

WHITTLESEY VISION

Potential urban extension of Whittlesey
on behalf of Whitacre Management Ltd



July 2011

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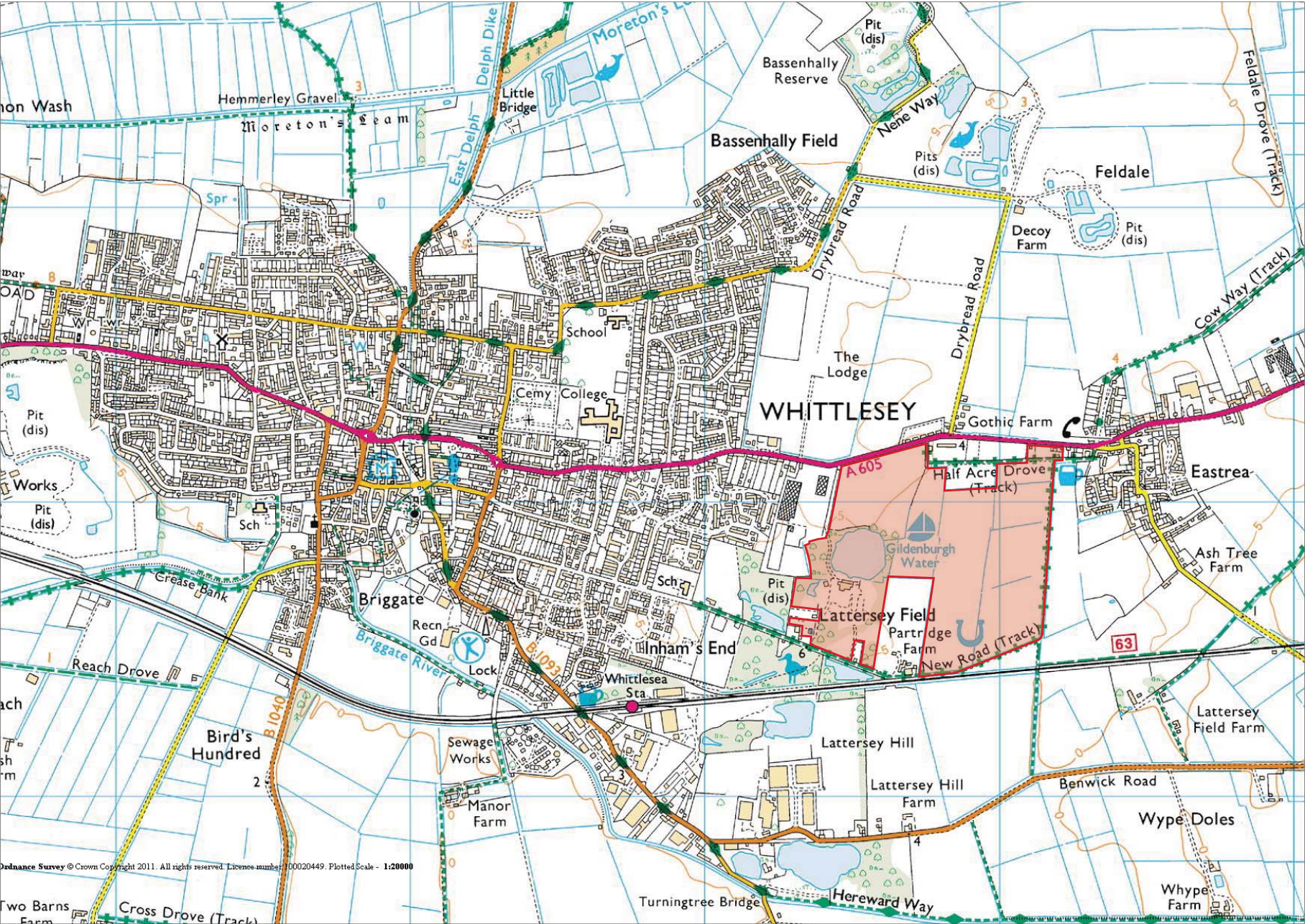


Figure 1 Site location plan



Existing settlement



Site extent

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Whitacre Management Ltd (Whitacre) we would like to formally present a vision for the future urban extension for the east of Whittlesey.

