



DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK

APRIL  
2025

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# Land South of Doctors Lane Eccleston, Chorley

# About Story Homes

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**A strong commitment to design, placemaking, and customer experience will be instrumental in delivering an exemplary new development, making Story Homes the perfect choice.**

Story Homes is a privately owned housebuilder. Founded by Fred Story in 1987, it has a long and successful reputation of building high quality, high specification homes across the North of England.

The family owned business has grown in size and status over the years but remains grounded, built on its original ethos of 'doing the right thing' and creating a brand synonymous with quality.

For nearly 40 years Story Homes has been the name most often associated with aspirational new homes throughout Cumbria, the North East and Lancashire. A passion for quality and excellence has seen Story Homes become a multi-award winning UK property developer; with modern and attractive homes that inspire buyers.

Story Homes' success is underpinned by a determination to understand the needs of communities in which it builds, and a goal to deliver carefully designed homes that stand the test of time.

## Story Homes go the extra mile by:

- Employing local people;
- Supporting local trades and supply chains;
- Using local materials where possible;
- Supporting local communities and being a good neighbour in the areas in which it builds;
- Acting as a responsible housebuilder, placing sustainability at the heart of its homes and developments;
- Building high-quality homes that continue to look beautiful in years to come and can be enjoyed by future generations;
- Building homes that it is proud to put its name to and that customers are proud to call home;
- Providing 'affordable' homes for local people; and
- Collecting detailed feedback from customers and identifying areas for improvement.





