

# Land at Crown Lane, Ixworth



Concept Statement



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Introduction

The Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan identifies land at Crown Lane Ixworth for housing development and recreational open space. The allocation requires the development to be guided by a masterplan, which is to be prepared by the landowners / developers and which is in turn to be informed by a Concept Statement. This Concept Statement sets out the Council's planning requirements for the allocated site and, provides a basis for the approval of the ensuing masterplan.

## Concept Statements

A Concept Statement is a simple, clear expression of the kind of place that a new development should create. It sets out how the policies and objectives of the Local Plan will apply to a specific site in order to deliver the best possible economic, social and environmental benefits. Concept Statements are not detailed documents but provide more information for developers and the community than can be contained in statutory local plan policies or maps. The production of a Concept Statement for major sites is a key recommendation of the 1998 DETR publication Housing Layouts - Lifting the Quality. It suggests that the Concept Statement should begin the design process and be a forerunner to a planning brief. It should be imaginative, positive, ambitious, practical, opening up design opportunities, and indicating how local plan policy and other guidance would be interpreted on a specific site.

## Policy Context

The Local Plan allocates 2.5 hectares of land at Crown Lane, Ixworth for the development of approximately 70 houses. Key requirements of the development are the construction of an access road from the A143 Walsham roundabout and the provision of an area of public open space to the south of Walsham Road.

Other relevant policies of particular importance in the Local Plan are:

- Policy DS3: Development Design and Impact
- Policy H3: Affordable Housing
- Policy H4: Housing Density
- Policy H5 Mix of Housing
- Policy L4: Standards of Open Space and Recreation Provision
- Policy NE3: Protection of the Landscape

## Landscape Setting

The site is part of a large arable field immediately to the north of Crown Lane and adjacent to the cemetery. The field extends to the A143 to the east and to the Walsham Road to the north. The north-eastern fringes of Ixworth are bordered by expansive, gently rolling open arable land which is largely devoid of mature trees and hedgerows.



A broad ridge in the centre of the arable field is prominent in long open views from the surrounding farmland.

The site is tucked on the lower slopes of the ridge, relatively hidden from surrounding views. However, part of the access road will be prominent where it crosses the ridge top to the north of the site.

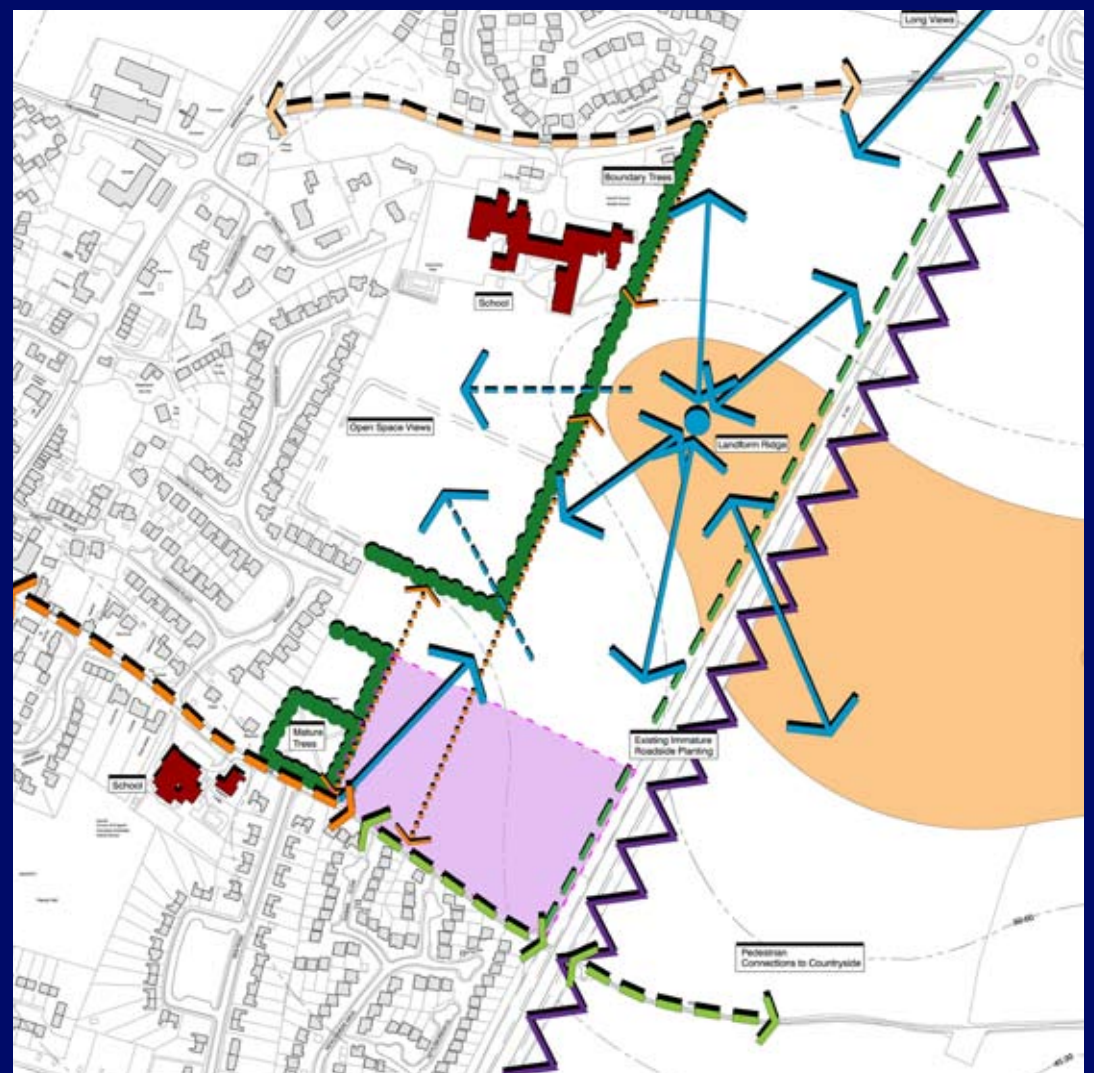
Crown lane provides a direct pedestrian link to the centre of Ixworth and the local primary school. To the east, Crown lane connects to the network of footpaths in the open countryside surrounding Ixworth.

