

CROWLE

Design guidance and codes

Final Report
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Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Jessie Watson	Jessie Watson	Ben Castell
Associate Director Urban Design	Associate Director Urban Design	Director
Sunayana Ramanand		
Graduate Urban Planner		
Holly MacMahon		
Graduate Urban Designer		

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INTRODUCTION

01

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This design guide supports the Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies, as well as the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) produced by **Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council**. It provides a common reference point and understanding of the local character in the Neighbourhood Area of Crowle (NA). Practical guidelines and codes for development in the NA will ensure locally sensitive design achieves this purpose.

1.2 Process to prepare this design guide

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SG) manage the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for Crowle.

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design guidance to support the SG.

To ensure this design guide accurately reflects the Crowle community's aspirations, the SG provided AECOM with guidance and local knowledge. **Figure 1** provides a brief overview of the key milestones for its preparation.

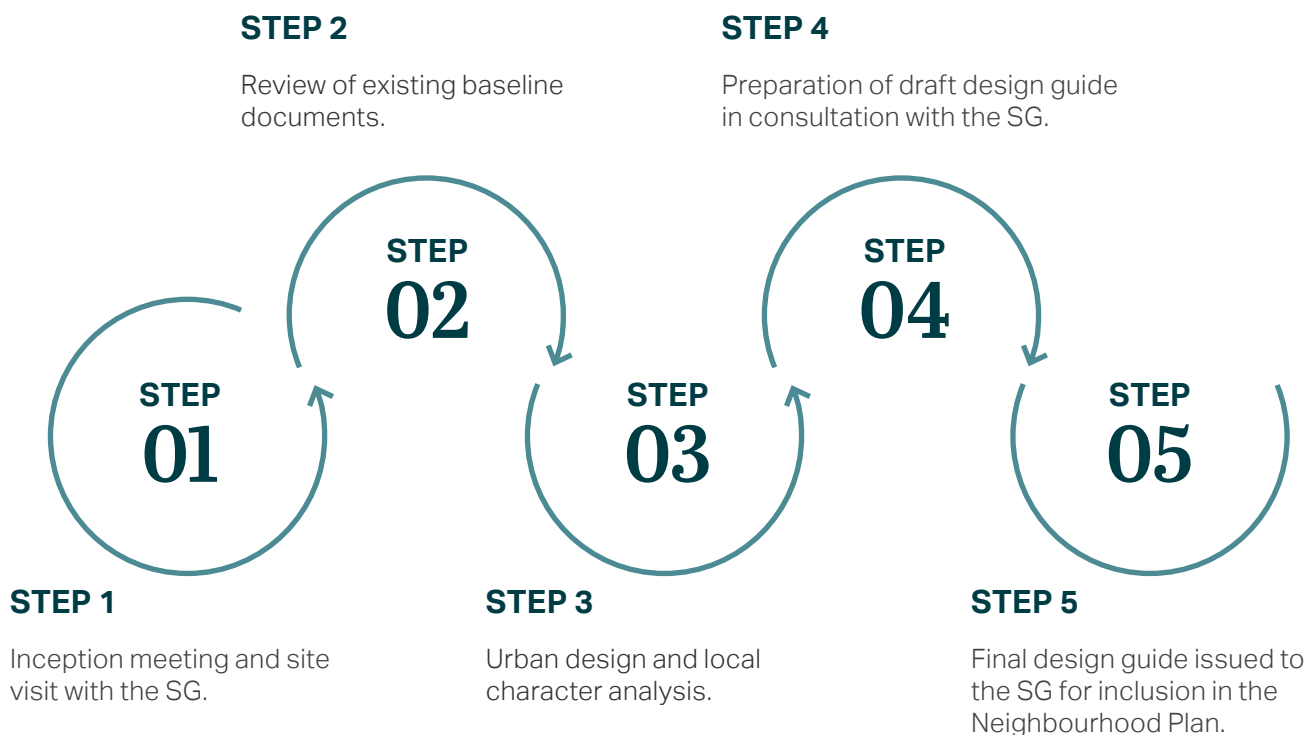


Figure 01: Diagram illustrating the process to preparing this design guide

1.3 Area of study

The designated NA is located five miles to the east of Worcester, in the Wychavon District of Worcestershire County. The NA is bounded by Crowle Brook in the south and west and by Bow Brook which runs from north to south through the parish.

The NA comprises three distinct and separate settlements namely Crowle (the largest of the three), Crowle Green and a part of Sale Green hamlet. It has around 400 dwellings, and a population of approximately 1,000.

Overall the NA covers an area of approximately 700 hectares, which consists of predominantly agricultural and woodland, including Ancient Woodland at Stanley Wood.

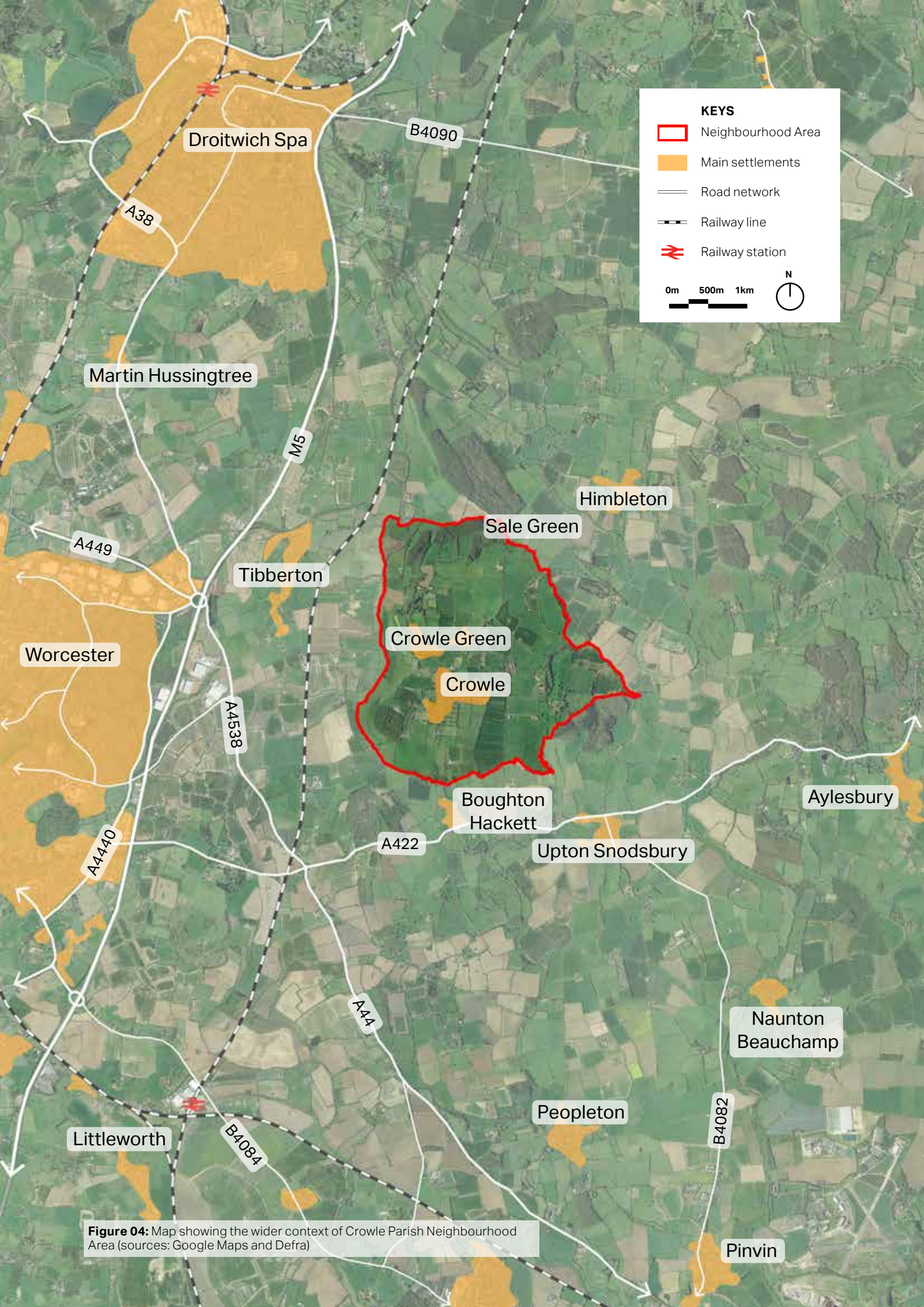
Crowle is 3 miles from Junction 6 of the M5. Church Road is Crowle's main north-south axis and features mainly historic dwellings over its 0.5 mile length. Though there are instances of much more recent housing development in the NA. In 1969, part of the centre of Crowle was designated a Conservation Area. Crowle Green and the part of Sale Green in Crowle comprises a cluster of older and newer houses.



Figure 01: Martin's Cottage, a listed thatched dwelling, Church Road (top).

Figure 02: Pear Tree Way (middle).

Figure 03: Views of countryside to the north, Sale Green



KEYS

-  Neighbourhood Area
 -  Main settlements
 -  Road network
 -  Railway line
 -  Railway station
- 0m 500m 1km
- N

Figure 04: Map showing the wider context of Crowle Parish Neighbourhood Area (sources: Google Maps and Defra)

1.4 How to use this design guide

This design guide should be a valuable tool in securing locally distinctive, high quality development in Crowle. It may be used differently by various stakeholders during the planning and development process, as summarised in **Table 1**.

A valuable way the design guide can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that seeks to understand and take account of local preferences and expectation for design quality. As such, the Design Guidelines and Codes (refer to **Section 4**) can help to facilitate conversations on the various topics to help align expectations and aid understanding on key local issues. The design guide alone will not automatically secure optimum design outcomes, but should help to influence that.

Table 01: How stakeholders may use this design guide

Stakeholders	How they may use this design guide
Applicants, developers and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Design Guidance and Codes as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidance and Codes should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application engagement.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines and Codes are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

1.5 Planning policy and guidance

This section outlines the national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have influenced, and should be read in conjunction with, this design guide.

1.5.1 NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) and the associated National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, the NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

National Model Design Code Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Model Design Code 2021 provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

National Design Guide

Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Design Guide 2019 illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

BHL is supported by Streets for a Healthy Life, which demonstrates what can be achieved in creating streets as places for people.