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# Executive Summary

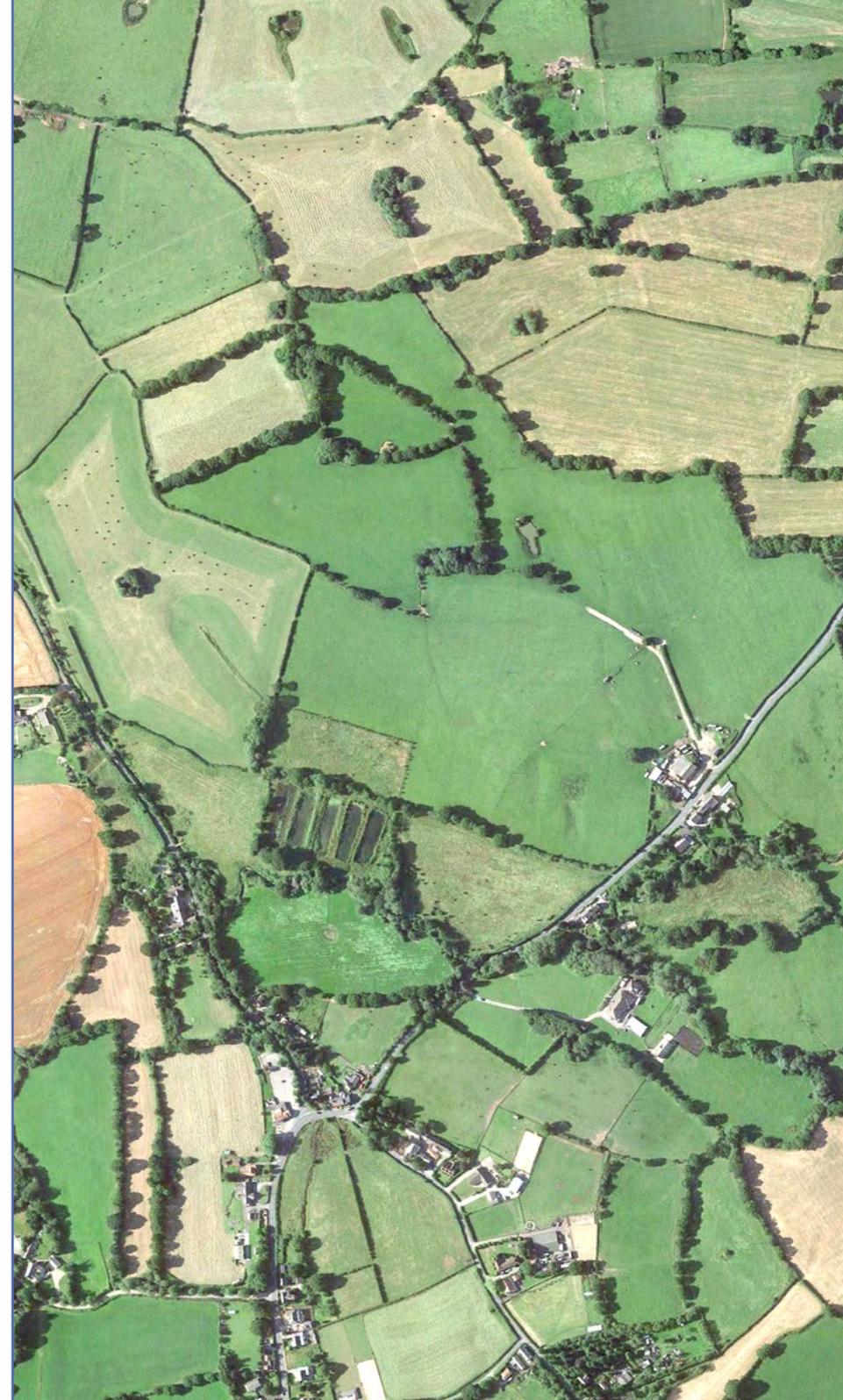
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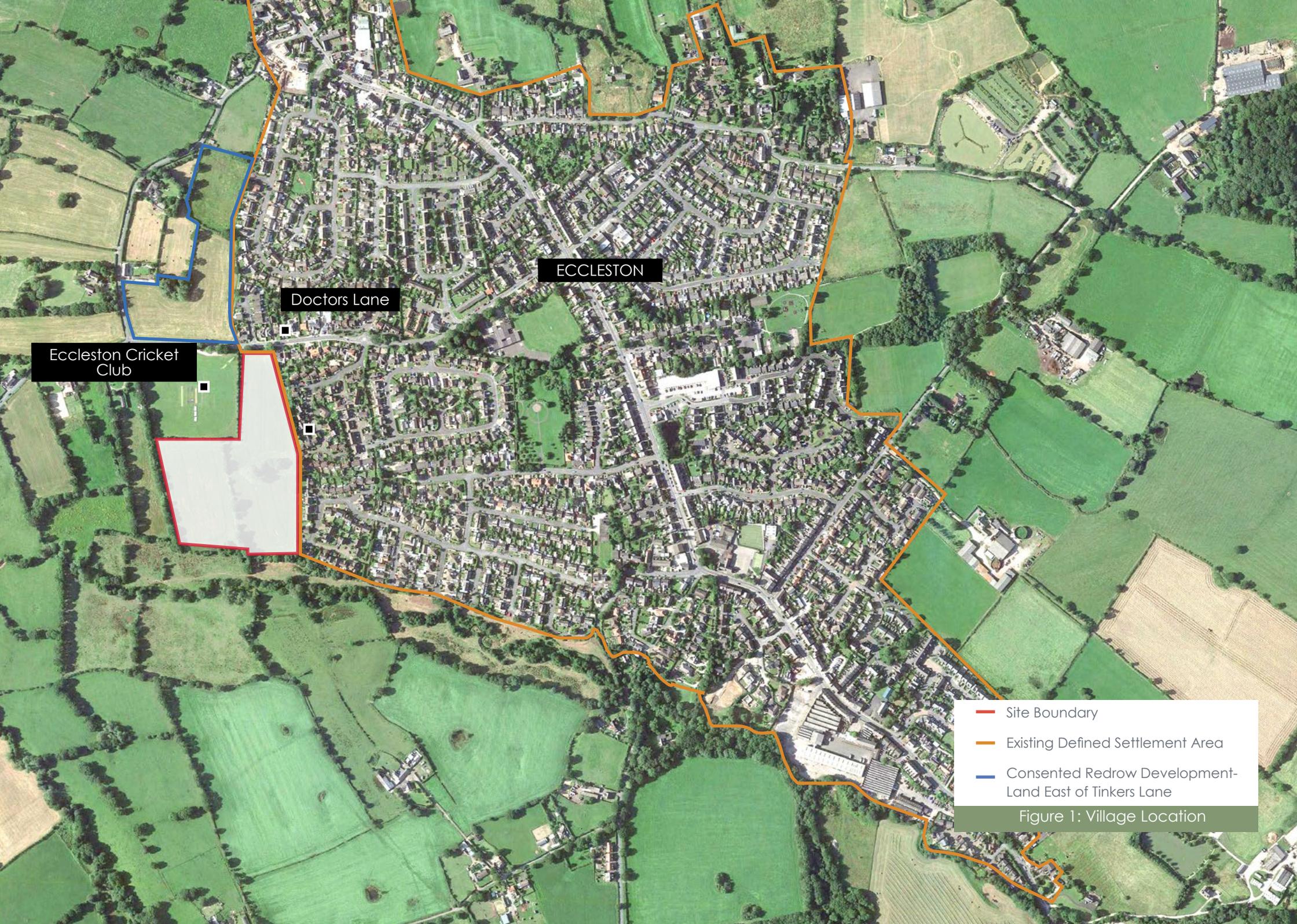
**This Development Framework has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of Story Homes. It demonstrates that land south of Doctors Lane (the Site) represents a sustainable solution to deliver new family and affordable homes to contribute to the future housing requirements of Chorley.**

The Site adjoins the west edge of the settlement of Eccleston, a desirable and very sustainable village in Chorley. The Site is accessible to a full range of local services, providing for every day needs. This document sets out the relationship of the Site to the existing built form of Eccleston and its accessibility to a range of services, including Eccleston Primary School, doctors' surgeries and local shops.

