

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **Stratford On Avon Area Committee**

Date of Committee **23 January 2008**

Report Title **Review of County Council Land and Property - Southam (and its surrounding rural area)**

Summary The Estates Group within Property is undertaking a series of reviews to cover all the property holdings of Warwickshire County Council. Liaison has taken place with each of Warwickshire County Council's property holding services, together with other public service landowners, to ensure that we optimise the use and efficiency of our collective property holdings. Southam and area is the second review and this report sets out the findings in respect of Warwickshire County Council's properties and details the results of our discussions with partners.

For further information please contact:

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) Cllr Stevens attended the review meeting whilst Cllrs Appleton and Booth were consultees
- Other Elected Members Cllr Atkinson has been provided with a copy of the report.....
- Cabinet Member Cllr Alan Cockburn

- Chief Executive
- Legal Barry Jukes
- Finance Graham Shaw
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils Stratford District Council have been involved with the review process
- Health Authority A representative of the PCT was invited to the meeting and was consulted on the findings of the meeting
- Police A representative of the Warwickshire Police Authority was invited to the meeting and consulted on the findings of the meeting
- Other Bodies/Individuals A member of the Southam Town Council has been involved with the process and all other parish councils have been consulted on the process.

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Stratford On Avon Area Committee - 23 January 2008.

**Review of County Council Land and Property - Southam (and its
Surrounding Rural Area)**

Report of the Strategic Director of Resources

Recommendation

Members are requested to approve the findings of the review

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council has begun a review of all its property on an area by area basis. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment Use of Resources Category requires that 'the Council integrates the management of its asset base with others, for example, third sector and local public agencies to identify opportunities for shared use of property and to deliver seamless cross sector, cross agency and community based services to users.'
- 1.2 Kenilworth and surrounds was the first area to be reviewed which produced a number of issues presently being explored, including the proposed public service centre and some potentially surplus accommodation through the rationalisation of leased space. Southam (and its surrounding rural area) is the second review and, as with Kenilworth, there are on-going discussions in respect of a proposed public service centre. Plans showing the location of the Warwickshire County Council portfolio are attached as **Appendix B**.
- 1.3 The County as a whole has been divided into 15 areas and it is proposed that the process rotates around the District and Borough Councils, each review taking 2 – 3 months. It is anticipated that the Shipston and area review will take place toward the end of 2008, Alcester and area in Summer 2009, Wellesbourne and Stratford towards the end of 2009/ start of 2010, and finally Studley and Henley in Arden should take place in Spring 2010, all of these falling within the remit of this Committee.
- 1.4 The purpose of the review is to explore the potential to:-
 - Optimise utilisation of assets in terms of service benefits and financial return
 - Identify property for additional service provision
 - Promote the shared use of assets with partners
 - Replace existing poorly performing assets with new purpose built, efficient, sustainable facilities
 - Improve customer access
 - Exploit the potential of e-government

- Reduce overall operational costs
- Release assets from their current use, either for an alternative use by the council, for letting to obtain a rental income, and/or disposal to obtain capital receipts
- Reduce maintenance backlog by disposing of assets in a poor state of repair, and possibly use some of the receipts to address maintenance issues with the retained assets
- Identify the potential for the transfer of an asset to the community.

2 The Process

- 2.1 A meeting was held in early November involving Warwickshire County Council service representatives and other significant public sector stakeholders with property interests in Southam and the surrounding area were invited. Unfortunately, there were a significant number of last minute apologies, although many of those unable to attend forwarded information including their requirements to the group to aid discussion.
- 2.2 Each party was supplied with a schedule of Warwickshire County Council assets and external stakeholders were asked to supply data for their property. A plan was prepared with the information that had been provided and following the meeting more accurate data was requested from other partners for future information and reference. Warwickshire County Council service representatives were asked to review the latest suitability assessment for their property, and benchmark data on utility costs was collated and compared against available data.
- 2.3 Local members were also sent this schedule and asked to comment on any properties within their area.
- 2.4 At the meeting each representative was asked to talk about their service, its future direction, their existing assets and requirements. There was a useful exchange of information and a few potential opportunities to explore further.
- 2.5 Following the meeting, notes were prepared and circulated for approval by the attendees. This report has been prepared to include comments on each Warwickshire County Council property within the review area. Southam local members have been consulted on its contents and have been given the opportunity to comment and discuss the findings prior to its formal presentation to this Committee. A flowchart showing the process is attached as **Appendix C**.

3. The Properties

As a result of this review, each property has been categorised as follows:-

- A There is clear potential for sharing space or disposal. Agree actions to pursue.
- B There may be some potential for rationalisation but not in the short term. This property needs regular review
- C There is no obvious potential for change but there are certain issues to pursue in respect of running costs, energy efficiency, or improving suitability. Agree actions.
- D No action is required.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The Property Review for Southam (and its surrounding rural area) has been a beneficial exercise for both Warwickshire County Council and other stakeholders. The stakeholders' meeting resulted in open and frank discussions taking place about property issues and has identified some issues both in respect of procedures, accommodation requirements and the availability of accommodation which can be investigated further. The findings of the review and the actions identified are presented in **Appendix A**.

