

Aldringham-cum-Thorpe

Spatial Evidence for Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Final report

2 June 2024

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Quality information

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3	31/05/2024	Final Report to Locality	Jack Wilton-Cooley	Graduate Planner
4	11/06/2024	Locality Review	Annabel Osborne	Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Locality
5	11/06/2024	Final Report	Angus McNeill Peel	Senior Planner

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A photograph of a row of colorful houses (blue, yellow, red, and pink) built into a hillside. The houses have red-tiled roofs and multiple chimneys. In the foreground, there is a gravelly area and a wooden fence. A large green circular overlay is centered over the houses, containing the text 'Introduction' and '01'.

Introduction

01

1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide mapping, visioning and planning support to Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Parish Council.

1.1 Objectives

AECOM has supported Aldringham-cum-Thorpe with mapping and planning expertise to map the vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan. This has involved iterations of mapping and engagement with the QB to arrive at a final set of maps setting out the vision and objectives for the NP and its spatial policies. AECOM has reviewed the background policy context, considered the Neighbourhood Steering Group's aspirations and arrived at a spatial vision for the parish which can be taken forwards through the Neighbourhood Plan.

This work builds on the previous Technical Support AECOM has delivered for Aldringham-cum-Thorpe through the Neighbourhood Plan Technical Support programme led by Locality. In particular, this document builds on the Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Design Guidance and Codes.

1.2 Process

The following diagram outlines the steps undertaken to produce this document:

01. Background evidence base produced as part of the Design Guidance and Codes document
02. Inception meeting
03. In-person vision and objectives workshop and site visit, building on responses from recent public consultation carried out by Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Parish Council
04. Preparation of professional GIS maps
05. Draft and final report



Background

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2. Background

2.1 Planning policy and guidance

2.1.1 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020)

Policy SCLP3.1: Strategy for Growth, which includes policies such as:

- Significantly boosting the supply of housing, the mix of housing available and the provision of affordable housing, through the delivery of at least 542 new dwellings per annum (at least 9,756 over the period 2018 - 2036)
- Ensuring the provision of infrastructure needed to support growth;
- Protecting and enhancing the quality of the historic, built and natural environment across the District.
- Appropriate growth in rural areas that will help to support and sustain existing communities.

The Local Plan seeks to encourage development in locations where people can access services and facilities and

where there is a choice of transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport, recognising that in some of the more rural parts of the plan area opportunities for sustainable transport may be more limited but that some development may, nevertheless, help to sustain communities.

Policy SCLP3.2: Settlement Hierarchy

Thorpeness classified as 'small village'. Policy approach here includes:

Employment:

- Development within existing Employment Areas (Policy SCLP4.1)
- Development of employment uses appropriate to the scale of the settlement (Policy SCLP4.2 and Policy SCLP4.5)

Retail:

- Protection of local shops (Policy SCLP4.12)

Housing:

- New housing allocations (Section 12)
- Small groups of new housing and infill within Settlement Boundaries (Policy SCLP5.2)

Aldringham falls within the 'countryside' category. Policy approach here includes:

Employment:

- Conversion and replacement of rural buildings for employment uses (Policy SCLP4.6)
- Farm diversification (Policy SCLP4.7)
- Development within existing Employment Areas (Policy SCLP4.1)
- New employment uses where need is demonstrated (Policy SCLP4.2)

Retail:

- Protection of local shops (Policy SCLP4.12)

Housing

- New housing within clusters of existing dwellings (Policy SCLP5.4)
- Affordable housing on exception sites (Policy SCLP5.11)
- Conversions of agricultural buildings / replacement dwellings (Policy SCLP5.3)
- Rural workers' dwellings (Policy SCLP5.6)

Policy SCLP3.3 Settlement Boundaries:

Land which is outside of Settlement Boundaries and which isn't allocated for development in the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans is defined as Countryside. New development within defined settlement boundaries will be acceptable in principle, subject to consideration of other relevant policies of the development plan. New residential, employment and town centre development will not be permitted in the Countryside except where specific policies in this Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans indicate otherwise. Proposals for new residential development outside of the Settlement

Boundaries and outside of land which is allocated for development will be carefully managed in accordance with national planning policy guidance and the strategy for the Countryside. Neighbourhood Plans can make minor adjustments to Settlement Boundaries and allocate additional land for residential, employment and town centre development providing that the adjustments and allocations do not undermine the overall strategy and distribution as set out in this Local Plan.

Policy SCLP3.4: Proposals for Major Energy Infrastructure Projects outlines the different requirements and needs to mitigate the impact of major energy infrastructure projects on local communities and environments. It states that its role either as determining authority for development under the Town and Country Planning Act, or as consultee on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, the Council will take into consideration the nature, scale, extent and potential impact of proposals for Major Energy Infrastructure Projects, including cumulative impacts throughout

their lifetime, including decommissioning of existing plant and facilities. The Council will work in partnership with the scheme promoter, local communities, National Grid, Government, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, service providers, public bodies and relevant local authorities to ensure significant local community benefits and an ongoing legacy of the development is achieved as part of any Major Infrastructure Projects.

A new nuclear power station at Sizewell is a nominated site in the National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation EN6 as part of the national package.

The current Sizewell site is a rural location in close proximity to Aldringham-cum-Thorpe. In addition, the wider highway and rail network to this location will be significantly impacted over the 15/20-year build period.

As well as the social impacts affecting the communities nearby, the environmental impacts of a site on the coast, within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and close to protected landscapes such as

Sizewell Marshes and Minsmere Nature Reserve, and the impact on the Suffolk Seascape will need to be assessed both during construction and beyond.

Impacts on the historic environment should be avoided, and if not possible, minimised.

Moreover, beyond nuclear, the area is also increasingly under pressure to support developments associated with wind and inter-continental electricity connections.

To balance the impact of hosting a variety of major energy infrastructure facilities in the area, a variety of local economic, environmental and community mitigation and enhancement measures may be required which can be focused on in the masterplan e.g. in land use terms these could be in the form of but not limited to examples such as sports facilities, meeting places, woodland planting schemes or habitat creation.

2.1.2 Housing

Housing Allocations: The former Suffolk Coastal area has a large number of communities in the rural areas and public consultation responses highlighted there is a need for appropriate development to be encouraged in some of these settlements. The strategy reflects the need to support the numerous villages across the plan area by recognising the possibility of higher levels of growth in some communities. Through allocation of appropriate sites some settlements will welcome higher levels of growth than has been experienced in previous Local Plans. Increasing the amount of development in rural areas reflects the need to provide more housing opportunities for people with a local connection to live in rural areas and to deliver more affordable housing to meet local needs.

Thorpeness: 12 housing allocation with permissions and resolution to grant permission as at 31/3/2018.

Aldringham: Despite being classified as in the countryside under the settlement hierarchy, Aldringham had 40 existing housing allocations without permission or resolution to grant as at 31/3/2018, which were carried forward into the Local Plan. Now been developed (Acorn Close and Oak Drive, Aldringham).

The NP will therefore be expected to plan for these allocated homes.

Policy SCLP5.2 Housing Development in Small Villages (Thorpeness):

Residential development will be permitted within defined Settlement Boundaries where it is:

- a. A small group of dwellings of a scale appropriate to the size, location and character of the village; or
- b. Infill development (in accordance with ***Policy SCLP5.7***).

Policy SCLP5.3 Housing Development in the Countryside (Aldringham) sets out the circumstances where new housing in the countryside would be supported:

- a. Affordable housing to meet identified local needs on exception sites adjacent to, or well related to, Settlement Boundaries or clusters of housing in the countryside (in accordance with **Policy SCLP5.11** and **Policy SCLP5.4**);
- b. Limited development within existing clusters (in accordance with **Policy SCLP5.4**);
- c. Replacement dwellings on a one to one basis where these are no more visually intrusive in the countryside than the building to be replaced;
- d. Subdivision of an existing larger dwelling;
- e. Conversion of an existing building (in accordance with **Policy SCLP5.5**);
- f. Rural workers dwellings, where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work (in accordance with **Policy SCLP5.6**);
- g. Other residential development consistent with policy on residential

development in the countryside contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

So overall, generally not considered to be suitable for new developments, but consistent with policy in the National Planning Policy Framework the Council recognises that there is a need for housing in the countryside in certain circumstances and where this can help to sustain thriving rural communities. Aldringham may represent one of these cases where there has been moderate housing development in recent years and offshore windfarm projects.

Policy SCLP5.4: Housing in Clusters in the Countryside. Proposals for new dwellings within 'clusters' in the countryside will be supported where:

- a. The proposal is for up to three dwellings within a cluster of five or more dwellings; OR the proposal is for up to five dwellings within a cluster of at least ten existing dwellings which is well related to a Major Centre, Town, Large Village or Small Village;

AND

- b. The development consists of infilling within a continuous built up frontage, is in a clearly identifiable gap within an existing cluster, or is otherwise located adjacent to existing development on two sides;
- c. The development does not represent an extension of the built up area into the surrounding countryside beyond the existing extent of the built up area surrounding, or adjacent to, the site; and
- d. It would not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or, result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape.

Policy SCLP5.10: Affordable Housing on Residential Developments states that proposals for residential development with capacity for ten units or more or sites of 0.5ha or more will be expected to make provision for 1 in 3 units to be affordable dwellings, and to be made available to meet an identified local need, including

needs for affordable housing for older people. Proposals which provide a higher amount of affordable housing than that set out above will also be permitted. Of these affordable dwellings, 50% should be for affordable rent / social rent, 25% should be for shared ownership and 25% should be for discounted home ownership. Neighbourhood Plans may set requirements for a greater proportion of affordable housing where this is supported by evidence of need and viability assessment.