Manual for Streets Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets 2007, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

1.5.2 LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) 2006-2030

Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council

The Local Plan, adopted February 2016, considers the long-term vision and objectives for South Worcestershire up to the year 2030 and sets planning policies to deliver those objectives to improve, protect and manage sustainable growth in the area, over the plan period. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies set out in the adopted Local Plan.

Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council

The Design Guide SPD, adopted in March 2018, provides additional guidance on how the SWDP design related policies should be interpreted, for example through the design and layout of new development and public spaces across south Worcestershire, and is consistent with the planning policies in the SWDP, in particular SWDP21 Design. It is aimed at built design professionals, e.g. architects, urban designers and developers but it will also be of relevance to anyone else with an interest in the delivery of quality residential design and public spaces. The SPD identifies principles of good design that are considered to be best practice. These are under the following headings:

- Connecting places;
- Creating Mixed Use and a Range of Dwelling Types;
- Appropriate Residential Density;

- Sustainable Design;
- Residential Adaptability;
- A Safe Environment; and
- Residential Amenities

Planning for Health SPD

Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council

This Planning for Health SPD, adopted in September 2017, has been prepared to provide guidance to local authority Planning Officers, applicants, relevant organisations and the wider community on delivering healthier developments.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD

Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council

The Renewable and Low carbon Energy SPD sets out guidance on how the requirements in Policy SWDP 27 relating to Renewable and Low Carbon Energy should be applied. It includes guidance on what must be provided in Energy Assessments; Issues that need to be considered when examining the potential for decentralized energy and heat networks in large scale development proposals to comply with SWDP 27B; the various renewable and low carbon energy technologies and the planning issues associated with each technology that will need to be addressed.

1.6 Community engagement

Community consultation was undertaken as part of the Crowle Neighbourhood Plan launch event on 15 January 2023. The key matters raised by members of the public were:

- Housing, particularly on the size and type of housing required, with an emphasis on both providing smaller houses and bungalows/lifetime homes. Smaller housing developments should aid integration with the existing community, and of a design to fit with the rural setting;
- Housing design to be sympathetic to the village context, not generic; low density and spaced in keeping with the surroundings: "characterful properties that are not overcrowded". Provision of off-road parking for new residential development on Church Road;
- Connections to the village and access to be safe for everyone: "clear linkages with existing village";
- The scale of development to be based on "the size and if it fits in with rest of the village";
- Green space to provide open space and support wildlife;
- A good and sustainable drainage system;
- Eco-friendly and sustainable dwellings, e.g. energy efficient and with solar panels;
- Provision of new outdoor recreational facilities in the form of a park with picnic and music areas, a new school, provision for cyclists and walkers, and a pub/café.
- Several themes arose in relation to village development. There was a desire to maintain a gap between Crowle and Crowle Green: "vital this area remains to avoid any further development in the parish and to preserve the historic locations of Crowle and Crowle Green"; to maintain village character and feel including by avoiding urban features such as street lighting and cycle 'motorways', and to protect and maintain the development boundary to "avoid sprawl".
- Other comments referred to protecting the local environment more generally, including access to the countryside via footpaths and bridleways and by protecting features such as green spaces, trees, and hedgerows. No specific key views, for example of the countryside around the villages, were identified.



NEIGHBOURHOOD
AREA CONTEXT

02

2. Neighbourhood

Area context

This section presents a snapshot of the NA today to inform the design objectives of the Design Guidance and Codes. It provides an overview of Crowle's heritage, movement network, land uses, and landscape characteristics.

2.1 Heritage

Historic development of the NA

Crowle dates back to Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon times. The village as it stands today has 12th century origins.

Medieval Crowle was established in the familiar pattern of manorial villages in Worcestershire. It may have developed early on as a peasant farming community. The presence of the moated monument and farm buildings acts as a reminder of its early history.

Over the centuries, the settlement developed along two axes – Church Road and School Lane. Only ruins remain of the medieval core of Crowle but there are several sixteenth century black and white timber-framed cottages interspersed with 18th and 19th century farmsteads and red brick cottages in addition to some scattered post-1930 houses.

The more recent history of Crowle is one of expansion as modern development has spread eastwards and commuters have taken up residence. Many of the existing

barns and other farm buildings have been converted into modern homes. Despite this 20th century expansion, some of which has intruded onto its historic core, Crowle retains much of its historic plan, open spaces, numerous trees and historic built character and identity.

The countryside, gardens and numerous mature trees provide the settings to many of its historic buildings and make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the NA.

Crowle Conservation Area

The Crowle Conservation Area was designated in November 1969. The boundary was later reviewed in 2008. The conservation area is focused on the historic core of the village near the church in Bredicot Lane, Church Road and School Lane.

Crowle Conservation Area is characterised by a historic village comprising cottages, houses, farm buildings and ancillary buildings set within an early framework of plots and roads. The prominence of

older buildings and the presence of farm buildings, areas of open space, gardens, large mature trees and grass verges, continue to give it the feel of a historic rural village despite some recent encroachment by modern development.

Some of the buildings in the Crowle Conservation Area are listed for their architectural or historic interest. Additionally, there are many other buildings which are not listed, but retain qualities of age, style and materials that are locally important and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

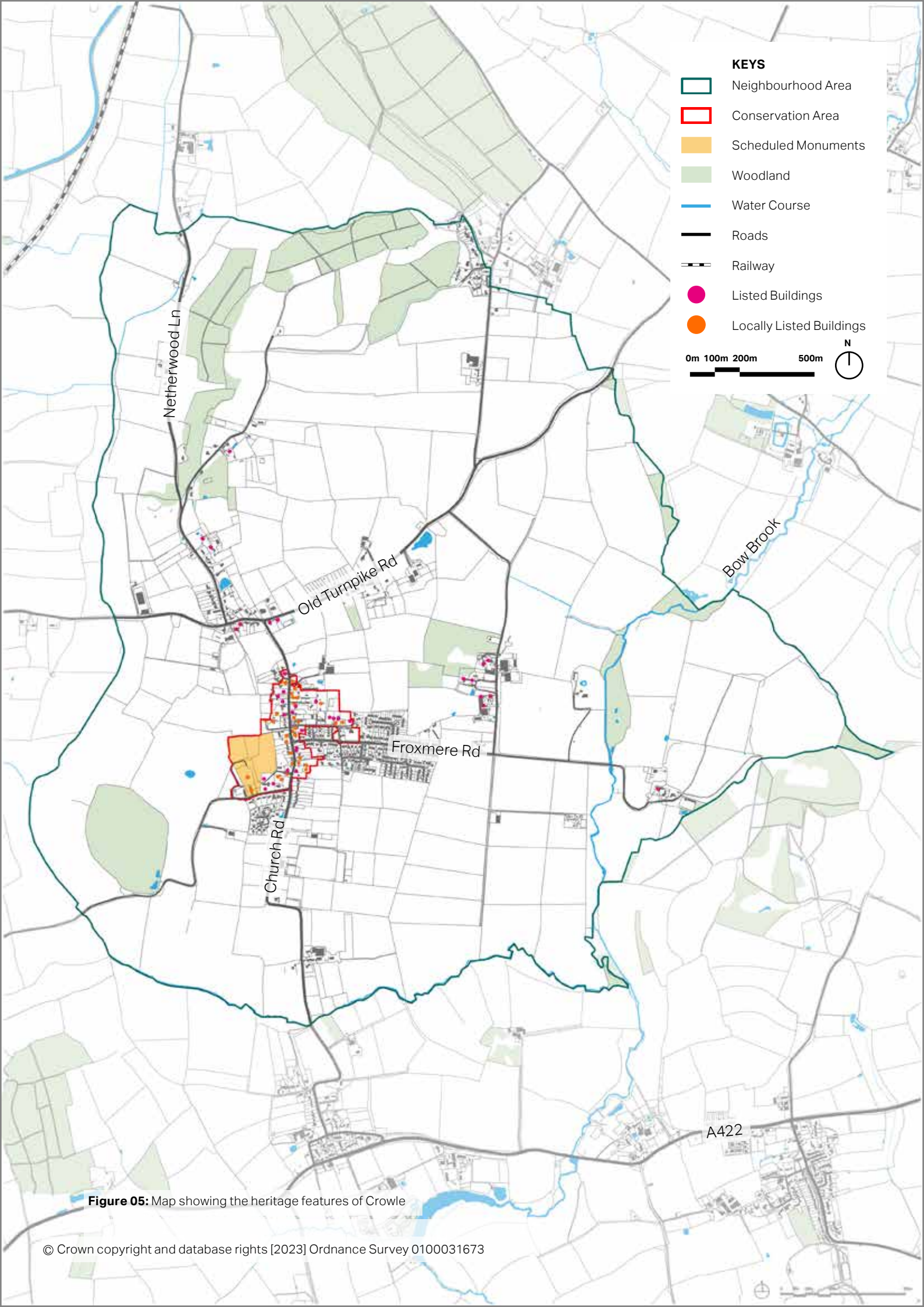
There are several substantial gardens in the conservation area, including those at Kemerton House, The Vicarage, Old Peartree Cottage, Martins Cottage, Church Cottage and Tomms' Orchard and the small area of trees and shrubs adjacent to The Cottage. It is noted that the full extent of these gardens also provide the setting of many of Crowle's historic buildings.

The full extent of the scheduled Ancient Monument around Crowle Court and the churchyard is a large open space at the head of the village that, with its several mature trees, makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Local List

There are 38 listed buildings in the parish, 22 of which are in the conservation area. The Church of St John the Baptist is listed as Grade II*. There are 36 Grade II listed buildings and one Scheduled Monument which is the Moated site and monastic retreat at Crowle Court.

Assets on local heritage lists, also known as local listing, are not protected in the same way as listed buildings but can be afforded protection through the planning system as 'non-designated heritage assets'. The lists can include any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape which has heritage significance but is not recognised by another designation. For Crowle, the [local list](#) is maintained and managed by Wychavon District Council.



KEYS

- Neighbourhood Area
- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monuments
- Woodland
- Water Course
- Roads
- Railway
- Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings

0m 100m 200m 500m



Figure 05: Map showing the heritage features of Crowle



Figure 06: Crowle Church - a landmark in the village (top left).

Figure 07: Historic property with a distinct external chimney (top right).

Figure 08: Large detached property, common across the NA (bottom).

