking the site with Whitehaven and other local settlements. The site is also intersected by a network of public rights of way, including the historic Wagon Way and the Cumbria Coastal Path, offering opportunities for strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

Surrounding Development: Adjacent areas include modern residential neighbourhoods to the north-east and south-east, open green space to the west, and formerly proposed industrial land to the south. Although the West Cumbria Mining scheme has now been formally withdrawn, this southern boundary remains in visual and spatial transition.

Landscape Setting: The site's position on rising ground allows for expansive coastal views westwards. Topography, combined with layers of historic industrial land use and ecological regeneration, offers a unique setting for a sensitive and high-quality residential-led development.



Local shop and Post Office



The Lion



Bed & Breakfast



St Mary's Catholic Church



Community Hall

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3.2 LOCAL VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



The Marchon site is characterised by a complex set of opportunities and constraints, informed by its historic land use, topographical prominence, and sub-surface conditions.

3.1 Coastal Setting and Heritage Strip
The western portion of the site lies adjacent to the designated Heritage Coast Strip, recognised for its ecological and landscape value. Development has been carefully excluded from this area to protect key views, biodiversity, and the evolving recreational use of the coastal edge.

This decision reinforces the emerging identity of the site as a sustainable and climate-responsive neighbourhood, distinct from its former industrial use.

3.2 Visual Impact and Landscape Sensitivity
A Local Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared in support of the application. The site's elevated position and open seaward views offer both a challenge and an opportunity. The landscape sensitivity is considered medium-low for the proposed type of development, given the brownfield nature of much of the land. The updated masterplan responds by:

Aligning building form with existing contours to reduce visual intrusion;

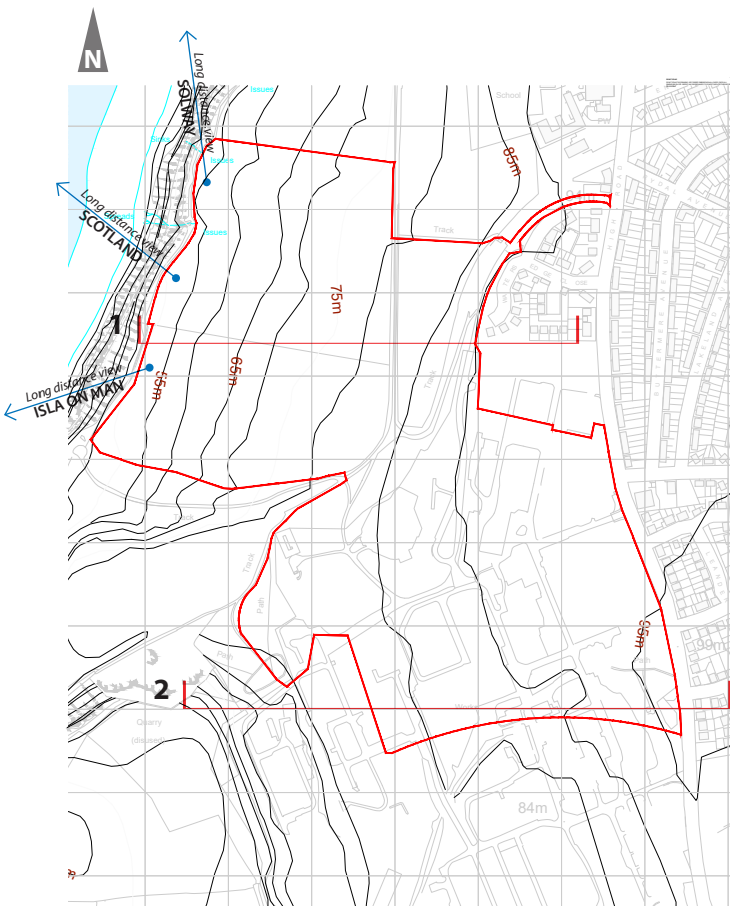
Retaining open coastal edges to preserve key sightlines;

Introducing landscape buffers and strategic green infrastructure to soften the development interface.



Significant Viewpoints - for Details Refer to Landscape and Visual Appraisal Report by Westwood Landscape

3.3 TOPOGRAPHY



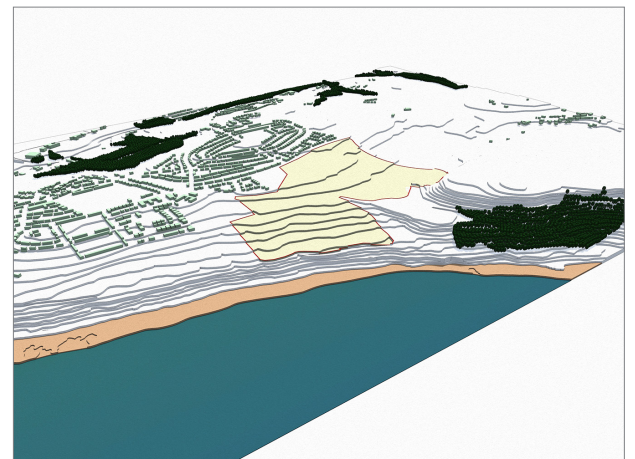
Topographic Survey

Key:

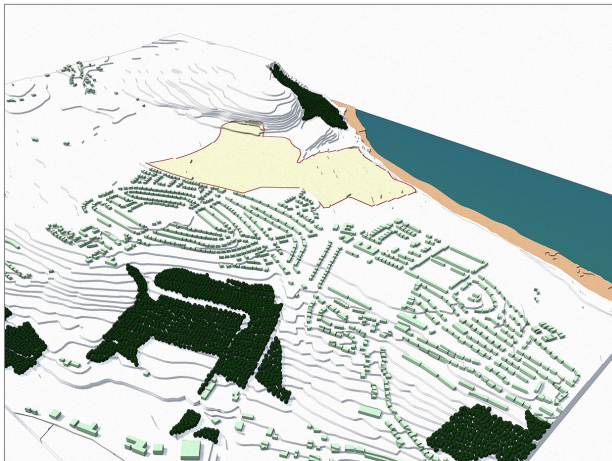
Red Line Boundary

The site rises approximately 36 metres from west (53m AOD) to east (89m AOD), with distinctive landform features including coastal ridges and internal valleys. These natural characteristics have directly influenced the layout and hierarchy of streets, supporting a layered, terraced architectural form that fits sensitively within the landscape.

This approach also preserves sea views for existing properties on Woodhouse Estate and Waters Edge Close, maintaining their long-standing visual connection with the coast.



View looking South West

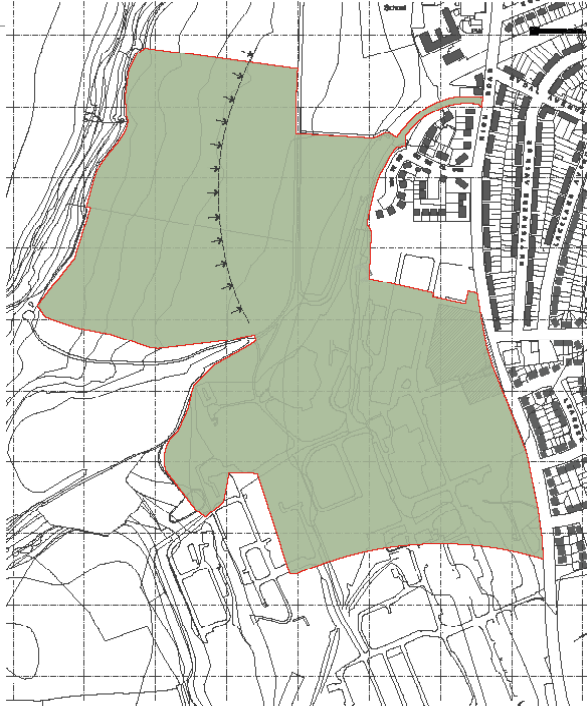


View looking South West



View looking North East

3.4 ECOLOGY



Key:

Red Line Boundary

An Ecological Survey and Assessment has identified both challenges and opportunities across the site. While parts of the brownfield land are ecologically limited, the coastal edge and greenfield margins support a mix of priority habitats, including semi-natural grassland, hedgerows, and potential reptile and bird nesting sites. Key ecological principles include:

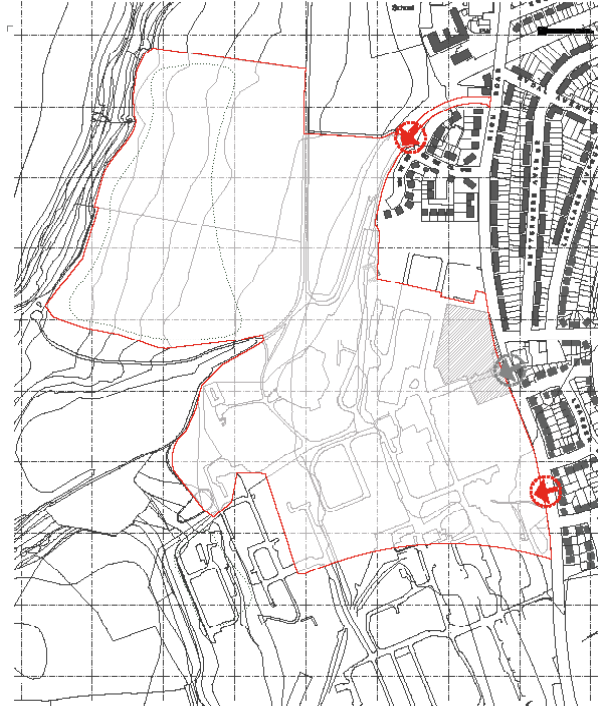
Retaining and enhancing species-rich habitats at the site's margins;

Integrating green corridors across the site to support biodiversity connectivity;

Establishing buffer zones to sensitive ecological features;

Incorporating SuDS and wetland habitats to support both drainage and wildlife.

3.5 PROPOSED ACCESS



Key:

Red Line Boundary

⬆ Proposed Primary Site Access

⬆ Proposed Secondary Site Access

Access remains consistent with the original proposals, with two principal points from High Road:

A northern access point serving Phase 1 housing;

A southern loop road facilitating residential and commercial access.

These entrances connect to a clear internal street hierarchy, which accommodates bus routes, emergency vehicle access, and active travel corridors integrated with the wider pedestrian and cycleway network.

4.0 WORKING WITH SITE AND CONTEXT

4.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The Marchon site presents a distinctive combination of coastal character, dramatic land-form, and complex historic land uses. The updated masterplan has been developed in close response to this context, recognising both the site's unique development potential and its technical and environmental sensitivities.