An additional footpath connection to the north of the site links the Walsham Road Roundabout with the secondary school and the High Street.

The cemetery, with its historic lych gate, is an attractive landscape destination adjacent to the site. It is highly enclosed by mature trees, which also provide a positive western boundary to the site.

A hedgerow with a dense band of mature trees encloses the large recreation ground to the south of Ixworth secondary school and contributes to the relatively sheltered, enclosed character of the western boundary within the wider context of the site.

By contrast the eastern boundary suffers noise and visual intrusion from the adjacent A143, which is bordered, but not enclosed, by a thin band of immature embankment planting.





Plant the ridge top with native woodland species to create a wooded skyline and a positive backdrop to the new development. Woodland planting on this prominent landform will also reduce the impact of cars and road lighting on the ridge.

Design the access road as a gateway landscape with a sequence of attractive, locally distinctive landscape features and 'village green' character zones. These landmark features should be designed in order to assist the integration of the road by mitigating any negative environmental impacts by creating a robust interconnected network of hedgerows and trees at a scale which will be appropriate and legible within the surrounding open countryside.

The landscape feature along the access road should also provide a logical rationale for a variety of alignments and junctions along its route designed to prevent speeding.

Create a formal public square marking the pedestrian entrance to the new housing development from Crown Lane.

Provide emergency access from the development to Crown Lane.

Retain a landscape corridor between the new housing and the cemetery in order to allow for a public footpath and cycleway linking Crown Lane to the new 'village green' and woodland immediately to the north of the site.

Promote Crown Lane as a shared space and introduce new road surface treatments at key junctions (alongside the primary school) and at the entrance to the High Street to reinforce this change.

Provide a mix of housing types including 40% affordable with higher densities towards the western and northern boundaries positively fronting on to the new landscape infrastructure. Provide adequate pedestrian linkage between the housing and adjacent open spaces. Lower density housing could be located towards the eastern boundary enclosed with native woodland planting. Building heights should not exceed 2 stories which is typical of local vernacular architecture within Ixworth.

Incorporate strategies to ensure that the development is as sustainable as possible, for example:

- Consider orientation to maximise opportunities for solar gain.
- Incorporate high standards of specification and construction to deliver high levels of insulation and air tightness to individual dwellings.
- Incorporate energy efficient heating systems
- Incorporate opportunities for rain and possibly for grey water harvesting.
- Allow for sustainable urban drainage (integrated as necessary within the landscape infrastructure as a positive feature).
- Apply principles as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes, Secured by Design, and CABI Buildings for Life.

The layout of the development should be carefully considered to ensure that the council's '3 bin' refuse collection and recycling system can be implemented.

Design Crown Lane frontage as an attractive 'green lane' along the site boundary linking Ixworth with its countryside setting.

There is potential for a future pedestrian footbridge over the A143 at the Crown Lane crossing which would improve the quality of footpath links between Ixworth and the surrounding countryside. Any additional future development will be expected to contribute to the provision of a footbridge.





| LEGEND |   |
|--------|---|
|        | Allocated Site                            |
|        | Protect the Ridge                         |
|        | Open Space - Amenity Grass & Meadow       |
|        | Trees & Existing Native Woodland Planting |
|        | Trees & Proposed Native Woodland Planting |
|        | Footpath / Cycleway Link                  |
|        | Access Roads                              |
|        | "Shared Space" Access to Town Centre      |
|        | "Green Lane" Access to Countryside        |
|        | Emergency Access                          |
|        | Future Pedestrian Bridge                  |
|        | Housing Frontages                         |

# Development Principles

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