

Pepples Lane
Outline Planning & Heritage Statement

February 2024

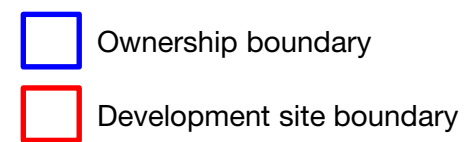
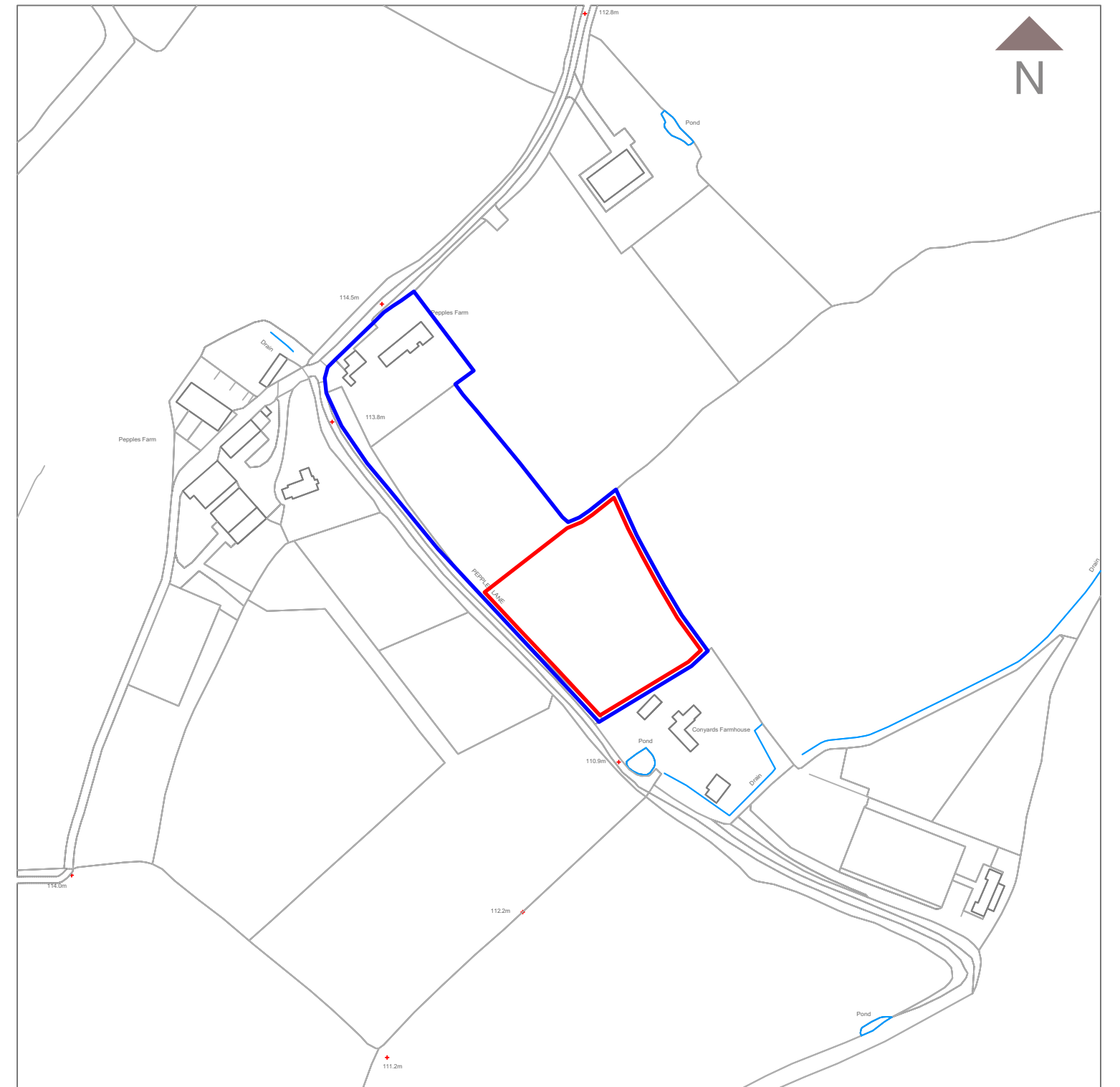
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement is submitted on behalf of Mr & Mrs Grove of Pepples Farm House in support of an outline application for permission to erect a two storey detached dwellinghouse with single storey outbuilding on the plot of land in the parish of Wimbish.

1.2 Matters for consideration at this stage are limited to location, land use, scale and means of access. Detailed matters such as layout, appearance and landscape will be considered at the next application stage.

2.0 LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SITE

2.1 The proposed development site area totals 1.7 acres. It sits within one of six hamlets of Wimbish - Howlett End, forming part of a cluster of existing residential and agricultural properties within the hamlet. Pepples Farm House to the north, Conyard Farmhouse to the south.



Site Location Plan - 1:2500 @ A3

- 2.2 On *Image 1* opposite, it can be illustrated that the proposed house (highlighted in blue) would sit within the line of buildings that currently run along Pepples Lane. Due to its location within this run of buildings, it will not encourage further 'sprawl.' It is therefore considered a logical and accessible housing site, in a sustainable location, on existing domesticated amenity land.
- 2.3 The proposed location of the new house has been chosen in large part to distance itself as much as possible from Pepples Farmhouse (120m to rear elevation of main house), whilst also maintaining a considerate distance from Conyard Farmhouse (40m to rear of detached garage, 50m to the side elevation) and taking advantage of existing natural screening.
- 2.4 In addition to the vehicle access to the north of Pepples Farmhouse, there is an existing vehicle access in the south corner of the property, which will serve as a main vehicle access to the proposed site.
- 2.5 Pepples Lane is a public highway and due to the requirements of farming activity at Pepples Farm, there is no limit to traffic numbers along the lane at any given time. There is no concern therefore, regarding the additional vehicle load that the proposed dwelling would bring (ie. 2 to 3 cars a day).