The current scheme has evolved through a robust process of investigation, analysis and testing, leading to a pragmatic and landscape-led layout that focuses development on the most stable and appropriate land parcels. Key elements of this approach include:

Avoiding development on geologically unstable ground, including voided, fissured or faulted areas;

Excluding the northern greenfield land west of the Wagon Way to maintain a natural coastal edge;

Introducing new green infrastructure corridors across and around the site;

Positioning commercial development in a location suited to its structural tolerance and local visibility;

Respecting the topography and heritage of the site to retain its identity while supporting a new, walkable neighbourhood.

CONSTRAINTS

The revised masterplan has been directly informed by the following constraints:

Geotechnical Instability: Extensive underground voiding (yellow-shaded areas) and deep geological fissures (light blue-shaded zones) significantly limit safe development. These areas are retained as non-developable space within the scheme.

Mine Shaft Locations: Two capped shafts at the southern boundary have informed the layout and structural buffer zones for adjacent development cells.

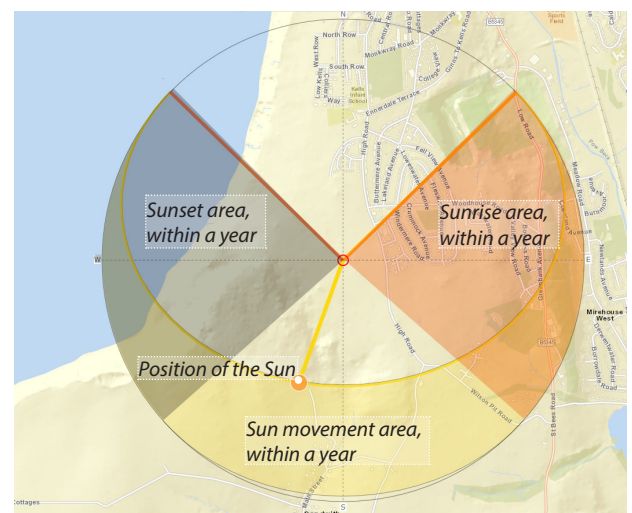
Topography and Erosion Risk: Steep gradients and coastal edge conditions present natural limitations on layout and construction methods.

Noise and Wind Exposure: The site is open to prevailing north-westerly winds and experiences moderate traffic noise from High Road.

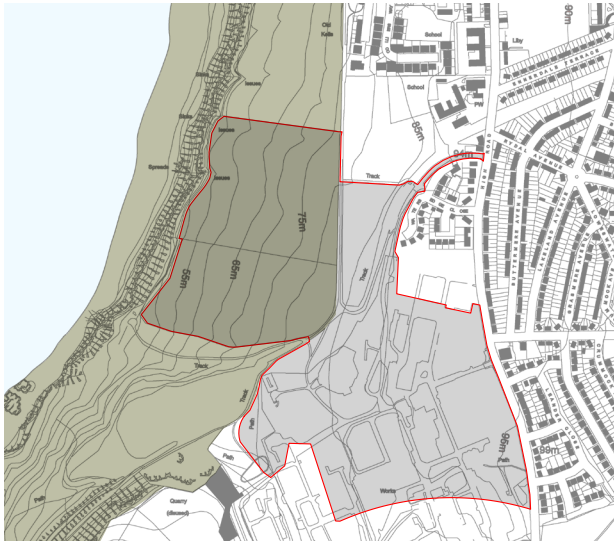
Historic Landscape Features: The north-south Wagon Way and its accompanying hedgerow are retained as a defining linear landscape feature and green corridor.

Heritage Coast Designation: The site lies partly adjacent to the designated Heritage Coast strip. This sensitive edge has been retained as open green space and enhanced through the landscape strategy.

Legacy Contamination: The site's industrial past requires careful remediation planning and phasing to ensure residential safety and environmental integrity.

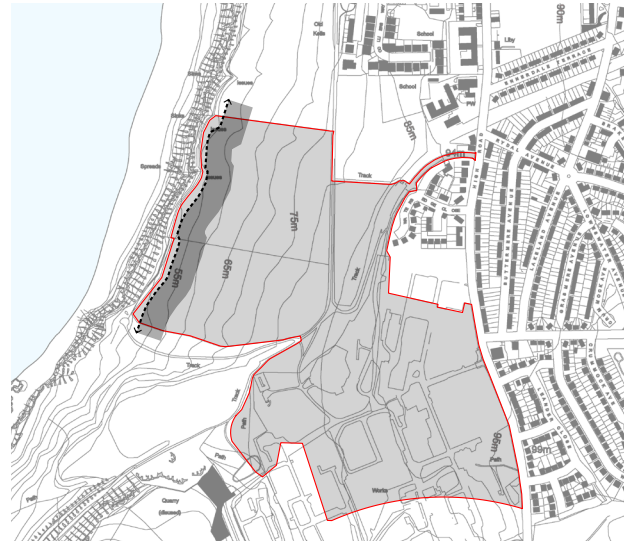


4.2 CONSTRAINTS



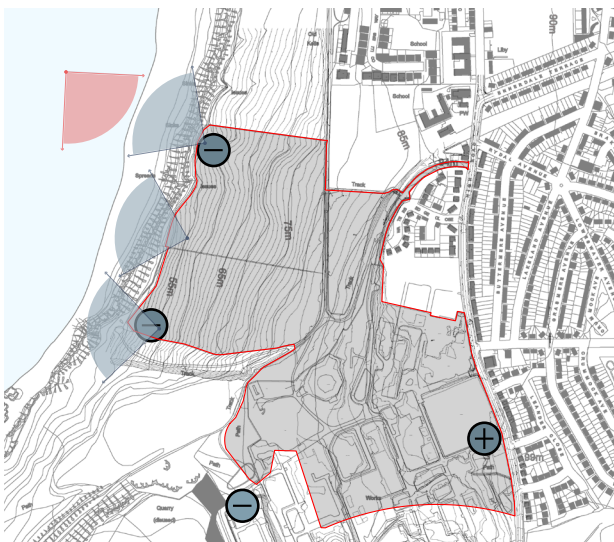
COASTAL HERITAGE STRIP

The site partly lies within the Heritage Strip running North- South along the Western Coastline.



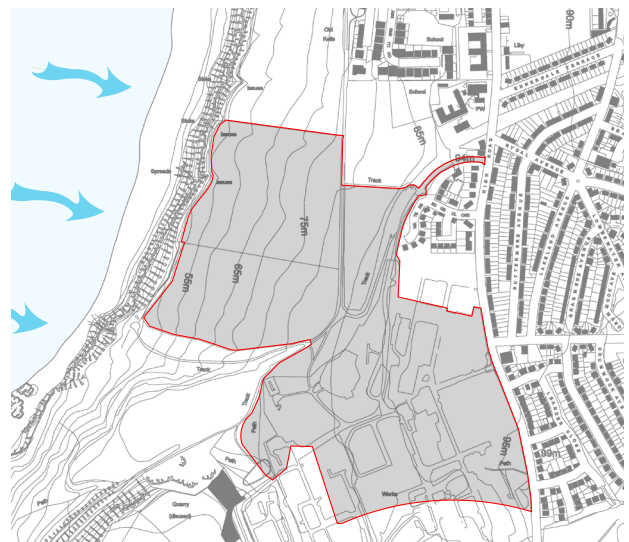
EROSION

Area of the erosion



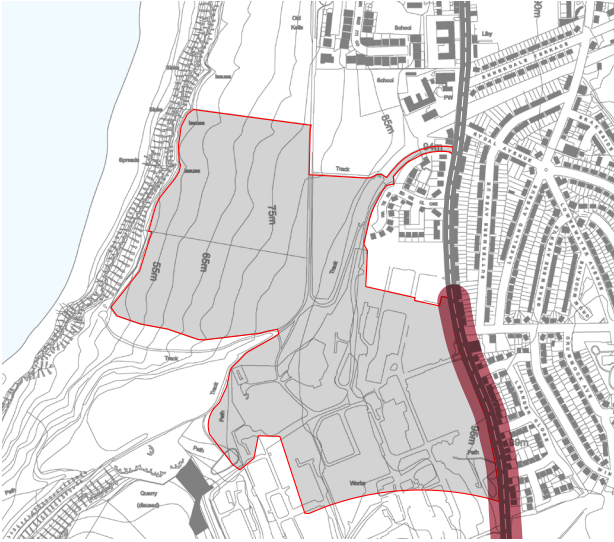
TOPOGRAPHY, HEIGHTS, VIEWS

The site offers long distance Western views.



WIND

The site is predominantly exposed to the North-Westerly wind.



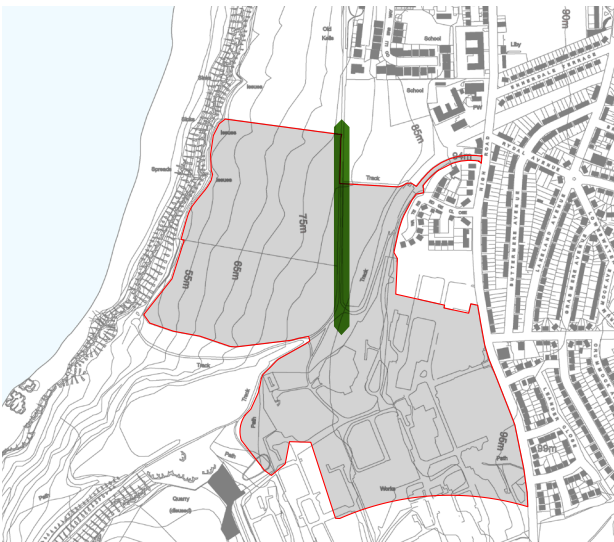
ROAD NOISE

There is noticeable traffic noise generated from High Road.



DEFINED BUILD LINE

A 25m green landscape buffer will be created to protect the enhanced coastal landscape habitat to the west of the wagonway.