Whitacre have been working with landowners and developers to develop a masterplan to show how Whittlesey could be developed to the south of Eastrea Road over the coming years. The aim will be to deliver a sustainable urban extension which will provide appropriate levels of growth, jobs, new leisure facilities and open space which will ultimately create a 'Gateway' into the town. This first document is illustrative for the purposes of early public engagement however it is our intention to submit a single planning permission for the whole scheme in the coming months once public opinion has been gauged.

Our initial discussions with Fenland DC have indicated that this approach will be consistent with emerging planning policy guidance set out in the Fenland DC Core Strategy. This document will be published on 28th July 2011 for public consultation. This approach is also consistent with the latest Government Guidance and advice ('Planning for Growth' statement), whereby development of sustainable sites is fully encouraged to assist in reigniting the economy.

Whitacre have the necessary agreements in place, and the full support of the landowners on which this masterplan will be delivered. We believe that by working together and looking at the 'bigger picture', rather than a single site in isolation, we will be able to deliver a wide range of opportunities and facilities for the town and the surrounding catchment area.

BACKGROUND

The proposed development land lies to the east of the market town of Whittlesey and to the south of Eastrea Road. The total land within the masterplan area is approximately 120+ acres and is made up of agricultural land (greenfield) and by the Gildenburgh Water Diving and Leisure site which as a former brick works is a large brownfield site.

The land is generally flat and is bounded by trees and hedgerows. The Gildenburgh Water site has a number of buildings from which the various leisure activities such as diving and paintballing are operated. Some of these buildings have been purpose built while others remain from when the site was in its former use as a brick works. The Gildenburgh Water site has its own tarmac access road while access to the agricultural land is from an existing field access, both onto Eastrea Road.

The site lies approximately 1.5km east of Whittlesey town centre. The town benefits from a wide range of services including :

- Leisure Centre
- Library
- Healthcare centre
- Wide range of Shops and Services.
- Small Food Retail store – Co-op

There has been a long established demand in the town for a major supermarket to serve the town and the surrounding catchment area. This demand has seen a planning application for a supermarket approved on Station Road however the site has proved unpopular given its poor location and access over a level crossing. A further planning application by Tesco on the Fire Station site close to the town centre has also been refused due to deliverability and impact issues. The latest planning application by Harrier Developments (Tesco) is on the former Nursery site on Eastrea Road adjacent to our proposed development site.

The proposed development of the enclosed masterplan will also seek to address this need for a supermarket by delivering a larger store than currently proposed by Tesco, on a site which in our view is better sited as it will front directly onto Eastrea Road and is sited away from neighbouring residential properties.

The development of this site will also lead to significant wider benefits to the town and the district, through the capital that will be raised through legal agreements attached to this much larger form of development. The scheme will also deliver significant leisure and open space areas due to the large amount of land available. This masterplanned approach represents a carefully considered and joined up approach between developers and landowners which will maximise the future benefits to the town for future generations.