2.2 Access and Movement

Roads

Crowle is accessed primarily via Church Road, the main vehicular route running through the village, which runs north-south connecting the village to surrounding villages and connecting roads. Church Road and School Lane are fairly straight on a north-south/east-west linear axis. Lanes branching to the left and right of Church Road would have linked the former communal fields to the settlement.

Church Road continues north toward Crowle Green, which is laid out on an L formation along Old Turnpike Road and Netherwood Lane. This framework of roads, lanes and tracks is likely to be medieval or earlier in origin and may have been planned.

Public Rights of Way

There are several public footpaths in Crowle that form part of a wider network. There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) providing connections between the village core and residential areas to recreational areas of the village.

Cycle routes

Worcestershire benefits from an excellent array of cycle routes, connecting its villages and towns via predominantly traffic-free routes to the wider local towns and area. Crowle is serviced by the Crowle to Tibberton Loop, providing further links into Worcester.

Bus services

A bus service operated through the village, with stops on Church Road, approximately 400m to the north of the site, and Froxmere Road, approximately 400m to the north-east of the site. Worcester Shrub Hill Train Station is approximately 5 miles from the Crowle Church.

Proximity to amenities

The proximity of local amenities and access to public transport means residents of the proposed development would have opportunities to travel by non-car modes of transportation within the existing local infrastructure.



Figure 09: Footpath to Crowle Church (top)

Figure 10: Access track into heading towards residential properties (bottom).

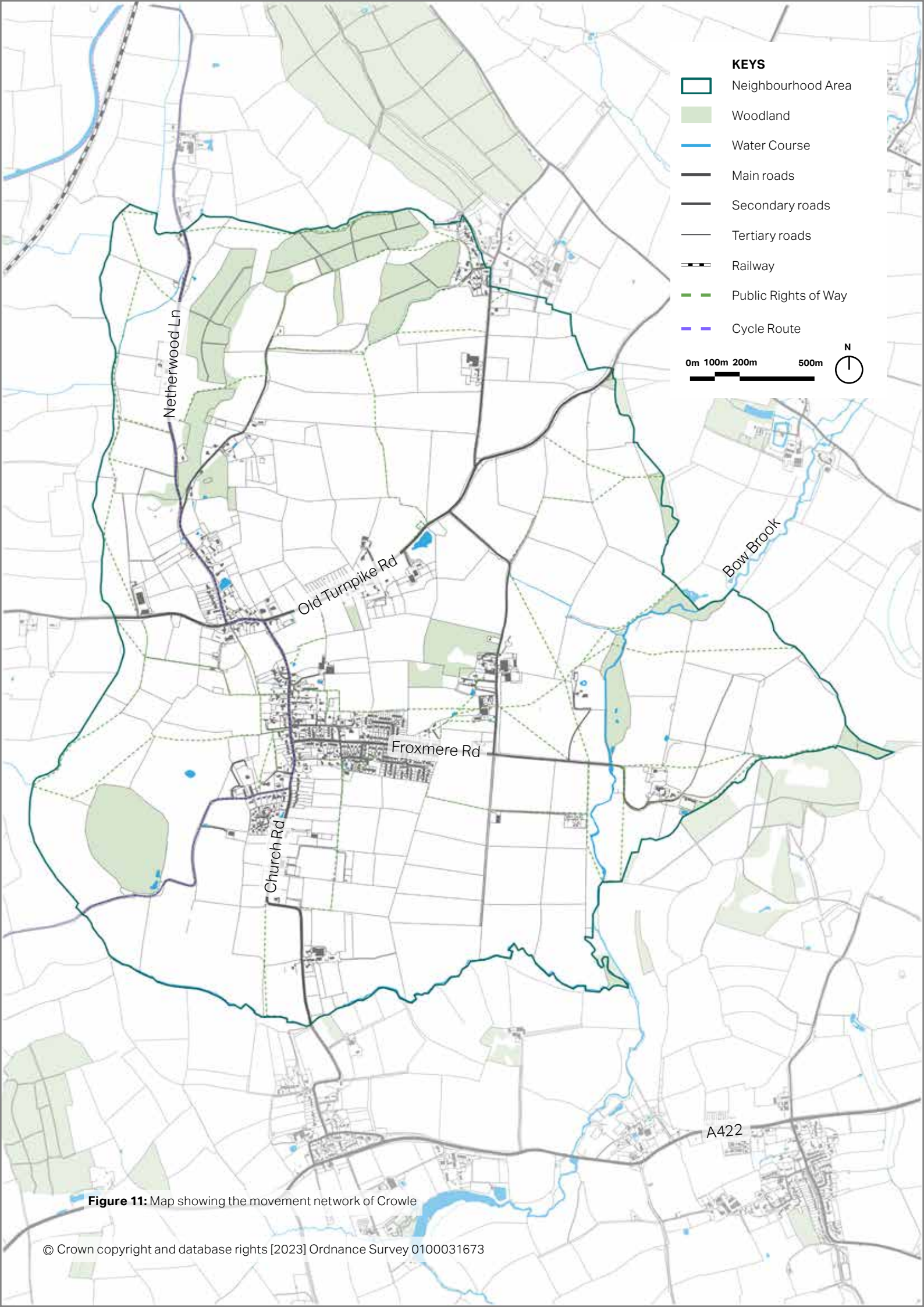


Figure 11: Map showing the movement network of Crowle

2.3 Land uses and facilities

The facilities in Crowle include, the Church, the Church of England First School, Jubilee Playing Field, the community hub in the south of the village (which includes The Shop at Crowle, the Parish Hall and Crowle Preschool), allotments, parish garden and playground all of which are in Crowle itself, whilst the Post Office and The Chequers Public House are located in Crowle Green.



Figure 12: The Shop at Crowle, a community run facility (top left).

Figure 13: Crowle Parish Hall (bottom left).

Figure 14: Children's play area (top right).

Figure 15: Church of England First School (centre right).

Figure 16: Sports facilities including tennis courts (bottom right).

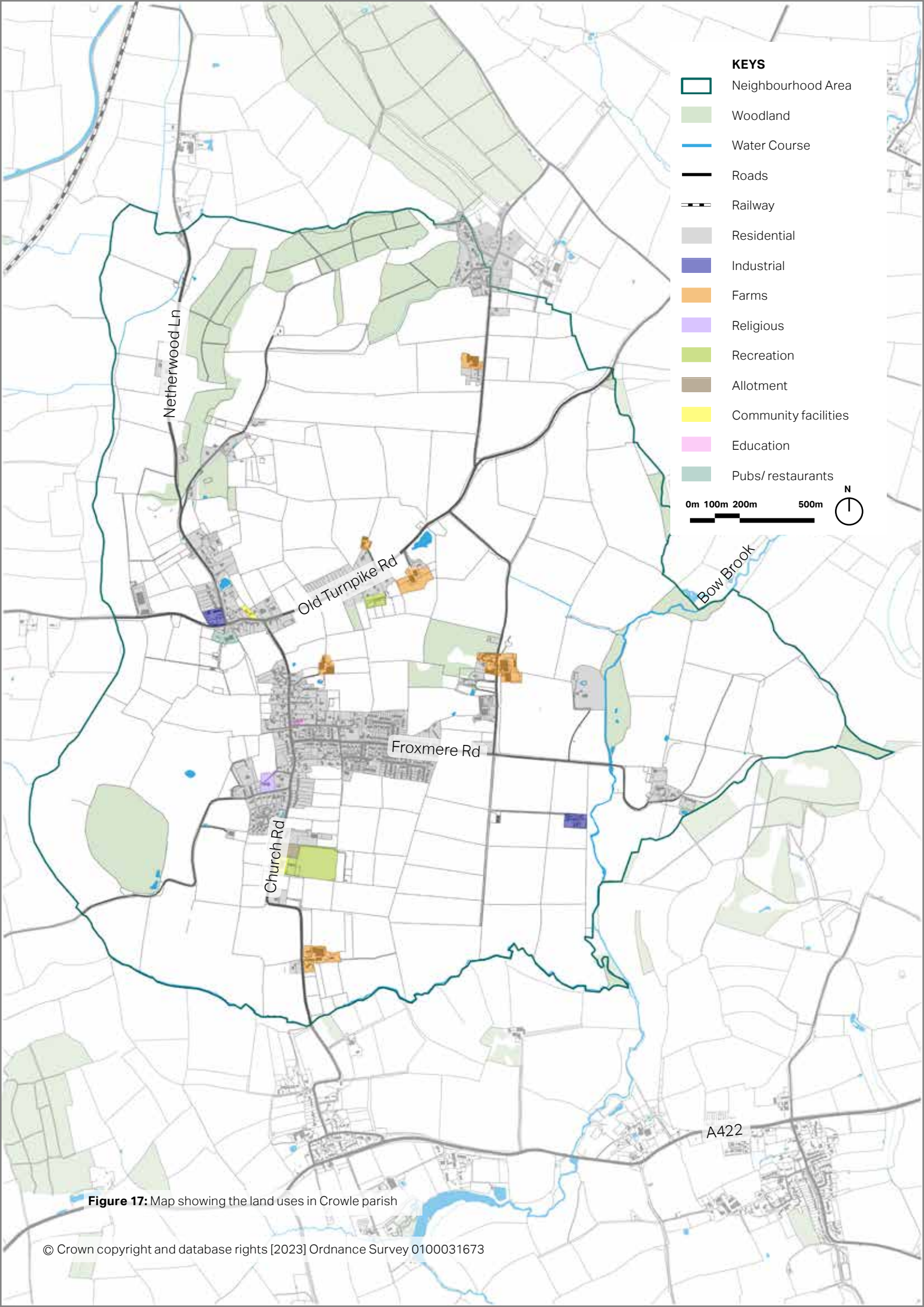


Figure 17: Map showing the land uses in Crowle parish

2.4 Landscape and Ecology

Landscape character

Much of the land in the parish is comprised of agricultural land, with corridors of Ancient Woodland, which follows the western edge of the ridgeline. Crowle Green is distinctly separate from Crowle, with open fields, field boundary hedgerows and mature trees providing a gap between the two settlements.