Policy SCLP5.16: Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes which may be relevant for the areas on the coast. As a residential use, the principal of development of permanent residential caravans and mobile homes will be considered under the relevant policies for housing. Proposals for residential caravan and mobile home sites will be supported where:

- a. They are designed and sited in a way which does not result in a harmful impact on the landscape or on the character of a settlement;

- b. Amenity space is provided on site;
- c. They are located outside of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3; and
- d. Safe access and space for vehicle maneuvering can be achieved within the site.

Policy SCLP12.42: Land to the East of Aldeburgh Road, Aldringham – Now developed

1.66ha of land to the east of Aldeburgh Road, Aldringham, as shown on the Policies Map, is identified for the development of approximately 40 dwellings.

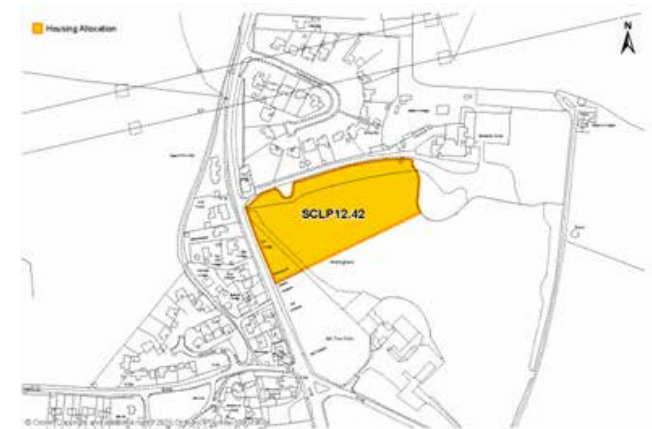


Figure 01: Housing Allocation SCLP12.42

2.1.3 Climate Change

Policy SCLP9.1: Low Carbon & Renewable Energy

The Council will support Neighbourhood Plans in identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy development, particularly where they relate to developments that are community-led. In identifying suitable areas, consideration should be given to the criteria listed below:

- a. They can evidence a sustainable and, ideally, local source of fuel;
- b. They can facilitate the necessary infrastructure and power connections required for functional purposes; and
- c. They are complementary to the existing environment without causing any significant adverse impacts, particularly relating to the residential amenity, landscape and visual impact, the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape, transport, flora and fauna, noise and air quality, unless those impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

The Council will support low carbon and renewable energy developments, with the exception of wind energy schemes, where they are within an area identified as suitable for renewable or low carbon energy or satisfy the above criteria. Wind energy schemes must be located in an area identified as suitable for renewable or low carbon energy in a Neighbourhood Plan.

Wind farm developments: Local planning authorities should also support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy taken forward through Neighbourhood Planning. The Government have stated that wind farm developments should only be granted planning permission if the site is identified as a 'suitable area' and the proposal has the backing of the local community.

Due to the need for a transition to low carbon, the option of resisting wind power generation entirely is not appropriate. Although generally encouraged, proposals will need to ensure they do not adversely affect the high quality landscape, natural

beauty and special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (now National Landscape) wildlife populations or habitats and avoid noise pollution across the former Suffolk Coastal District.

Policy SCLP9.2: Sustainable Construction:

All new developments of more than 10 dwellings should achieve higher energy efficiency standards that result in a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions below the Target CO2 Emission Rate (TER) set out in the Building Regulations.

Policy SCLP9.3: Coastal Change Management Area (also info from Coastal Adaptation SPD).

Suffolk has some of the fastest eroding coastline in Europe. Over the next 20 to 100 years there is the potential for properties, agricultural land and conservation land in some of our more vulnerable areas to be considered 'at risk' or lost to increased coastal erosion.

This policy states that planning applications for all development within and 30 metres landward of the Coastal Change Management Area and within and 30 metres landward of areas where the intent of management is to Hold the Line, identified on the Map below must be accompanied by a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment.

The policy states for the CCMA:

- In areas of soft cliff located up to 60 metres landward of coastal defences where known geological information indicates that the capacity of coastal defences are likely to be adversely affected by development, a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment should be considered.
- In parts of the Coastal Change Management Area expected to be at risk from change within a 20 year time horizon, only temporary development directly related to the coast, for example beach huts, cafes, car parks and sites used for touring caravan and camping will be permitted.

- In parts of the Coastal Change Management Area expected to be at risk from change beyond a 20 year time horizon, other commercial and community uses will be permitted providing they require a coastal location and provide economic and social benefits to the local community.
- Proposals for new or replacement coastal defence schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the works reflect the management approach for the frontage presented in the relevant Shoreline Management Plan and/or endorsed Coastal Strategy, and there will be no material adverse impact on the environment, including exacerbation of coastal squeeze.
- Proposals for new or replacement estuary defence schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the works reflect the management approach for the frontage presented in the endorsed estuary plans/strategies, and there will be no material adverse

impact on the environment, including exacerbation of coastal squeeze

- Essential infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, utility infrastructure and wind turbines will only be permitted in the Coastal Change Management Area where no other sites outside of the Area are feasible and there is a management plan in place to manage the impact of coastal change including their future removal and replacement.
- Planning permission for all development within the Coastal Change Management Area will be time-limited according to the risk identified in the Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment.

Policy SCLP9.4: Coastal Change Rollback or Relocation

Proposals for the relocation and replacement of community facilities, commercial, agricultural and business uses affected by coastal erosion will be permitted in the countryside, provided that:

- a. The proposed development replaces that which is within the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map and is forecast to be affected by erosion within 20 years of the date of the proposal;
- b. The new development is located at an appropriate distance inland with regard to Policy SCLP9.3 on the Coastal Change Management Area;
- c. The new development is in a location that is accessible to the coastal community from which it was displaced; and
- d. The existing site is either cleared and made safe or put to a temporary use beneficial to the local community.

Proposals for the relocation and replacement of dwellings affected by coastal erosion will be permitted in the Countryside where:

- e. The development replaces a permanent building which is within the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map and is forecast to be affected by erosion within 20 years of the date of the proposal;
- f. The relocated dwelling should be in a location which exhibits a similar or improved level of sustainability with respect to access to services and facilities as the original dwelling;
- g. The relocated dwelling is outside of the Coastal Change Management Area as identified on the Policies Map; and
- h. The existing site is either cleared and made safe or put to a temporary use beneficial to the local community.

Coastal management strategy: The Council aims to take a proactive approach in dealing with loss of land and/or property to

coastal erosion by encouraging rollback or relocation before the land or property is lost.

This is particularly relevant for development along the coast out from Thorpeness.

- Aldringham-cum-Thorpe falls under Shoreline Management Plan 7 (SMP7).

Buffer areas:

- East Suffolk Council apply a 30 metre risk zone landward of areas identified as a CCMA or Hold The Line (HTL) areas in order to ensure that developments take account of the coastal erosion risk in the general vicinity.
- Through the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, East Suffolk Council applies a 60m risk zone to the landward edge of risk management structures in areas of soft cliffs where geological information indicates that risk management structures would likely be adversely affected by development. Within the 60m buffer area/risk zone, Coastal Partnership East should be consulted to consider whether a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment should be undertaken.

Within these risk zones a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment will often be required to support a relevant planning application and demonstrate that the development will not result in an increased risk to life or property.

What types of development can be appropriate in a CCMA:

The types of development this can include are:

- Essential transport infrastructure (including mass evacuation routes) which has to cross the area at risk;
- Essential existing or proposed utility infrastructure which is or has to be located in a risk area for operational reasons, including electricity generating power stations, grid and primary substations and water treatment works that need to remain operational in times of flood;
- Coastal erosion risk management structures;
- Wind turbine infrastructure.

Permanent residential development within CCMA is prohibited. Significant new build development of a permanent nature that is not associated with an existing building and/or use, is unlikely to be appropriate within the CCMA, whatever its proposed use. However, where there is clearly a benefit to the wider community arising from the proposed development, for example, community infrastructure, then that will be a material consideration to be balanced against the risk implications.

Table 2(see overleaf): Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment matrix for development types. Note: Red colour = will not be permitted, Amber colour = possibly acceptable and Level B CEVA required, Green colour = possibly acceptable and Level A CEVA required.

Policy SCLP9.5: Flood Risk

Proposals for new development, or the intensification of existing development, will not be permitted in areas at high risk from flooding, i.e. Flood Zones 2 and 3, unless the applicant has satisfied the

safety requirements in the Flood Risk National Planning Policy Guidance (and any successor). These include the 'sequential test'; where needed the 'exception test' and also a site specific flood risk assessment that addresses the characteristics of flooding and has tested an appropriate range of flood event scenarios (taking climate change into consideration).

Developments should exhibit the three main principles of flood risk, in that, they should be safe, resilient and should not increase flood risk elsewhere. In this respect, single storey residential developments will not be permitted in areas of high risk of flooding within or outside Settlement Boundaries.

Neighbourhood Plans can allocate land for development, including residential development, in areas at risk of flooding providing it can be demonstrated:

- a. There are no alternative available sites appropriate for the proposed use within the Neighbourhood Area;

Local Plan	Location on the coast	Permanent Residential Development	Non-residential Development	Temporary development and uses (e.g., caravan)	Extensions to existing development	Modifications to existing development
East Suffolk Council (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan)	Within CCMA	Not permitted	Level B	Level B	Level A	Level A
	CCMA or Hold The Line areas =30m risk zone	Level B	Level A	Level A	Level A	Level A
	60m risk zone landward of coastal risk management structures in areas of soft cliffs	Level B	Level A	Level A	Level A	Level A

Table 02: Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment Matrix

- b. The development provides sustainability benefits which outweigh flood risk; and
- c. Evidence is provided that it is possible for flood risk to be mitigated to ensure development is safe for its lifetime and the lifetime of the relevant flood defence.