WAGONWAY

The historic wagon way and hedgerow runs north - southwards



CONTAMINATION

There is a legacy of industrial Site contamination

4.3 OPPORTUNITY



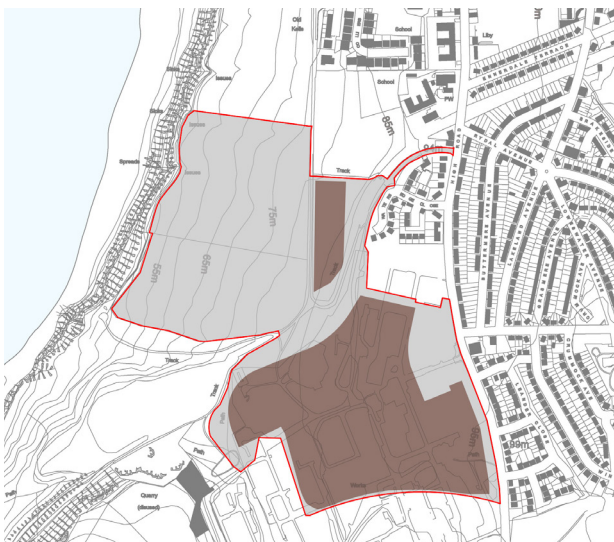
NEW SPINE ROAD AND LINK TO THE TOWN CENTRE

There is an opportunity to introduce three access points along the site off the existing High Road. The northern access point will provide a route to phase 1 of the residential development and the southern loop road will serve residential cells.



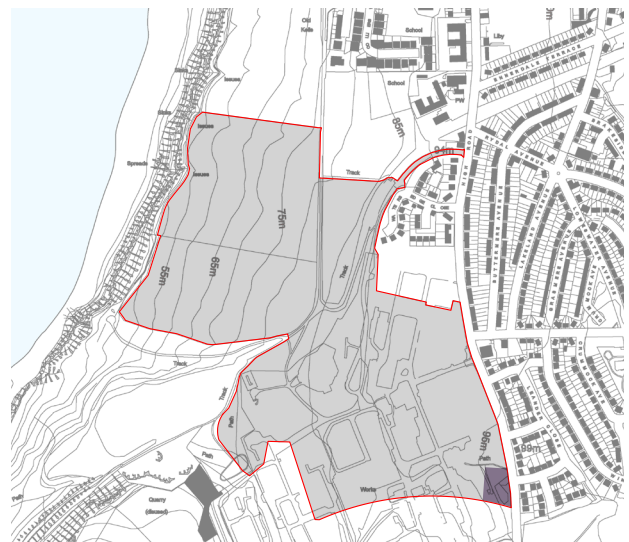
PEDESTRIAN LINKS

There is an opportunity to link with the existing local and national pedestrian and cycle network.



RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A range of housing types will be provided to meet local needs and respond appropriately to the current market.



LOCAL CENTRE/RETAIL - EMPLOYMENT

The site is allocated as an employment opportunity site. The Local Centre/Retail will provide employment opportunity to the residential site.



STRATEGIC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green fingers through the site with habitat enhancement measures.

OPPORTUNITIES

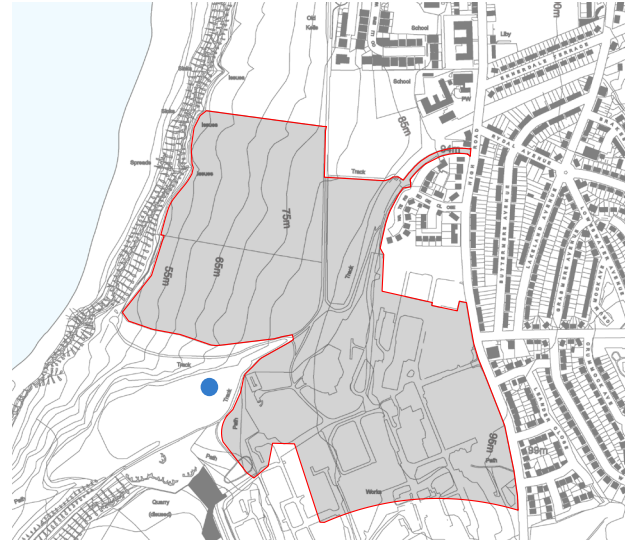
Despite these constraints, the Marchon site retains substantial opportunities for regeneration and place-making. The updated masterplan seeks to harness these, delivering a carefully balanced and resilient neighbourhood:

High Quality Coastal Living: The elevated position, panoramic sea views, and proximity to the coast offer an exceptional setting for new homes.

Focused Residential Development: Phase 1 proposes 139 homes within a well-defined and stable land parcel, providing a mix of typologies and tenures.

Reinforced Green Infrastructure: The masterplan introduces a network of green fingers, ecological corridors, and incidental open spaces that preserve and enhance biodiversity.

Sustainable Drainage Strategy: The site's lowest point provides a natural location for a SuDS wetland basin, integrating water management with habitat creation.



SUDS

The SuDS pond will be located at the lowest point of the site.

Improved Connectivity: Existing footpaths and the Wagon Way will be linked to new cycle routes and pedestrian networks, connecting to the wider town and coastal paths.

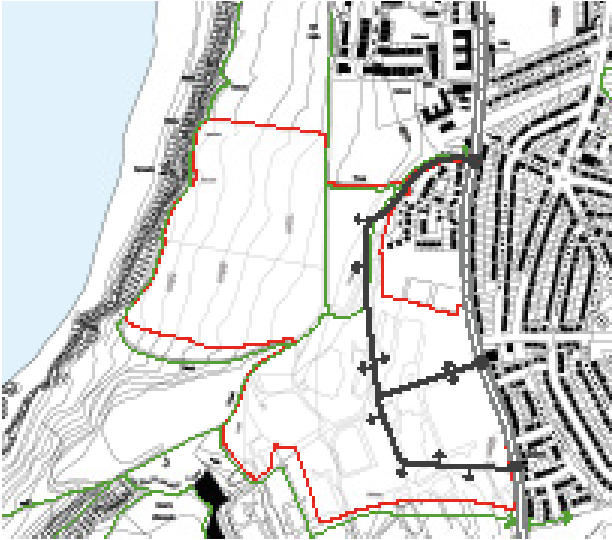
Landscape and View Corridors: A sensitive response to topography allows development to sit within the landscape, preserving views from both within and beyond the site.

Key:

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Proposed Access
-  Blue Line Boundary
-  Interface With Existing Landscape
-  Pedestrian Routes
-  Prevailing Wind Direction
-  Interface with Potential Future Development
-  Sea Views
-  Views Into The Site
-  Potential Noise Source
-  Existing Wagonway Exclusion Strip
-  Bus Stop and 400 m Walking Distance
-  Ecological mitigation

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

4.5 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT - CONCEPT PROGRESSION



1. VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The above plan illustrates the principle vehicular entry points and residential streets. The proposed southern loop road can deliver bus services which provide public transport links to the proposed and existing residential areas. New pedestrian and cycle routes will be designed and linked with the existing network to allow easy access to the coastal paths.



2. EMERGING DEVELOPMENT CELLS

The northern parcel will be accessed through a single access point running west from High Road. The residential loop road to the southern parcel of the development forms the principle route which facilitates access to secondary, tertiary streets and private drives creating a legible road hierarchy.



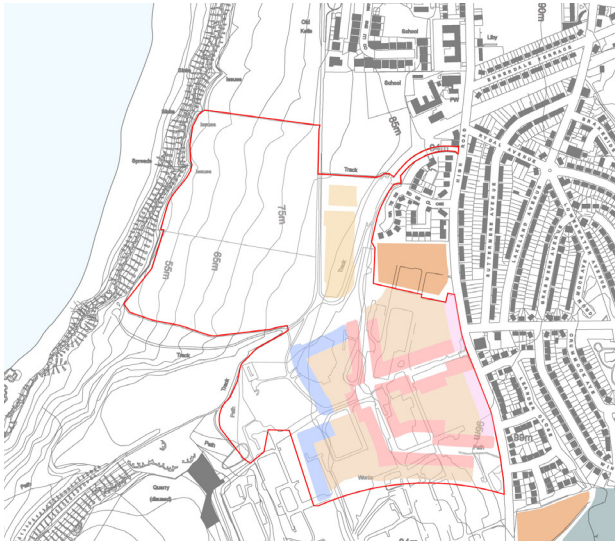
3. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Landscape corridor runs through the development as well as large green area of protected coastal heritage site provides large recreations space.



4. URBAN SPACES

The main carriageway will be punctuated by urban squares, which will create visual points of interest. Those nodal points will ensure the legibility of the overall site.



5. DEVELOPMENT CELLS-CHARACTER AREAS

Once the main accesses and primary routes has been established the nature of the character area can then be developed in respond to its location within the site.

The evolution of the concept masterplan reflects both physical realities and the site's potential to deliver a distinctive, legible, and sustainable neighbourhood. Key steps included:

Identification of Developable Land: Based on updated site investigations, stable ground has been delineated for residential use, with other areas reserved for open space, ecology, or commercial use.

Access and Movement Strategy: Vehicular and pedestrian networks were refined to provide safe, direct routes while respecting natural features and slopes.

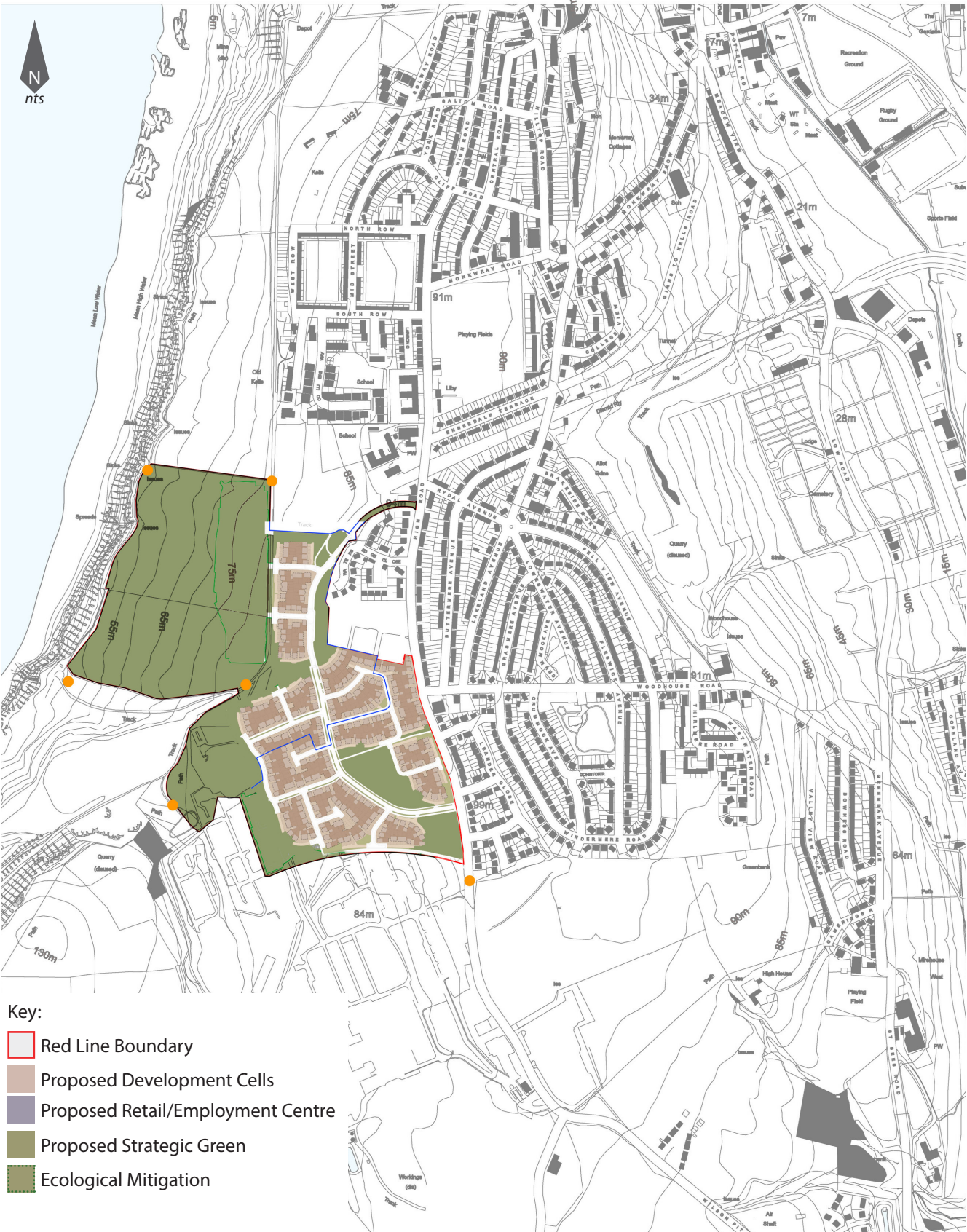
Integration of Green Infrastructure: A landscaped layout introduced green corridors, nodal spaces and a protected coastal margin.