The existing Eccleston Cricket Club lies to the north-west of the Site, which effectively forms an L-shape around the Cricket Club.

This document sets out how the Site constitutes a logical extension to the village as part of its next phase of growth. It includes an initial assessment of the Site and its surroundings to inform an emerging Illustrative Masterplan to demonstrate our Client's emerging design rationale for the Site. In doing so, we demonstrate the ability of the Site to accommodate up to 90 dwellings, alongside, new public open space.





ECCLESTON

Doctors Lane

Eccleston Cricket Club

- Site Boundary
- Existing Defined Settlement Area
- Consented Redrow Development-Land East of Tinkers Lane

Figure 1: Village Location

# Vision

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Story Homes' overarching vision is to design and build quality homes that people aspire to live in, and it is proud to build high-quality homes that bring something different to the areas in which it operates. For this Site, the goal is to create a residential development which provides much-needed new housing and excellent standards of urban design, whilst making a valuable contribution to the existing and future community.





# Site Location & Description

## SITE LOCATION

The Site immediately adjoins the western edge of the built-up area of Eccleston. It is approximately one kilometre from the junction of Doctors Lane and The Green, which is the main north-south road running through the Village. The northern boundary of the Site comprises Doctors Lane where there is an existing access gate and an opportunity to create a new vehicle access into the Site.

Doctors Lane benefits from existing pedestrian footways which have been modernised in recent years and link as far as the entrance to the new Cricket Club and Pavilion. A speed limiting sign marks the entrance to the Village at this point.

The southern boundary is formed by a mature tree belt beyond which lies Syd Brook. The western boundary of the Site comprises mature tree belts and Eccleston Cricket Club which includes a new Club House and car park.

The eastern boundary comprises the existing residential development at Chaucer Close and Reeveswood, both of which are 20th Century modern housing estates comprising of semi-detached and detached housing types.

A public footpath runs along the southern boundary of the Site adjacent to Syd Brook.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The Site extends to c.4.6ha in size and forms an L-shape around Eccleston Cricket Club. It consists of two fields within agricultural use.

The fields are divided by a mature hedgerow and mature trees. An existing drainage ditch sits alongside this hedgerow and a further drainage ditch flows along part of the eastern boundary.

There is a mature cop of trees located in the middle of the eastern most field.

Mature trees, scrub planting and hedgerows define the Site boundaries with the rear aspect and close board fencing of existing residential properties also forming the eastern boundary.



View of cop of trees middle of the eastern field



Existing Site access (Doctors Lane)



View of eastern Site boundary



Consented Redrow Development- Land East of Tinkers Lane

Doctors Lane

Chaucer Close

Eccleston Cricket Club

c. 4.59 Hectares)

Reeveswood

Syd Brook

Figure 2: Site Location

# Neighbourhood Assessment

Eccleston is a vibrant and prosperous village, with a good range of shops and services within a 10 minutes walking distance of the Site. The settlement has two primary schools, Eccleston Primary School and Eccleston St. Mary's Church of England Primary School.

Places of worship include:

- St. Mary's Church, Eccleston;
- St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church; and
- Eccleston Methodist Church.

Shops and services in the village include:

- Post Office;
- Sainsbury's Local;
- One Stop community store;
- Eccleston Green Filling Station;
- Several public houses, restaurants; takeaways, fish and chip shops;
- Social clubs; and
- Local businesses.

Eccleston Clinic comprises of a recently built, modern Doctors surgery/treatment centre.

Immediately adjacent to the Site lies the recently constructed Eccleston Cricket Club and Pavilion, which is a very popular local facility.

Eccleston Recreation Ground, the Millennial Green and the Cricket Pitch provide areas of public open space for amenity and recreation enjoyment.

## EMPLOYMENT

The settlement includes a range of local and rural based employment opportunities and businesses. Local employers include the Eccleston Bed Centre, Designer Radiator Showroom and Croston Plumbing and Heating. There are also several car dealerships within the settlement.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bus services provide frequent public transport connections in the Village.