The entire NA falls under the Severn and Avon Vales National Character Area (NCA 106). The lower valleys of the rivers Severn and Avon dominate this low lying open agricultural vale landscape made up of distinct and contrasting vales, including Evesham, Berkeley, Gloucester, Leadon and Avon, with Cotswold outliers like Bredon Hill punctuating the otherwise flat vale landscape.

The M5 Motorway runs through the centre and the eastern edge of the area.

Topography and flood risk

The topography of the landscape in the NA, with its ridgeline broadly running north - south to the west of Crowle and Crowle Green, makes a significant contribution to its character and setting.

The topography is highest to the west of the settlements, along the ridgeline at 85m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and to the north by Sale Green at 55m AOD. The ridgeline drops away steeply to the west, reaching a low point along Crowle Brook and Bow Brook at 40m AOD. It gradually falls away to the east at a low point of 40m AOD.

The majority of the NA sits in Flood Zone 1. This suggests very low flood risk. There are however, areas adjacent to Bow Brook, to the east and west of Crowle settlement, in Flood Zone 3 indicating a high risk of flooding from rivers.

Views and vistas

Crowle is a visually compact settlement, with important open spaces that contribute to the rural feel of the settlement and afford important views. The Crowle Conservation Area Appraisal states there are a number of views into and out of the conservation area. Notable views are found north and south along Church Road, east down School Lane and from the public footpath at the rear of The Vicarage and the footpath across the Ancient Monument at the rear of Glebe Orchard. There are also long distance views toward Bredon Hill from Bredicot Lane.

Green infrastructure

A multi-functional network of green infrastructure is the hallmark of liveability in settlements and access to green infrastructure helps to improve wellbeing. Green infrastructure includes green space but also assets such as allotments, playing fields, woodland, blue infrastructure (e.g. waterways and lakes), of which Crowle has many. Green infrastructure assets of the NA will be detailed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Key elements are shown overleaf.

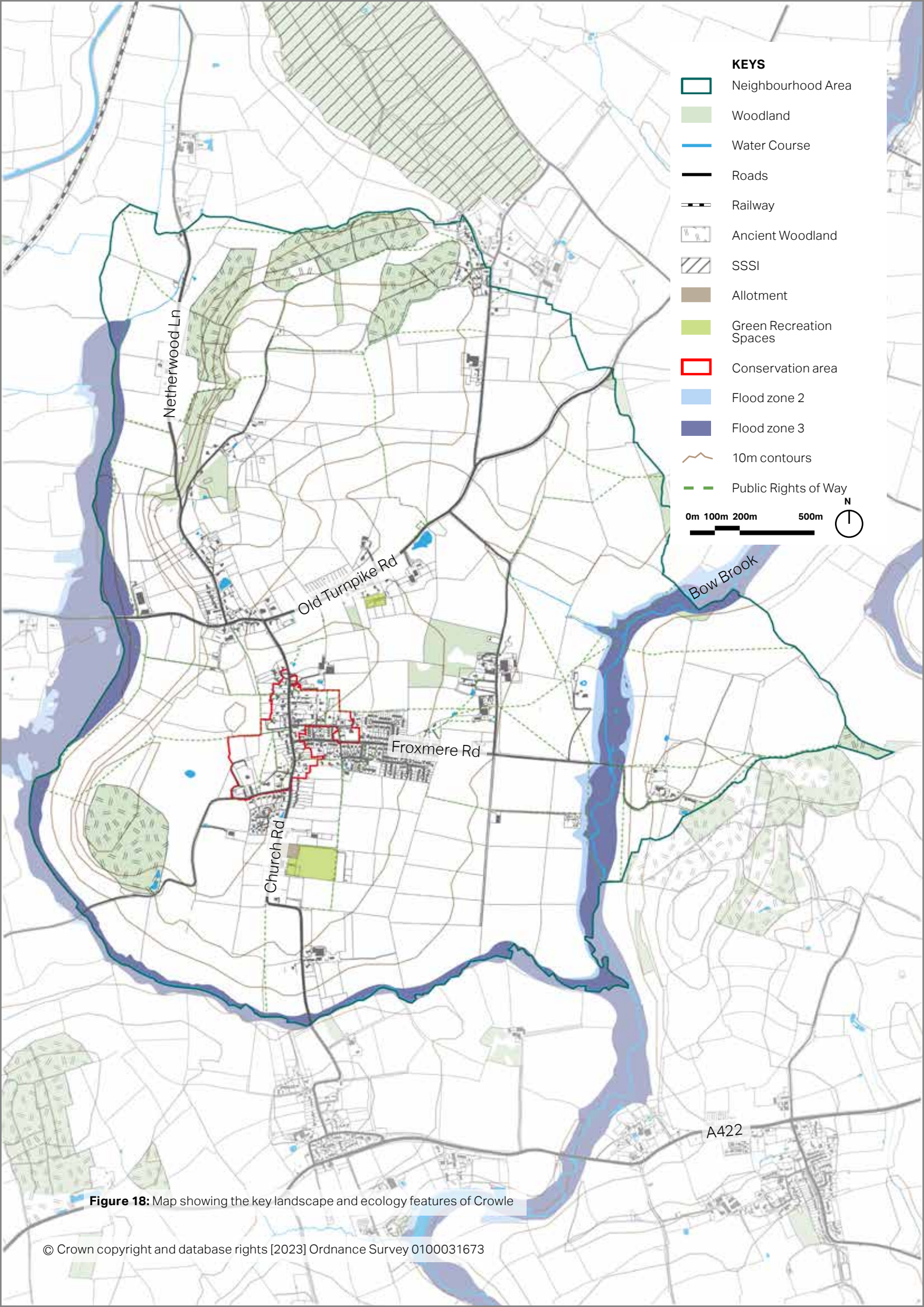


Figure 18: Map showing the key landscape and ecology features of Crowle



**DESIGN OBJECTIVES,
GUIDANCE AND CODES**

03

3. PART 1: DESIGN OBJECTIVES

This section outlines the design objectives, which were influenced by the contextual analysis, character study and community engagement process.

The three design objectives provide holistic and high level guidance and apply to development in the whole NA. The design codes in the next chapter, are classified into the design objectives and set out more specific design guidance.

3.1 Integrate development with the built setting

Although there are a range of building periods in the NA, most buildings share common design features which are characteristic of the local vernacular.

The historic features of the NA built character are varied - the roofline, windows and doors, detailing - and create a quaint village setting. This variation also provides architectural interest along Church Road and other residential streets.

The unifying elements, such as the material palette, building scale, simple rectangular plan form and detailed fenestration, combine to create a consistent built character. Some newer developments present uniform buildings with a limited architectural material palette, which is not characteristic of Crowle as a whole.

The most prevalent building type in the NA are houses (tend to be detached and large) and cottages.



3.2 Contribute to the rural village lifestyle and character

The rural character of Crowle is defined by its movement network, settlement pattern and historic built form. The movement network reflects its medieval farming origins, with the roads, lanes and paths branching out to the east and west of Church Road (which would have given access to the surrounding fields) creating a rectilinear, easily navigable layout.

An irregular building line, with buildings set back at varying points and orientation in the CA, along with frequent gaps in between detached building, creates a rural character. The hedgerows and many street trees in the front gardens of Crowle help to blend the built form in with the surrounding landscape.

In Crowle Green and Sale Green, the built form is more dispersed and this, alongside the higher lying landform provides long uninterrupted views of the countryside, which creates a feeling of expansiveness.

3.3 Protect and enhance the landscape setting

The landscape setting of the NA is mixed. In the built up areas, the shrubs and many mature trees in substantial front gardens, alongside hedgerows, provide a sense of enclosure and a rural character.

The countryside is open, expansive and undulating, due to the dramatic landform. The separation between the three settlements characterises the NA.

The Conservation Area of Crowle and Crowle Green sit on top of a ridge, which affords picturesque views towards the Malvern and Bredon Hills, which reinforces its rural character and makes an important contribution to the landscape setting of the NA. Excellent access to the wider countryside via the Public Rights of Way network are a part of the Crowle lifestyle and are important part of the landscape setting.



3. PART 2: DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

This section sets out the Design Guidance and Codes that support the Neighbourhood Plan. This design guide is in addition to, and should be read in conjunction with, national and local policy and guidance on design.

New development in the NA should demonstrate how best practice design guidance contained in national and local policy and guidance documents, including this design guide, has been considered.

3.4 INTRODUCTION

This section identifies design guidance and codes for development in the NA to adhere to. They are organised under the three design objectives for the NA.

- **BS:** Built Setting
- **RV:** Rural Village
- **LS:** Landscape Setting

The Design Guidance and Codes apply to the whole NA. In some instances, further guidance and codes are also provided for the character areas.

3.4.2.1 WHEN TO USE THE CODES

The table overleaf identifies when guidance and codes for each theme should be considered by development. A prefix has been created for each theme to allow simple application and referencing of the design guidance codes.



Figure 19: Large detached property set back from and elevated from the road (left)



Figure 20: A uniform series of small detached residential properties with grass verges (right).

Table 02: Application of Design Guidance and Codes to development

Code	Prefix	When to use the code
Built Setting (BS)	BS.01	Building height, scale and roofscape. Code to be applied when determining the height and roofscape of development in the NA.
	BS.02	Fenestration and architectural details. Code to be applied when determining the fenestration and architectural details of development in the NA.
	BS.03	Architectural materials and colour palette. Code to be applied when determining the architectural materials and colour palette of development in the NA.
	BS.04	Housing extensions and conversions. Code to be applied when determining the appropriateness of proposed residential extensions and conversions.
Rural Village (RV)	RV.01	Pattern of growth. Code to be applied to shape the pattern of development in the NA.
	RV.02	Site situations. Code to be applied to ensure the scale and type of development is appropriate to its location in the NA.
	RV.03	Views and landmarks. Code to be applied to make sure key views and landmarks are protected.
	RV.04	Village streets. Code to be applied to development that proposes new streets in the NA.
	RV.05	Development in close proximity to heritage assets. Code to be applied when development may affect the setting of a heritage asset.
	RV.06	Plot and building layout. Code to be applied to development that proposes new plots, new buildings or extensions in the NA.
Landscape Setting (LS)	LS.01	Landscape design. Code to be applied to development in the NA to ensure locally distinctive and wildlife friendly landscape design.
	LS.02	Boundary treatments. Code to be applied to development in the NA to ensure locally distinctive boundary treatments.

