



LD&A DESIGN



Felixstowe Leisure Vision

October 2017

Submissions for Sites – 1091, 1092, 1094

also covering sites 644, 750, 800, 801 and 802

of the Issues and Options for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Review consultation

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Document Issue:

Revision A Updated cover image and insertion of contact details

23rd November 2017

Introduction – opportunities for Felixstowe

Introduction

This vision document has been prepared on behalf of Suffolk Coastal District Council to identify opportunities for leisure and sports hub led development in and around Felixstowe. The document has been prepared on behalf of SCDC as landowner and provider of leisure services within the district.

Land to the north of Felixstowe has been subject to a recent consented scheme for 560 homes, community centre, care provision, business units and open space as part of the allowed Candlet Road appeal. Other land in the area is also being actively promoted by Trinity College and other landowners. It is recognised that Suffolk Coastal District Council as a landowner in the area and provider of leisure services for the district need to play a proactive role in this regard and in particular opportunities to deliver enhanced leisure provision.

The East Suffolk Business Plan (2015 – 2023) identifies leisure and investing in healthy lifestyles as a critical success factor that supports the delivery of their shared vision. This support is underpinned by a focus to enhance and re-develop leisure and sports facilities in in the District, with an overall aim to increase the access to quality leisure facilities and activities that promote healthier lifestyles.

This project aims to achieve this goal of promoting healthier living in the District through provision of high quality leisure facilities, as part of a wider leisure led scheme that will benefit the wider area and help to meet the aspirations set out in the east Suffolk Business Plan. Specific planned actions for the Suffolk Coastal District include the enhancement and re-development of a modern Leisure Centre and Sports Hub facilities.

The existing provision of leisure facilities in Felixstowe are constrained in the existing centres due to the fact modification to existing buildings is difficult and unfeasible. The projected demand for leisure facilities suggest existing provision will undersupply future need. Swimming pool, sports hall, health and fitness, 3G, climbing facilities and leisure water all have demand that is not being met within the town and the district. It also must be addressed that there is an ageing population that is projected to increase placing more importance on health and vitality of this demographic as well as younger age groups. A new focus on leisure also has potential to attract tourists and families from the wider area in line with the East Suffolk Business Plan vision.

The document has been prepared to take forward a masterplanned approach to development in and around Felixstowe, that can deliver modern Leisure Centre and Sports Hub facilities, new homes, education, open space and employment opportunities.

This therefore relates not only to the primary study area to the north of the town but also to the wider Felixstowe area and in particular opportunities for the redevelopment of existing leisure sites at the Seafront and Brackenbury sites.

The document has been prepared for submission to the Suffolk Coastal District Council Local Plan Issues and Options consultation. The document has been prepared in order to take forward engagement with the local community, landowners, and local businesses.

The Project Team draws together planning, design and technical expertise led by the Council and its vision:

Suffolk Coastal District Council



Strutt & Parker



LDA Design



Sports Consultancy



MLM



Opportunity area and wider context

The study area is located to the north of Felixstowe with road and rail connections linking to Ipswich, the wider Suffolk Coastal Region and major centres including London and Cambridge.

The town features the Port of Felixstowe as a major employer and range of supporting businesses. The town also benefits from a healthy retail and leisure offer supported by a balanced mix of residents, employees and tourists.

Felixstowe is, therefore, well placed to accommodate growth and deliver new homes and facilities for the Suffolk Coastal Region.



Response to Suffolk Coastal District Council Issues and Options Consultation Questions:

Q85 – How can planning policy better facilitate the development of tourism attractions to support the resort of Felixstowe?

The Issues and Options consultation recognises that the potential of attractions and activities in complementing the vitality, viability and economic regeneration of Felixstowe.

This accords with the policy emphasis given the economic growth in the national planning policy framework which recognises that economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities.

Within Felixstowe there are particular opportunities to provide jobs and attractions that can operate all year round, as well as improving the links between the town centre and sea front.

The Local Plan Review will allow for the development of a strategy for the town that can build upon these opportunities through the delivery of an enhanced leisure offer and masterplanned development to the north of the town. Such an approach will also provide for the regeneration and redevelopment of existing leisure sites including the existing seafront site adjacent to the pier. This will therefore have significant economic and social benefits, and should be given consideration in the emerging Local Plan.

Q97 – How can the Local Plan assist the enhancing and redevelopment of modern leisure centres and sports hub facilities across the district?