The nearest stops are located close to Eccleston Primary School at Doctors Lane. This includes services towards Croston and Buckshaw Village.

Services to Preston take around an hour and a half and services to Wigan, in the opposite direction, take approximately 30 minutes.

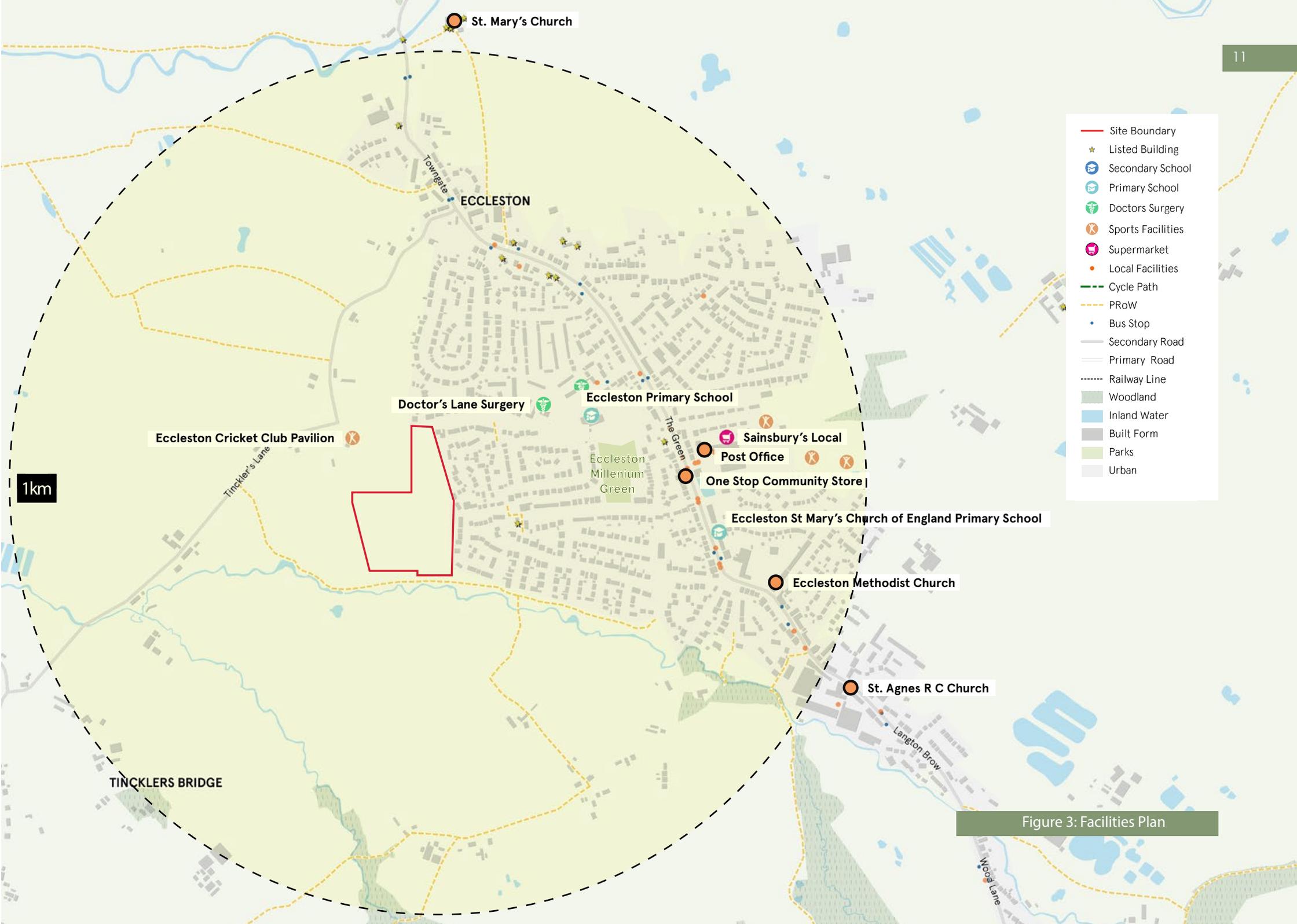


Figure 3: Facilities Plan

## LOCAL CHARACTER

Eccleston has a variety of development types and housing types. These range from traditional large dwellings located along The Towngate and The Green to more modern detached and semi-detached properties.

Several new build estates have characterised the settlement in the mid to late 20th Century including the Hawthornes to the north of the Site and Chaucer Close to the east. House types vary including detached (image 1), semi-detached (image 2) and terracing (image 3) and there are a number of bungalows (image 4) interspersed amongst detached housing. A number of housing loops, crescents and culs-de-sacs also characterise the built-up part of the settlement (image 5).