Policy SCLP9.6: Sustainable Drainage Systems

Developments should use sustainable drainage systems to drain surface water. Developments of 10 dwellings or more, or non-residential development with upwards of 1,000 sqm of floorspace or on sites of 1 hectare or more, will be required to utilise sustainable drainage systems, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate.

2.1.4 Natural Environment

Policy SCLP10.1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

States that development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it maintains, restores or enhances the

existing green infrastructure network and positively contributes towards biodiversity and/or geodiversity through the creation of new habitats and green infrastructure and improvement to linkages between habitats, such as wildlife corridors and habitat 'stepping stones'. All development should follow a hierarchy of seeking firstly to avoid impacts, mitigate for impacts so as to make them insignificant for biodiversity, or as a last resort compensate for losses that cannot be avoided or mitigated for. Adherence to the hierarchy should be demonstrated.

New development should provide environmental net gains in terms of both green infrastructure and biodiversity. Proposals should demonstrate how the development would contribute towards new green infrastructure opportunities or enhance the existing green infrastructure network as part of the development.

Policy SCLP10.3: Environmental Quality states that development proposals will be expected to protect the quality of the

environment and to minimise and, where possible, reduce all forms of pollution and contamination.

Policy SCLP10.4: Landscape Character states that proposals for development should be informed by, and sympathetic to, the special qualities and features as described in the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (2018), the Settlement Sensitivity Assessment (2018), or successor and updated landscape evidence.

Policy SCLP10.5: Settlement Coalescence states that development of undeveloped land and intensification of developed land between settlements will only be permitted where it does not lead to the coalescence of settlements through a reduction in openness and space or the creation of urbanising effects between settlements. Neighbourhood plans may include policies addressing local issues related to settlement coalescence.

2.2 Development Management Context

2.2.1 Energy Infrastructure

There are a number of major energy infrastructure developments ongoing/ recently completed in or adjacent to the neighbourhood.

2.2.2 Windfarms (East Anglia ONE -ScottishPower Renewable and East Anglia TWO - ScottishPower Renewables)

There are two main windfarm projects near the area, both carried out by ScottishPower Renewables as part of the East Anglia Hub, consented jointly in March 2022:

1. East Anglia ONE North
2. East Anglia TWO

Offshore development - The offshore development area comprises of:

- Wind turbines – up to 67 wind turbines for East Anglia ONE North which would

cover an area of 208km² and up to 75 wind turbines for East Anglia TWO which would cover an area of 218.4km². The maximum height to the blade tip would be 282m above sea level.

- Offshore platforms – up to four electrical platforms connected by platform link cables to collect the electricity, a construction, operation and maintenance platform and a meteorological mast.
- Subsea cables – inter-array cables connect the turbines to the offshore electrical platform. A maximum of two export cables, buried or protected on the seabed will then transport the electricity to shore. The two cable routing options are the preferred choice in terms of engineering and environmental constraints.

On-shore development - The onshore development area comprises of:

- Landfall location – Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) will be required to install

the ducts to avoid any construction works on the beach, and a minimum setback distance of 85m from the cliff top will allow for natural coastal erosion based on the potential 100-year erosion prediction and will not compromise the integrity of the cliff.

- Underground cables – up to six single core onshore cables will be buried for a maximum of 9km. For the majority of the route, trenching will be undertaken in which to place the ducts through which the cables are pulled.
- Public highways – a number of road improvements or modifications will be required to facilitate the ingress and egress from the public highways for construction access or at locations on the existing public road network in order to facilitate construction traffic and/or construction-related deliveries.
- Onshore substation – a maximum building height of 14m and external electrical equipment (with the exception of lightning protection masts) of up to

14m in height from finished ground level is proposed and the substation will cover an area of 32,300m² (190x170m).

- National Grid substation – to accommodate the electricity produced by East Anglia TWO (and East Anglia ONE North) an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) or Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation would be required. The maximum height of the AIS would be 6m with a footprint of 145x310m and the maximum height of the GIS would be 16m with a footprint of 120x140m.
- National Grid realignment works – up to one additional pylon within the vicinity of the National Grid substation as well as up to three cable sealing end compounds, up to one cable sealing end (with circuit breaker) compound, and potentially additional strengthening or modification works within the overhead line realignment works area will be required for East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO.

2.2.3 Consultee Responses regarding the Soil Survey Works for East Anglia ONE North Offshore Windfarm and East Anglia TWO Offshore Windfarm

Friston Parish Council raised a number of concerns in relation to the recent discharge of requirement applications submitted by Scottish Power Renewables to both Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council. These were in relation to the Accuracy of plans; Working hours; Flood risk; Nature of plant and equipment; Duration of works; Parking and access.

However, the Ecological Management Plan addresses all of these concerns in relation to the pre-construction Soil Survey Works and is therefore recommended for approval (<http://publicaccessdocuments.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/NorthgatePublicDocs/01830430.pdf>)

There were no other objections.

2.2.4 Electricity Sea Link

National Grid Electricity Transmission is currently developing proposals for Sea Link, a new planned high voltage undersea electricity link between Suffolk and Kent. Also includes an a Suffolk Onshore Scheme which affects the area (EN020026-000043-EN020026 - Scoping Report - Volume 1 - Part 2 Suffolk Onshore Scheme.pdf (planninginspectorate.gov.uk)). The Suffolk Onshore Scheme comprises of:

- HVAC connection, by underground cable, from the proposed Friston Substation to a converter station site;
- A new converter station site; and
- A HVDC underground cable from a new converter station site to a landfall on the Suffolk coast.

2.2.5 Sizewell Nuclear Power Stations

Sitting North of the neighbourhood, the Sizewell power stations represent a significant infrastructural development that impacts Aldringham-cum-Thorpe.

The whole site includes; Sizewell A, with two Magnox reactors, is now in the process of being decommissioned. Sizewell B has a single pressurised water reactor (PWR) and is the UK's newest nuclear power station. A third power station, to consist of twin EPR reactors, is planned to be built as Sizewell C which is a 15/20 year build programme with major enabling works now underway.

Consultation with local communities is ongoing with the development of Sizewell C. The development has proved controversial for some, with resistance from some in the local community.

'Stop Sizewell C' group campaign against it. Alison Downes, of Stop Sizewell C, said: "There's very strong opposition here. I mean, it's not just local communities" but also wildlife charities such as the RSPB, which has warned of a "major impact" on the area. It's a region popular with pensioners and retirees rather than would-be nuclear technicians, she added.

The planning decision is being challenged by Together Against Sizewell C, supported

The increased number of people in the area, their impact on the tourist industry with the demand on accommodation, and the significant benefit a younger and more active group of individuals could be of to the parish which has an aging population.

On May 24th 2023, a decision was made by the Supreme Court to reject a case brought by a Suffolk campaign group opposed to the new power station. If the project goes ahead the parish council wish to see the parish receive maximum benefit and opportunity provided by the project.



Figure 07: Stop Sizewell C - Take Action.



Figure 08: Sizewell C visualisation - BBC.

**Spatial Analysis and
Proposals**

03

3. Spatial Analysis and Proposals

3.1 Vision and Objectives Setting

Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Parish Council is at an advanced stage of preparing its emerging Neighbourhood Plan and recently engaged widely with the community through two public consultation exercises. The plan is at a detailed draft stage and this report is designed to provide supporting evidence and analysis to the plan. AECOM has reviewed the planning and infrastructure context, and engaged with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at an in-person workshop in March 2024.

At the workshop, it was noted that the strategic masterplanning exercise would help the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to better communicate with residents about what they are aiming to achieve with the document. Aldringham-cum-Thorpe as a parish is affected by a wide variety of planning issues.

Opportunities raised at the workshop by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group included:

- Sizewell Nuclear Power Station is anticipated to generate significant growth in economic activity and population for this part of Suffolk. Up to 8,000 workers may be expected on site and enabling works have started. The demand from the construction works will support the local supply chain industry, and is likely to generate additional demand for housing. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are considering allowing sufficient flexibility in the Neighbourhood Plan to allow for some additional housing within the parish. It is for this reason that the document should allow Aldringham to potentially accommodate some limited growth over the plan period, whilst maintaining separation from Leiston.
- Sizewell Nuclear Power Station may release some funds for the Parish Council enabling certain projects. The Parish Council is following this closely and is keen to work with other surrounding groups such as Leiston Town Council and Aldeburgh Town Council. An example of future potential upgrades includes a new footpath between Aldringham and Thorpeness, and a grade levelled cycle route along the derelict railway line between Leiston and Aldeburgh passing through the parish.
- There is an opportunity to refurbish a derelict railway platform to use as a tourist destination and café situated on the new active travel network.
- Opportunity to support the construction of a new community centre on the Thorpeness sports ground.
- There is a new link road for Sizewell Nuclear Power Station with access from the A12 near Yoxford, likely to improve vehicular access to the area and potentially relieve traffic on some of the minor roads in the parish. Additionally, there will be dualling and a new bypass for the A12 around Farnham and Stratford St Andrew.
- Opportunity to take advantage of

improved broadband connectivity to encourage more sustainable travel patterns, such as more small businesses and working from home.

- Scottish Power renewable energy infrastructure involves extensive cabling works in parish, which may generate additional funding and opportunities to generate biodiversity net gain.