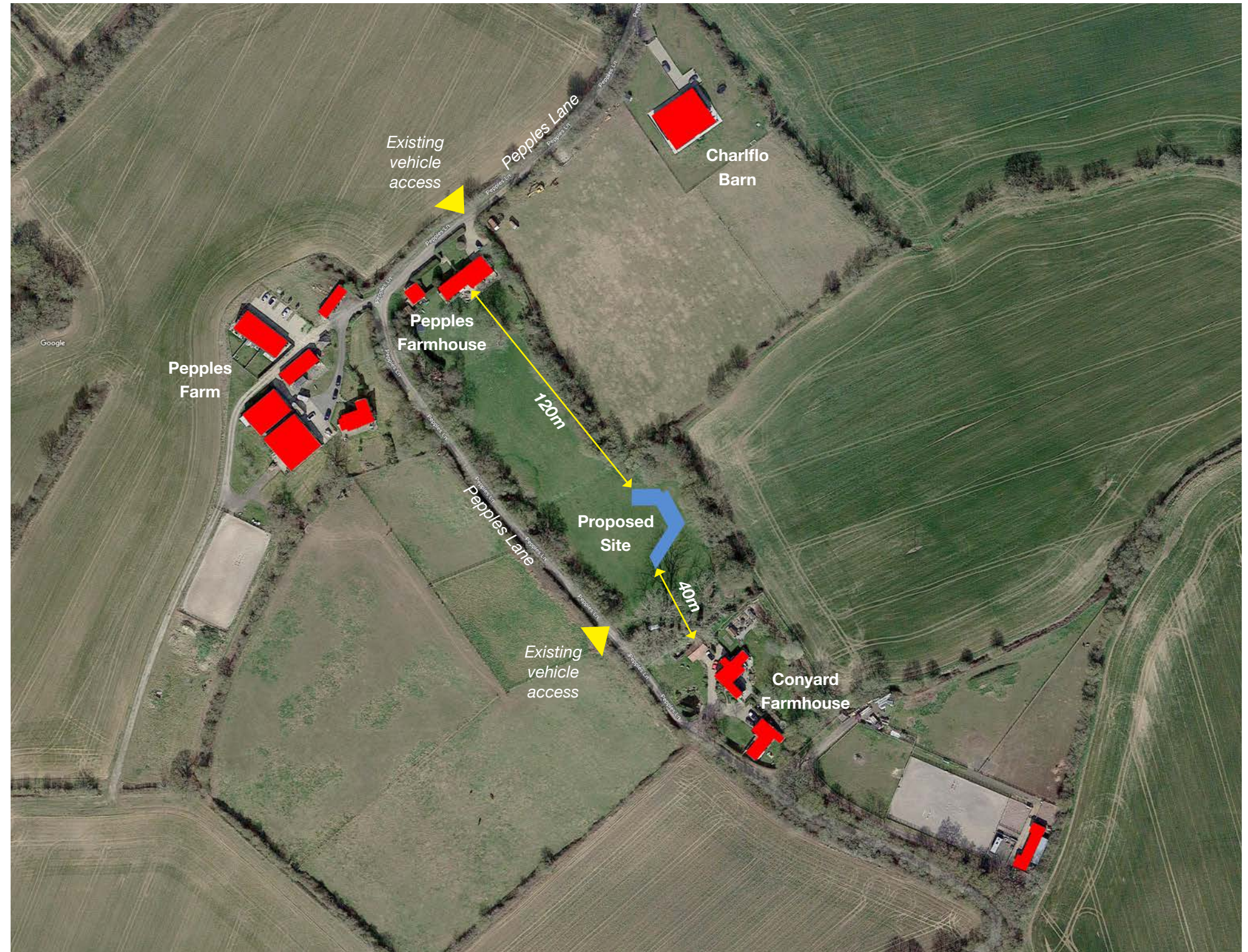
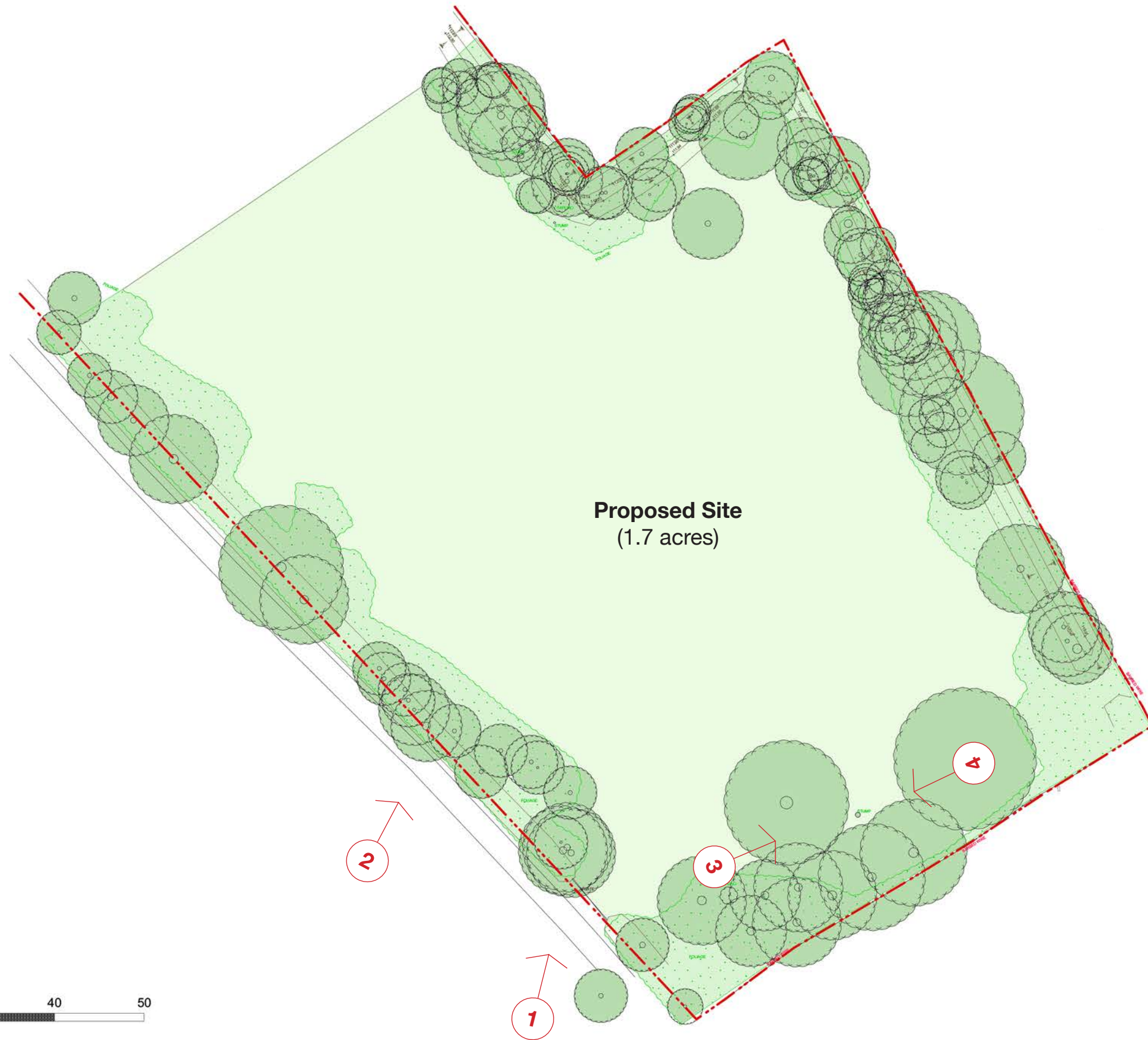