Housing is generally of brick construction with either slate or tiled roof types (image 6). Houses are often set back from the road with front gardens and have integrated or separate garages to the side (image 7). Many houses have private driveways reducing the need for on street parking (image 8).

It is noted that development at Chaucer Close includes substantial planting to the rear of dwellings, many of which have end gables on to the Site (image 9). There are, therefore, very few properties which overlook the proposed development Site.

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**As proposals for the Site progress, Story Homes is committed to undertaking a more detailed review of the surrounding and the wider urban area to gain a detailed understanding of the urban characteristics to guide future development.**

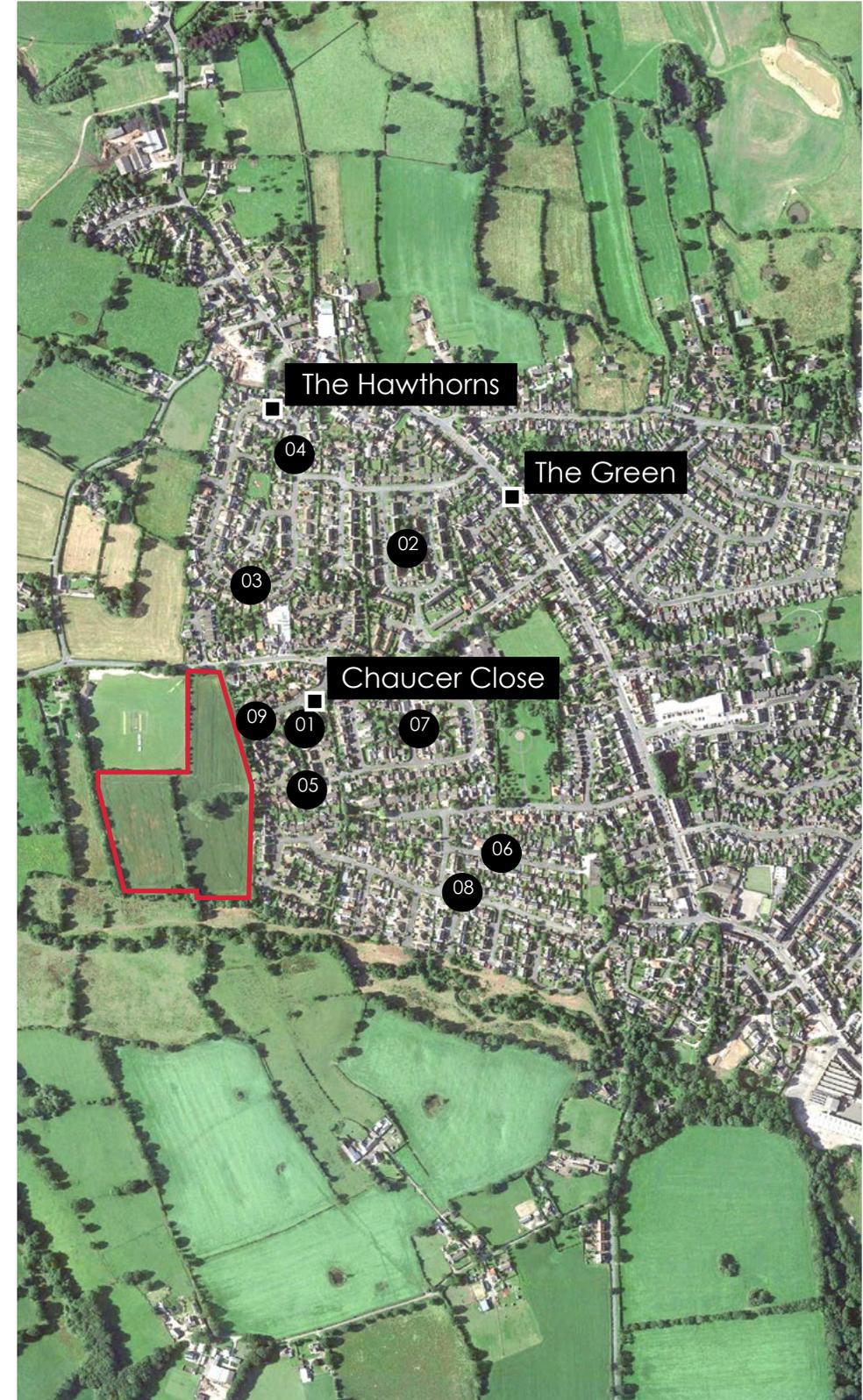




Figure 4: Local Character Assessment

# Green Belt Assessment

## GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

The Site lies immediately to the west of the Eccleston settlement boundary and is currently designated as Green Belt within the adopted Development Plan.