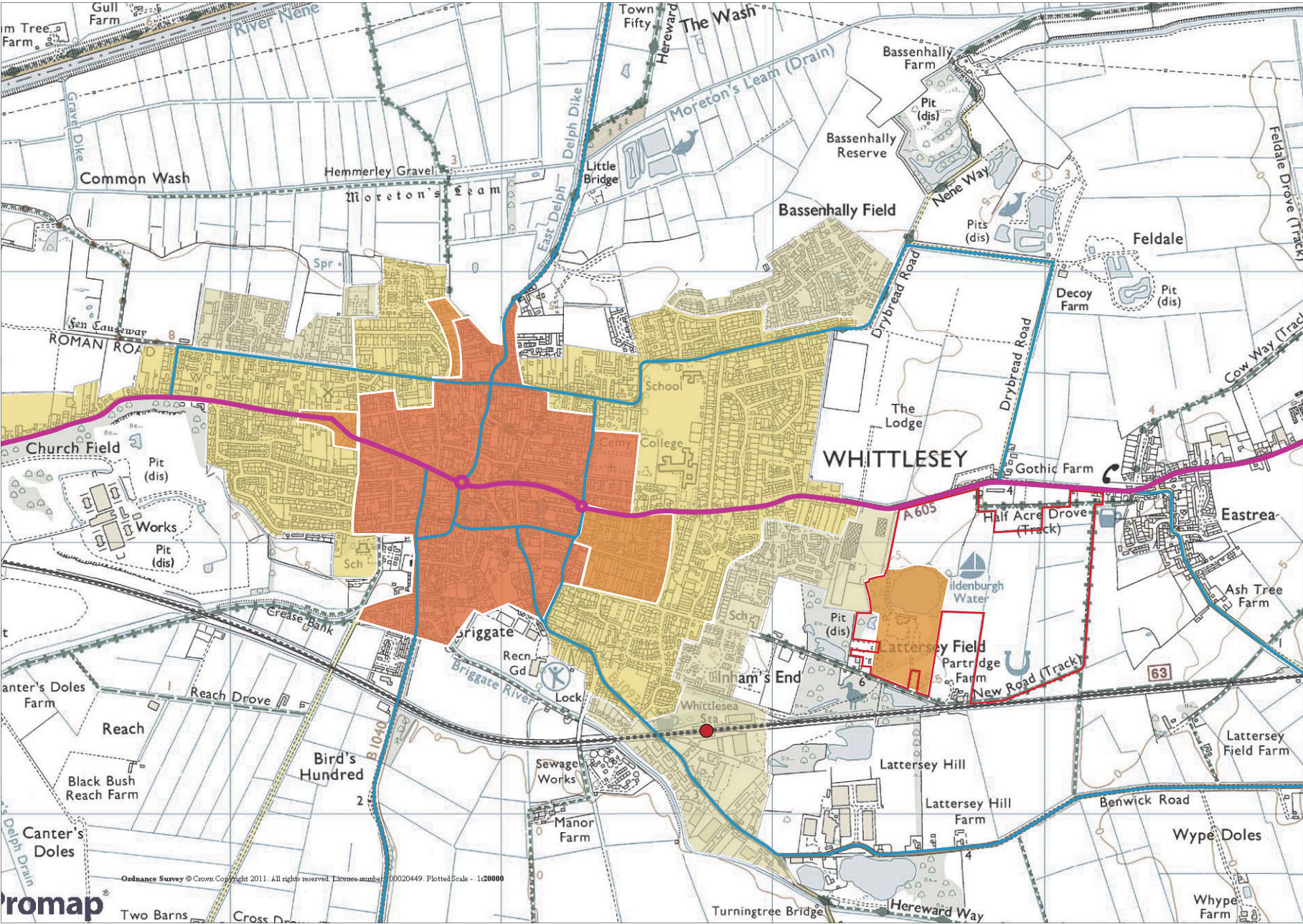
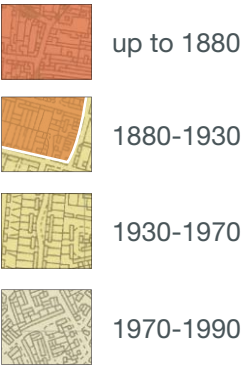