Image 1: Site Aerial Context

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOS



Existing Site Plan
1:500 @ A3

Stoney Studio



View 1: From Pepples Lane - existing gated entrance



View 2: From Pepples Lane - tree lined western boundary

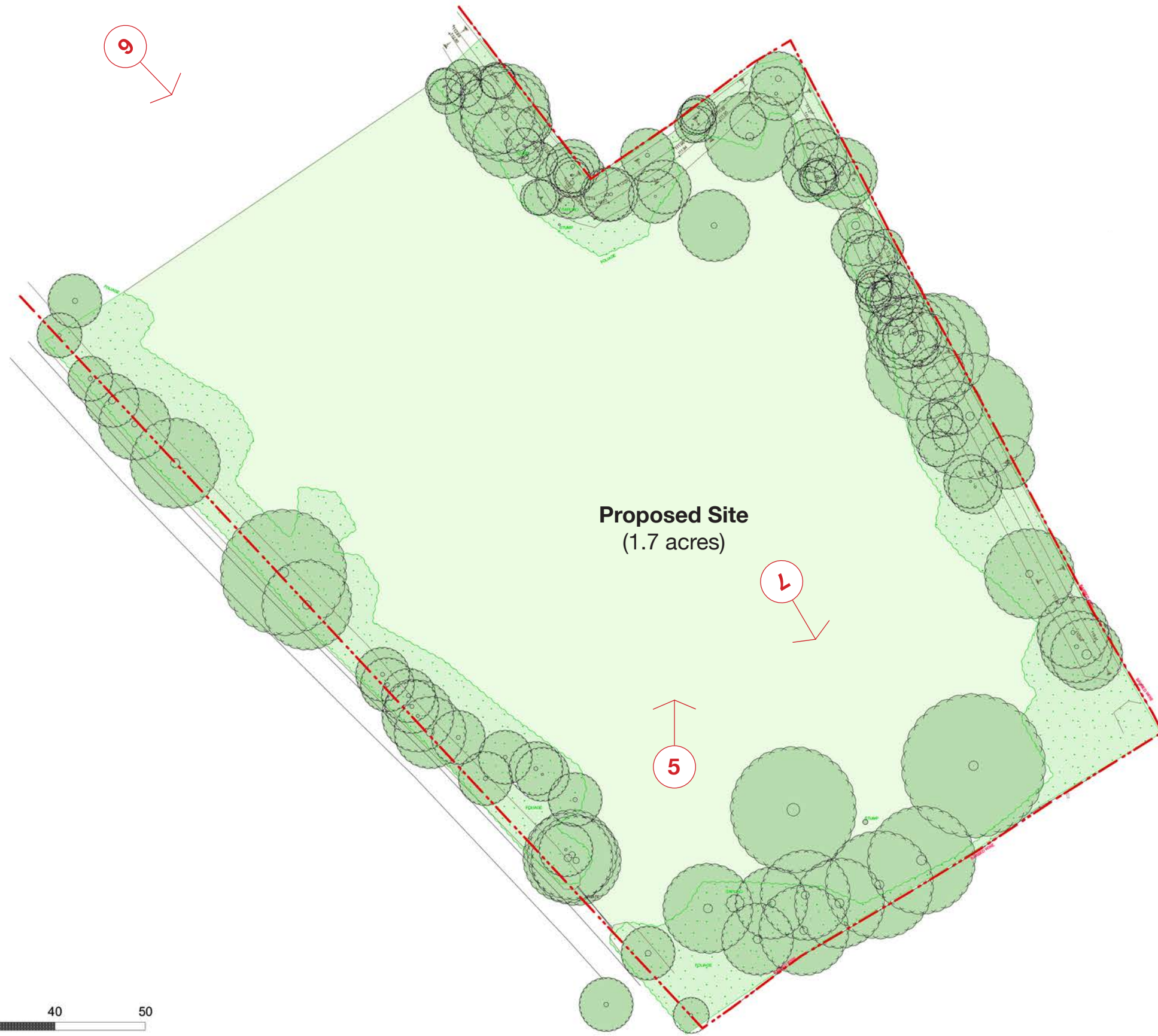


View 3: Looking east along row of poplar trees



View 4: Looking west towards gated entrance

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOS



Existing Site Plan
1:500 @ A3

Stoney Studio



View 5: Looking north from existing gated entrance - row of trees along eastern boundary



View 6: Looking south-east down the garden from Pepples Farmhouse



View 7: Southern boundary

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 This application proposes the construction of a new detached dwellinghouse with outbuilding, with access via the existing gated entrance off Pepples Lane.