BS. BUILT SETTING

Development, whether traditional or contemporary, should integrate with Crowle's historical architectural character. All design proposals should be high-quality and sustainable.

Development proposals should provide specification on the architectural design, including materials, fenestration and detailing. Proposals should also demonstrate how the character of the wider local context, as defined by this design guide, has been considered.

BS.01 BUILDING HEIGHT, SCALE AND ROOFSCAPE

Creating variety and interest in the roofscape is an important element in the design of attractive buildings and places.

Rooflines in the NA are fairly inconsistent, with some staggered ridge heights and a mix of gable and hipped roofs. Most of the buildings present principal elevations with their ridges in approximate alignment to the road but some have gable ends to street. Dormers are commonplace and are mainly contained within the roof slope. There are some small clusters of consistent roofline, which is more commonplace in the newer parts of the NA. A large proportion of the historic parts of the NA comprise detached dwellings, so the roofline is not continuous. Roofs are a mix of steep and shallower pitches. Roof materials and detailing features are also varied, and include stone tiles, clay and concrete pantiles. Chimneys create a consistent feature of the skyline, but they are simple in form.

Building heights are fairly consistent at 1.5-2 storeys, with any change to this noticeable. Key feature buildings, such as the old Post Office and the Primary School.

The consistent building height and various roof elements make an important contribution to defining the character of the NA. Guiding principles for development to consider in order to achieve a well-designed roofscape include: (cont'd overleaf)

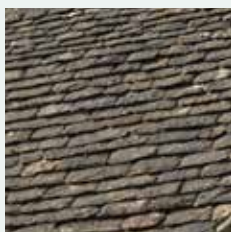
01. Ensure the height of development responds to the surrounding buildings, street width and sense of enclosure, topography and mature vegetation;
02. Consider how the roof design integrates with the surrounding development or creates a new roofscape;
03. Design the scale and pitch of the roof to be in proportion with the dimensions of the building, and avoid overly complex designs; and
04. Deliver a locally distinctive roof design by including:
 - 04.01. Variety in form along the street, including hipped and front facing gable roofs, and dormers;
 - 04.02. Simple chimneys and decorative features for visual interest;
 - 04.03. Subtle changes in rooflines, avoiding stark transitions; and
 - 04.04. Locally distinctive roof materials (refer to **Figure 18**).



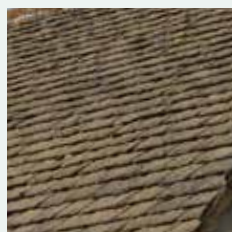
Figure 21: Varying heights, no higher than 3 storeys for residential properties (top).

Figure 22: Consistent roofline for historic terraced properties (middle).

Figure 23: Predominant roof materials found in the NA (below).



Stone tiles



Thatch



Plain clay tiles in brown/red



Slate tiles

Roof Materials

BS.02 FENESTRATION AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

There are a range of architectural features and traditional detailing in the NA. For example, wrought iron casement and sash windows, decorative lead flashing, dentilled eaves, porches, gates and thatched roofs. The timber cruck frames are also characteristic. Doors are mainly painted timber. Boundaries are a mix of hedges, local lias stone walls and brick walls. Most are low, allowing views of the buildings and gardens.

The intricacies of the architectural features and detailing in the NA are locally distinctive. They provide visual interest and reduce the scale and bulk of buildings. The use of architectural features and detailing is of particular importance given the discrete architectural material palette that of the NA.

Guiding principles for development to consider to achieve locally distinctive design include:

01. Include locally distinctive fenestration and detailing in the design of new development, drawing on examples in the Conservation Area and listed buildings within the NA. However, avoid mixing historic styles;
02. Development involving multiple houses should ensure a variety of detailing is utilised across the development to provide visual interest along the street and avoid homogeneous building designs, however there should be unifying elements; and
03. Include detailing on roofs and facades to minimise the bulk and scale of buildings, for example ornate brickwork around fenestration and across walls (such as the curved wall next to the Church).





Figure 24: Scattered fenestration (overleaf - top).

Figure 25: Property with simple brickwork and fenestration pattern (overleaf - middle).

Figure 26: Large house with ornate barge boards (overleaf - bottom).

Figure 27: Cream front porch with barge board detailing (top left).

Figure 28: Historic painted brick property with black timber 'cruck' frames (top right).

Figure 29: Curved wall which runs through the village. (middle).

Figure 30: Modern wall emulating the colour scheme of the above (bottom).

BS.03 ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS AND COLOUR PALETTE

Much of the character of Crowle comes from the materials used in its buildings and boundaries. The historical palette is fairly restrained, with strong roots in the typical Worcestershire architectural vernacular.

Common wall materials in the NA are orange/red brick and painted brickwork. There are some examples of painted render; a few of which have crux timber frames. More recent development features a creamy-white render, which has less visual glare in the sunlight compared to white render.

Fenestration is generally timber painted white. However, there are examples of dark grey accents.

The discrete material palette, alongside with locally distinctive landscape features such as trees, shrubs and hedgerows, is locally distinctive.

New development should respond to the local character by demonstrating that the material palette reflects the local character of the NA.



Figure 31: Modern red brick, common in Crowle village (top).

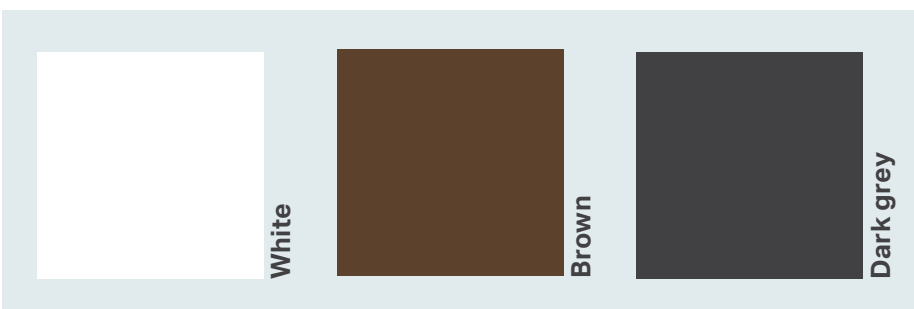
Figure 32: Cream rendered house with clay roof tiles (middle).

Figure 33: Typical cruck timber framed property with red clay roof tiles (bottom).

Figure 34: Another cruck frame property with a thatched roof and a small section of slate tiled roof (overleaf - top)

Figure 35: Recent residential properties with varied appearance using brick work, render, roof style and fenestration (middle).

Figure 36: Locally distinctive materials and colour palette (bottom and right).



Painted Wood Colours



Red brick



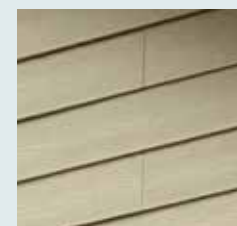
Painted brickwork



Crux frame



Modern brick



Timber

Stonework and Wall Materials

BS.04 EXTENSIONS, CONVERSIONS AND INFILL

Extensions

Housing extensions to dwellings can make a dwelling more suited to its occupants space requirements. There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. However, it is important that housing extensions are designed to an appropriate scale to the original building to preserve the character and appearance of the building itself as well as the street scene within which it sits.

The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by enhancing the existing character. Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features and proportions of the original building and designed to complement these existing elements.

Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, meaning that they do not need planning permission. There are exceptions, though, that will be relevant here, such as Conservation Areas. Check the latest guidance here: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/17/extensions.

Guiding principles for proposed rear extensions include:

01. Single storey rear extensions are generally the easiest way to extend a house and provide extra living space. The extension should be set below any first-floor windows and designed to minimise any effects of neighbouring properties, such as blocking day light. A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension; and
02. Double storey rear extensions are becoming more common but they can affect neighbours' access to light and privacy, however, sometimes the size and style of the property allows for a two-storey extension. In these cases, the roof form and pitch should reflect the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.



Figure 37: Example of a sympathetic extension with common colour palette and window frames

Infill

Infill sites will vary in scale, context and location within a settlement. An infill can have significant impact on the character and appearance of the built environment. The following principles should be applied in any future infill site:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it will be inserted. Pastiche should be avoided. Points of continuity in the streetscape can be created by scale, massing and layout (i.e. ridge/eave heights, especially for terraced or dense groupings of buildings, or architectural detailing / colour scheme);
- The character of Crowle is varied throughout and therefore originality in the design of infill sites should not be discouraged.
- Building set backs should provide some defensible space, in keeping with the generous front gardens, and should not front straight onto the pavement edge. Very often, the existing arrangement of buildings forms an irregular, meandering building line; and
- The density of any new infill development should reflect its context and its location in the village (centre or edge), or in a smaller settlement nestled in a wider landscape, such as Crowle. The optimum density will respond to surrounding densities whilst making efficient use of land.