Establishment of Character Areas: Design responses vary across the site, influenced by proximity to the coast, topography, and landscape edges.

Phasing and Delivery Strategy: Phase 1 (139 homes) is deliverable independently and provides a robust start to the wider regeneration vision.

4.6 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CELLS

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CELLS



The layout of the revised masterplan is organised into a series of clearly defined development cells, shaped by ground conditions, topography, and the green infrastructure framework. These land use zones establish a coherent, phased structure for residential and commercial development while maintaining generous landscape provision and ecological buffers.

Key Land Use Components: Residential Phase 1 (blue edge): This parcel, comprising 139 homes, forms the core of the developable land. It includes a mix of housing types and tenures, distributed across a street hierarchy that steps with the topography and aligns with key views and landscape features.

Repositioned Commercial Parcel (SE corner): Previously proposed on the western edge, the commercial/employment element has been relocated to the south-east. Although underlain by faulting, the land is suitable for non-residential use with appropriate construction techniques. This location ensures visibility and accessibility from High Road while avoiding visual conflict with the coastal edge.

Strategic Open Space and Green Infrastructure: Land that is undevelopable due to faulting, voids, or environmental designation (e.g. yellow and light blue shaded areas) will be repurposed as ecological corridors, landscape buffers, and recreation space. These spaces provide visual relief, support drainage infrastructure, and enhance biodiversity across the site.

Heritage and Landscape Protection Areas: The historic Wagon Way forms a strong linear landscape feature running north-south. It is retained as a green corridor and integrated into the wider pedestrian and ecological network. The adjacent hedgerow and open land are also safeguarded as part of the site's character framework. **Development Strategy:** Each development cell is shaped to respond to site features and constraints, creating a patchwork of distinct but connected neighbourhood zones.

The layout supports a range of densities and building typologies, with potential for tailored character areas responding to edges, views, and movement corridors.



Future development potential beyond Phase 1 is reserved but constrained, subject to further investigation and long-term remediation planning.

This cell-based approach allows flexibility in delivery while maintaining a clear structure that supports legibility, design coherence, and environmental integration.

The Marchon masterplan is underpinned by a landscape-led design approach that reflects the site's prominent coastal setting, topographical drama, and ecological sensitivities. Landscape plays a vital role in shaping the character, resilience, and legibility of the development.

Landscape Objectives:

To integrate the development sensitively within the natural and urban edge of Whitehaven;

To mitigate and adapt to ground condition constraints through strategic landscape buffers;

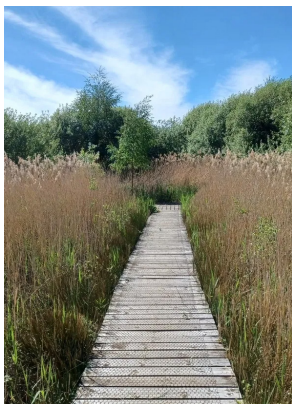
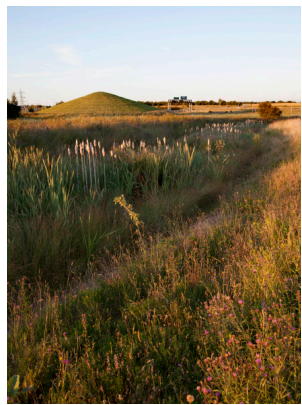
To preserve long-range views and the visual relationship between built form and seascape;

To deliver biodiversity enhancement and ecological connectivity across the site;

To provide accessible, attractive, and multifunctional open spaces for future residents.

Strategic Green Infrastructure:

A significant green buffer is retained along the western and north-western coastal edge, protecting the Heritage Coast designation and providing ecological mitigation.



Strategic Green and Ecology Areas

A dense 25m landscape belt to the south screens the site from residual WCM infrastructure and visually separates the residential edge from formerly industrial land.

Green 'fingers' and corridors penetrate through the site from west to east, forming natural movement channels and biodiversity pathways, and visually breaking up built form.

The historic Wagon Way and associated hedgerow are retained as key heritage and ecological features and serve as a unifying linear landscape structure.

Ecological Integration:

Biodiverse habitats will be retained, enhanced, and newly introduced, including:

Species-rich grassland

Native hedgerows and trees

Wetland and SuDS features

Habitat mounds and bunds to create shelter and support wildlife movement

A SuDS basin at the site's lowest point (western boundary) will combine water attenuation with habitat creation, forming part of a connected blue-green infrastructure network.

Community and Amenity Landscapes:

Incidental green spaces are distributed throughout the site, often around development nodes, forming focal points, informal play areas, and social spaces.

Feature landscaping at entrances and corners will enhance the arrival experience and define neighbourhood character areas.

Planting will be selected for resilience to the coastal environment (e.g. salt-laden winds), including evergreen structure, colourful shrubs, and robust native species.

Landscape maintenance and management will be integral to the long-term success of the public realm and biodiversity strategy.

This layered approach to landscape not only responds to technical challenges but turns them into placemaking opportunities, ensuring the development is attractive, ecologically rich, and well-rooted in its setting.

4.8 CONNECTIONS AND INTEGRATION

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT



The Marchon masterplan seeks to create a neighbourhood that is well-connected, permeable, and integrated with the wider urban and landscape context of Whitehaven. The access and movement strategy has been carefully considered to support sustainable travel, accommodate vehicular circulation, and promote active travel across the site and beyond. Access and Movement Principles:

Two vehicular access points from High Road remain as previously proposed, providing a northern entrance to Phase 1 housing and a southern loop road serving both residential and commercial parcels.

The primary loop road through the southern part of the site facilitates clear distribution of traffic and establishes a structured street hierarchy.

Emergency access will be provided between the northern and southern parcels via an Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) link, ensuring site-wide resilience.

A network of pedestrian and cycle routes is integrated throughout the masterplan, linking into the existing Cumbria Coastal Path and the historic Wagon Way.

Public transport access is retained via bus stops on High Road, with opportunity for routes to circulate through the southern loop if required. Integration with Wider Context:

To the north and east, the site connects to existing residential communities at Woodhouse Estate and Waters Edge Close, reinforcing neighbourhood cohesion.

To the west, the development respects the sensitive edge of the coastal Heritage Strip, retaining long-distance views and reinforcing the natural buffer.

To the south, the former WCM land is now removed from industrial use, allowing the southern boundary of the site to soften into an enhanced green interface.

The result is a highly legible development structure that balances movement efficiency with place-making, walkability, and environmental sensitivity.



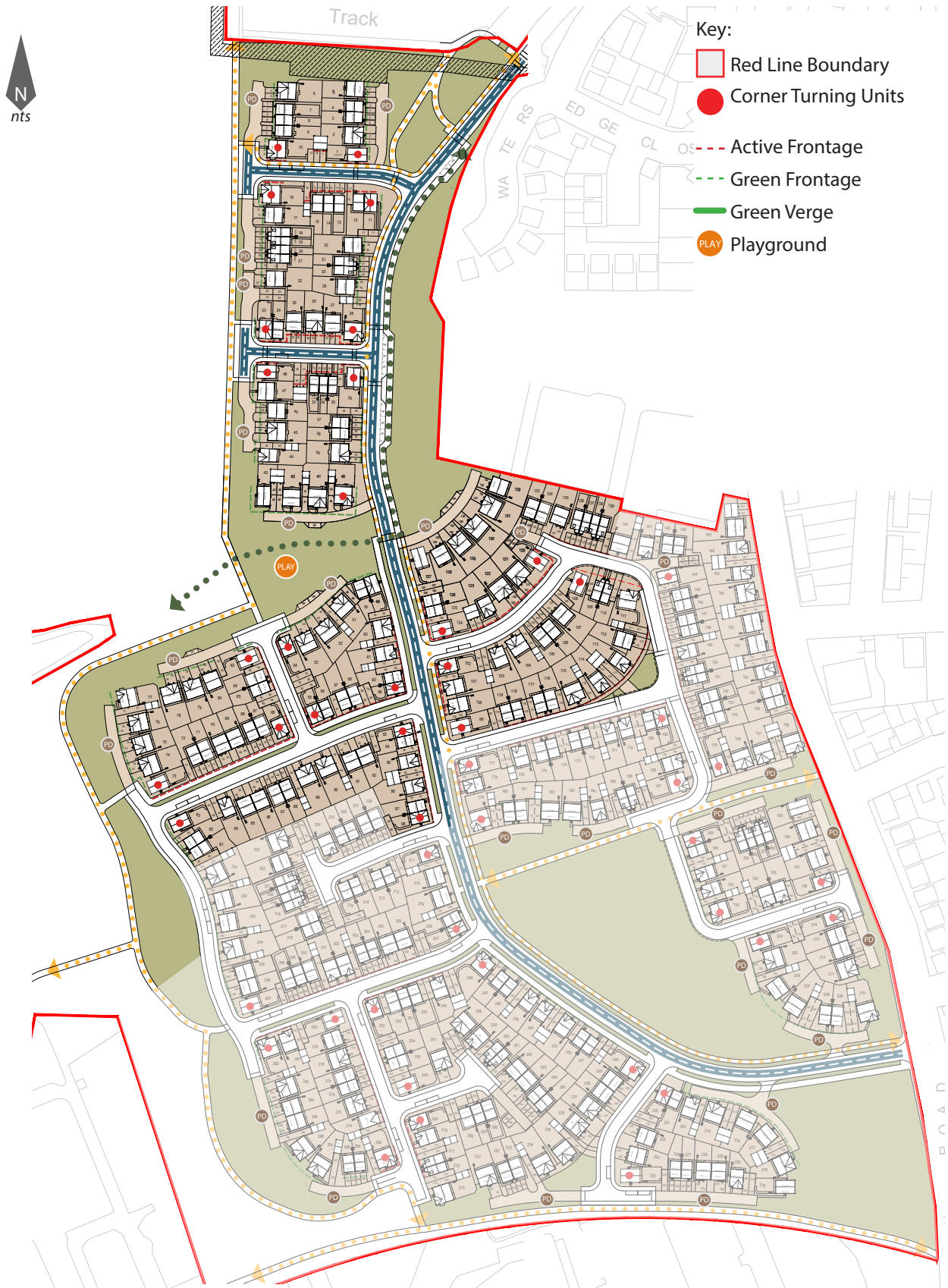
Integration of hard landscape feature at key junctions within site