Constraints raised at the workshop by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group included:

- The parish's shortage of social infrastructure and public transport inhibits the level of development which can take place, meaning that there is insufficient policy justification for housing allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan. There is a lack of affordable housing in the area, particularly for those working in the holiday industry in Thorpeness.
- The parish is constrained by areas of flood risk, several designated

environmental sites, the National Landscape and Thorpeness Conservation Area.

- The cumulative impact of several energy projects on this part of the Suffolk coastline is significant and a concern to community members, especially HGVs damaging the rural road network, additional housing pressures and landscape impacts in a National Landscape.
- There is a degree of disruption from Sizewell works and cabling works that presents a challenge for maintaining a peaceful rural area.
- Leiston is anticipated to grow but it is critical that separateness is maintained between Aldringham and Leiston by designating a green gap.
- Coastal erosion situation is worsening and there is a lack of funding available to address this issue, one property on North End has recently been demolished and others have suffered significant

erosion of the cliff face. It is likely that the approach is to be managed retreat, given lack of funding, however, the Steering Group support any local initiatives to fund the introduction of coastal defences as proposed following the public consultation carried out by Coastal Partnership East. The Steering Group wish to discourage unsustainable demolish and rebuild applications, or significant extension applications, within areas at great risk of coastal erosion. Construction work in this location is also unwise should it cause greater instability to the cliff edge.

AECOM and the Steering Group discussed the opportunities and constraints in the area, and suggested the following key components to the vision and objectives:

A green gap maintaining the countryside separation between Aldringham and Leiston, and Aldringham and Coldfair Green and Knodishall Common to maintain a visually distinct village identity and character. This green gap also allows for

some limited flexibility, should Aldringham accommodate additional housing over the plan period to meet local housing needs.

- A Special Landscape Area covering the river valley to the south of the parish.
- Local Green Spaces.
- Non-designated heritage assets.
- Key views.
- A coastal erosion zone where planning applications for demolish and rebuild or significant extensions are discouraged on the basis of the likelihood of cliff erosion in future .
- New footpath and cycle routes to encourage a better active travel network.
- Potential for new café and tourism attraction at derelict railway platform.
- Acknowledgment of future energy infrastructure and opportunities for biodiversity net gain.

Figure 11: Map showing the impacts of large scale energy projects on the Neighbourhood Area.

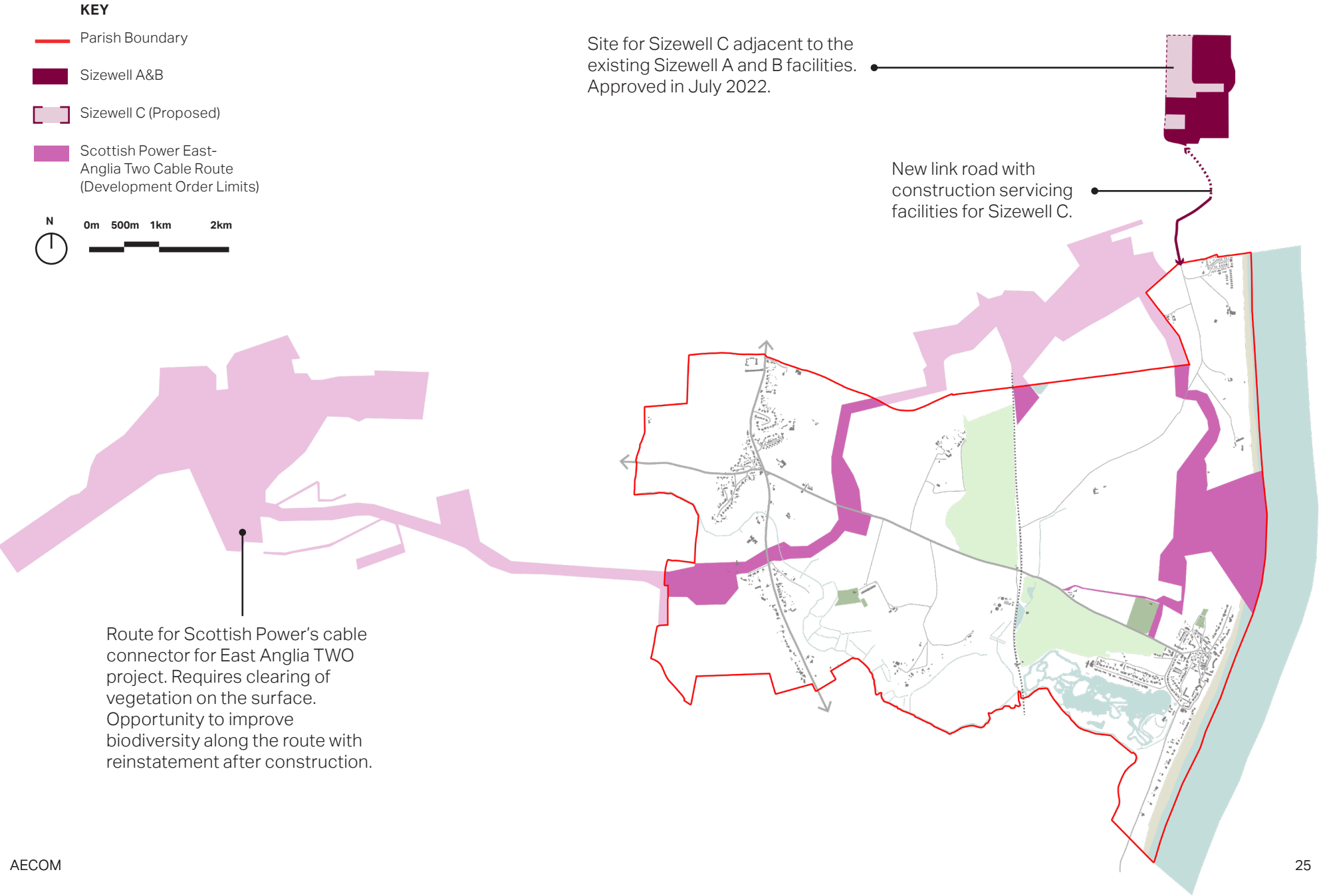


Figure 12: Map showing the green network in the area.

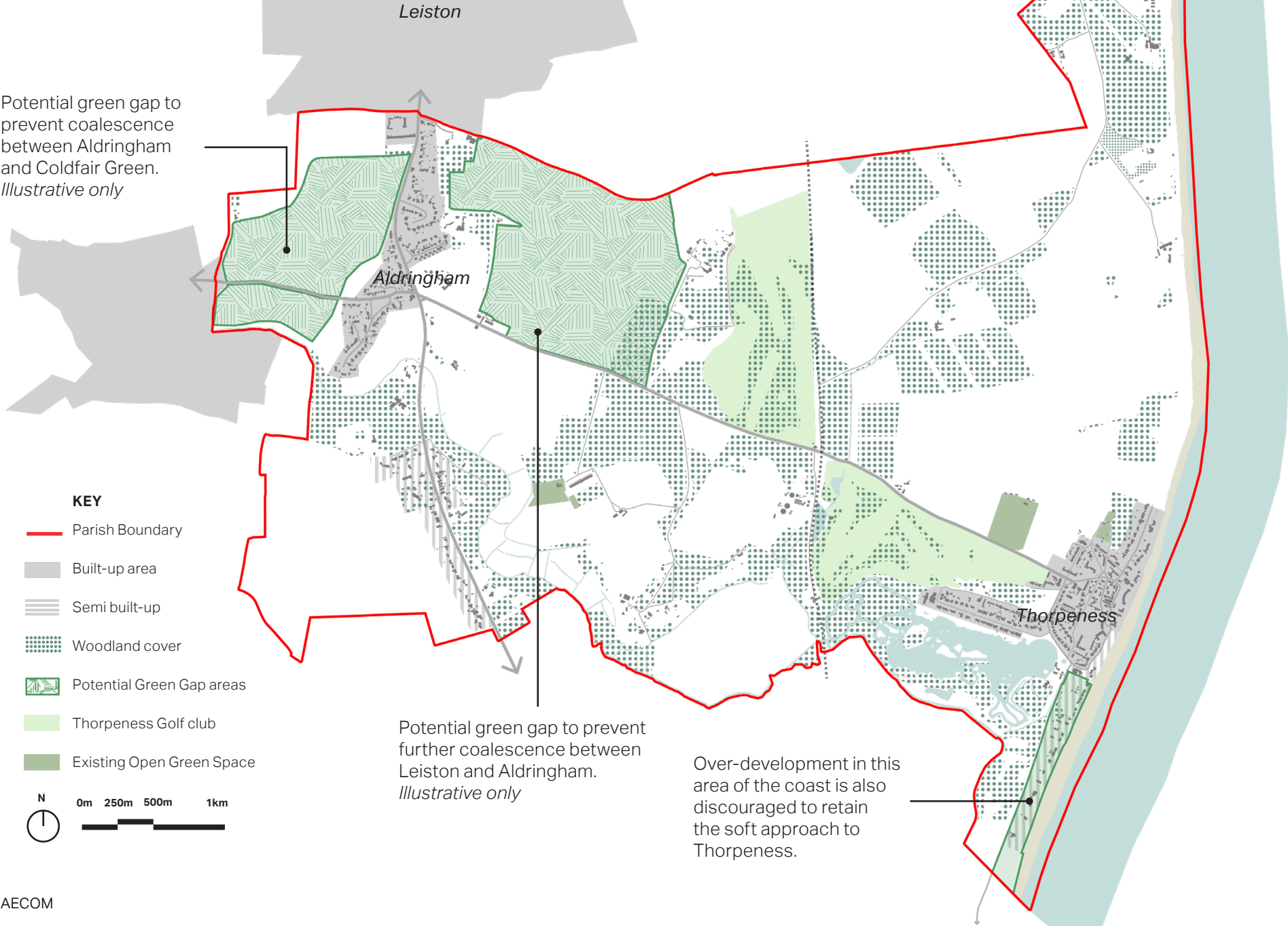


Figure 13: Map showing the green network in the area.