To the north of the Site, outline planning permission was granted in 2022 for the development of up to 80 dwellings (ref. 20/01331/OUTMAJ). Conditions are currently being discharged, and it is anticipated that this neighbouring parcel will come forward for development in the medium term. The Site's southern edge is defined by Syd Brook, which goes on to mark the southern edge of Eccleston's settlement area.

Outline planning permission was obtained in 2022 for the development of up to 80 dwellings to the north of the Site. Conditions are currently being discharged, and it is expected that this parcel is to come forward in the medium term. Syd Brook forms the southern boundary of the Site and also marks the southern edge of Eccleston's settlement area.

In the context of committed residential development to the north and the strong physical boundary to the south, there is scope to promote the Site as a logical and contained infill development. With appropriate and robust evidence, a case could be made for the Site's release from the Green Belt.

Story Homes understands that Chorley Council is in the process of reviewing its Local Plan. As part of this review, the Council will need to identify a new development strategy which delivers new housing over the next 20 years.

Localised Green Belt reviews are an acceptable part of that strategy. Accordingly, Story Homes has undertaken an assessment of the Site against the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt in accordance with Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This is shown in Table 1 below.

Purpose of the Green Belt	Assessment
1. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	The Site is small and contained by the Cricket Club site. It does not fulfil a role in preventing any wider urban sprawl or coalescence. The Site is contained by existing landscape features, Syd Brook and the cricket club.
2. Prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Eccleston is not a densely built up area, nor is it vulnerable to merging with other settlements. The Site does not sit within an area of separation.
3. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The Site is contained on all sides and development of the Site would not lead to any wider erosion of the countryside. It is therefore suitable for development without harming the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
4. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The Site does not lie within a conservation area or its setting, in addition there are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the Site which would be impacted upon
5. Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling or urban / derelict land	This purpose is not relevant as Eccleston does not have any regeneration needs. It is a thriving, successful village with very few derelict, redundant or brownfield sites available, therefore Green Belt land is the only logical solution for new development.





## OVERALL CONCLUSIONS FROM THE GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

National planning policy acknowledges that to fulfil housing requirements, a review of the Green Belt may be necessary.

In the case of Ecclestone and the Chorley District, the lack of brownfield land supply is such that a Green Belt review is fundamental if the Council is to deliver on its housing requirements.

Ecclestone is recognised as a very sustainable settlement with a good range of shops and services, as well as, public transport connectivity. Due to the constrained nature of the settlement, with relatively few brownfield sites available, Green Belt release will be essential. Recent changes to the NPPF and planning practice guidance, have indicated that Councils should review the inclusion of land in the Green Belt where it does not fulfil a strong contribution to the wider Green Belt, as in this case. The Government is clear that the review of the Green Belt is needed to meet the overall housing needs of any borough.

# Site Assessment

This section provides a summary of the initial observations and the findings of preliminary assessment work.

This assessment has been informed by a Highways Appraisal (Curtins) and a landscape and engineering constraints plan which assesses the Site's landscape drainage and utilities requirements.

## LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The Site consists of two fields, which are within agricultural use. The fields are divided by a mature hedgerow, mature trees and a drainage ditch. A further drainage ditch flows along part of the eastern boundary.

Site boundaries are delineated by mature hedgerows, scrub planting and more significant mature trees, providing an enclosed parcel of land.

There is a mature cop of trees located in the middle of the eastern most field. There is also an existing pond located within the cop of trees. The Site is not recognised as having a special landscape quality and is not subject of any landscape designations.

Where possible, all existing landscape features of merit will be retained as part of the proposed development.

## ACCESS

Primary vehicle access to the Site can be provided via Doctors Lane to the north of the Site. A detail access drawing is provided within Appendix A.

## FLOOD RISK

According to the Environment Agency maps, the Site is in Flood Zone 1 which is defined as land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 years annual probability of flooding and is suitable for residential development. Flood zone 3 slightly encroaches onto the southern part of the Site, however this area will be retained as public open space.

## TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE

The Site gently slopes down towards Syd Brook to the south. The proposed development could provide a drainage attenuation pond in the Site's south-eastern corner.

Initial investigations have indicated that Site drainage can be achieved via an appropriately designed Sustainable Urban Drainage System.

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

There are no Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within or immediately adjacent to the Site.