Reduction in formality of highway

5.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The inception plan shows in greater detail the overall strategy for land use through out the masterplan at Marchon, illustrating the application site boundary, hierarchy of streets and highway infrastructure , development extents for residential and commercial uses, positioning of strategic landscape and open space and vehicle and pedestrian connectivity.



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The development at Marchon is underpinned by a series of design principles that respond to the site's unique physical, historical, and landscape characteristics. These principles inform all aspects of the masterplan, from the layout and street hierarchy to architectural style and materials.

Key Design Principles: Contextual Integration

Respect and respond to the distinctive topography and coastal setting of the site.

Retain and enhance landscape features such as the Wagon Way, existing hedgerows, and coastal edge.

Use the built form to frame views and reinforce the character of Whitehaven's southern fringe.

Character and Identity

Create a strong sense of place through varied character areas that reflect location, views, and landscape context.

Use architectural cues, materials and boundary treatments inspired by the local vernacular and industrial heritage.

Connectivity and Legibility

Establish a walkable, legible street network that integrates with existing movement routes and prioritises active travel.

Create a clear structure of primary, secondary and tertiary streets with visual landmarks and landscape features to aid orientation.

Green Infrastructure and Public Realm

Provide generous, multifunctional green infrastructure that supports drainage, ecology, recreation and biodiversity.

Integrate SuDS features and habitat corridors as part of the public realm strategy.

Sustainability and Resilience

Position development on land proven suitable through robust technical assessment.

Ensure materials, planting and infrastructure are suited to the exposed coastal conditions.

Deliver energy-efficient, adaptable homes in a walkable layout to promote low-carbon living.

Phasing and Delivery

Design a coherent first phase of 139 homes that can be delivered independently while setting the tone for potential future phases.

Accommodate access, drainage and open space infrastructure to serve early development and integrate with long-term site use.

These principles ensure that the Marchon development is locally grounded, environmentally responsible, and capable of delivering a lasting positive legacy for Whitehaven.

6.0 STREET HIERARCHY

The road hierarchy has been developed in direct response to the site's topography, access points, and the layout principles established in the indicative routes plan. It provides a logical and well-structured approach to movement across the site, ensuring efficient vehicular access while supporting walkability, legibility, and connectivity. The hierarchy underpins the development's overall form, helping to define distinct character areas and reinforcing a sense of place through appropriately scaled streets and junctions.



STREET HIERARCHY

Building upon the broader design principles and site analysis, the street hierarchy for Marchon has been designed to deliver a safe, efficient and characterful movement network, supporting both place-making and practical servicing.

Street Types:

Primary Loop Road

Connects High Road at two access points and serves both residential and commercial parcels.

Designed to accommodate two-way traffic, public transport, service vehicles and emergency access.

Includes tree-lined verges and space for on-street parking where appropriate.

Secondary Residential Streets

Branch from the primary loop into individual development cells.

Typically adopt shared surface principles, with integrated planting and lower design speeds.

Private Drives and Lanes

Serve smaller clusters of dwellings or courtyard typologies.

Typically narrower in width with soft landscaping and informal boundary treatments.

Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

Run through green corridors and open spaces, including enhanced access to the Wagon Way.

Minimum 3m width for shared pedestrian/cycle paths, with lighting and wayfinding as appropriate.

Emergency Link (EVA)

Provides secondary connection between northern and southern parcels without permitting general traffic, ensuring safe, uninterrupted access.

Key Features:

Designed to follow site contours, minimising cut and fill and preserving visual relationships with the surrounding landscape.

Streets are used as structuring elements to define development blocks, frame views and structure character areas.

Integrated with landscape nodes and green corridors to create a connected and visually rich public realm.

All streets designed to comply with Manual for Streets and adoptable standards, with emphasis on human-scaled environments and safety.

This calibrated hierarchy ensures efficient movement, supports placemaking, and embeds resilience into the structure of the site from the outset.

6.1 STREET HIERARCHY

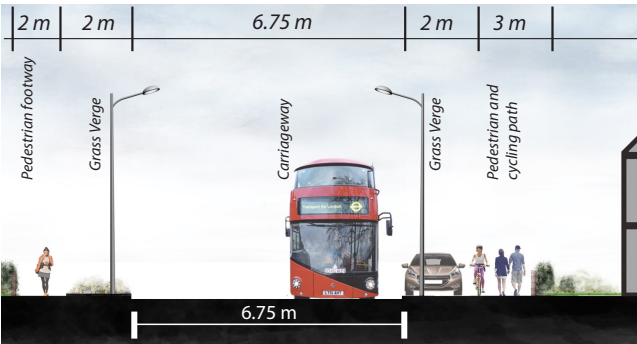
The design of the street network has evolved from the site’s topography, access points, and development cells, resulting in a clear and legible hierarchy that supports navigation, accessibility, and a strong sense of place.

Street Hierarchy Principles:

A primary loop road runs through the southern part of the site, accommodating residential access, service vehicles, and public transport.

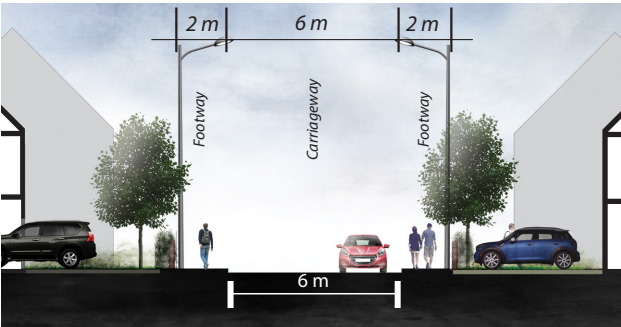
This spine branches into secondary streets that serve individual development cells and connect to shared surface lanes and private drives.

RESIDENTIAL STREET WITH BUS ROUTE



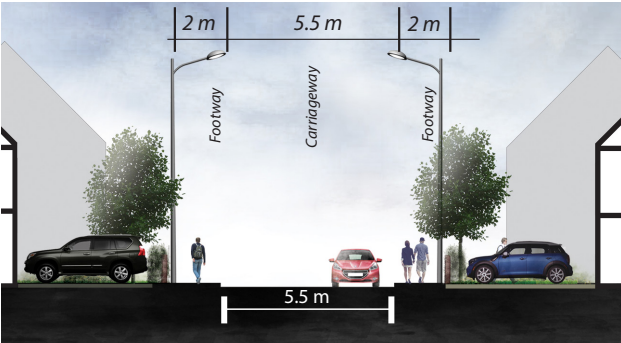
ROAD TYPE	Residential Street with Bus Route Features (Table 2.4)
CHARACTER AREAS	All character areas
PARKING	In curtilage
MATERIALS	Carriageway: Bituminous Footpath: Flagstones / Bituminous
VERGE	Hard / Soft Landscape

PRIMARY RESIDENTIAL STREET



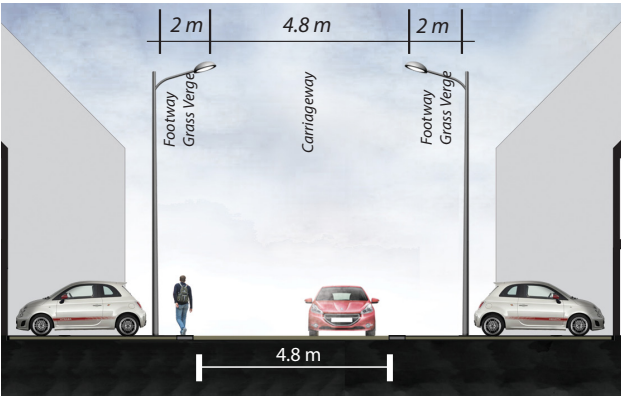
ROAD TYPE	Primary Residential Street Features (Table 2.5)
CHARACTER AREAS	All character areas
PARKING	In curtilage
MATERIALS	Carriageway: Bituminous Footpath: Flagstones / Bituminous

SECONDARY RESIDENTIAL STREET



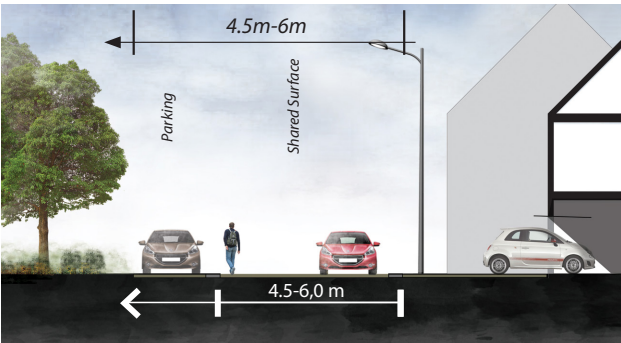
ROAD TYPE	Secondary Residential Street (Table 2.5)
CHARACTER AREAS	All character areas
PARKING	In curtilage
MATERIALS	Carriageway: Bituminous Footpath: Flagstones / Bituminous