Aldringham-cum-Thorpe parish council and NP steering group recognise the significance of the non-statutory River Hundred Special Landscape Area (SPA) identified by Suffolk County Council for its unique landscape value.

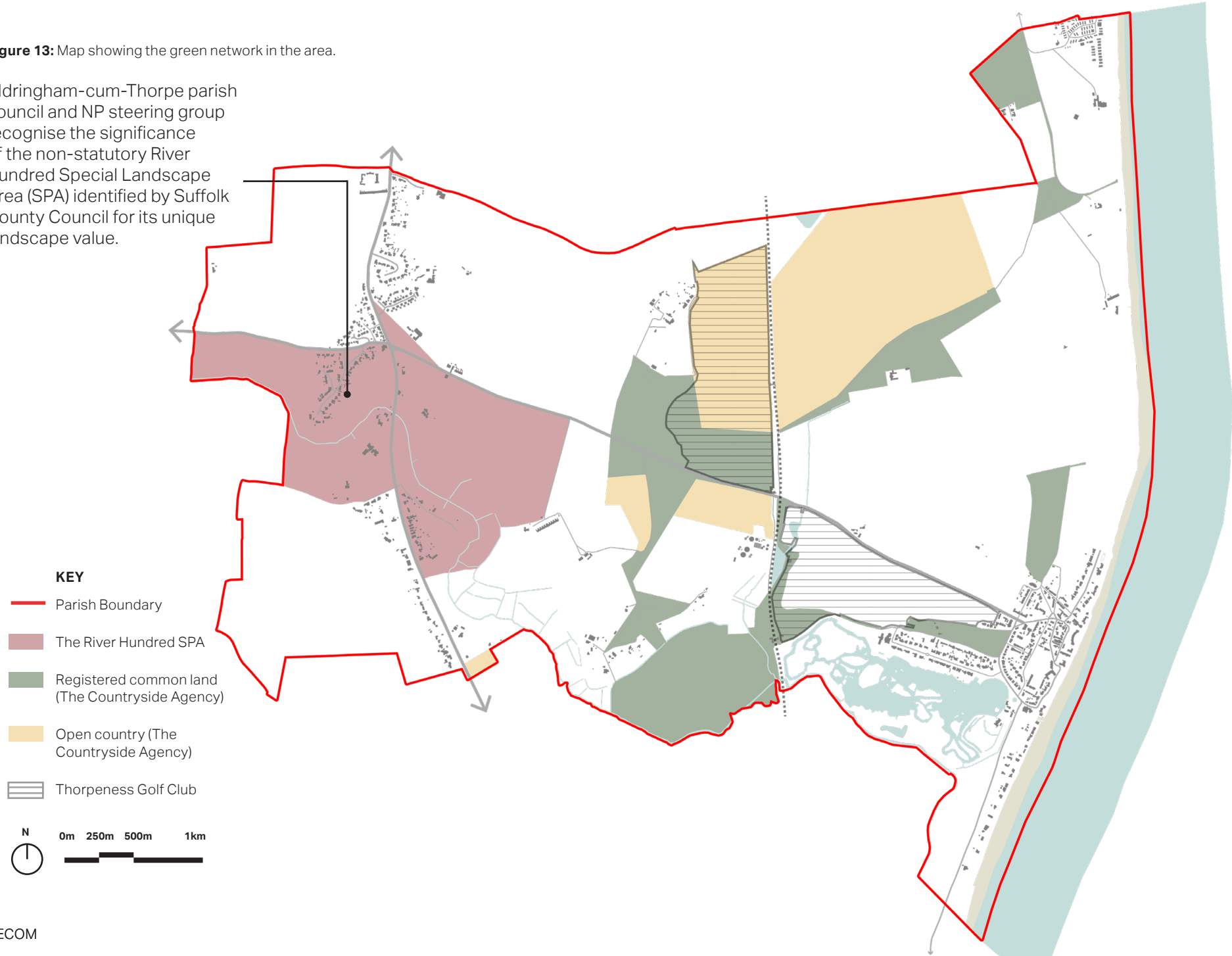


Figure 17: Map showing the green network in the area.

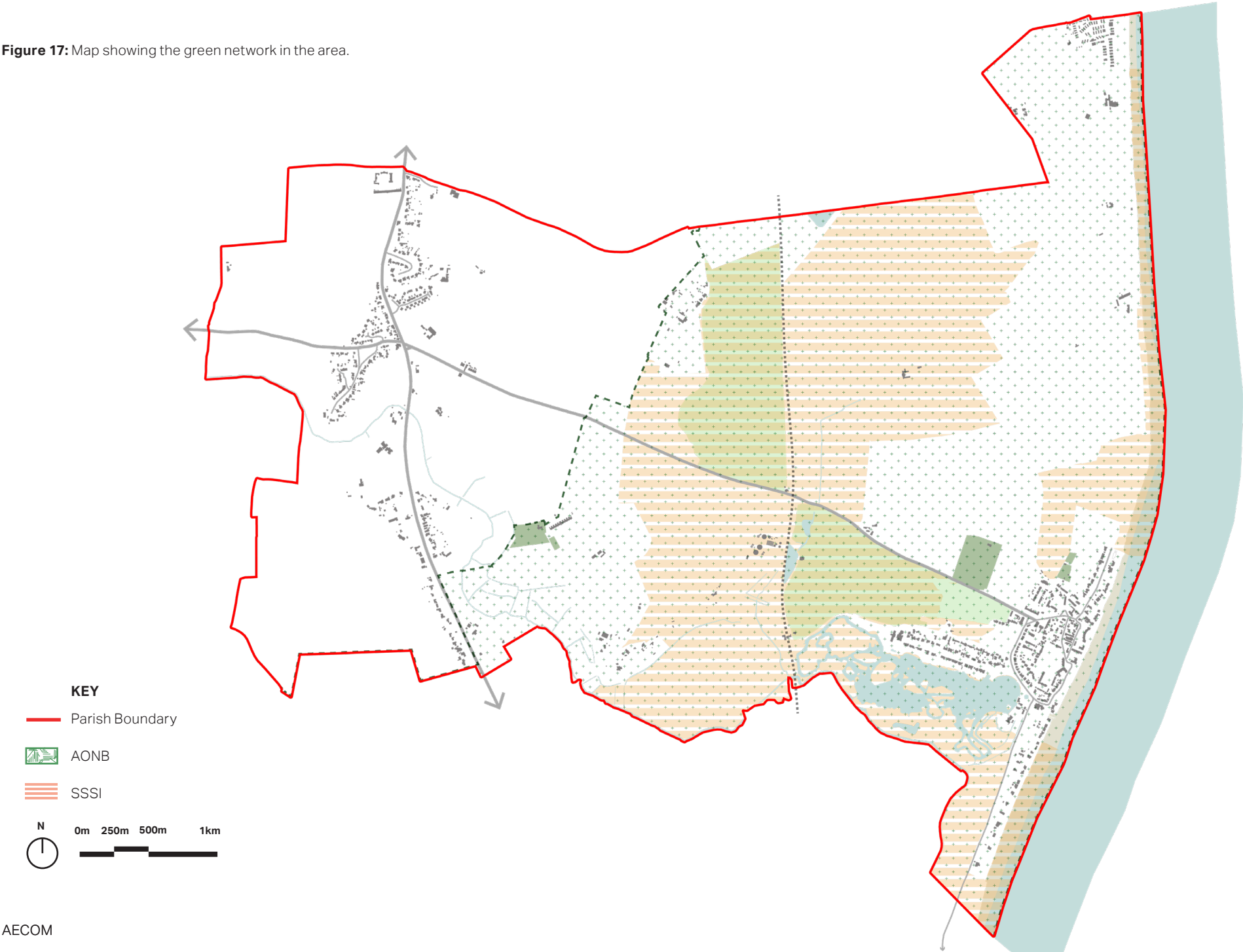


Figure 18: Map showing the movement network.