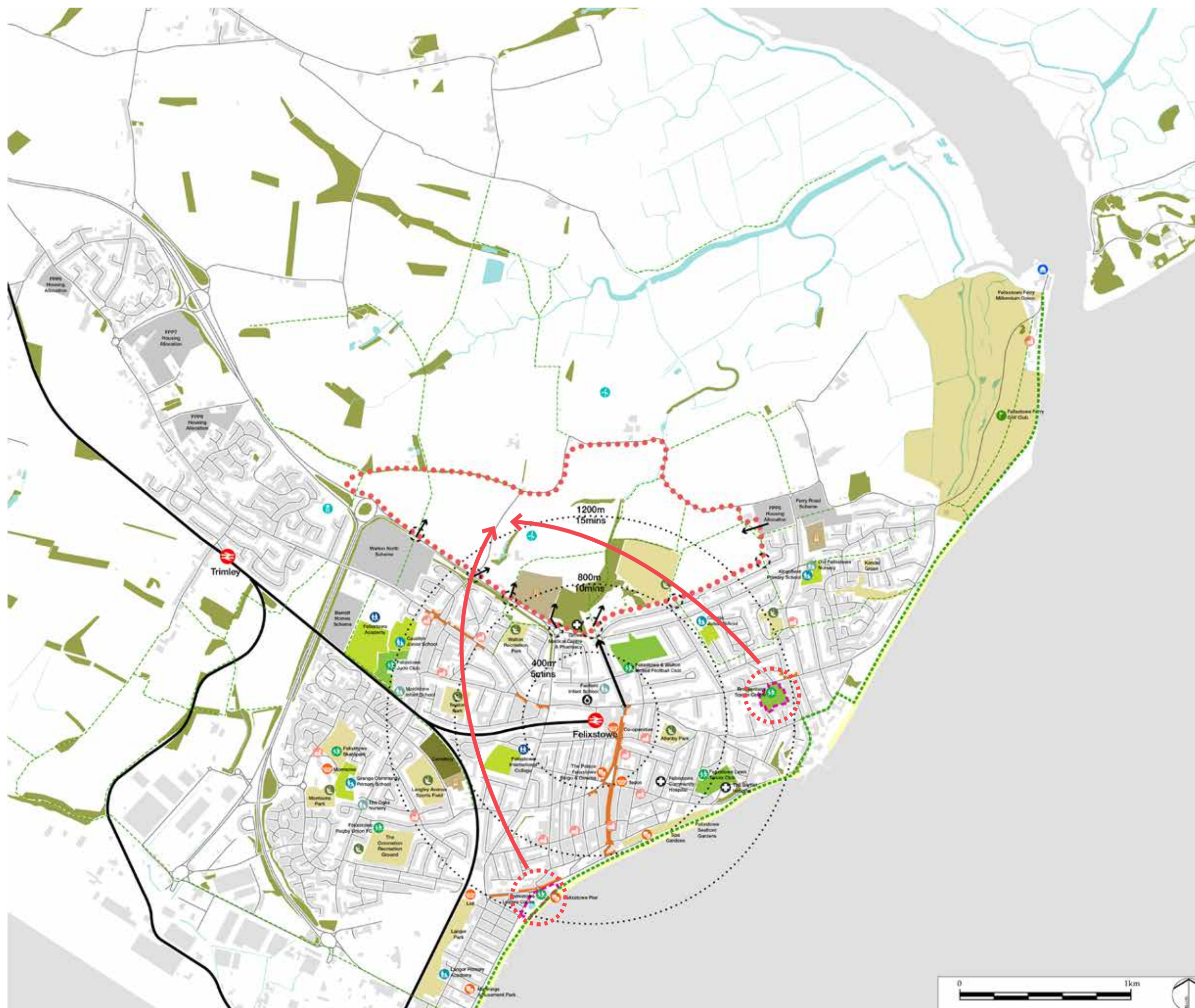
The Local Plan review provides an opportunity to identify a site suitable for a new sport and leisure village to meet the needs of Felixstowe and the wider district now and into the future. It is considered such a site should be identified through a masterplan approach with associated development and this should be taken forward as part of the Local Plan review.

Q98 – What policies are needed to ensure that appropriate leisure provision is provided across the district?

It is considered the delivery of enhanced and high quality leisure, cultural facilities and activities that support healthier lifestyles should be taken forward as part of a co-ordinated approach within the new Local Plan. With regards to opportunities in Felixstowe this is anticipated to consist of a masterplanned approach to development opportunities to the north of the town, and policies to support the redevelopment of existing leisure sites to provide social and economic benefit. Policies as part of a masterplan approach should additionally support appropriate supporting using including residential, education, employment and community uses.

Q99 – Is the provision of a new modern leisure facility for Felixstowe, enabled through the redevelopment of the existing facilities for other uses, better then seeking to refurbish the existing ageing leisure facilities?

It is considered that the provision of new modern leisure facility, as outlined in this vision document, would provide for a number of benefits. It would allow for the creation of a high quality designation facility providing greater community benefit and maximising participation in leisure within the district. Provision as part of a masterplanned and mix use development would also provide for a mechanism for delivery as well as other important social and economic benefits including homes, jobs, community facilities and potential for landscape and environmental enhancements. The appropriate redevelopment of existing leisure sites also provides an opportunity to support local businesses and increase the visitor and leisure offer.



A town and district wide leisure and recreation opportunity

The northern study area is within walking distance of Felixstowe's primary retail High Street on Hamilton Road which also connects pedestrians through to the seafront with the beaches and associated leisure facilities.

The town features a network of recreational facilities, including formal playing fields and recreation grounds along with the natural assets of the seafront to the south and the Suffolk landscape to the north. At the heart of the northern development area, The Grove provides a natural recreational asset and a link from town to country; a vehicle that puts the people of Felixstowe in touch with nature.