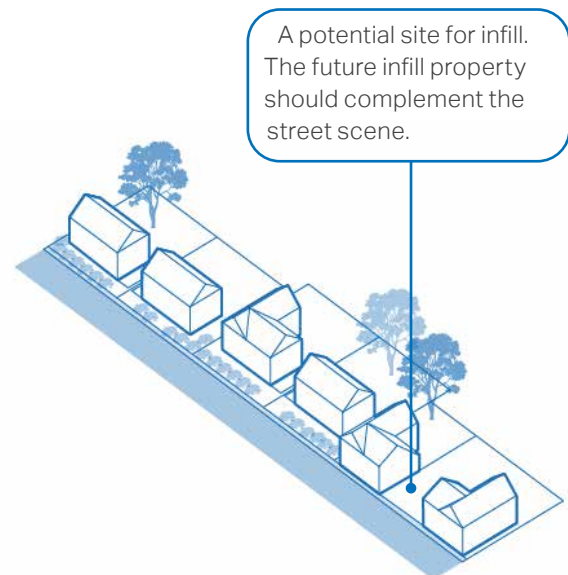


Figure 38: An indicative diagram highlighting a site before infill

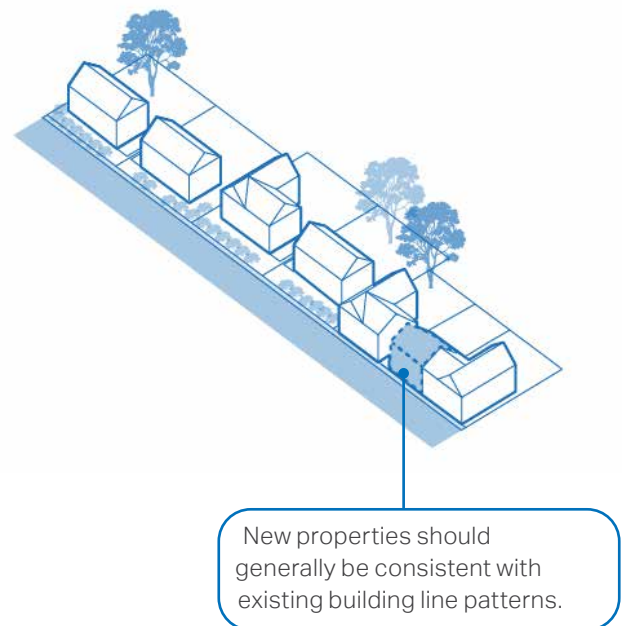
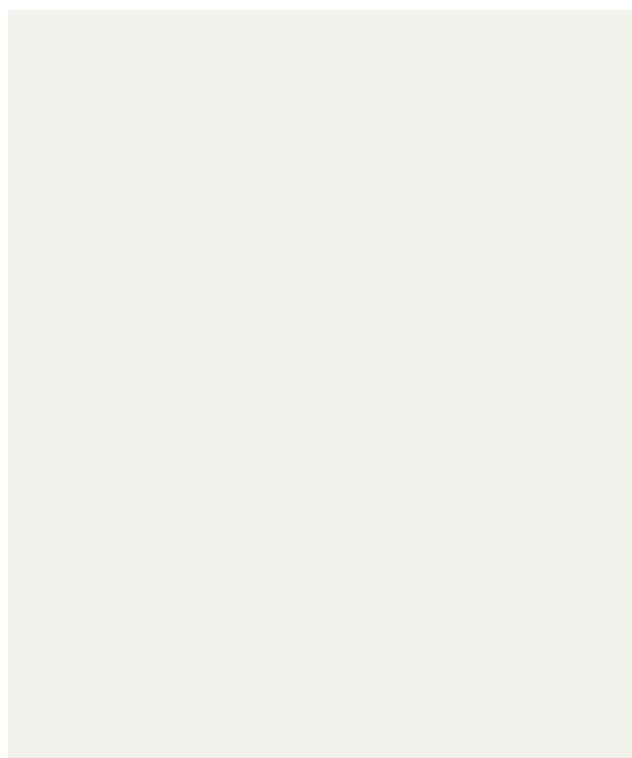
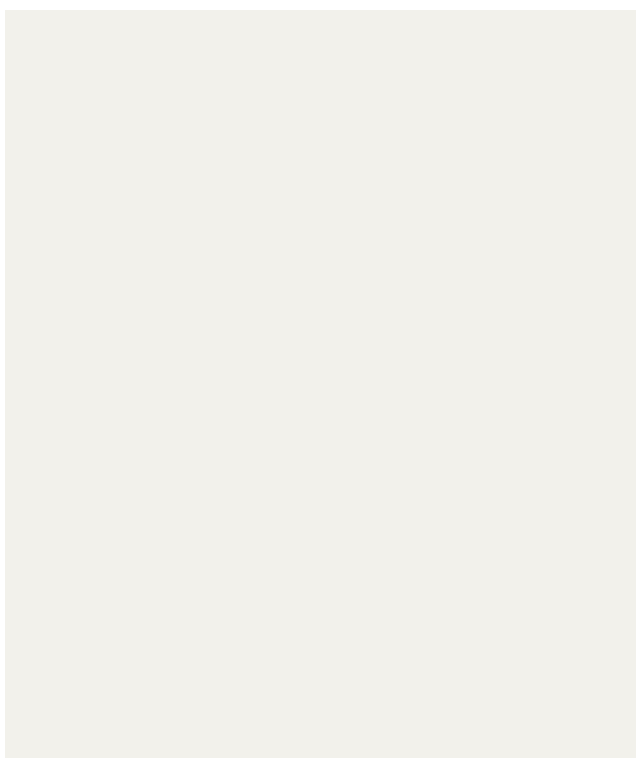
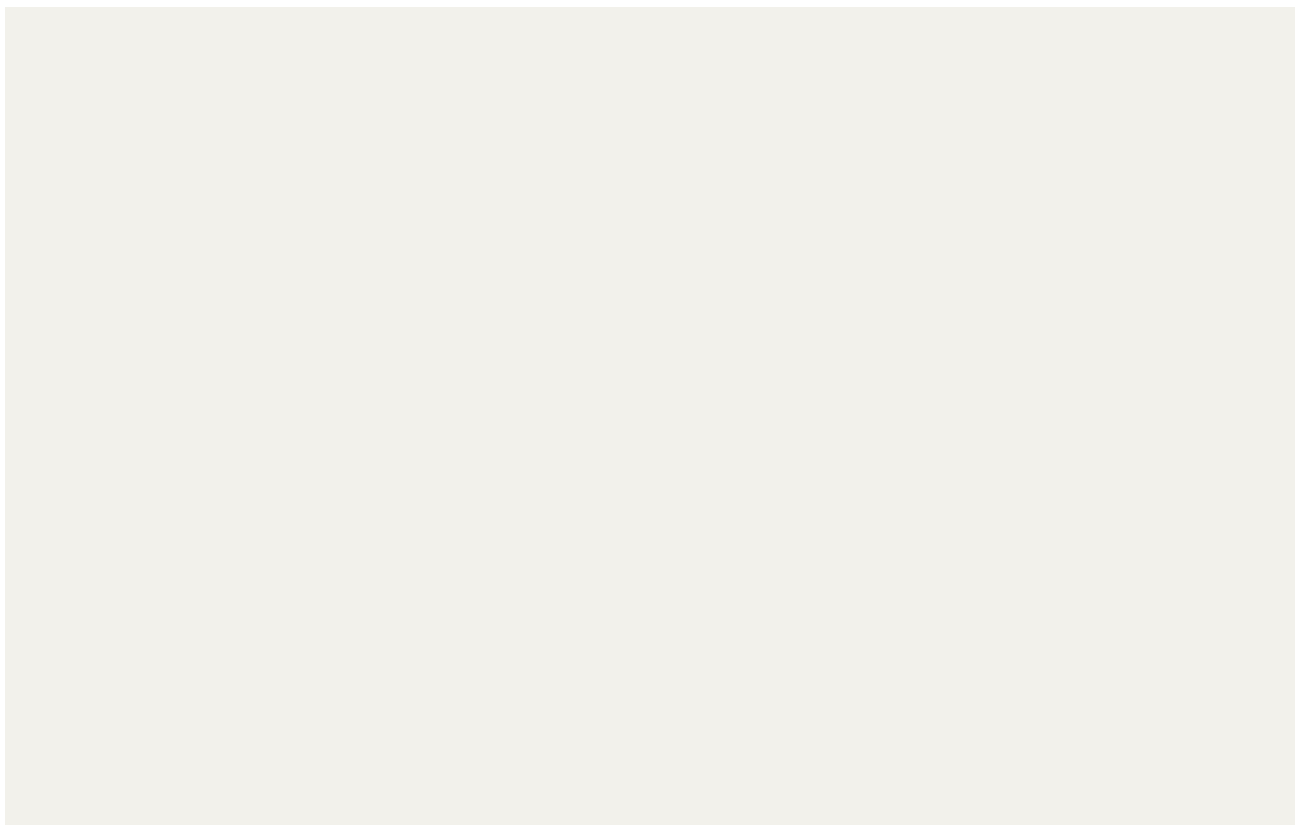


Figure 39: An indicative diagram highlighting a site after infill.

**Group - Please provide photos of any positive/
negative examples of infill in the NA**



Conversions

Farmsteads and barns are a dominant feature of the NA. These are positive examples because there has not been any change to their historic fabric and thus, they significantly contribute to the local vernacular of the village telling a story about the development of the NAs' heritage.

Therefore, design guidance is needed to ensure that any other future conversion does not undermine the original use of the farm building. Some design guidelines are:

01. Features and general layout of the building setting that are characteristics of historic working buildings need to be retained and not filled in. For instance, loose courtyard arrangements of buildings, physical boundary treatments, openings or wagon doors. New openings should generally be avoided and kept to a minimum when necessary;
02. The use of domestic add-ons such as chimneys, porches, satellite dishes, domestic external lighting and hanging baskets need to be avoided;
03. Wall treatment should reflect the existing materials of the building and be sympathetic to the surroundings;
04. Features such as dormer windows need to be avoided. If roof lights are used, they should be sited discreetly so as to not become over dominant in the landscape;
05. Courtyards should be surfaced in a material that reflects its rural setting. Farmyards should remain open and not be divided by fences or walls;
06. Parking spaces should not be formally marked out; and
07. Boundary brick walls should be left intact, and not chopped through or reduced for access or to create visual splays.



Figure 40: Old Tithe Barn, a residential barn conversion



Figure 41: Re use and retention of historic materials alongside contemporary landscaping

RV. VILLAGE SETTING AND CHARACTER

A place's character and setting can be made up of many different elements which come together to create a unique sense of place. The character and setting of the NA is influenced by its position within the landscape and its built character.

The design codes in this section describe the elements that contribute to Crowle's character and setting and set out a number of Codes that apply to any new development coming forward in the NA, whether an individual site or a larger development site such as site allocation land at Church Road.

RV.01 PATTERNS OF GROWTH

Any future development in the NA should reflect the local context, ensuring that it makes a positive contribution to the existing pattern of development, which is a particularly distinctive element of its built character.

To ensure a good fit between new and old it is important that any new development seeks to enhance the character of the existing settlement in terms of urban form as well as the landscape setting, which is also a strong element of the character of the NA. The views to the surrounding landscape and the topography of the landform is a defining character of the NA. The following principles apply to new developments:

- i. Development affecting the transitional edges between the settlements and the surrounding countryside should be softened by landscaping to complement the character of the surrounding countryside. New development should preserve the landscape gap between built up areas in the NA and the surrounding landscape;
- ii. Any key views across the countryside and open fields should be protected;
- iii. New development along the edge of any settlement in the NA should provide landscaping along the boundary, to screen and soften the visual impact of the building to ensure it is integrated into the rural setting of the NA;
- iv. New development in close proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets must propose green screening to mitigate visual impact, while also preserving key views;
- v. New development must demonstrate a good understanding of the scale, building orientation and enclosure of the settlement pattern in the NA;
- vi. The size and pattern of any new development plot should be varied to contribute to the rural character;
- vii. Any proposal that would adversely affect the physical appearance of a rural lane, or give rise to an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic, noise, or disturbance must be avoided;
- viii. New development should preserve existing native trees and hedgerows and incorporate new greening. Loss of flora should be avoided to protect local biodiversity; and
- ix. New planting should aim to connect up any gaps in isolated woodlands and hedgerows to promote the connectivity of habitats and biodiversity.