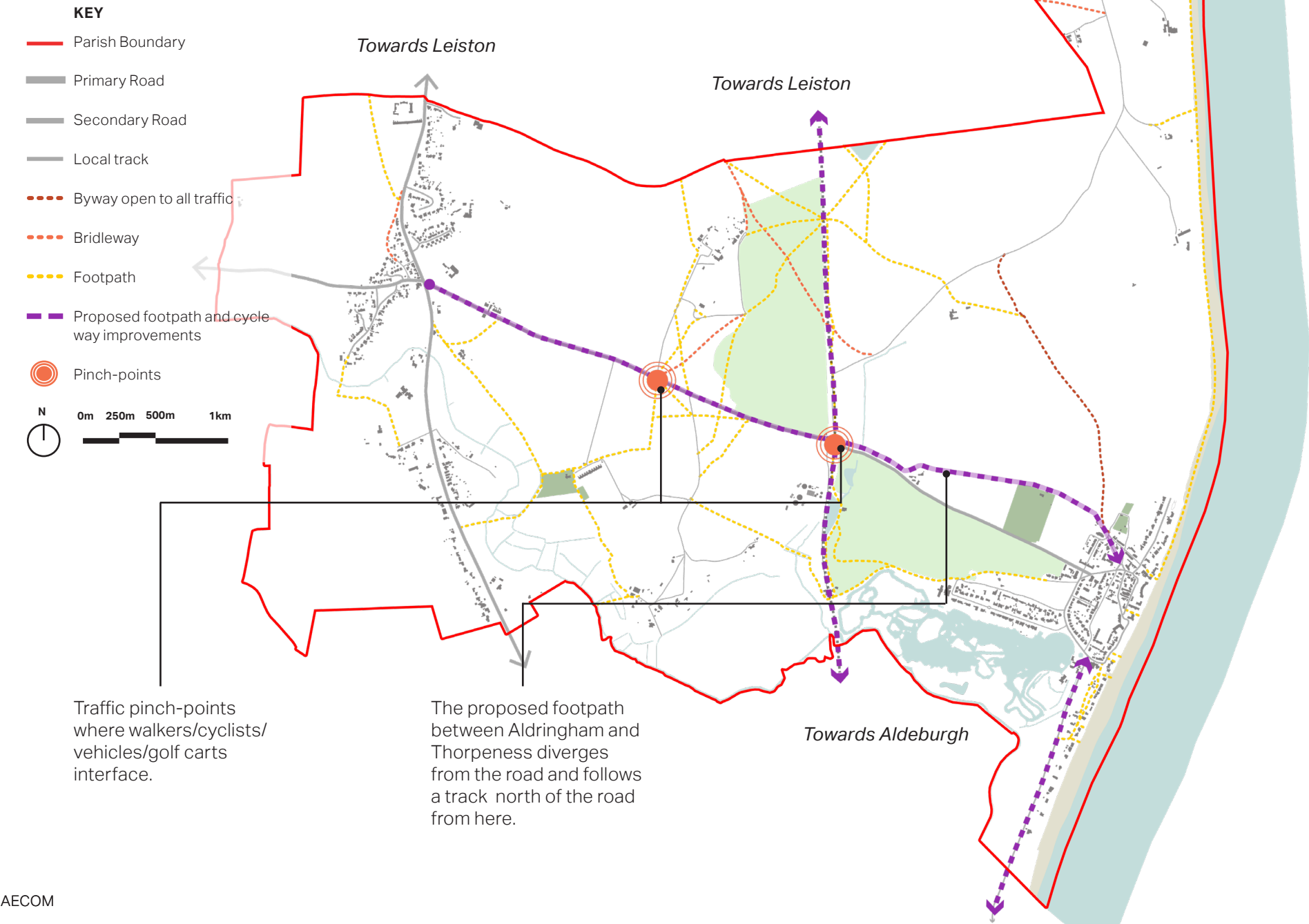
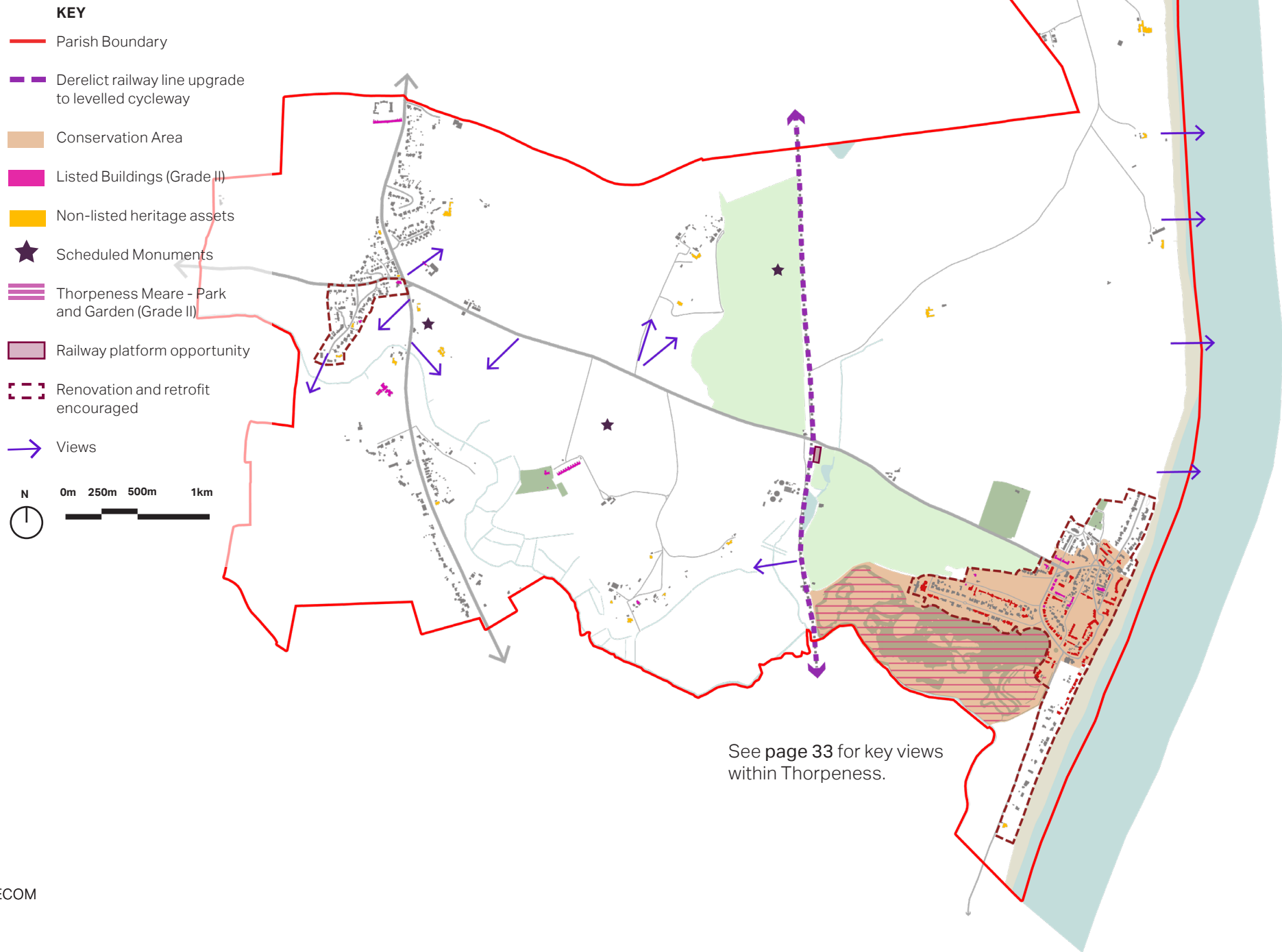
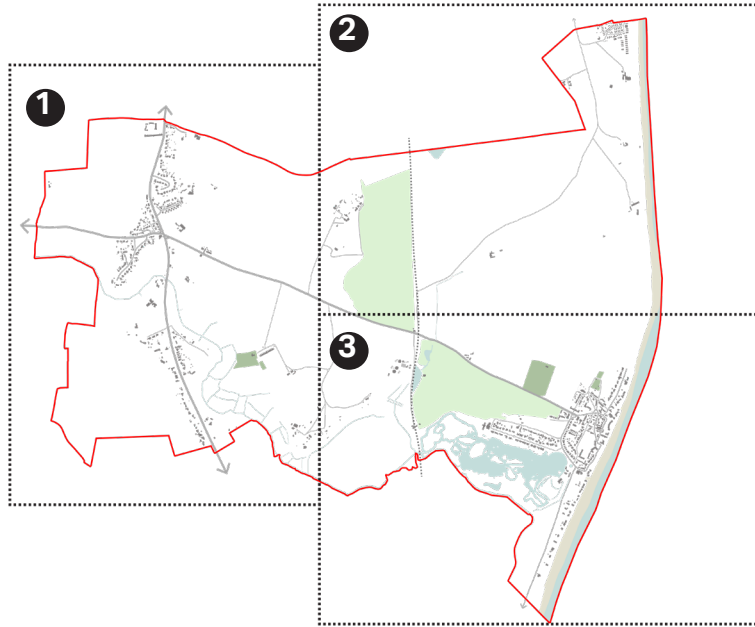
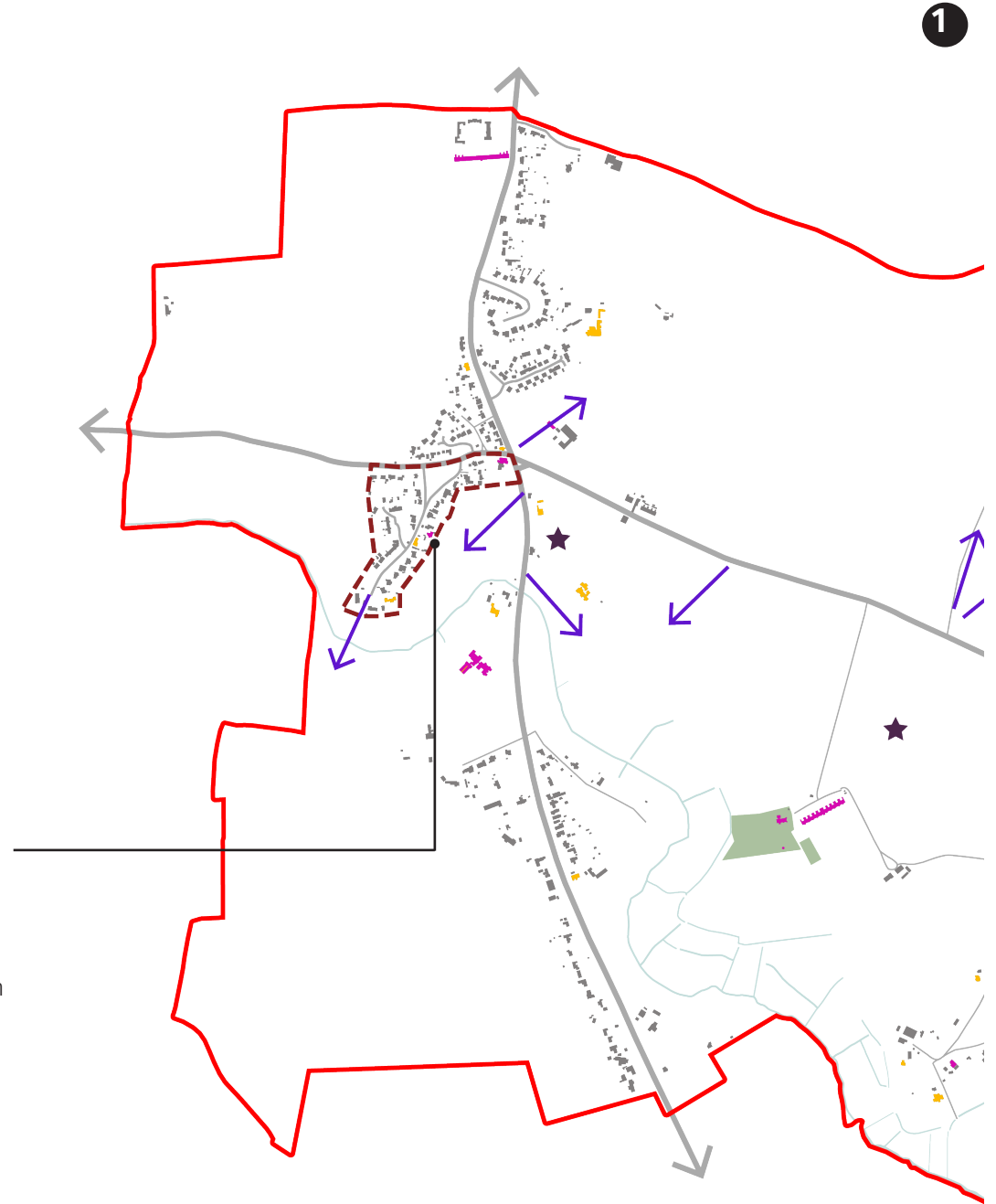