Future growth of the town presents an opportunity to not only make a sensitive response to the landscape context but also begin to link existing and new recreational assets with the natural landscape to drive a new identity for the town founded on the health and well-being of the community.

KEY:

- Study Area
- Existing Leisure Facilities to be reprovided in enhanced hub

Invest in leisure and recreation for community health and well-being

Early delivery of community facilities helps build a community spirit and momentum for positive placemaking outcomes.

The Felixstowe Leisure Vision prioritises open space provision connected into the wider landscape with a new sports and leisure centre at the heart of the new community to promote health and well-being as a key part of the identity of Felixstowe and the District.



A landscape led approach to placemaking

A landscape-led approach to masterplanning creates specific kinds of value. It creates an extraordinary environment. It elevates development to truly unique places where people can flourish; heightening the quality of life and health and well-being of the community. For the Felixstowe Leisure Vision this means 5 things:

The right location

The next phase of growth for Felixstowe must sensitively plan for new homes and infrastructure whilst making a positive contribution to the overall settlement structure.

Fit the landscape

Future growth has an opportunity to be defined by, and have a more positive relationship with the landscape to set a northern extent of development in perpetuity whilst putting the town back in touch with nature.

Create and enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity

Existing and proposed recreational routes can be connected within an enhanced green infrastructure network that links recreational and natural assets in Felixstowe for the good of all to promote healthy lifestyles.

Create a unique identity


Unearthing the layers of local history and creating a settlement that is of its place...specific to Suffolk and the nuances of the townscape and landscape conditions.








Fostering a community spirit



A high quality of life exploiting the benefits from being within reach of the countryside – access to the landscape and a natural setting PLUS a sense of community and range of facilities.

Land ownership and existing housing sites



 Study area boundary
area: 144.3 ha

Land within study area		hectares
	Trinity College	33
	The Stennett Family	32
	Allotments	5
	Woodland Trust	4
	Suffolk Coastal District Council	34
	Felixstowe Town Council	0.3
	The Adams Family	36

Land outside study boundary	
	Trinity College
	The Adams Family

Existing consented and allocated sites:

- A

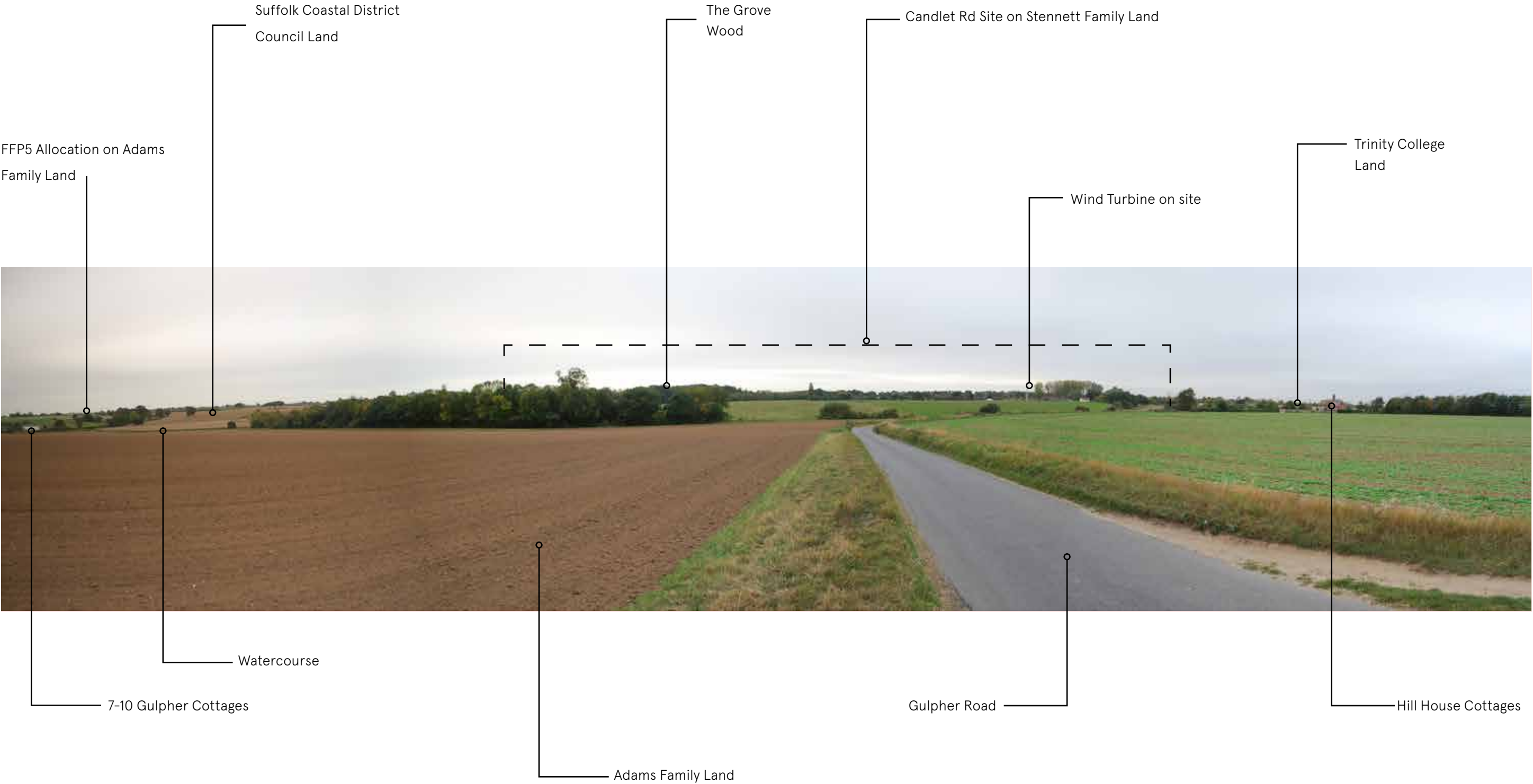
The Candlet Road site has been subject to a successful appeal for development (DC/15/1128/OUT) and benefits from Outline Planning Permission for up to 560 dwellings, including a Local Community Centre, a 60 Bedroom extra Care Home and 50 assisted Living Units, small Business Units and open space provision with associated Infrastructure.
- B