## ECOLOGY

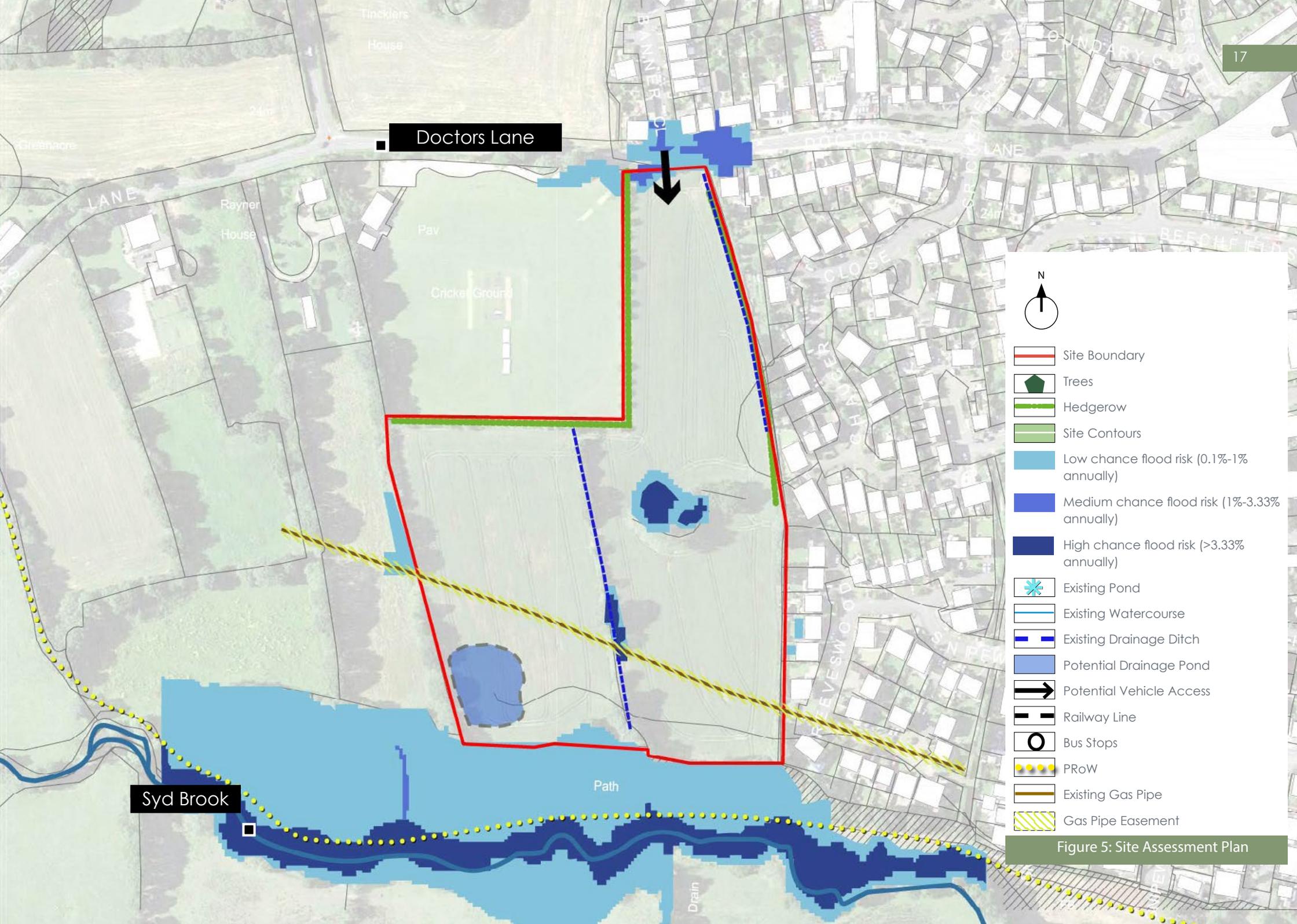
The Site is not subject to any local, regional or international statutory or non-statutory ecology designations.

As noted, the Site includes hedgerow planting and the occasional boundary mature tree. These would be retained as part of the development.

## UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Site includes a combined sewage pipe that runs from east to west across the Site. The proposed development will be required to provide a 3m stand off from the pipe.

All supporting infrastructure such as gas, electricity, broadband and water are within the direct vicinity of the Site and easily accessible. Overall, there are no utilities or infrastructure constraints that would prevent the development of the Site.