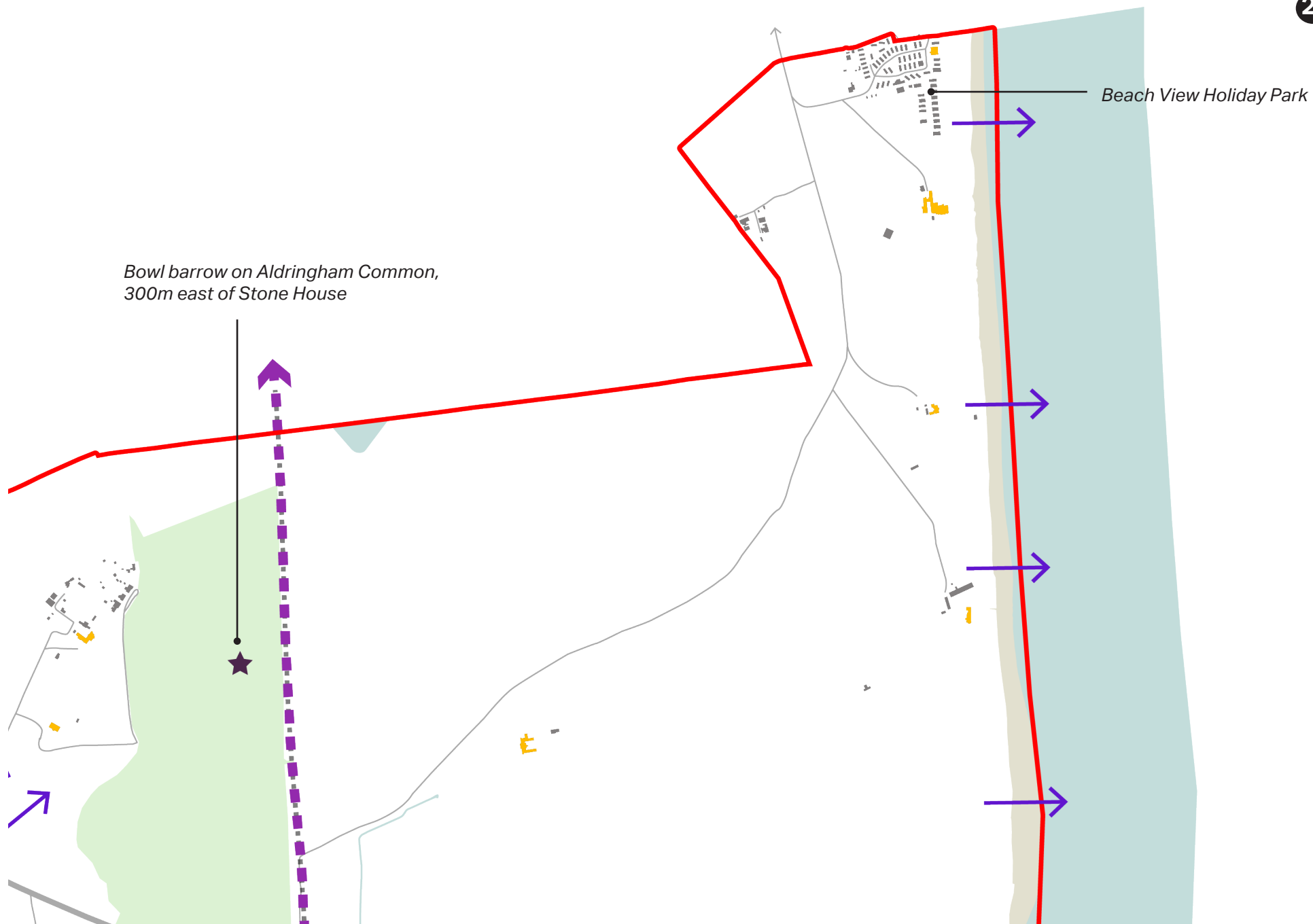
Figure 19: Map showing heritage assets and opportunities..





Aldringham, although not covered by a Conservation Area, has several examples of development from the 17th and 18th centuries. Renovation and retrofit will be supported and encouraged in this area of Aldringham which is notable for its architectural variety and pre-war housing.