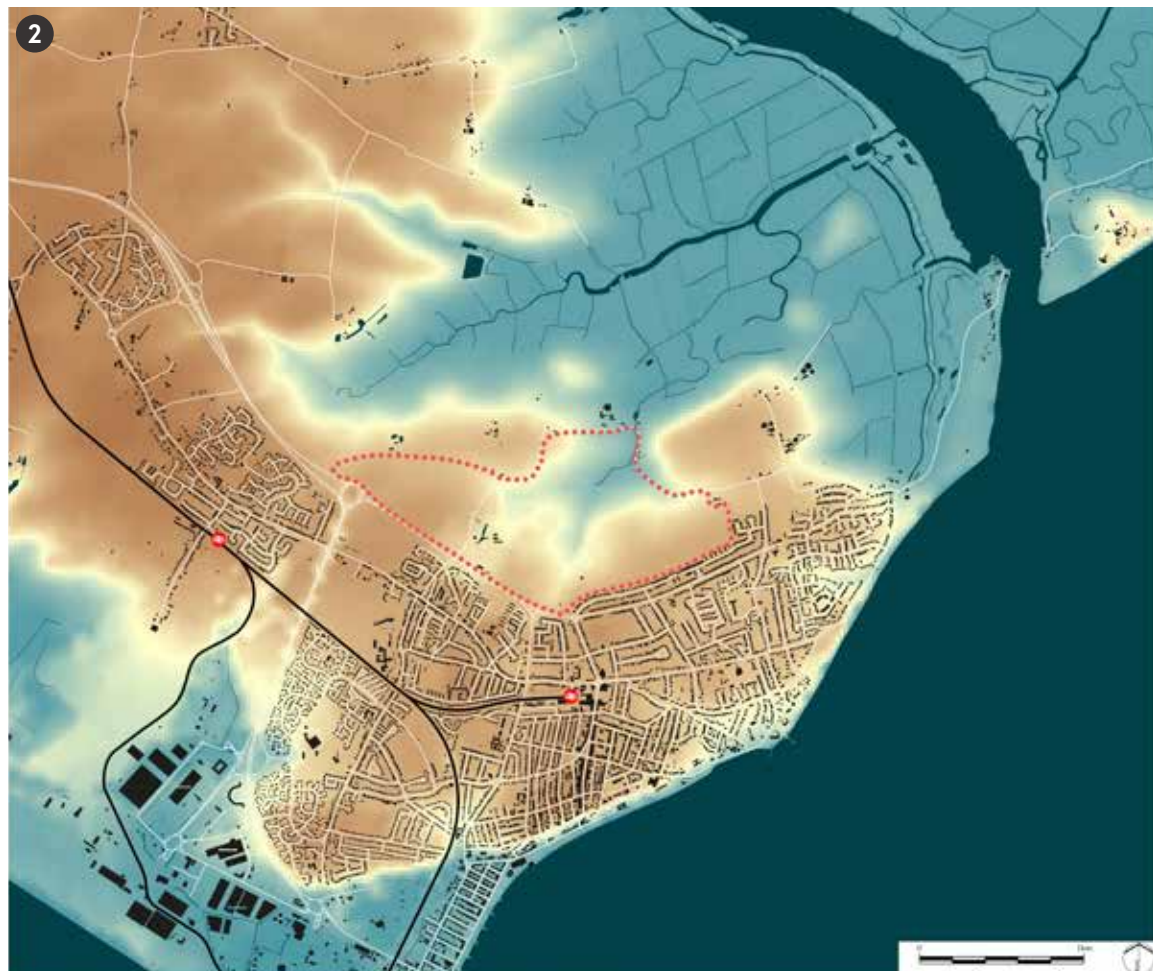
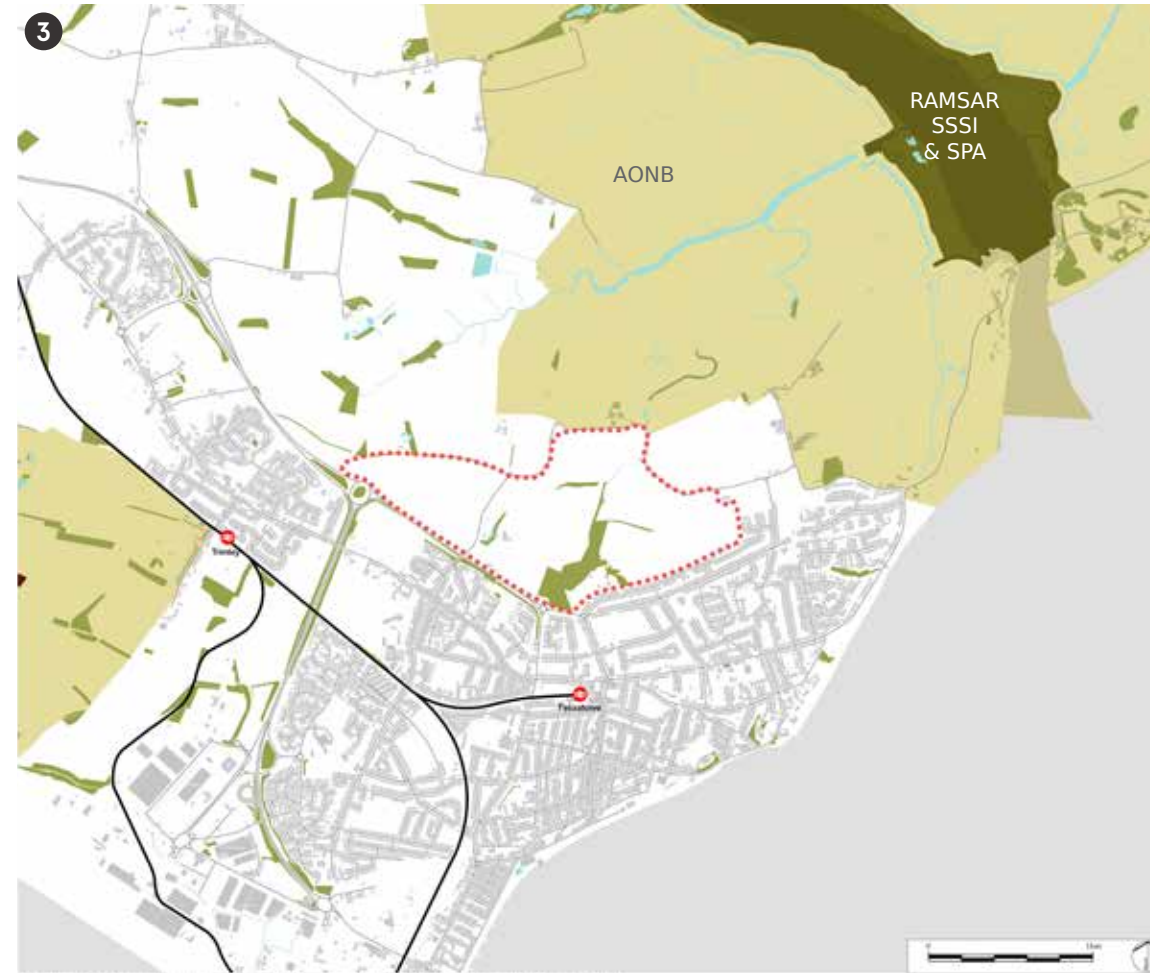
Up to 385 dwellings pending approval under application DC/16/2778/OUT
- C