SHARED SURFACE STREET



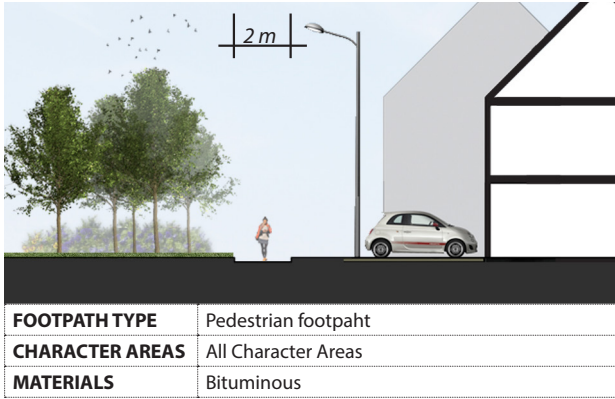
ROAD TYPE	Shared Surface Street Features (Table 2.6)
CHARACTER AREAS	All Character Areas
PARKING	In curtilage
MATERIALS	Carriageway: Bituminous/Block Paving/Setts Footpath: Bituminous/Block Paving/Setts
VERGE	Where development becomes single side. Grass verge becomes an option

PRIVATE DRIVE

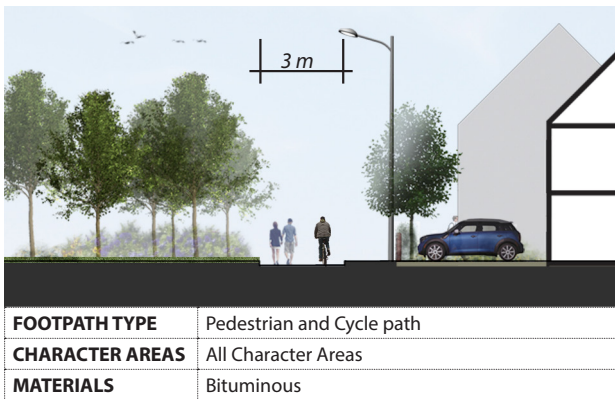


ROAD TYPE	Tertiary Residential Street Features (Table 2.6)
CHARACTER AREAS	All character areas
PARKING	In curtilage
MATERIALS	Carriageway: Bituminous/Block Paving/Setts Footpath: Bituminous/Block Paving/Setts

PEDESTRIAN WALK



PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE PATH



Street design follows the natural contours of the land, with a stepped arrangement that preserves views and reduces visual dominance.

Pedestrian and cycle paths are prioritised through green corridors and are integrated with the wider movement network, including connections to the Wagon Way and Cumbria Coastal Path.

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

At 2 meters wide these are pedestrian only routes, excluding all vehicular, cycle and equestrian movement. These will be set down in order to separate them from soft/hard landscaping or raised where adjacent to vehicular routes and defined by a 200mm concrete curb. They will be finished in a hard, bituminous surface material.

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE PATH

These are carriageways of a minimum width of 3 meters designed to be used by pedestrians and cyclists on unsegregated thoroughfares. They are required to have a hard surface.

Typologies:

Primary Streets: Accommodate two-way traffic, bus movement, on-street parking, and street trees. These are designed with generous widths and a landscaped verge to soften their impact.

Secondary Streets: Lower traffic volume, often with a shared surface approach. These provide access to smaller blocks and encourage low speeds.

Private Drives and Lanes: Serve small clusters of homes or courtyard blocks. These are designed for a more intimate scale and may include permeable surfaces and minimal kerbing.

Pedestrian-Only Routes: Where appropriate, 2m-wide walkways are set within landscape to support safe, car-free access to public spaces and path networks.

Combined Pedestrian/Cycle Routes: Typically 3m wide, these unsegregated routes are surfaced for all-weather access and provide key east–west and north–south links.

The street hierarchy supports placemaking by reinforcing neighbourhood identity, defining character areas, and framing open spaces. It also enables phased delivery without compromising legibility or overall site function.

7.0 BLOCK STRUCTURE

The built form for the development cells is based on the principles as set out in the Design Principles section of the document. It has evolved following the establishment of the main hierarchy of streets for the overall masterplan.



BLOCK STRUCTURE

The block structure at Marchon has been shaped by the site's complex topography, ground conditions, and the desire to create a varied, legible and attractive neighbourhood. The structure reflects the established street hierarchy and supports a mix of housing typologies, character areas, and landscape spaces.

Key Principles:

Blocks are orientated to follow the contours of the site, ensuring efficient land use, minimising excavation, and preserving coastal views.

The layout establishes a clear perimeter block form where feasible, creating well-defined frontages, active streetscapes, and secure private rear gardens.

Block shapes respond to constraints such as mine shafts, fissuring zones, and ecological buffers, avoiding over-complication or over-engineering of sensitive land.

Building frontages define and frame key public spaces, such as nodal green areas, route junctions, and vistas toward the coast.

Variations in block size and orientation are used to break monotony, introduce variety, and reinforce individual character areas.

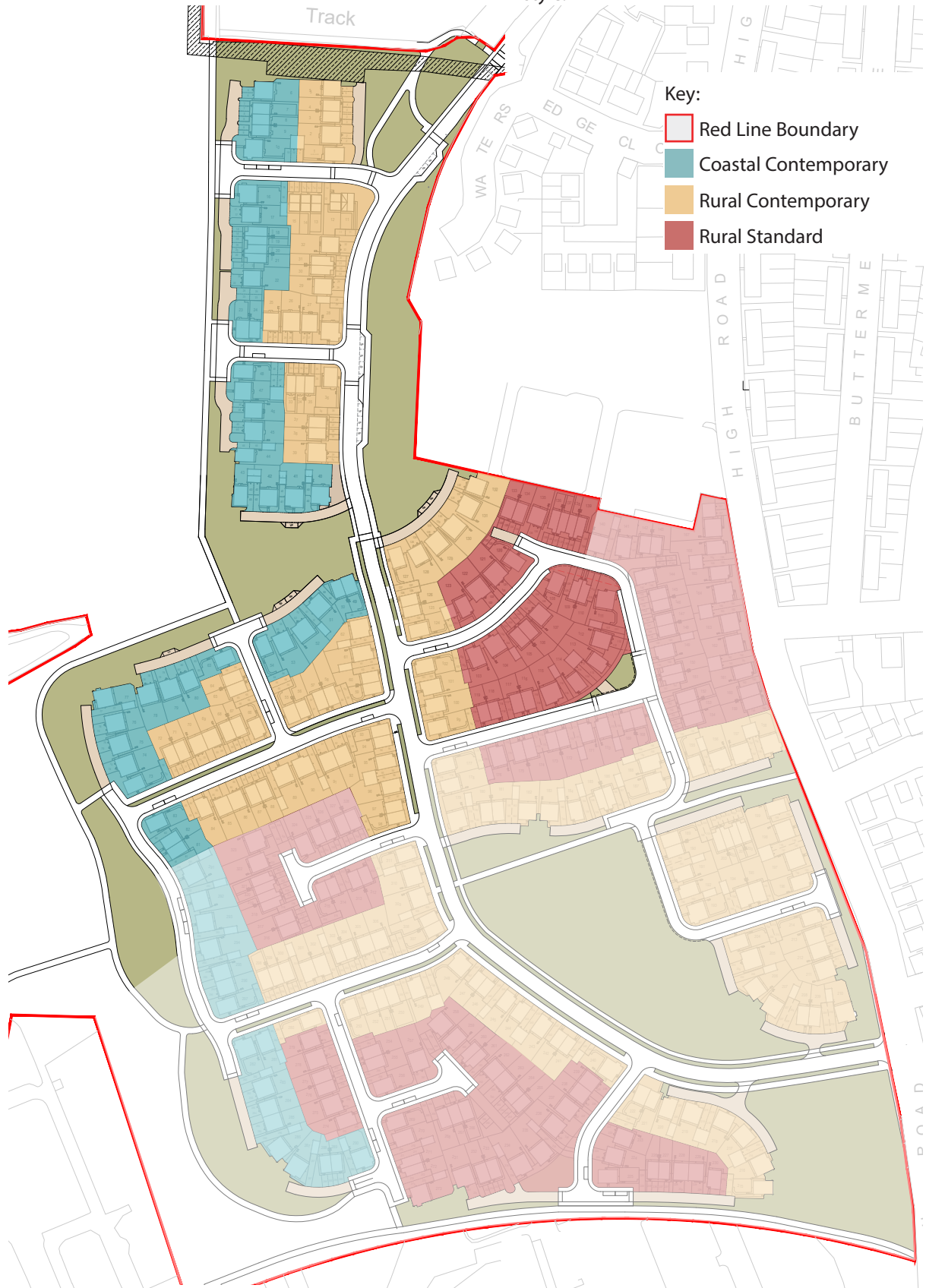
A mix of housing tenures and types is distributed across blocks to support diversity and inclusivity.

This approach supports a coherent development structure that is robust enough for phased delivery and flexible enough to accommodate future change, while remaining grounded in its physical and environmental context.



8.0 CHARACTER AREAS

Successful development has unique characteristics formed by the relationship between design elements such as landscape, built form, context and resident's needs. This can be achieved by carefully selected building materials, boundary treatments and use of carefully designed hard and soft landscaping applied throughout the site. Three distinct character areas have been developed for the Marchon scheme: Main Road, Coastal Edge and areas, contemporary and traditional in style.



CHARACTER AREAS

A successful and lasting place is built upon local character, identity and distinctiveness. The Marchon masterplan defines a series of character areas shaped by landscape setting, views, street hierarchy, and proximity to public spaces. These areas guide material choices, planting, architectural detailing and boundary treatments.

Defined Character Areas

Three initial character areas have been developed for the Marchon Phase 1 layout, with potential to expand or refine in future phases:

1. Coastal Contemporary

Located at the western edge of the site, adjacent to the retained open space and views towards the sea.

Characterised by lower-density plots, generous setbacks, and a strong relationship with green infrastructure.

Buildings here may adopt a more contemporary coastal aesthetic, with timber cladding, muted tones, and soft front gardens.

Tree planting and hedgerows provide a natural transition to the adjoining coastal landscape.

2. Contemporary Rural

Follows the primary loop road and forms the spine of the development, supporting movement, activity, and legibility.

Includes a mix of housing typologies, potentially with higher density and more formal frontages.

Key nodal points feature urban squares, enhanced hard landscaping, and tree-lined streets.

Materials to include robust brickwork, stone accents, and a consistent rhythm of built form to reinforce street definition.

3. Standard Rural

Located off secondary streets and within smaller cells.

Defined by a more intimate scale, irregular layouts, and proximity to incidental open spaces.