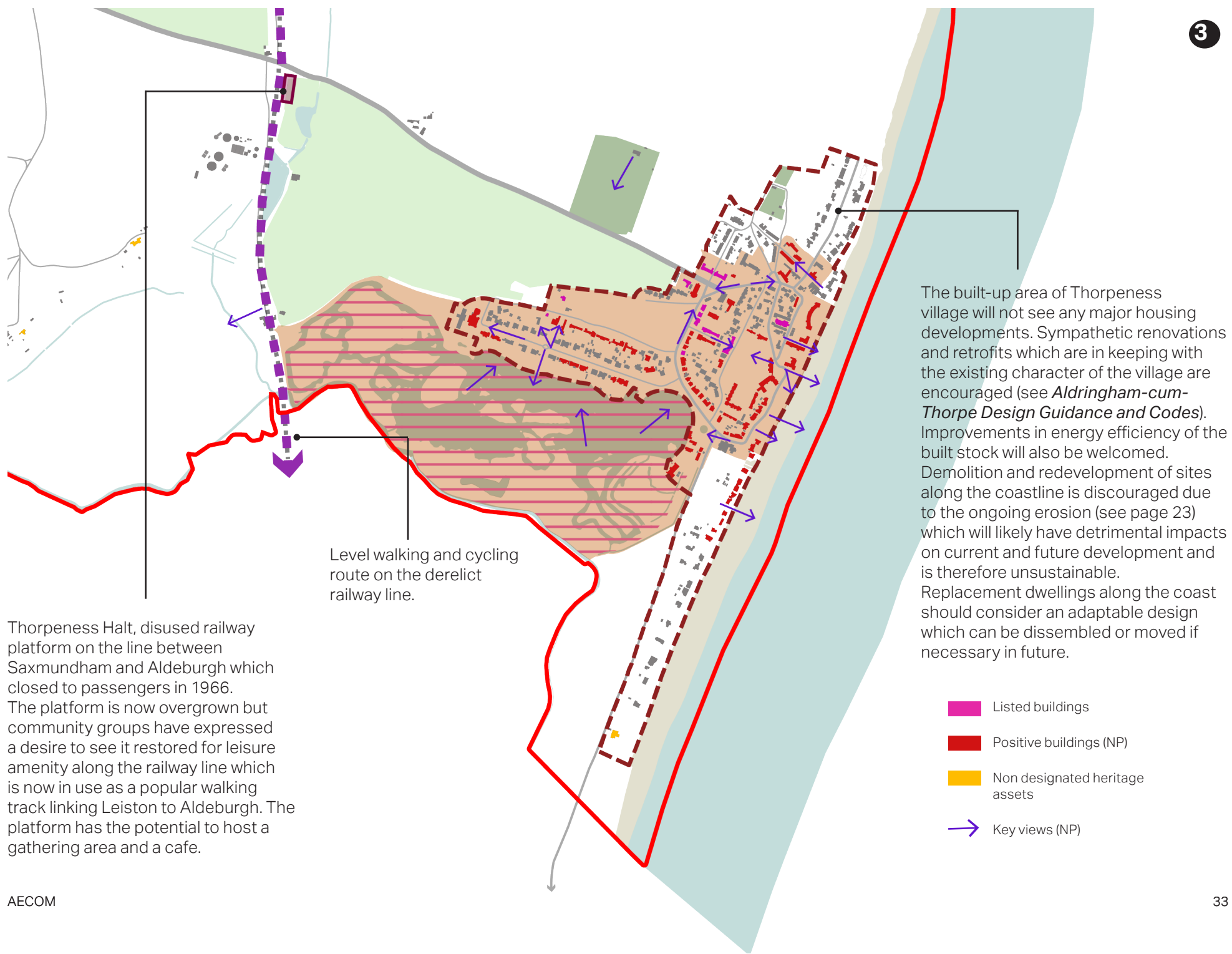
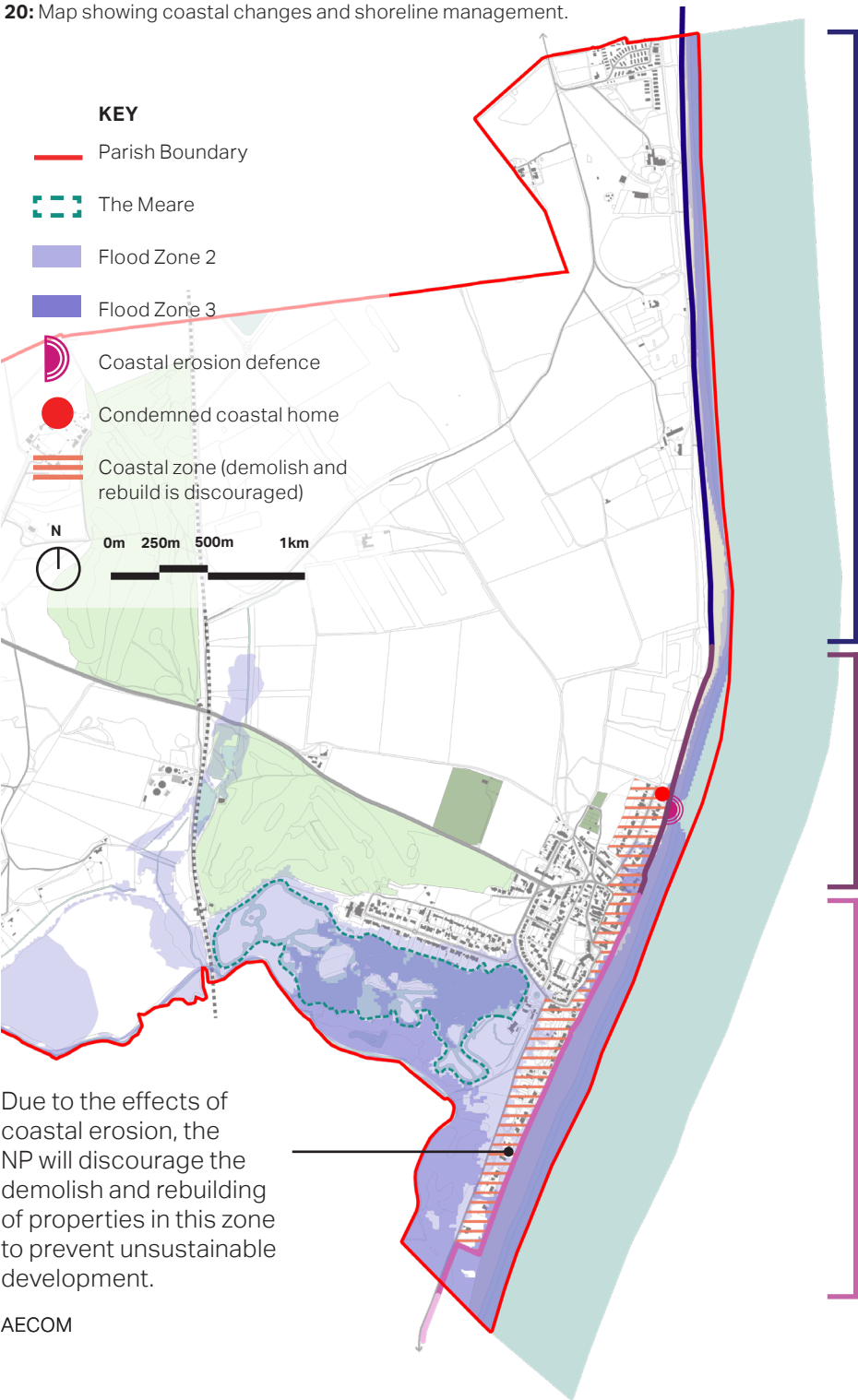


Figure 20: Map showing coastal changes and shoreline management.



MIN13.3

Management Approaches:

Thorpeness Unit MIN13.3

- 2025-2055: MR2 - Managed realignment = Slow erosion, no active intervention
- 2055-2105: MR3 - Managed realignment = Remove defences. Where defences are present, and the intention is to remove them to allow flooding to higher ground or to allow erosion.

Thorpeness Haven Properties Unit ALB14.1

- 2025-2055: MR2 - Managed realignment = Slow erosion, no active intervention
- 2055-2105: MR3 - Managed realignment = Remove defences. Where defences are present, and the intention is to remove them to allow flooding to higher ground or to allow erosion.

Thorpeness Haven Beach Unit ALB14.2

- 2025-2055: MR6 - Local activity only = Where the overall intention is for a natural shoreline, not to encourage new defences. In some areas, where specified in the Shoreline Management Plan, works to repair or construct short stretches of defence to provide localised protection (such as to a slipway, access point or isolated properties) may be considered by the Local Planning Authority. All works require relevant permissions.
- 2055-2105: MR6 - Where the overall intention is for a natural shoreline, not to encourage new defences. In some areas, where specified in the Shoreline Management Plan, works to repair or construct short stretches of defence to provide localised protection (such as to a slipway, access point or isolated properties) may be considered by the Local Planning Authority. All works require relevant permissions.

ALB14.1

ALB14.2

Figure 21: Flood defence map.

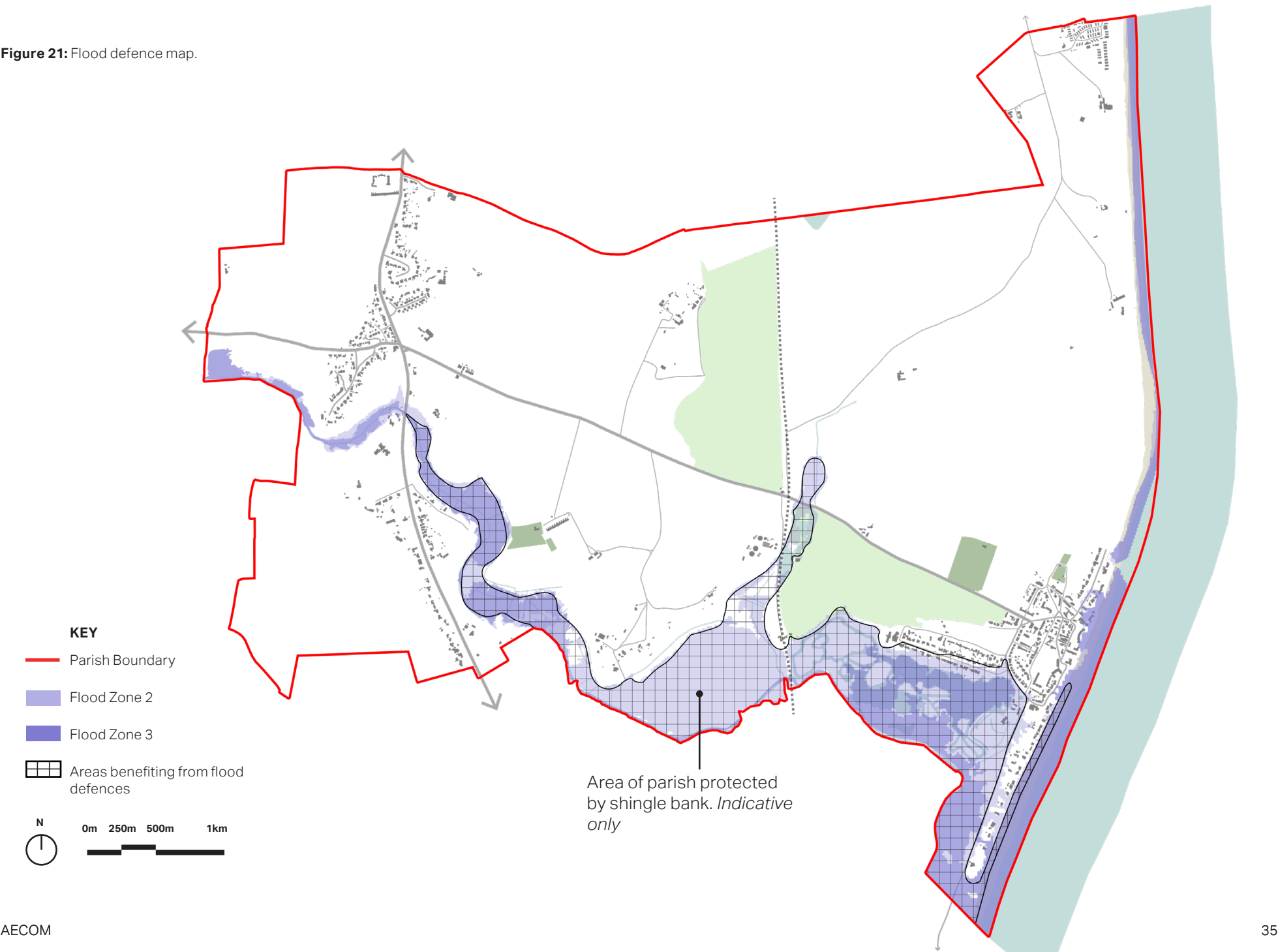


Figure 22: Key vision plan.