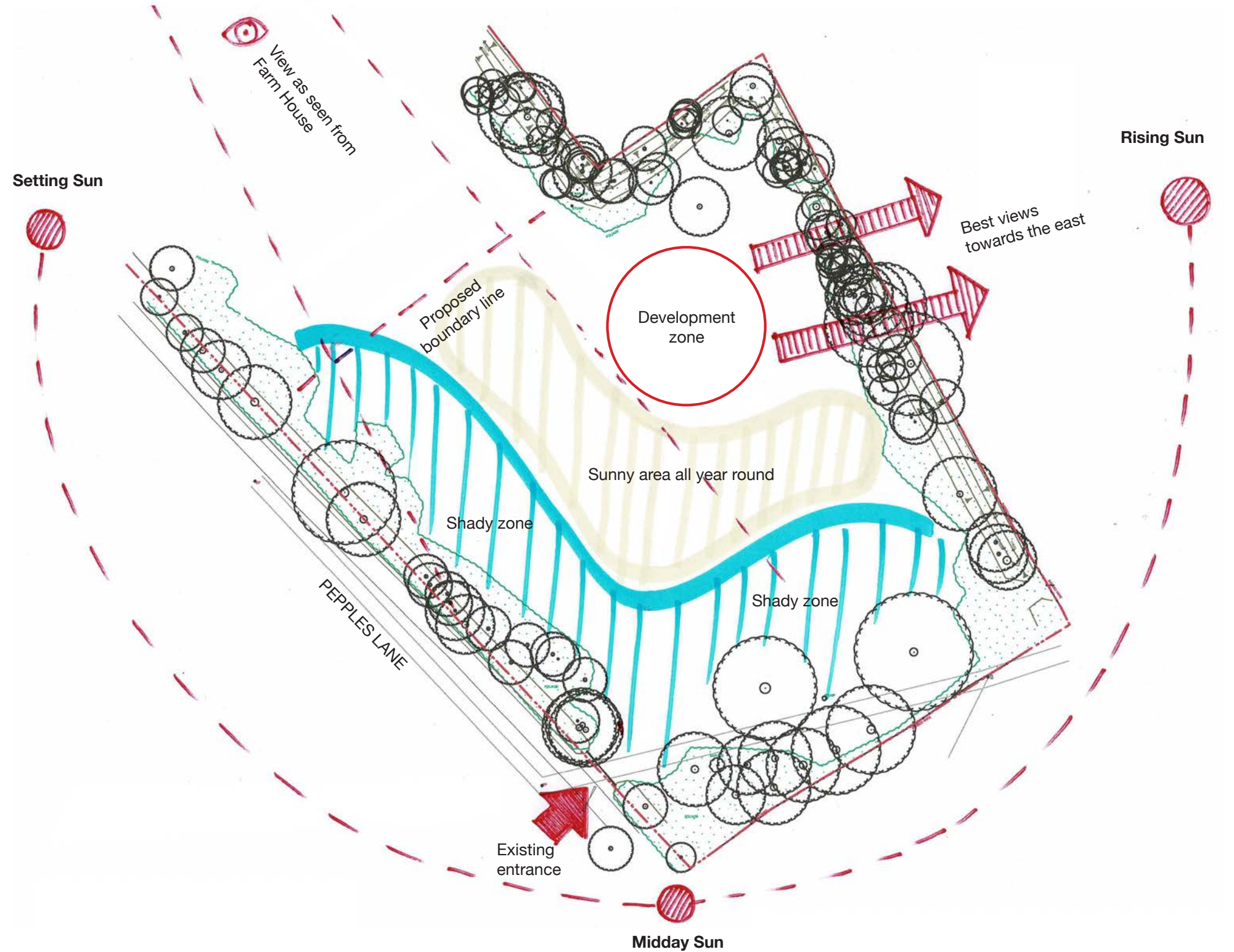
3.2 The new house would be the subject of a later technical details application. However an initial design concept has evolved from the combination of site analysis and client brief; resulting in a proposal that aims to respectfully respond to the grade II listed Pepples Farm House. It was important also to bear in mind the enhancement of the existing landscape and respond to the wider context of the site, as illustrated by the context sketch adjacent.

3.3 The following key design considerations will be made for any subsequent applications:

- Engage with the character and views of the site, so that the building captures the best orientation, whilst respecting the view from Pepples Farm House
- Achieve a reinterpretation of the agricultural language, through massing and layout
- Take inspiration from the local vernacular
- Express the local geology and materiality of the site to root it to the place
- Impose a robust, sustainable brief and overall environmental strategy
- Ensure a consideration and harmony between both architecture and landscape
- Sit predominantly at single storey height; subservient in scale to Pepples Farm House
- Simple built forms to avoid visual 'clutter'

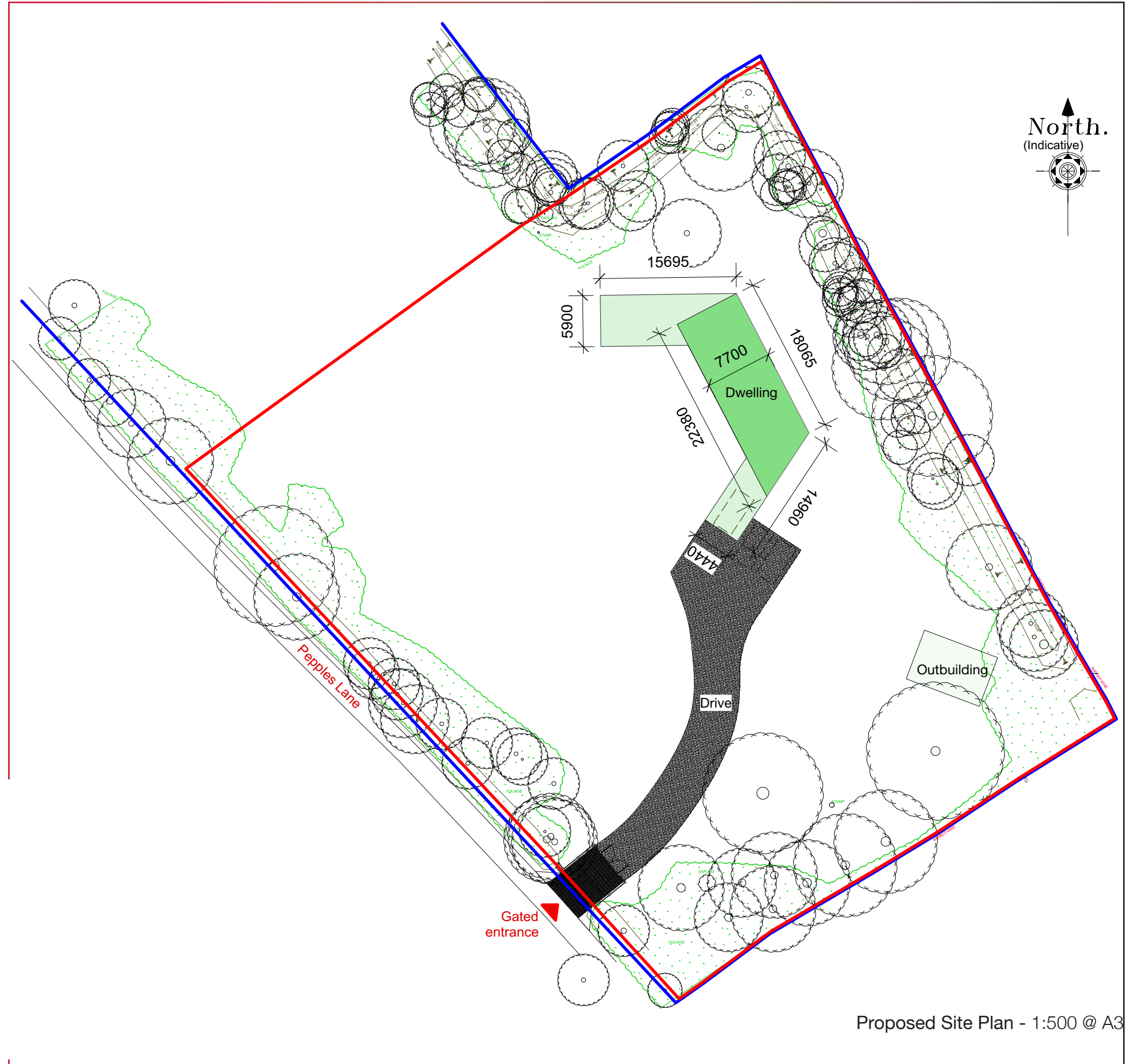
3.4 The scheme is likely to be a mix of single and two storey forms and of a design to reflect the scale, form and appearance of other properties in the area.