Land North of Conway Close and Swallow Close is also allocated in the Felixstowe Area Action Plan for approximately 150 homes. (FFP5)
- D

197 dwellings approved under DC/13/3069/OUT & DC/16/3776/ARM

Development envelope





Understanding the context

1. Drainage and flooding constraints

The Deben Estuary and associated tributary watercourses are identified on the Environment Agency flood maps with areas shown in blue being in Zones 2 and 3.

2. Topography

The Southern half of the site is characterised by generally more level land parcels at a similar contour to the existing northern development edge formed by adjacent property 'backs'

Low points in the site feature watercourses and in general the land falls into these drainage channels with a more undulating landform to the north as the site meets the Suffolk landscape beyond Felixstowe.

3. Landscape and environmental designations

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (shown in light green) wraps around the north of the larger extension site

2km north east of the site is Deben Estuary which is designated as:

- o **SSSI**

- o **Special Protection Area**

- o **RAMSAR Wetlands**

4. Heritage

2 nearby Scheduled Ancient Monuments to the south of the site

- o Immediately south of the A154 is Walton Priory

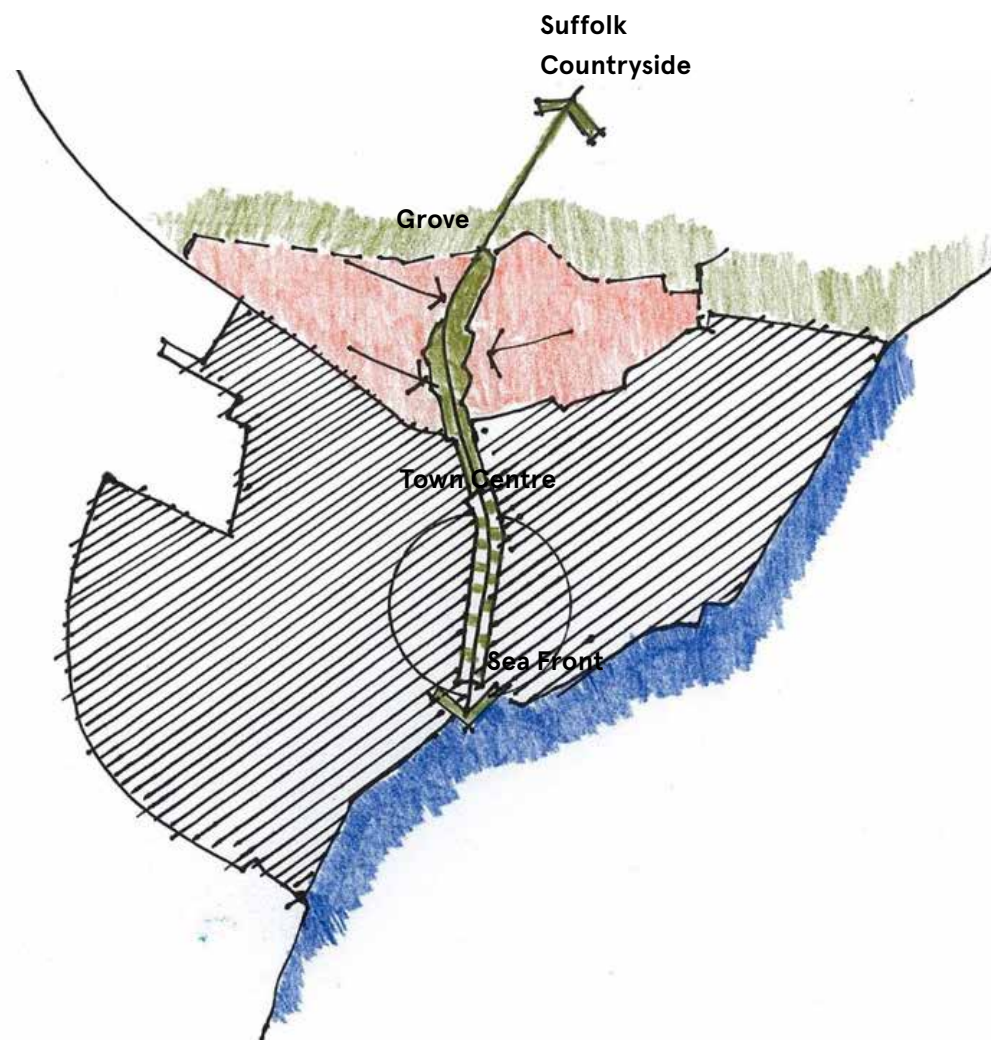
- o South of Colnesis Road is Walton Old Hall

2 no. Grade II listed buildings in the surrounding farmsteads (Gulpher Hall and Park Farm Cottages)

Felixstowe Town Centre also features 2 conservation areas.