Linear pattern

Crowle and Crowle Green are linear settlements flanked by pasture and arable fields. Church Road and School Lane are fairly straight on a north-south/east-west linear axis. Lanes branch to the left and right of Church Road and Church Road continues north toward Crowle Green.

Crowle Green is laid out on simple linear axis, with Netherwood Lane and Old Turnpike Road dissecting. There is separation between the two settlements.

Development in these settlements should reflect the following conditions:

- Proposals should maintain the continuity of built form along the main routes. However, building lines should be set back from the road to provide some defensible space.
- Building lines should not be repetitive, and should provide a variety of building types and design with coherent scale, massing and detailing;
- Development should include generous gardens with trees, as well as hedgerows, brick boundary walls;
- Boundary treatments in the settlement edges should be planted and should maintain the separateness. Residential development with a hard edge which imposes on adjacent landscape and surrounding countryside should be avoided.

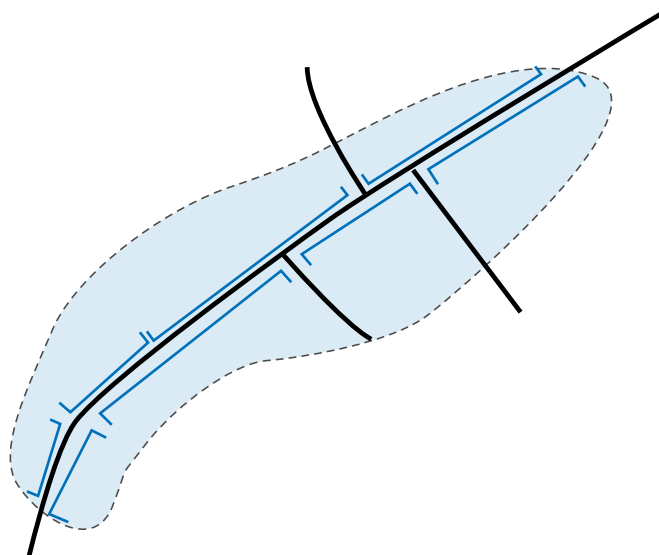


Figure 43: Diagram showing a typical linear pattern of development.



Figure 42: Aerial photo showing the linear pattern of development in Crowle village.

Nucleated pattern

Sale Green has developed in a nucleated pattern, in keeping with historic patterns of growth in villages across the UK. Woodland to the north and west of the settlement contains it within the landscape.

Development in these parts of the village should reflect the following conditions:

- Proposals should maintain the low density and scale of development in the village;
- Proposals should maintain the sense of enclosure created by the woodland; and
- Building set backs should vary.

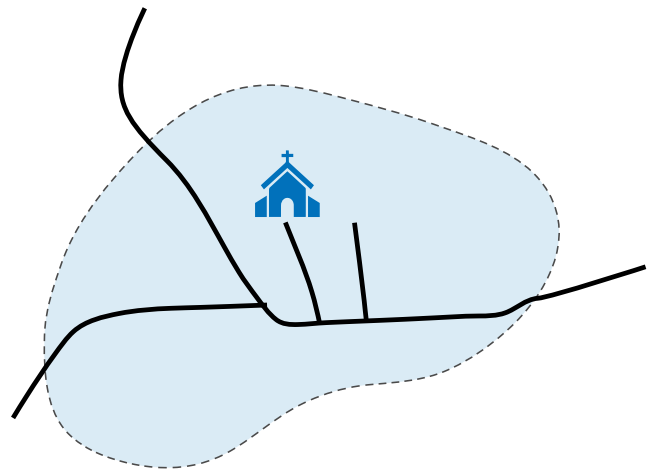


Figure 44: Diagram showing a typical nucleated pattern of development.



Figure 45: Aerial photo showing the nucleated pattern of development in Sale Green.

RV.02 SITE SITUATIONS

Gateway

A gateway site is normally situated at the edge of a settlement, near to a main route into the settlement. The SWDP Review Preferred Option allocation (CFS0019) could be defined as a gateway site.

A gateway site marks the transition from one space to another, and is a point of arrival into (and departure from) a settlement, usually from the surrounding landscape setting.

The sense of departure and arrival can often be achieved by a noticeable change in scale, enclosure, or road configuration. The gateway buildings or features should, however, reflect local character.

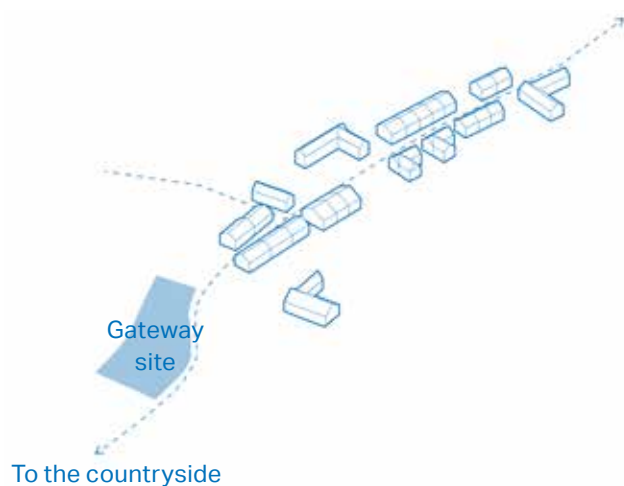


Figure 46: An indicative gateway site on the edge of a linear settlement.



Figure 47: Spitfire Homes gateway site, west of Church Road



Figure 48: Land off Church Road SWDP site

RV.02 SITE SITUATIONS (CONT'D)

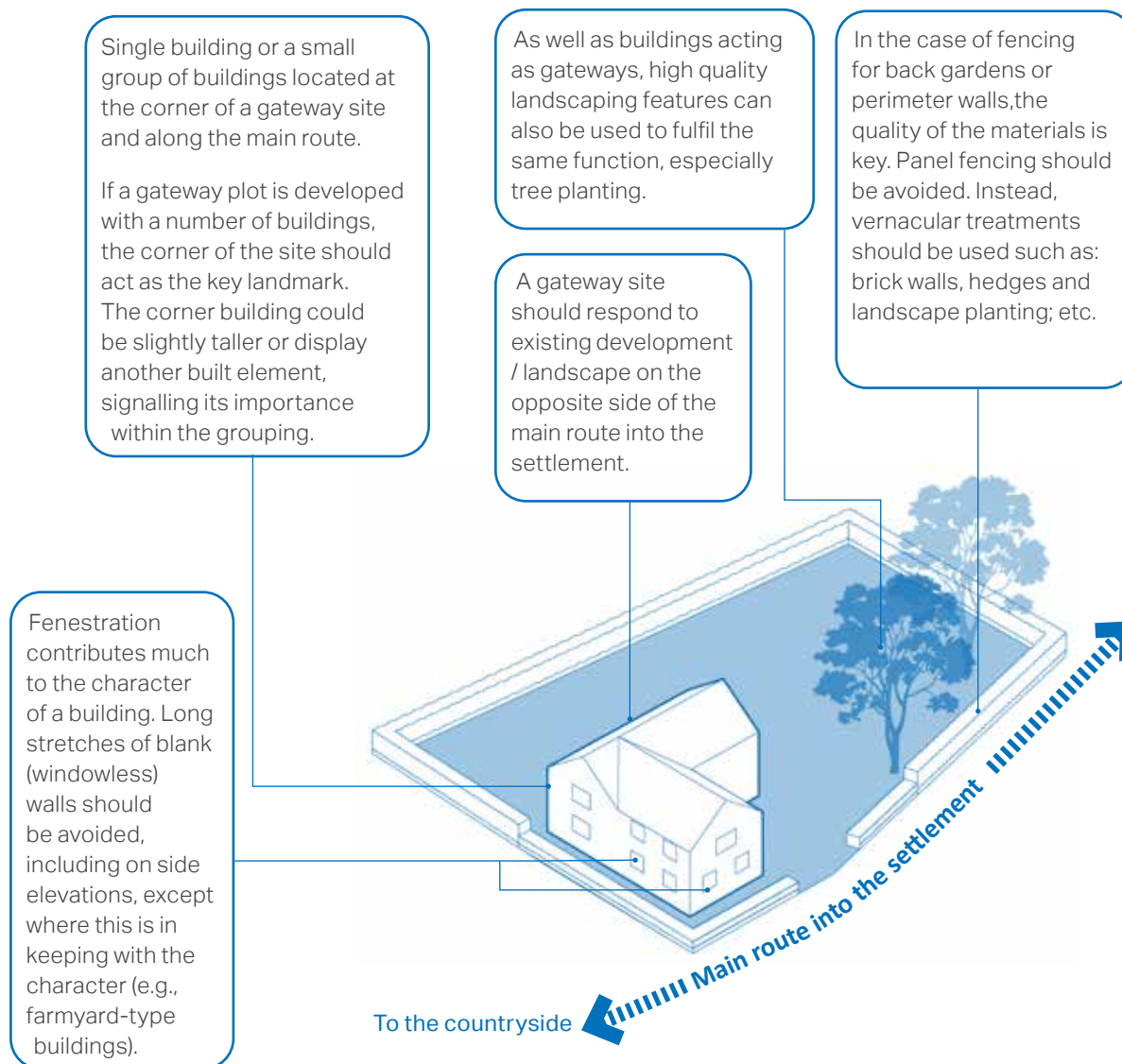


Figure 49: Gateway site guidelines

RV.03 VIEWS AND LANDMARKS

The visual connection of views out of and within the NA towards the landscape and certain landmarks is fundamental to its setting, particularly in relation to the Crowle Conservation Area.