Figure 2 Whittlesey - historic growth



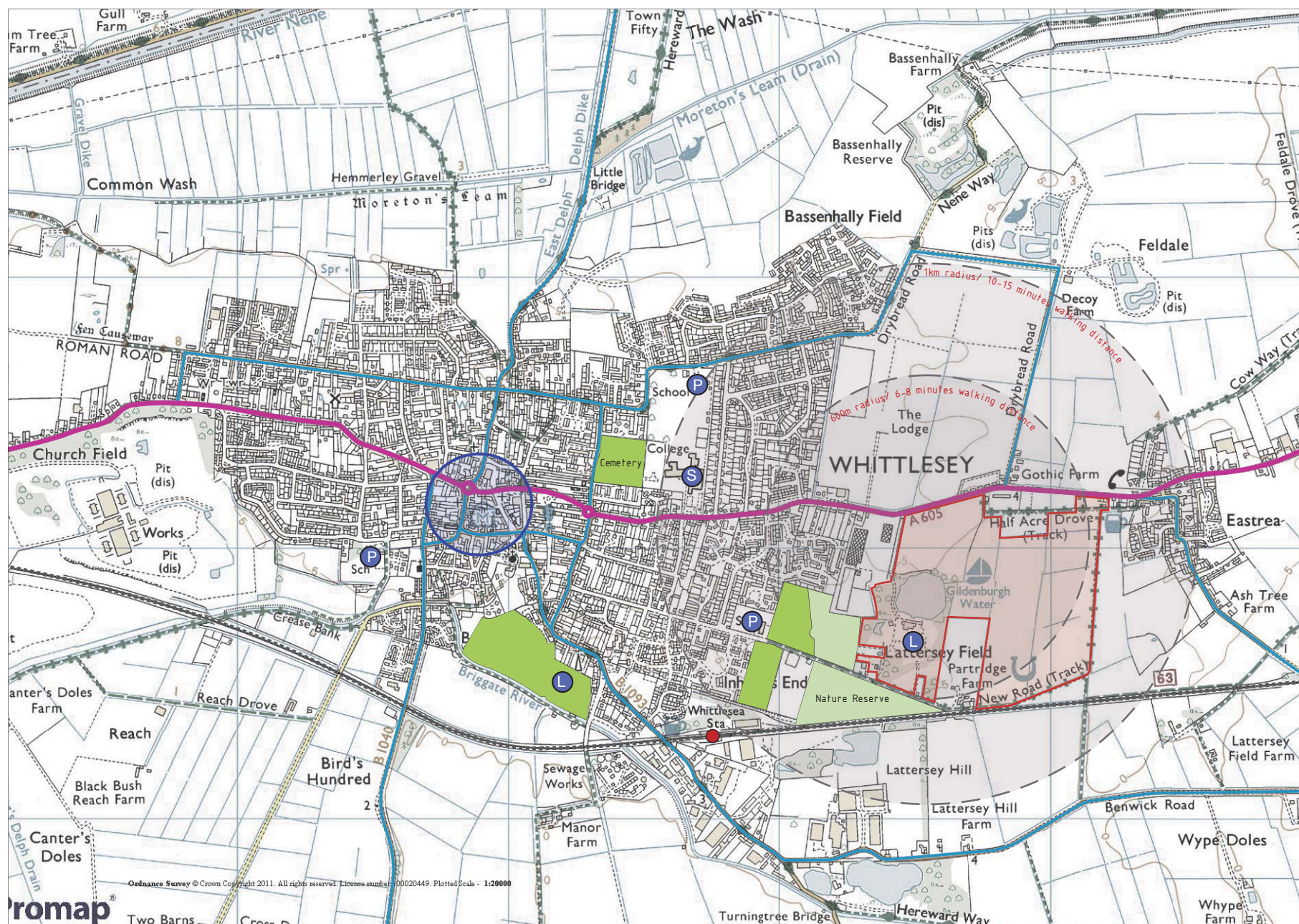


Figure 3 Uses and connectivity



Site extent



Town centre



Public open spaces



Services and facilities

 Primary school

 College

 Leisure facilities

 Whittlesey railway station

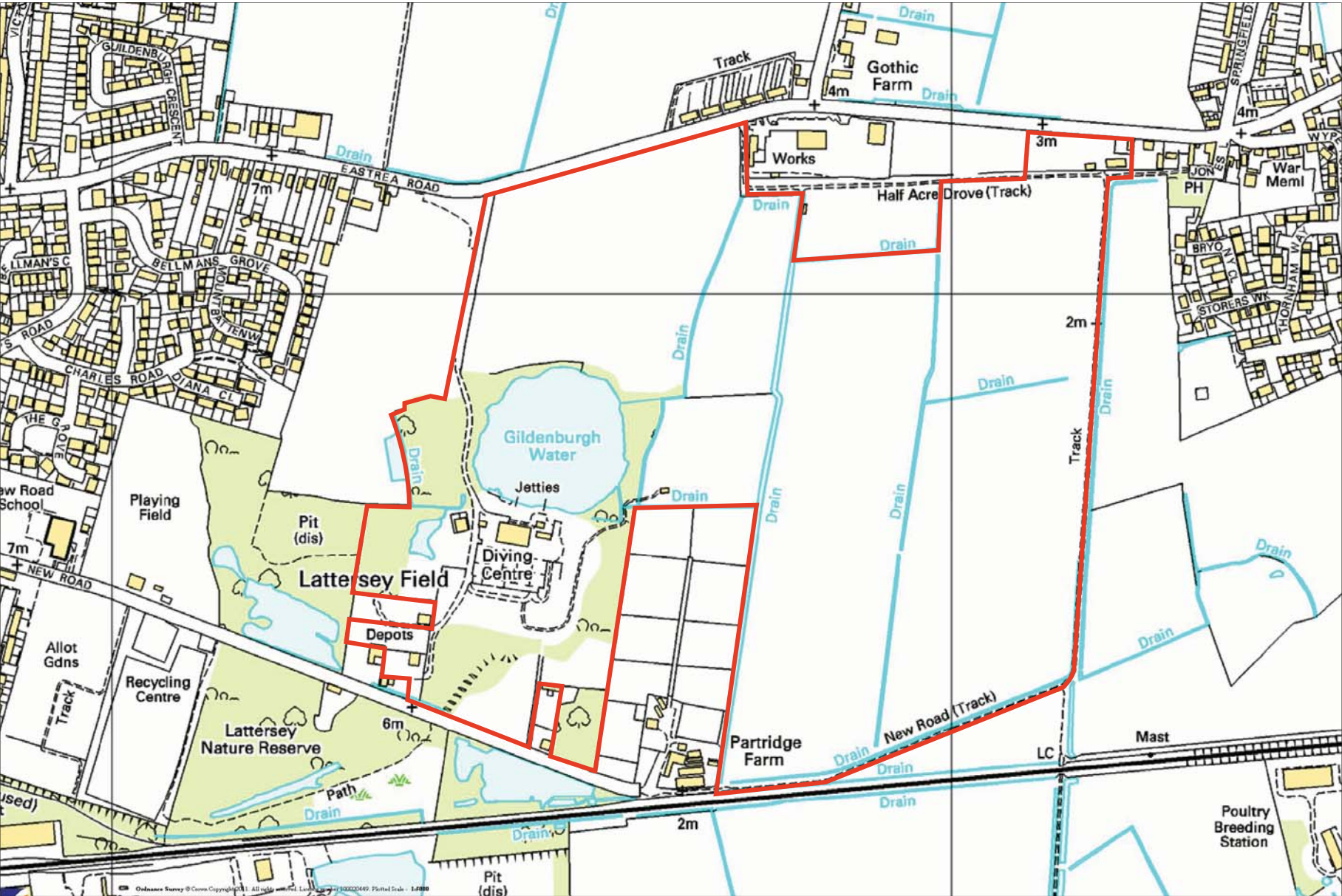


Figure 4 Site plan





Figure 3 Development concept

VISION

Supermarket

The first phase of delivering this vision will be the delivery of a supermarket on the frontage of Eastrea Road which will represent the first phase of development (refer **Figure 6** on page 9). Whitacre are currently in final discussions with a major supermarket to deliver a large food store and a petrol filling station. The delivery of this store will meet the long standing need for a supermarket in the town as at present the residents are having to travel to Peterborough and March. The modern store will serve both the town and the surrounding immediate catchment area and provide greater consumer choice in the town. The petrol filling station will also provide a much needed alternative option for the current single filling station in the town.

We are aware that Harrier Development has submitted a planning application for a Tesco supermarket on the adjoining former nursery site. In our view the development of this site for a supermarket is inappropriate as it will effectively sterilise the development of the land on which our masterplan is established. We will be making separate objections to the Tesco proposals, however we wish this masterplan to be considered as a credible alternative to that scheme. In our view our proposals for the supermarket are more appropriately located on the highway frontage and due to the larger scale of the store can deliver significantly wider benefits such as more jobs (300+) to the town than this alternative proposal.

A family pub/restaurant operator has also expressed an interest in building a new family pub adjacent to the supermarket scheme. There is currently no family pub/restaurant of this type in Whittlesey.

The supermarket is the key first phase of the development and will be fundamental in financing the wider facilities such as the Country Park. This phase of the scheme will be submitted to Fenland DC in full detail so it can be delivered first on the site.