Opportunities for innovative layouts, shared surfaces, and mews-style lanes.

A softer, more informal palette, blending traditional and modern references, with varied planting and boundary treatments.

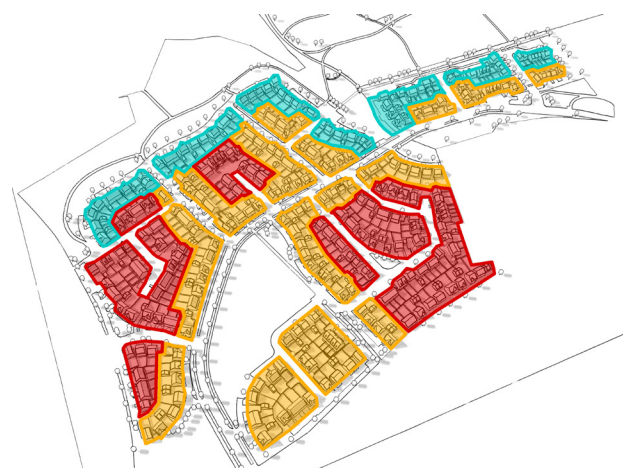
Design Cues Across All Areas
Materials: Locally inspired brick, stone and render treatments, with contrasting feature details in metal or timber.

Roofs: Varied pitches and orientations to respond to topography and enhance visual interest.

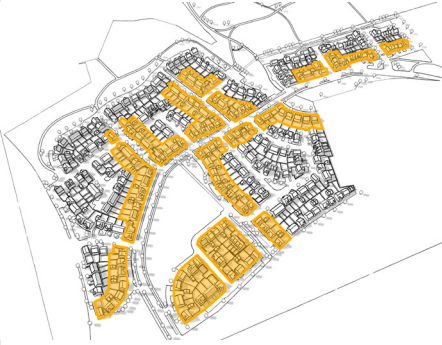
Boundary Treatments: Combinations of low walls, hedging, and railing, tailored to context and street typology.

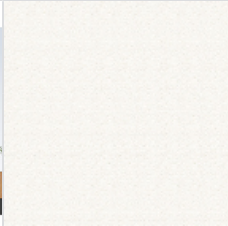
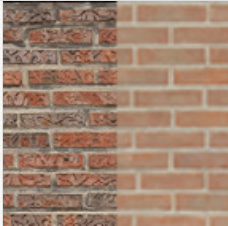
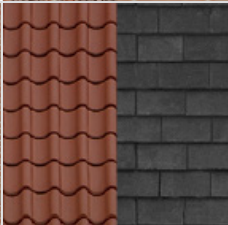
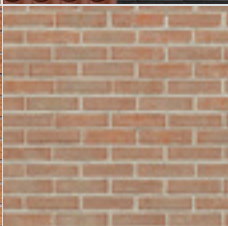
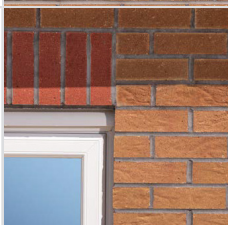
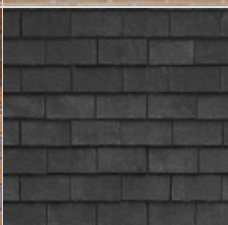
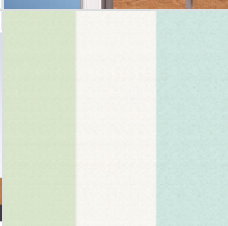
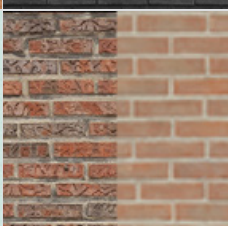
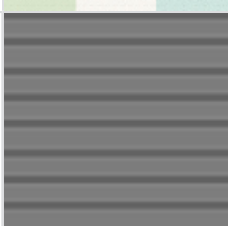
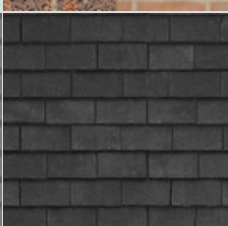
Hard Landscaping: Permeable paving, natural stone, and textured concrete for durability and visual richness.

This character-led approach ensures that Marchon offers a cohesive but varied neighbourhood identity, embedding a clear narrative of place-making from the outset.



8.1 CHARACTER AREAS

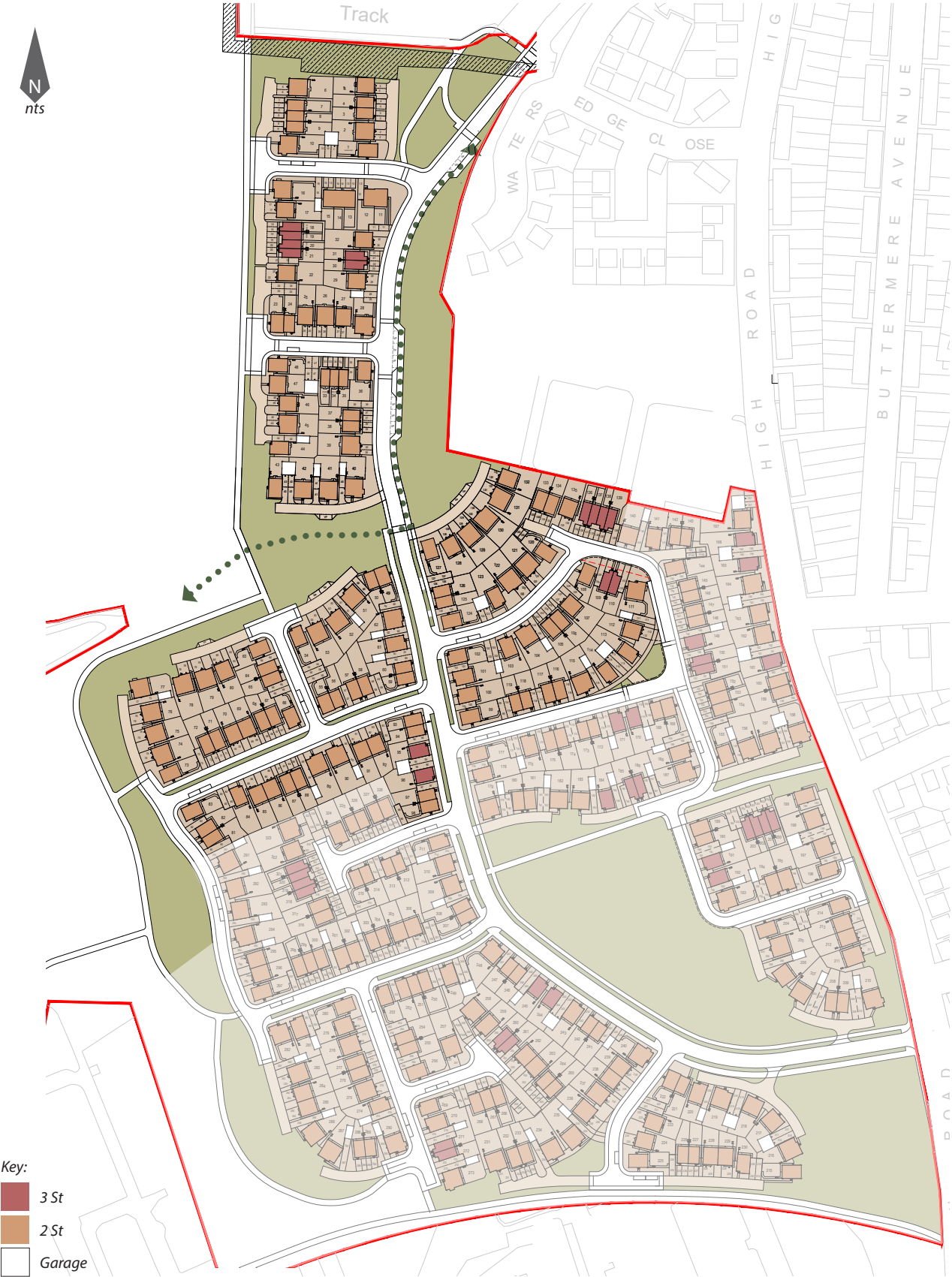
CHARACTER AREA	LOCATION PLAN	CHARACTERISTICS
RURAL CONTEMPORARY		STANDARD CONTEMPORARY (+) ENHANCED CORNERS - Contemporary style windows - Contemporary style doors - Contemporary detailing - Doors / windows - Black - Garage Doors - Black - Brick - Red, Multi - Window Surrounds - Roof tile - Black, Red - Render - White
RURAL STANDARD		STANDARD CONTEMPORARY - Contemporary style windows - Contemporary style doors - Contemporary detailing - Doors / windows - Black - Garage Doors - Black - Heads and Cills to Windows - Roof tile - Black - Boarding - Grey
COASTAL CONTEMPORARY		ENHANCED CONTEMPORARY - Contemporary style windows - Contemporary style doors - Contemporary detailing - Doors / windows - Black - Window Surrounds - Garage Doors - Black - Roof tile - Black - Render - Green, Blue, White - Boarding - Grey

ELEVATIONAL INSPIRATION	PREDOMINANT ROOFS & WALLS MATERIALS		BOUNDARY PRIMARY FRONTAGE
			
			
			