Doctors Lane

Syd Brook

Pav

Cricket Ground

Path

Drain



-  Site Boundary
-  Trees
-  Hedgerow
-  Site Contours
-  Low chance flood risk (0.1%-1% annually)
-  Medium chance flood risk (1%-3.33% annually)
-  High chance flood risk (>3.33% annually)
-  Existing Pond
-  Existing Watercourse
-  Existing Drainage Ditch
-  Potential Drainage Pond
-  Potential Vehicle Access
-  Railway Line
-  Bus Stops
-  PRoW
-  Existing Gas Pipe
-  Gas Pipe Easement

Figure 5: Site Assessment Plan

# Design Opportunity

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**Considering the location of the Site and the density of existing residential development, this provides the potential to deliver in the region of up to 90 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per net hectare.**

**The proposed density allows for the creation of a sustainable and balanced residential development, comprising a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures.**

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- 01 Vehicle access to the development is proposed via Doctors Lane.
- 02 The proposed development will overlook the Cricket Club with a suitable stand off from new dwellings and a protective screen fencing along the Site boundary adjacent to the cricket pitch.
- 03 An estate road extends into the Site from Doctors Lane, beyond which is a hierarchy of shared streets and private drives.
- 04 The mature cops of trees and pond located within the centre of the eastern field has been retained within a new village green.
- 05 Existing drainage ditches within the Site have been retained and suitable standoff distances applied. Where possible, these have been accommodated within public open space.
- 06 The Illustrative Masterplan retains the mature hedgerow and mature trees running north south through the Site into an area of public open space which also accommodates a retained drainage ditch.
- 07 New pedestrian footpaths are proposed to join with the surrounding residential areas and potentially the PRow that runs alongside Syd Brook to the south of the Site.
- 08 Use of best practice design principles, will provide outward facing housing frontages which securely enclose rear garden spaces and achieve natural surveillance of streets and public green space.
- 09 Provision of a strong landscaped buffer to the southern Site boundary to accommodate drainage features, play spaces and new planting.
- 10 Landscape themes will define character areas and routes within the development including street trees, grassed verges and hedgerows.





Doctors Lane

Eccleston Cricket Club

Development Area: c.2.73ha  
Dwelling: c.85  
Development Density: c.30dph

Retained Tree Copse

-  Potential Vehicle Access (see Appendix)
  -  Potential SuDS
  -  Potential Pedestrian/ Cycle Route
  -  Potential Play Area
- Figure 6: Illustrative Masterplan

# Summary and Conclusion

## SUMMARY

Eccleston is a thriving and popular Local Service Centre with a very good range of shops, services and local facilities, including a health centre and schools. It also benefits from regular bus services.

The Village has grown considerably from its historic settlement pattern with a number of new housing estates added at various times during the late 20th Century.

The Site is located between Chancer Close and Eccleston Cricket Club and represents a contained site which is the most logical next chapter in the continued growth of this settlement. The Development Framework has been prepared on behalf of Story Homes who are promoting the Site as part of the next Chorley Local Plan.

In addition to the assessment of local services, many of which are within walking distance to the Site, the document includes an analysis of the development of the Site in design terms. The broad design strategy set out in this document suggests an indicative capacity of up to 90 dwellings, constructed of a density of around 30 dwellings per hectare.

The scheme will bring with it several economic, social and environmental benefits, associated with the development.

These include:

- Construction of new homes will create new jobs and support local trades;
- Story Homes employs local people and creates apprenticeships as part of its strategy;
- New homes will bring in more economically active people into Eccleston, including local spending power and revenues;
- Chorley Council will benefit from the New Homes Bonus, enabling the Council to further deliver on its local capital expenditure programme;
- New market and affordable homes will be constructed, adding to the supply of homes for local people;
- A variety of house types will be built, adding to the variety in the local housing stock;
- The scheme will include child play facilities and access to green spaces;
- Opportunity to improve connectivity to the existing PRow to the south of the Site;
- Where possible, the scheme will retain and enhance the existing mature hedgerows and trees. A management plan will ensure better maintenance of existing landscape features; and
- The drainage pond and SuDS offers the opportunity create new habitat as part of net ecological gains.





## CONCLUSION

Land south of Doctors Lane, Eccleston represents a sustainable location for new homes in one of the most sustainable areas in the Chorley District.

The Site has been carefully assessed to fully understand existing features and the design provided in the illustrative masterplan reflects local character.

The scheme allows for a suitable separation between existing dwellings at Chaucer Close/ Reeveswood which back on to the Site, and existing and new landscape can provide a substantial buffer.

Overall, the Site is largely contained and does not fulfil the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt. It, therefore, represents a suitable Site for development as part of the emerging Local Plan review.

Story Homes is committed to progressing the emerging Illustrative Masterplan towards a high quality residential development that responds to local housing needs.

# Appendix A - Site Access Plan



Appendix A: Primary Access off Doctors Lane



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AR152684

Revision	B
Author	EF
Checked By	JB
Authorised By	JB
Issue Date	APRIL 2025