3.5 The application is supported by an indicative site layout plan (opposite) - Drawing No. 01 AP(0)03.



Site Analysis - not to scale

- KEY**
- Single storey (3.75m)
 - Two storey (6.5m)
 - Ownership boundary
 - Development site boundary



Proposed Site Plan - 1:500 @ A3

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT - PEPPLES FARM HOUSE AND CURTILAGE

4.1 Purpose of the Appraisal

4.2 This appraisal seeks to describe the heritage significance of Pepples Farm House, both intrinsically and as part of the wider historic environment. The proposed works will be examined in the context of local and national heritage policy for managing change in the historic environment

4.3 Designations

4.4 Pepples Farm House is listed Grade II as being of special architectural or historic interest. The listing description states;

4.5 Whimbish 1. 5222 Pepples Farmhouse II
2. C16-C17 timber-framed and plastered building on a partly moated site. Two storeys. Modern casement windows with leaded lights. Modern porch. A modern addition extends at the north-east end. Roof tiled, gabled, with a central original chimney stack with grouped diagonal shafts. (RCHM 20) *Listing NGR: TL5834434015*

4.8 Heritage Significance

4.9 Pepples Farm House has intrinsic heritage significance as a 16th/17th century timber framed farmhouse, recognised by the Grade II listing. It is a good example of rural farmhouse vernacular architecture of the post-medieval period.

4.10 In terms of the broader historic environment of Whimbish, the site of Pepples Farm House contains the substantial remains of a medieval moated site. This appears to be a rectangular moat (with the northern side filled in) which once would have surrounded a house platform. Whimbish is notable as a village containing some 10 moated sites, recorded

by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (RCHM Volume 20). Of these sites, Tiptofts (13th/14th century) is a particularly important building, described by Nikolaus Pevsner in the Buildings of England (Essex) as “one of the most valuable survivals of medieval domestic architecture in Essex”

4.10 Pepples Farm House and its moated site forms an important element in the network of Whimbish historic buildings and their landscape context. The individual listed buildings and their moated sites, including Pepples Farm House site, together form a notable series of medieval and post-medieval buildings and sites in their original moated setting. A distinctive and valuable historic landscape.

4.11 The evidence of the two historic OS maps adjacent show that historically, the site within the current ownership boundary (highlighted in blue) was made up of 3 plots. A conclusion can therefore be made that the historic curtilage of Pepples Farmhouse was limited to the northern plot (outlined in yellow).

4.12 Note that the footpath shown within the historic maps is no longer in use and is not listed as a right of way. Indeed it cuts through the site of a recent barn conversion on the north corner of plot ‘488’.

4.12 The Proposal

4.13 It is proposed to erect a detached dwellinghouse and outbuilding at the bottom of the garden at Pepples Farm House. Access will be via an existing gated entrance at the southern corner of the development plot. The proposal does not include any work or alteration to the fabric of Pepples Farm House, nor any external / landscape features such as the moat; of which there are very few remaining features, after being filled in mid 20th century.



Pepples Farmhouse - as viewed from south



Pepples Farmhouse - as viewed from north

4.14 **Heritage Context**

4.15 The Government’s policy for managing change in the historic environment is given in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