			
			• Estate railing • Estate railing and hedge
			

9.0 BUILDING HEIGHTS

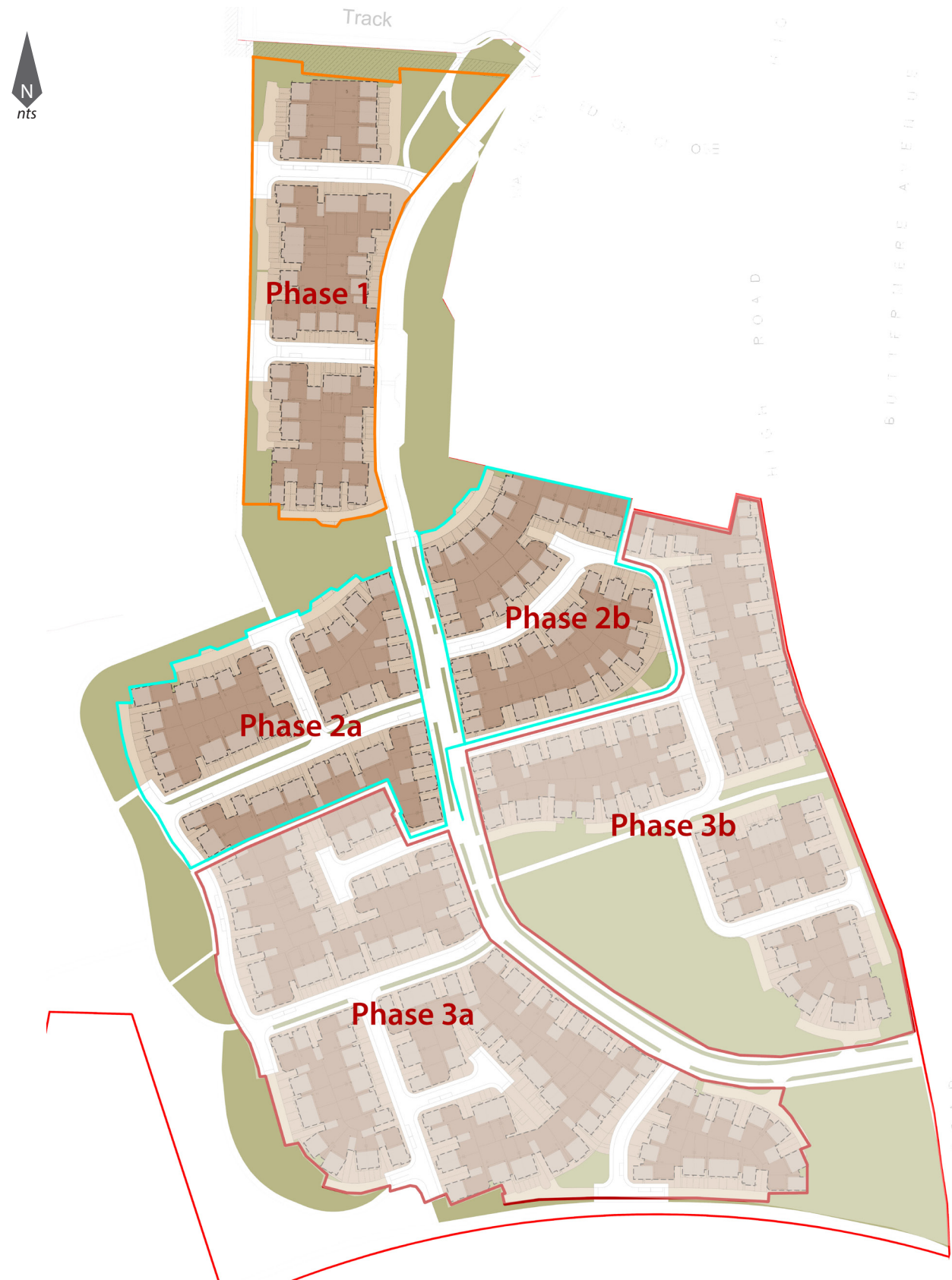
The plan shows how density and building heights range vary across the masterplan.

Variation in building heights provides visual interest within individual character areas It also responds to key site features such as the topography.



10.0 PHASING

The plan shows the proposed phasing of the site.



Density

The proposed development at Marchon has been carefully structured to respond to the site's constraints and opportunities through a graduated approach to density. This variation reflects topography, proximity to open space, character areas, and the underlying principles of Building for a Healthy Life.

Density Strategy:

Lower densities are proposed along the western and coastal edges of the site, responding to open views, landscape sensitivity, and the transition to retained green space.

Medium densities form the core of the residential area along the main spine road, providing rhythm, enclosure, and walkable access to green infrastructure and the Local Centre/Retail.

Higher densities may be introduced at key nodal points, such as junctions or near the commercial parcel, where appropriate, through terraced units, maisonettes, or denser street typologies.

This responsive approach to density:

Creates visual variety and a legible urban form;

Ensures sensitive integration with the surrounding context;

Supports housing mix and tenure diversity, and

Maximises the site's potential within safe, developable limits.

Green Pocket Neighbourhoods

Located off secondary streets and within smaller cells.

Defined by a more intimate scale, irregular layouts, and proximity to incidental open spaces. Opportunities for innovative layouts, shared surfaces, and mews-style lanes.

A softer, more informal palette, blending traditional and modern references, with varied planting and boundary treatments. Design Cues Across All Areas
Materials: Locally inspired brick, stone and render treatments, with contrasting feature details in metal or timber.

Roofs: Varied pitches and orientations to respond to topography and enhance visual interest.

Boundary Treatments: Combinations of low walls, hedging, and railing, tailored to context and street typology.

Hard Landscaping: Permeable paving, natural stone, and textured concrete for durability and visual richness.

This character-led approach ensures that Marchon offers a cohesive but varied neighbourhood identity, embedding a clear narrative of place-making from the outset.

The revised masterplan for Marchon is designed to enable a realistic and deliverable phasing strategy, beginning with a stand-alone first phase of residential development.

Phase 1 – 2 Initial Residential Parcel: Delivers 139 new homes, including a mix of market and affordable housing;

Includes primary infrastructure, including roads, SuDS, open space, and services to serve the development;

Incorporates the initial portion of green infrastructure, providing public access and ecological mitigation from the outset;

Establishes the main High Road access point and links into the local movement network.

Future development parcels (beyond the Phase 1 boundary) remain within the overall red edge but are currently constrained by ground conditions and technical uncertainties. These areas are shown illustratively only and would be subject to further site investigations and planning applications.

Offers flexibility in land use and timing, responding to local economic conditions;

Strategically placed to utilise land unsuitable for housing while providing community benefit.

This phasing strategy ensures the scheme can proceed responsibly and efficiently, unlocking early housing delivery while aligning with infrastructure provision and environmental management.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT - MARCHON - CUMBRIA- 15 August 2025



The landscape strategy for Marchon has been designed to deliver high-quality public realm, ecological enhancement, and strong visual character from the outset. It plays a vital role in stitching together the developable land with the wider site and coastal setting.

Key Objectives:

Create a strong landscape framework that reflects site topography and ecological value;

Integrate SuDS and natural drainage as part of a wider green infrastructure network;

Enhance existing natural assets, including the Wagon Way, hedgerows, and coastal edge;

Provide spaces for community use, recreation, and informal play;

Introduce planting and materials that are resilient to the exposed coastal environment.

Core Landscape Components:

Coastal Margin & Heritage Strip: Retained as informal open space, with grassland restoration and wildflower meadow planting. Public access routes and seating areas will enhance passive enjoyment of the landscape.

Green Corridors: Finger-like green spaces running east-west, linking development blocks and supporting habitat connectivity. These include low-level mounding, tree planting and habitat-led design.

Wagon Way Landscape Spine: Retained as a multi-functional green corridor. Enhanced with native planting, seating points, and wayfinding, respecting its historic linear character.

Neighbourhood Greens and Nodes: A series of small public spaces at key junctions and corners, with feature planting, seating, and play elements to foster social interaction.

Southern Landscape Buffer: A 25m wide planted zone providing visual and ecological separation from former industrial land, with bunding and species-rich planting for noise and visual mitigation.

Wetland SuDS Basin: Located at the lowest point in the west, this multifunctional feature provides surface water attenuation, informal amenity, and wetland habitat. **Planting and Management:** The palette includes native trees and shrubs, salt- and wind-tolerant species, and evergreen structure planting for year-round interest.

Rabbit protection measures, resilient ground cover, and low-maintenance design principles are incorporated to reduce long-term management burden.

All landscaped areas will be subject to a Landscape Management Plan, to be secured via planning condition.

12.0 RESPONSE TO VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views - Completed Phase 1

Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views - Completed Phase 1

Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views - Completed Phase 1a



Views - Completed Phase 1b



Views



Views



A Local Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared to support the planning application and assess the potential effects of development on the site's landscape character and visual amenity. The LVIA considers views from key receptors, including nearby residential areas, public rights of way, and the coastal path network.

Summary of Visual Sensitivity:

The site is prominent in views from the west and south-west due to its elevated topography and open exposure to the coast.

Viewpoints from Woodhouse Estate and Waters Edge Close benefit from long-range vistas across the site to the Irish Sea and Solway Firth.

The coastal Heritage Strip, although adjacent, forms a distinct visual and ecological zone that remains free from built development.

The landscape sensitivity of the brownfield portion of the site is assessed as medium-low, given its industrial legacy and fragmented vegetative cover.

Design Response:

The masterplan aligns with the LVIA recommendations by:

Concentrating built form on less sensitive, previously developed land, east of the Wagon Way;

Following the natural contours to reduce the visual impact of massing;

Retaining key view corridors and allowing long-distance views to be preserved, especially from existing residential properties;

Introducing a graduated building height strategy, with lower-rise homes along sensitive edges and potential variation in rooflines to soften the visual silhouette;

Delivering a robust landscape framework, including strategic buffers, green corridors, and tree planting to integrate development into the wider landscape.

This carefully calibrated response ensures the scheme will sit comfortably within its setting, maintaining the scenic value of the coastal edge while delivering a legible and attractive townscape.

13.0 CONCLUSION

The revised proposals for the Marchon site represent a transformative and deliverable opportunity to regenerate a historically complex but strategically located area on the southern edge of Whitehaven.

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the development has evolved in direct response to:

- Technical constraints, including subsurface voiding, fault lines, mine shafts, and legacy contamination;
- Environmental considerations, particularly the protection and enhancement of the coastal edge, ecological habitats, and biodiversity value;
- Visual and landscape context, ensuring that topography, long views, and seascape character are respected and celebrated;
- Community and infrastructure needs, delivering much-needed housing, public open space, and sustainable access routes;
- And, significantly, the withdrawal of the adjacent industrial coal mining proposals, which has fundamentally changed the context of the site.

The cessation of the West Cumbria Mining scheme presents a new and timely opportunity to consider a complementary extension of the town to the south. While no detailed proposals exist at present, it is anticipated that any future development of this area may involve the input of Homes England and will benefit from a coordinated masterplanning approach.

Importantly, the Marchon development is already positioned to support and integrate with such a wider vision. The layout incorporates clear and direct linkages for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, providing structured connectivity to the land to the south. These connections lay the groundwork for future integration and ensure that the development is not only self-contained, but also open, adaptable and future-facing.

Phase 1 - 2, comprising 139 dwellings, has been carefully designed to deliver a high-quality residential environment that is robust, characterful and environmentally responsible. The inclusion of a repositioned commercial parcel introduces long-term economic flexibility, while the retained red line boundary ensures that the wider site can evolve in a managed and responsive manner over time.

Through a landscape-led, character-driven and technically informed approach, the Marchon masterplan establishes a confident and coherent vision for a new coastal community, one that acknowledges its past, embraces its setting, and provides a foundation for future growth in Whitehaven.

3Di

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