- New development proposals should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through appropriate scaling and design, including landscape screening, where appropriate;
- Where appropriate, future development proposals should incorporate landscape and built features to create landmarks, helping with legibility;
- New development proposals should maintain visual connections to the surrounding landscape and long views out of the settlement. Development density should allow for spaces between buildings to preserve views of countryside beyond and maintain the perceived openness of the settlement.

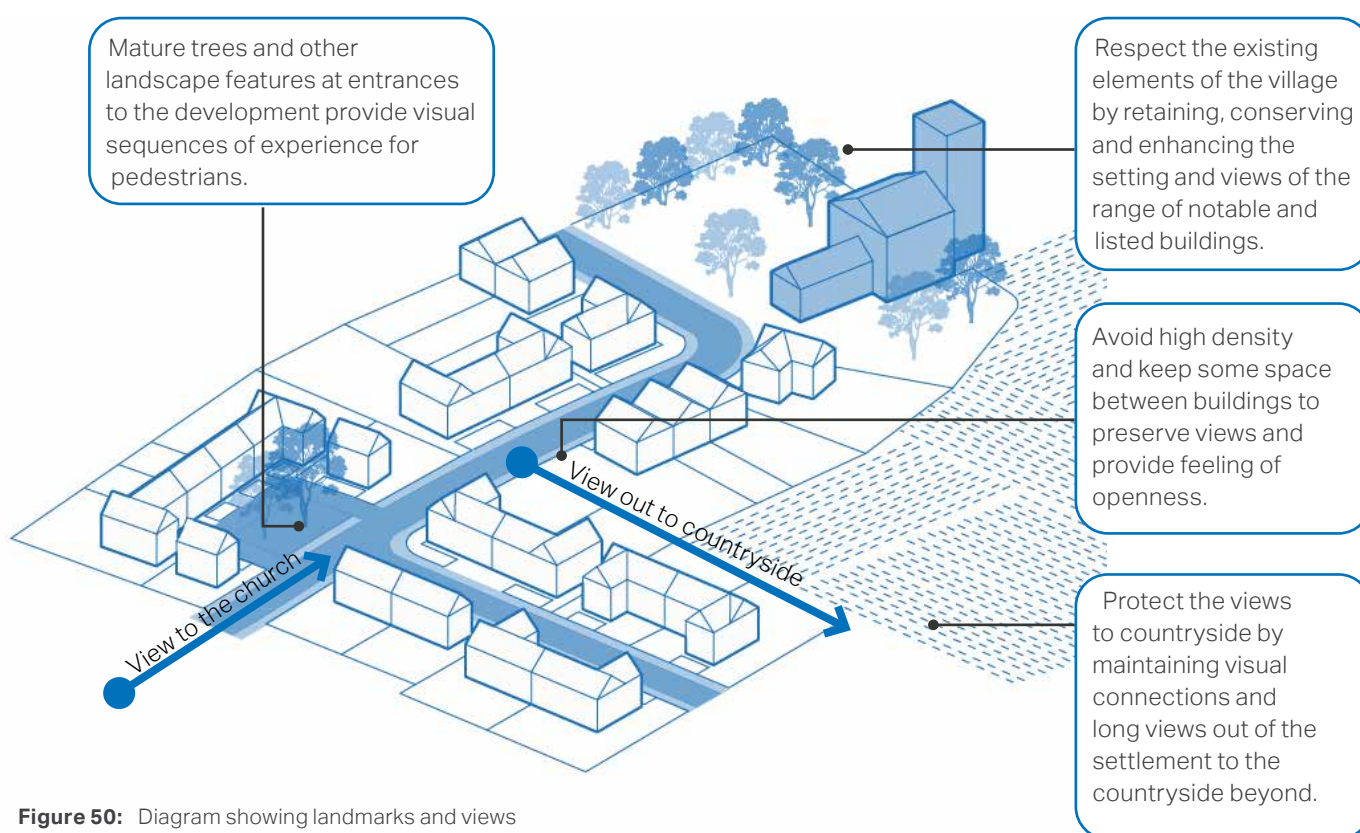


Figure 50: Diagram showing landmarks and views

RV.04 VILLAGE STREETS

Safe, attractive and integrated movement networks are based on streets that are permeable, legible, accessible and comfortable.

Development should deliver a street network that demonstrates best practice design principles in addition to considering how to enhance the rural setting and lifestyle of the CA.

The following principles should be considered by development to ensure streets are locally distinctive:

01. Ensure streets are laid out to encourage connectivity. Designers should collaborate with adjacent landowners and provide connections to existing and future development areas, particularly via walking and cycling routes;
02. Encourage public access to community facilities, green space and the countryside by ensuring publicly accessible streets are adjacent, and provide direct access and views, to these places;
03. Design streets to have the appearance of a rural village, not suburbia; and
04. Landscaping along streets in the NA, particularly with trees and hedgerows, is a defining characteristic. Refer to Code LS03 **Landscape setting** for guidance.



Figure 51: Private drive



Figure 52: Rural lane with no footpath



Figure 53: Typical residential street with footpath on either side

RV.05 DEVELOPMENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HERITAGE ASSETS

There is rich history in the NA, mainly concentrated within the conservation area which covers a large part of the village of Crowle, which includes a number of listed buildings.

Therefore, it is very likely that there will be new development in close proximity to heritage assets at some point. Design guidelines relevant to this are:

01. New development in close proximity to a heritage asset must respect its significance and demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced. For example, the new development should allow for a generous setback from the asset and be of a massing and scale that is sensible to the neighbouring structure;
02. New development proposals should not block key views to and from heritage assets. This should be achieved through proposing appropriate density and design including footpaths and green links;
03. New development should retain the existing open spaces, vegetation and trees to preserve the historic form and pattern of development close to the asset; and
04. New development should propose architectural details and materials that respect the local vernacular. More details on the local vernacular and materials that are used in the NA are illustrated in Figures 31-36.



RV.06 PLOT AND BUILDING LAYOUT

Part of Crowle's charm is the varied plot and building types, creating a diverse street scene. The Conservation Area is the most intensely developed part of the NA, with sections of continuous, active frontages and narrow plot widths.

The following principles should be considered by development to ensure the layout of plots and buildings are locally distinctive:

01. Vary plot widths to allow for a mix of housing types along the street, which encourages a diverse community and creates visual interest;
02. Orientate buildings generally parallel to and overlooking the street and / or public space;
03. Establish a consistent building line, with subtle variations for visual interest. Infill development should be consistent with the existing average building line of the street;
04. Maintain gaps between buildings for areas of landscaping and views to the rural landscape. These important green spaces maintain the balance between the rural areas and village.



Figure 54: View of Crowle Church (overleaf - top)

Figure 55: Church grounds including the graveyard and curved walls (overleaf - middle).

Figure 56: Inscription on the curved wall (overleaf - bottom).

Figure 57: Large semi-detached property set back from the road (top).

Figure 58: More recent residential developments, at a higher density but with gaps in-between (middle).

Figure 59: Large classical property set back from the road (bottom).

LS. LANDSCAPE SETTING

Crowle's landscape setting is formed by woodland blocks, mature trees and hedgerows, which provide a sense of enclosure and a rural character to the NA.

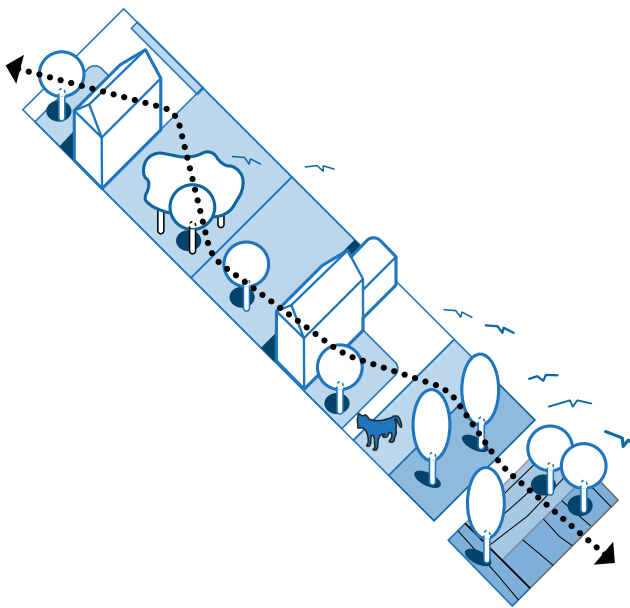


Figure 60: Diagram demonstrating how connected front and back gardens can enhance wildlife connectivity. Accompanying layout considerations with wildlife friendly features supports wildlife movement and habitat creation.

LS.01 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Landscape design should be considered at the outset of development to ensure planting areas and species achieve exceptional development outcomes.

The following principles are recommended for the landscape design of development:

01. Provide landscape areas of a sufficient size to support the establishment and growth of healthy vegetation. Avoid an over reliance on planting strips;
02. Utilise landscaping to mitigate impacts of development (i.e. visual, noise, urban heat island) on adjacent areas;
03. Preserve existing vegetation (i.e. mature trees and hedgerows) and provide new trees as part of the landscape design to reinforce the NA's rural landscape character; and
04. Incorporate wildlife friendly features that support movement and habitat, particularly for hedgehogs. For example, holes in fencings/walls, gaps beneath gates, temporary houses and native planting. Consider how front and back gardens can create wildlife corridors.

LS.02 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

Hedgerow boundary treatments are a significant feature in Crowle. Mature hedgerows provide spatial enclosure, provide screening and enhance privacy. They are generally tall at the edges of the settlement, and lower in the centre. The rural landscapes of the NA incorporate hedgerows alongside woodland and large landscaped buffers.

The following principles are recommended for the boundary treatment of development:

01. Boundary treatments should primarily consist of hedgerows. Some brick and timber fencing boundary treatments may be acceptable if they align with the prevailing character of the street and Conservation Area;
02. Ensure front gardens of a sufficient depth are provided to allow for mature hedgerows while maintaining the solar access and aspect of dwellings. Mature landscaping should be in accordance with the character of the settlement,



Figure 61: The aforementioned low rise curved wall is a distinct feature in Crowle (top).

Figure 62: Grass vergers on the pavement acting as an extension to the front garden of these houses (bottom).

4. CHECKLIST

As the design Guidelines and Codes in this section cannot cover all development scenarios, this concluding section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

The checklist can be used to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

3

Local green spaces, views & character:

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

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