4.16 16 *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*

Proposals affecting heritage assets

194. *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting...*

195. *Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise...*

4.17 Historic England has produced policy guidance in their publication; Conservation Principles – Policies & Guidance

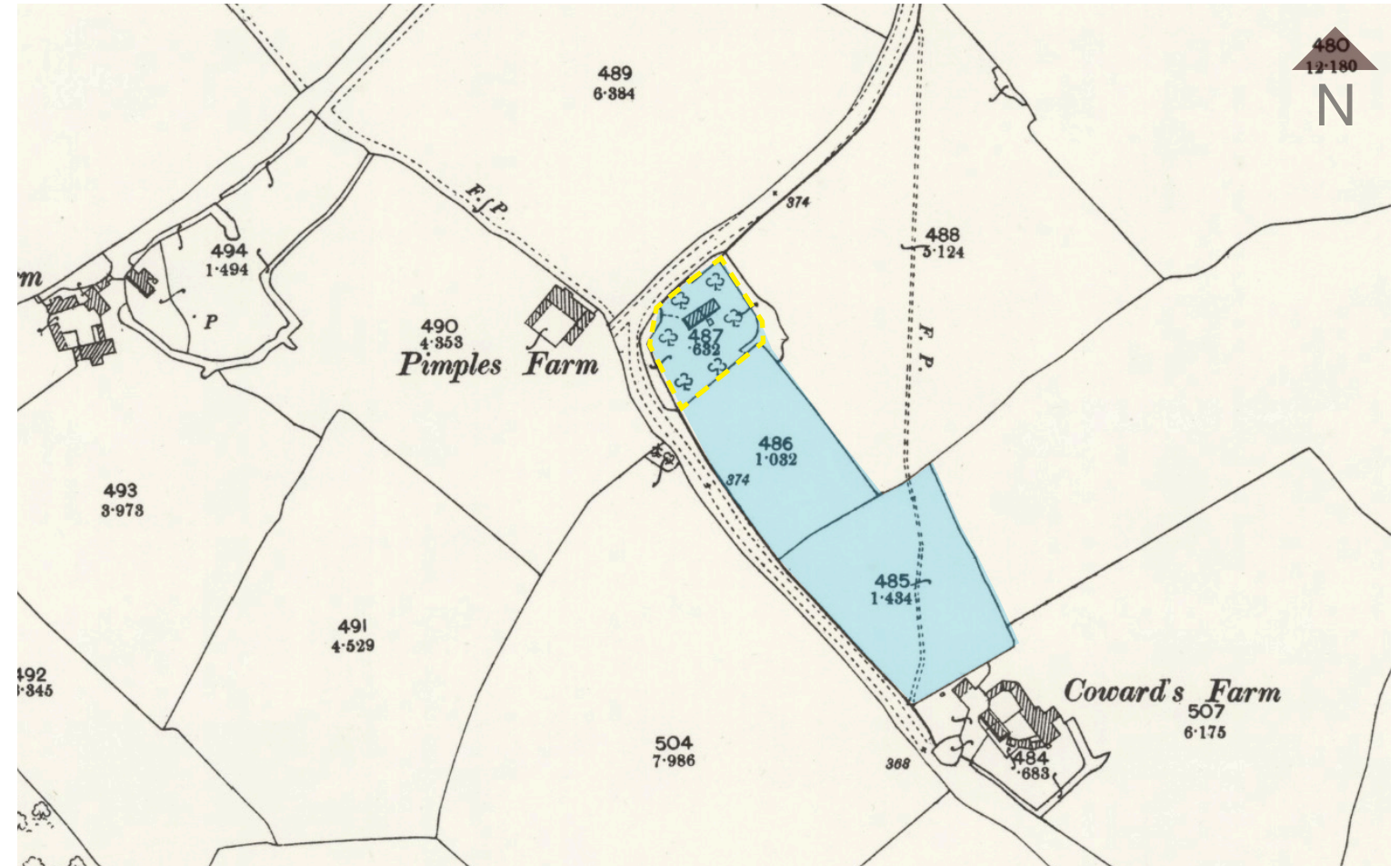
Assessing Heritage Significance

76. *Consider the contribution made by setting and context. “Setting” is an established concept that relates to the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. Definition of the setting of a significant place will normally be guided by the extent to which material change within it could affect (enhance or diminish) the places significance.*

4.18 Uttlesford District Council’s Local Plan contains policies aimed at recognising and protecting the historic environment;

Policy ENV2 – Development affecting Listed Buildings

Development affecting Listed Buildings should be in keeping with the scale, character and surroundings... In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for the conversion of listed buildings to alternative uses, favourable consideration may be accorded to schemes which incorporate work that represents the most practical way of preserving the building and its architecture and historical characteristics and its setting.



OS Map - 1897



OS Map - 1921

4.19 Assessment

- 4.20 Measures have been taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal on Pepples Farm House and will continue to be in subsequent applications to avoid or minimise any conflict between its conservation and any aspect of the proposed new dwellinghouse.
- 4.21 This proposal does not involve the alteration or loss of heritage fabric or features. What is proposed is that a detached dwellinghouse and outbuilding are built over 120 metres away from Pepples Farm House. Furthermore, the set-back position of the house has been chosen to limit the view of the proposal down the garden from the south facing windows of Pepples Farmhouse. Though this application does not seek matters on landscape, the proposed boundary between the development plot and remaining plot would be screened with trees and shrubs to further mediate this view of the proposal.
- 4.22 As the historic OS maps show, the proposed development area would not encroach on the historic curtilage of Pepples Farmhouse. Given the change in boundaries over the centuries, and the sheer size of the property / garden as it stands, there is no diminishment of the listed house in building over 120 metres away and is almost entirely stepped back from view.
- 4.23 The use of single storey at the front of the proposal further reduces this aspect, with the second storey concealed from view within the 'dog-leg' of the site.
- 4.24 There are a number of listed buildings within Wimbish, which like Pepples Farm House, constitute a record of the agricultural history of the area. The relationship of these buildings, their moated sites and linking ancient road pattern, whilst not being formally designated,

nevertheless constitute an undesignated heritage asset of buildings, landscape and features. The proposed dwellinghouse and outbuilding aims to be a continuation of this and enhance both the setting of Pepples Farm House, as well as the wider historic rural landscape and heritage assets.

- 4.25 In this rural area of Essex, there is a tradition of farmsteads. For farmhouses were commonly built within their working context – the central point of the farm - where people, animals, grain and equipment were housed and which comprised the farm's main arrival and departure point. The proposed house and landscape setting would draw strongly on the essential characteristics of this farmstead tradition in an endeavour to both recognise the contribution these farmsteads have made to shaping the character of the Essex countryside, and to maintain this character. In the 1800s and early 1900s the predominant farmstead type in the area featured a loose courtyard plan, formed by a collection of detached structures arranged around a yard, usually with the farmhouse located on one side of the yard. As can be seen within these examples of typical Essex farmsteads.

- 4.26 *“Old farmsteads nestling in folds in the countryside, protected by trees, close to water sources, and built of natural materials from pictorial compositions painted by generations of artists – a tacit acknowledgement of their value in visual terms.”*
(‘Essex Farm Buildings Supplementary Planning Guidance’ by Essex Planning Officers Association 1994)

4.27 Conclusion

- 4.28 The outcome of the proposed works would have no perceivable impact on the setting or heritage fabric of Pepples Farm House. This proposal meets the policy requirement for change to be positive and sympathetic in the setting of the historic environment.



Blackmore End, Essex



Coggeshall, Essex



Writtle, Essex

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Principle of Development

5.2 It's noted that application site is located outside the village development limits and Local Plan Policy S7 applies to the proposal stating that the countryside will be protected for its own sake and that planning permission will only be granted for development that is required to be there or is appropriate to a rural area, adding that there will be strict controls on new building. The policy adds that development will only be permitted if its appearance protects or enhances the particular character of the part of the countryside within which it is set or there are special reasons why the development in the form proposed needs to be there.