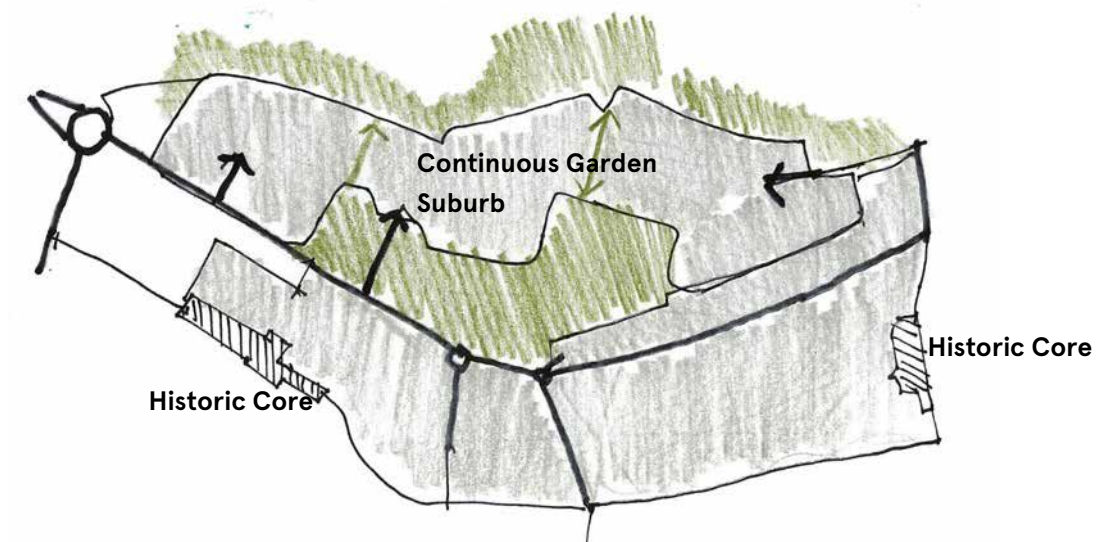
Conceptual Approach

1. Connect the northern development area and new leisure offer with the town and the seafront

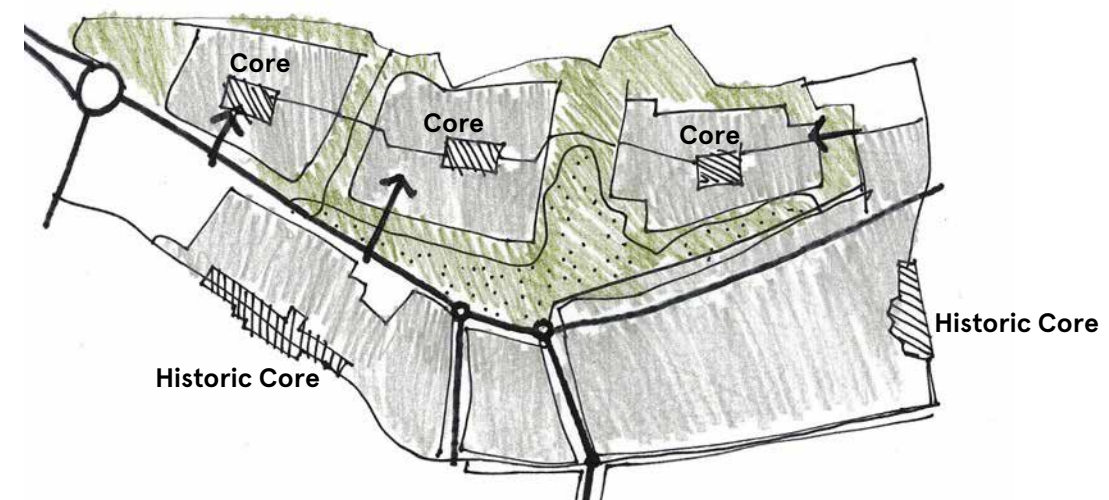


2. Placemaking strategy – creating a complementary addition to Felixstowe

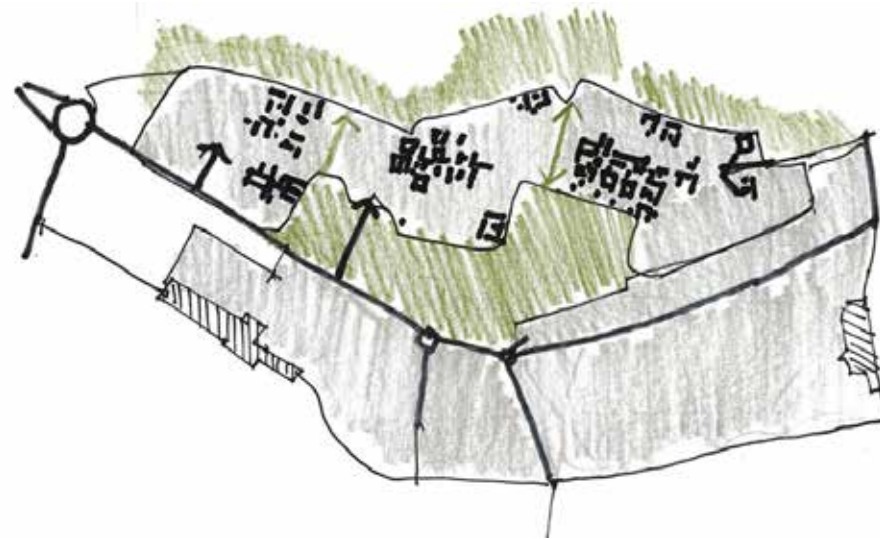
2a. Integrated urban extension



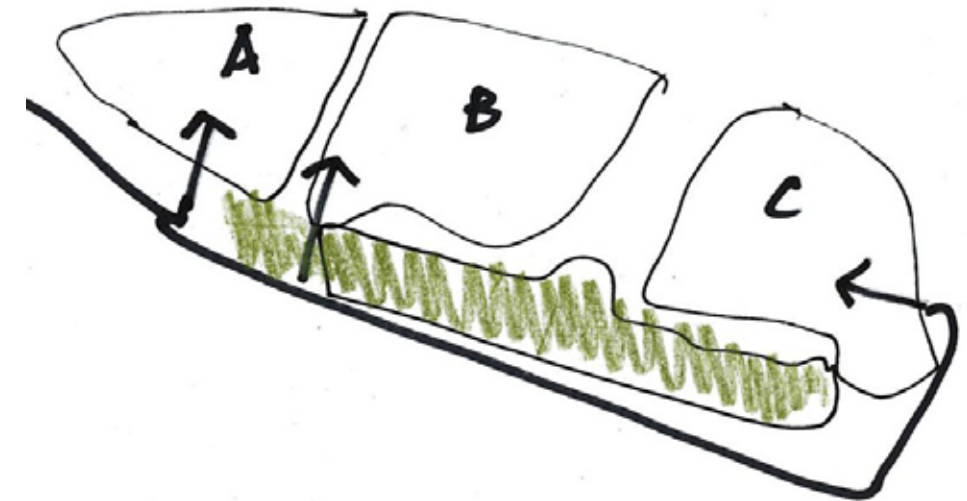
2b. Connected clusters



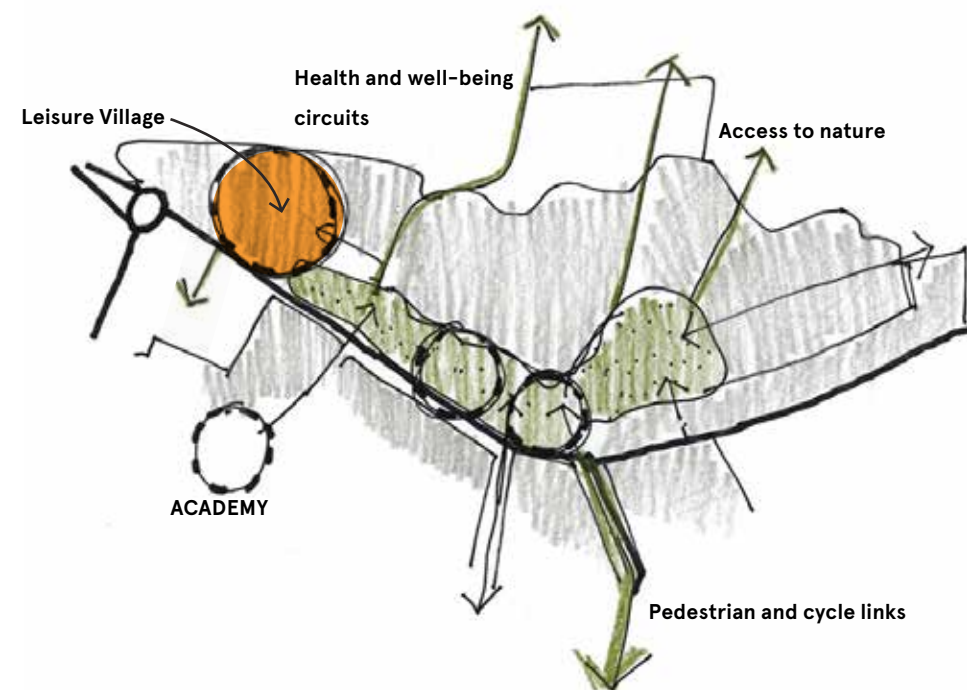
3. Appropriate density and grain responding to the landscape



5. A deliverable plot and infrastructure strategy



4. A new leisure gateway plus wider recreational loops to benefit all



It is proposed that a wider masterplan approach to Felixstowe could include:

- Enhanced Sports and Leisure Facilities
- A quantum of housing necessary to deliver new homes and infrastructure
- Neighbourhood Centre
- Primary School
- Employment area
- Open space and improved recreational opportunities
- Strategic landscaping and habitat creation

Potential Concept Framework



Key:

..... Study Area

○ Potential point of access

○ Pedestrian and cycle links

■ New neighbourhoods
(residential led development including, schools, community facilities and local employment opportunities)

■ Leisure centre and enhanced sports pitches

■ Green Infrastructure
(including retained allotments, The Grove woodland, new formal sports pitch provision, public open space, childrens play spaces and informal natural / semi-natural landscape areas)

Summary and next steps

The opportunities for a northern masterplan area and new leisure hub for Felixstowe will additionally allow for redevelopment of existing leisure sites to deliver significant economic and social benefits. The existing Felixstowe seafront and Brackenbury leisure centre sites hold potential for redevelopment that will be of public benefit. There are particular opportunities around the seafront