Country and Activities Park

A major benefit of the proposed scheme will be the potential delivery of a 54 acre Country and Activities Park. This land could potentially be gifted to Fenland DC as part of the overall planning gain related to the overall planning vision. The delivery of such a large area of open space would deliver informal or formal open space currently lacking close to Whittlesey and the surrounding area. We consider that this would be a major benefit to the town and the surrounding area. At present most residents in Whittlesey and the surrounding villages are required to drive into Peterborough to access a similar Country Park (Ferry Meadows).

A further benefit of locating a park in this location is that it would adjoin the existing Gildenburgh Water Diving and Leisure Centre which is one of the leading diving schools in the UK attracting thousands of visitors each year.

The Gildenburgh site benefits from planning permission for a wide range of leisure uses including a pub, hotel, caravan park and has a wide range of licences to hold on site events. Many of these uses are yet to be delivered on the site however with the potential development of excess land around the site this would allow these permitted uses to be financed and brought forward in addition to a wide range of other potential uses which could also be linked to or undertaken on the new Country Park (Eg. Cycling, Triathlon). All of these facilities would be accessible to the public.

The Country Park would be linked into the existing Gildenburgh site to allow improved public access between the sites and across the whole area. The development of this significant area of open space will also ensure there will be no coalescence between the built form of Whittlesey and Eastrea.

Future development

Following the development of the supermarket and the Country Park there would be an opportunity to delivery development across the wider area adjacent to the supermarket and the Gildenburgh Water site. This will form the second phase of the planning application which will be submitted in outline as part of a hybrid planning application. Development of the wider land is required to provide a comprehensive urban extension and to maximise the benefits of this approach.

In our view the former Nursery site which is currently subject of the Tesco application should be developed for housing in line with Fenland DC aspirations. As the site is well related to the existing residential built form of Whittlesey we believe that housing would be the most appropriate use for this site. We expect that the emerging Fenland Core Strategy will confirm this view, and that the Council are seeking to see a more comprehensive development to the East of Whittlesey rather than a single development scheme.

A more detailed masterplan will be developed to illustrate and inform where potential future developments of employment or leisure uses could be sited. The outline planning permission on these additional parcels of land will ensure that there is flexibility in the future to deliver a wide range of uses on this land. Securing outline planning permission will also provide comfort that the whole of the land area will be developed in line with the masterplan.

Savills will use their vast network of contacts both locally and nationally to find appropriate end users to develop these additional parcels of employment and leisure land.

Access

The primary access to the proposed scheme will be taken from a new access from Eastrea Road. The proposed supermarket will be accessed from a new roundabout arrangement which can be delivered in isolation and when required link into the approved roundabout being delivered by Larkfleet Homes for their 460 houses to the north of Eastrea Road. This access arrangement has support from Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and has been designed to ensure that it will have the capacity to deliver all of the future development identified in the indicative masterplan.

In addition to the new roundabout there are opportunities to deliver two further accesses from Eastrea Road to serve the future development and the Country Park. These two additional accesses have been designed and checked as acceptable in principle by Cambridgeshire CC Highways and Fenland DC.

There is further potential to upgrade New Road which currently provides access into the Gildenburgh site. All these proposed accesses will be assessed through a full transport assessment and the necessary auditing process when the planning application is submitted.

The Country Park will also link into the existing national cycle way which runs along New Road. It will be possible to provide pedestrian links through the site and into the surrounding housing estates and existing footpaths.



Figure 6 Indicative master plan



Existing urban area



Existing equestrian centre



Existing diving and leisure centre



Existing fishing lake



Existing Lattersey Nature Reserve



Potential location for supermarket (Phase I development)



Potential development area for future uses (employment and leisure)



Potential pub/ family restaurant



Potential location for a cafe/ car park associated with leisure uses/ Country Park



Potential Visitor Centre for the Nature Reserve



Potential Country/ Activities Park



Native planting



Potential main access into the site



Potential additional access if required



Potential access into the Country Park



Footpath/ cycle link to existing leisure uses from Country Park



Existing national cycle route



Potential new cycle route linking to the national cycle route