5.3 In any case, paragraph 80 of the NPPF seeks to avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. In this regard, housing site should be within or adjacent to existing settlements to prevent sporadic development in the countryside.

5.4 Uttlesford District Council are currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The NPPF requires all local planning authorities to identify a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide five years' new housing supply against their requirements as calculated under national policies. A housing trajectory is used by Councils to calculate their 5-year housing land supply and demonstrate whether anticipated housing delivery will meet or exceed those housing requirements. Uttlesford District Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 Year Housing Land Supply where the current housing deficit against statutory housing requirements now stands as adjusted at 4.89 years.

5.5 In such circumstances Paragraph 11d of the NPPF states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies most important for determining the application are out of date (including housing, where the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites) permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when considered against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

5.6 Sustainable Development

5.7 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF considers the presumption of sustainable development; this includes where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date (this includes where five-year housing supply cannot be delivered). Therefore, the titled balance is engaged in favour of housing. As such the development should be assessed against the three strands of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental).

5.8 *Economic*

The development will deliver an economic role by the creation of employment during the construction phase and the occupiers of the house would contribute to the local economy and services in the long term. As such, there would be a positive economic benefit.

5.9 *Social*

The NPPF identifies this as supplying required housing and creating high quality-built

environment with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

5.10 The site is in one of the six hamlets of Wimbish and enjoys immediate access to a wide range of local services supporting the community's health, social and cultural well-being including (distance in miles):
Howlett Farm Shop and Cafe, Howlett End - 0.6m,
Barnards Farm riding school/stables - 0.6m
Redwing Sports Club - 0.8m
Wimbish Village Hall & Bowls Club - 1.0m
Wimbish Recreational Ground - 1.0m
Wimbish Primary School - 1.1m
Yuva Restaurant, Debden - 1.8m
Debden Post Office and store - 1.8m
Refill Barn store/cafe - 2.0m
Fitness Focus gym - 2.2m
Spriggs Nursery - 2.2m
Rosie's hairdressers - 2.2m
Thaxted recreation ground - 2.2m
Thaxted church - 2.5m
Thaxted surgery - 2.5m
Thaxted primary school - 2.8m
Aldi supermarket - 2.9m
Gold Street surgery - 3.8m
Newport village - 3.8m

5.11 While the above are all within immediate cycling/walking distance of the site, it is recognised that users of these services might also use bus connections or drive. The towns/villages of Thaxted, Newport and Saffron Walden are immediately accessible either by bus or car..

5.12 Uttlesford can be viewed in the context of being a rural district affording limited access. Bus services in the District are generally limited, but the B184 has reasonably good services as follows:
Bus 453 - Newport, Debden, Howlett End, Wimbish, Thaxted, at 7.45 am and in reverse in the afternoon, Monday to Friday,
Bus 314 - Wimbish, Saffron Walden, Howlett End, Wimbish, Thaxted, 7.45 and in reverse in the afternoon, Monday to Friday,
Bus 313 - Saffron Walden, Wimbish, Debden, Thaxted, Great Easton, Little Easton, Dunmow, 2-3 services a day Monday to Saturday and in reverse,
Bus 313a - Great Dunmow, Dutton Hill, Wimbish, Howlett End, Saffron Walden, Thaxted, Great Easton, Little Easton, 3 services a day and in reverse.

5.13 The nearest bus stop is at the top of the lane on which the proposed site is located, less than 0.5m walk away. The 453, 314 and 313 bus routes provide easy public transport access to all of the services above as well as major schools/retail in Saffron Walden and Newport and direct rail connections to central London and Cambridge.

- 5.14 In addition there is a demand response service operated within Uttlesford District, called DART 1. Instead of using fixed routes, customers book journeys with the operator in advance and are picked up at an agreed point, which can be their own home. The service is funded by Essex County Council and operated by Arrow Cars.
- 5.15 It is recognised that the proposal would likely lead to vehicle movements to access services and facilities. However, paragraph 78 of the Revised NPPF recognises that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby and advises that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning Policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this would support local services. Our proposed site sits within a cluster of 4 existing homes and 6 holiday lets, and it is our aim to integrate the new dwelling within this small settlement; and in turn, enhance and support local amenities and villages like Wimbish.
- 5.16 Furthermore, electric car charging points will be provided at the proposed house which will provide consistently sustainable means of transport. It can also be concluded that the social strand of sustainability would also be met in respect of providing accessible housing.
- 5.17 *Environmental*
Paragraph 17 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions should take account of the different roles and character of different areas, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving communities within it.
- 5.18 The proposed development site is an entirely domesticated garden; with a mown lawn and hedgerow that have been maintained by the current owners for over 30 years. Though heavily screened by trees and shrubs along Pepples Lane, any glimpses of the site would not offer a view of an open countryside landscape, but rather one of a manicured garden; closed-off by trees and shrubs along boundaries to the north, east and south.
- 5.19 Any proposed development would endeavour to not only conserve, but enhance the natural environment. As a proposed garden would introduce the opportunity for a large host of fauna and flora to occupy and thrive in many newly introduced habitats. Moreover, due to the site being entirely within the confines of a domestic garden setting, no intrinsically rural character or appearance is being lost or threatened. This is also supported within the Preliminary Ecological Survey (PEA), which concludes there to be no current evidence of habitats for bats, reptiles, water voles, great crested newts or badgers. This could not be said for a truly rural site.
- 5.20 Taking these three strands of sustainable development into account, it can be concluded that the proposal would cause no harm to its context or setting, but rather positively contribute to the economic, social and environmental agenda that the Council are seeking to achieve. The site would feel in no way less domesticated than it currently feels and therefore is in line with the NPPF or ULP Policy S7.
- 5.21 The principle of residential development is therefore considered acceptable at this location.