leisure centre and its link to the newly redeveloped pier and a regenerated focal space for the sea front. It is the intention to ensure there is a seamless delivery of leisure services to ensure continuous availability to support healthy lifestyles. A masterplan approach for Felixstowe will integrate with these links to existing sites in the town, alongside infrastructure and community uses to ensure that connectivity is reinforced.

The Suffolk Coastal Issues and Options Consultation sets out a number of potential growth scenarios for the district. The higher growth scenarios will necessitate the provision of a substantial number of homes, employment opportunities and infrastructure. Felixstowe provides opportunities for an urban extension that can deliver such objectives alongside wider benefits including healthy living and new leisure provision. The concept framework set out in this document is at this stage indicative and the masterplan proposals, including locations of particular land uses, are therefore subject to change. The vision will be further developed over the coming months through engagement with the community, landowners, local businesses, statutory consultees, and technical appraisal, alongside engagement in the Council’s work as planning authority on the emerging Local Plan.

Next Steps

Alongside engagement with the community, landowners , local businesses, and statutory consultees. Technical work will be progressed including:

- Masterplanning & Urban Design
- Detailed topographical and survey work
- Landscape and Visual Impact including wider views to and from the AONB.
- Ecological and Biodiversity, including consideration of environmental designation and potential requirements for habitats regulations assessments
- Archaeological and Heritage
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan

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