5.22 **Design, Character, Appearance and Heritage**

- 5.23 ULP Policy GEN2 asserts that development will be permitted if the design, scale, form, layout, appearance and materials are compatible with the surrounding buildings; if it would not harm the living condition of the adjoining occupiers in terms of loss of daylight or overshadowing or overbearing impact. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF complements this policy by resisting poor design and the Home Extensions SPD (2005) sets out more detailed design guidance.
- 5.24 As identified above, it can be considered that the dwelling would not result in the domestication of this garden plot. Based on the size of the dwelling, it is likely to accord with the design specifications within the Essex Design Guide and also with its guidance on rear amenity spaces, their overall design, layout and size. It would be reserved for a later application, but any proposed materials and architectural form would be a reflection, if not a reinterpretation of the local vernacular.
- 5.25 As shown within the heritage statement, the scale of the dwelling would sit comfortably within the 1.7 acre plot, with ample space from neighbouring heritage assets. The mixed storey heights and set-back position on the site would not only limit the views in and out of the site due to distance, but also allows for the planting of significant tree and shrub planting along the west and southern boundaries. Therefore detracting from any perceived prominence in context of both adjacent listed buildings. As referenced in the heritage statement, there are many circumstances whereby a manor or farm house would be accompanied by farm buildings and barns either in close or nearby vicinity. Though the proposed dwelling has a larger footprint than Pepples Farm House (enabling a single storey, low-impact design), the language of the architecture would be one of a farmstead, set-back from the house. Therefore reducing its prominence.
- 5.26 The proposal would therefore accord with the design criteria outlined within Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan and the NPPF 2021 and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- ## 5.27 **Neighbouring Amenity**
- 5.28 Given its location within the north corner of the site, the proposal (along with the windowless single storey outbuilding near the east boundary) would not result in neighbouring properties experiencing an unacceptable loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of privacy. No window would fall under the minimum 21m distance to neighbouring windows, as is the guidance set out by most design guides. In fact the nearest neighbouring structure to the proposed dwellinghouse is the detached garage at Conyards, which is over 40m away from the proposed footprint.
- ## 5.29 **External and Internal Space**
- 5.30 A 3+ bedroom dwelling such as this would be expected to provide in excess of 100sqm of amenity space and 2 bedroom dwelling 50sqm as recommended in the Essex Design

Guide. The proposed plan, within a site of this scale would comfortably achieve this. Any detailed proposal would therefore easily meet the 'Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standard 2015'.

5.31 **Highways and Access**

5.32 As shown on drawing 01AP(0)04, the existing gated entrance on the southern corner of the development plot would easily accommodate the proposed vehicle entrance to the dwellinghouse. There is good visibility in both directions along Pepples Lane, where traffic consists of almost entirely local access as well as farm traffic. Given the nature of the road, speeds rarely exceed 20mph. The threshold to the gravel driveway will be in line with the proposed gates - 7 metres from the road edge. A brick paved area of hard-standing is proposed between the gates and road edge to avoid material spilling onto the highway This is an existing entrance into the client's site, which they currently use (and have used for 30 years) to no apparent detriment to themselves, their visitors, nor the safety of others using the road.

5.33 ULP Policy GEN8 takes into consideration vehicle parking standards, and is supported by the council's adopted neighbourhood residential parking standards supplementary guidance. As this is likely to be a 4+ bedroom house, 3 parking spaces have been allocated, including the single garage. The parking spaces are in accordance with Essex County Council Parking Standards and measure 2.9m by 5.5m. The parking needs of the proposal are entirely unlikely to cause any large increase in off-street parking.

5.34 **Biodiversity**

5.35 Please refer to the Ecological Survey and Assessment produced by John Dobson of Essex Mammal Surveys. The survey found no evidence or presence of bats, with the site considered to have negligible potential as a roosting place.

5.36 No Badger latrines or digging was found on the site, or within 30m of the boundaries. The site is covered by mown grass and there are no features that might be attractive to basking by reptiles, and, with the site surrounded by gardens and fields, there is no suitable habitat nearby from which the site could be colonised by reptiles.

5.37 There is no standing water at the site or in the vicinity and no suitable terrestrial dispersal habitat at the site for great crested newts. An ornamental pond in a neighbouring garden is stocked with fish. The Essex Field Club has no records of great crested newts in this 10km square during the last fifteen years.

5.38 It was recommended that the existing gaps along the site boundaries are retained to allow potential hedgehogs and common toads to forage across the site.

5.39 Any proposed development would endeavour to not only conserve, but enhance the local biodiversity. Any proposed garden would introduce the opportunity for a large host of fauna and flora to occupy and thrive in many newly introduced habitats.

5.40 **Landscaping and Trees**

5.41 Please refer to the Tree Schedule and Tree Constraints Plan compiled by TJG Arboricultural Services. Though the building has been positioned well away from the trees along the north and east boundaries, a subsequent root protection plan will be included in any further Reserved Matters application for layout, appearance and landscape.

5.42 **Air Quality**

The site is not in a specific air quality management area, although the proposed development will result in additional vehicle access the site and surrounding road networks this is not considered to be significant.

5.43 **Flooding**

The site is in Flood Zone 1, as such it is considered the proposal will not result in any significant increase to flooding. Any future Reserved Matters application will establish in more detail the considerations for mitigating surface drainage.

5.44 **Climate Change**

5.45 Though these details will be established for a future Reserved Matters application, its our intention to meet and exceed the UDC's climate change strategy by incorporating solar panels, heat source pumps, electric vehicle charging points and other such mitigation and enhancement methods.

6.00 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

6.01 The proposed scheme will be conceived as a sustainable, low impact and high performance home for Richard & Elizabeth Grove and their family; within a village and community they have enjoyed being part of for the past 30 years.

6.02 It's considered that any perceived harm of a new home on this site, could be far outweighed by the benefits of an innovative dwelling of excellent design; which provides habitats to a domestic garden lacking in biodiversity. Any further Reserved Matters application will follow a rigorous design process, to ensure it responds sensitively to both the immediate context of Pepples Farm House and the wider setting. In principle however, the Heritage Statement shows the proposal having very little impact on Pepples Farm House, due to both its generous distance from heritage assets; as well as Victorian OS maps that show the site was not part of the historic curtilage of Pepples Farm House.

6.03 The proposal will sit comfortably into the natural corner of the site, set within a line of existing houses running along Pepples Lane. Its mixture of single and double storeys and central courtyard convey an arrangement similar to the traditional Essex farmstead.

6.04 Furthermore, delivery of the scheme would support the local rural economy, whilst its ambitious sustainable agenda will ensure the local infrastructure will not be impacted.