4.2 Southam (and its surrounding rural area) has relatively few Council properties and as such it did not produce many opportunities for reviewing particular assets. However, the following opportunities have been identified:-

- **Southam Fire Station** : there is a community room sometimes available.
- **Southam library** : there is a community room sometimes available.
- **Harbury Library** : this part time library premises is under-used and could be shared with other community based groups.
- **Proposed Public Service Centre at Southam** : there is a need to further develop the feasibility study and plans for this with the Warwickshire Police Authority and Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- **The Grange, Southam**, (belonging to the District Council) There is a possibility that this will be sold which will result in the requirement of a small amount of space for some Warwickshire County Council offices.
- There is a requirement for storage in both the long and short term, and display in the long-term for the Cardall collection, a local history collection of artefacts, photographs and costumes.
- Groups with future space requirements should make enquiries of the Graham Adams centre
- **7 High Street, Southam** (Adult Health Premises) There is a possibility of a room at on the first floor but this is not suitable for public use.
- There is a need to identify the possibilities for services sharing the use of mobile facilities eg, library, youth and education groups. etc
- Youth Service has a requirement for accommodation in the villages
- The Council of Voluntary Services reported a requirement for offices for one of their groups

These issues are to be addressed as stated in the Action points in **Appendix A**. Members will be kept informed once further progress has been made.

4.3 The next review will be of the Rugby area which will be reported to the Rugby Area Committee. Although the whole review process should be completed by Spring 2010 there is likely to be a number of specific property initiatives to pursue, some of which will take longer to complete.

DAVID CLARKE
Strategic Director of
Resources

Shire Hall
Warwick

14 November 2007

Southam (and its surrounding rural area)

- A. There is a clear potential for sharing space or disposal. Agree actions to pursue
- B. There may be some potential for rationalisation but not in the short term. This property needs regular review
- C. There is no obvious potential for change but there are certain issues to pursue in respect of running costs, energy efficiency, or improving suitability. Agree actions.
- D. No action is required.

	Property	Comments
1.	Burton Dasset Country Park Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing numbers of visitors each year. • Good suitability study • DDA survey has been carried out D - No action
2.	Ufton Fields Nature Reserve Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing numbers of visitors each year. D – No action
3.	The Dasset C E Primary School – Fenny Compton. Harbury C.E Primary School- Harbury Long Itchington C E primary School St Lawrence CE Primary School, Napton St James CE Primary School, Southam St Mary’s Catholic Primary School, Southam Stockton Primary School Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These schools have approximately 8% free space which is the norm. • Utility costs have been compared with the benchmark average and all are lower, some substantially. • Long itchington School is also partly used as a community centre and let to the Parish council D - No action

	Property	Comments
4.	Southam Primary School Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility costs are lower than the benchmark average • This school has a higher vacancy rate than the other schools but does not at this time have any spare accommodation <p>B - keep under review (CYPF and PS)</p>
5.	Fenny Compton and Southam Fire Stations Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility costs are lower than the benchmark average • Good suitability • There is a room at the Southam station which could be used occasionally for community use (details of contacts to be held locally) <p>B – Keep under review (CP)</p>
6.	Harbury Branch Library Freehold and leasehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCC and the Wight School Trustees own parts of the site and WCC lease part from the Trustees – can be terminated on 3 months notice • Property also used for a playgroup • Property is under-used and its use could be shared with community users. <p>B – Keep under review (AHCS and PS)</p>
7.	Pineham Farm, Harbury Whitegate Farm, Harbury Land at Grange Farm, Long Itchington Carpenters Farm, Warmington Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These smallholdings are let on secure tenancies under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986. • Environment and conservation issues are being dealt with on a site by site basis by E and E <p>D - No Action</p>
8.	Harbury Parish Council Allotments Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council owned allotments leased to the Parish Council . <p>D – No action</p>

	Property	Comments
9.	Offices at the Grange Leasehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grange is owned by Stratford on Avon District Council and its future is uncertain. • AHCS have a short term lease of a small area. • The Registrars also have a small office. Both these uses could be re-located . • Potential revenue saving • Satisfactory suitability study <p>B – Keep under review (PS)</p>
10.	Southam College Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful school • 6th form and adult education provision • New English and Maths block • Application being made to Sport England for All Weather Pitch which could be made available for community use. <p>D – No action</p>
11.	Southam Library Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory suitability and DDA survey • Limited refurbishment has taken place • There is a room occasionally available for community use (details of contacts to be held locally). • The utility costs are low compared against the national average benchmark • Joint One Stop Shop will be in place by spring 2008, but improved accommodation for this will be considered as part of the proposed public service centre, together with some office accommodation for WCC uses and a small police station.

		B – Keep under review. (AHCS and PS)
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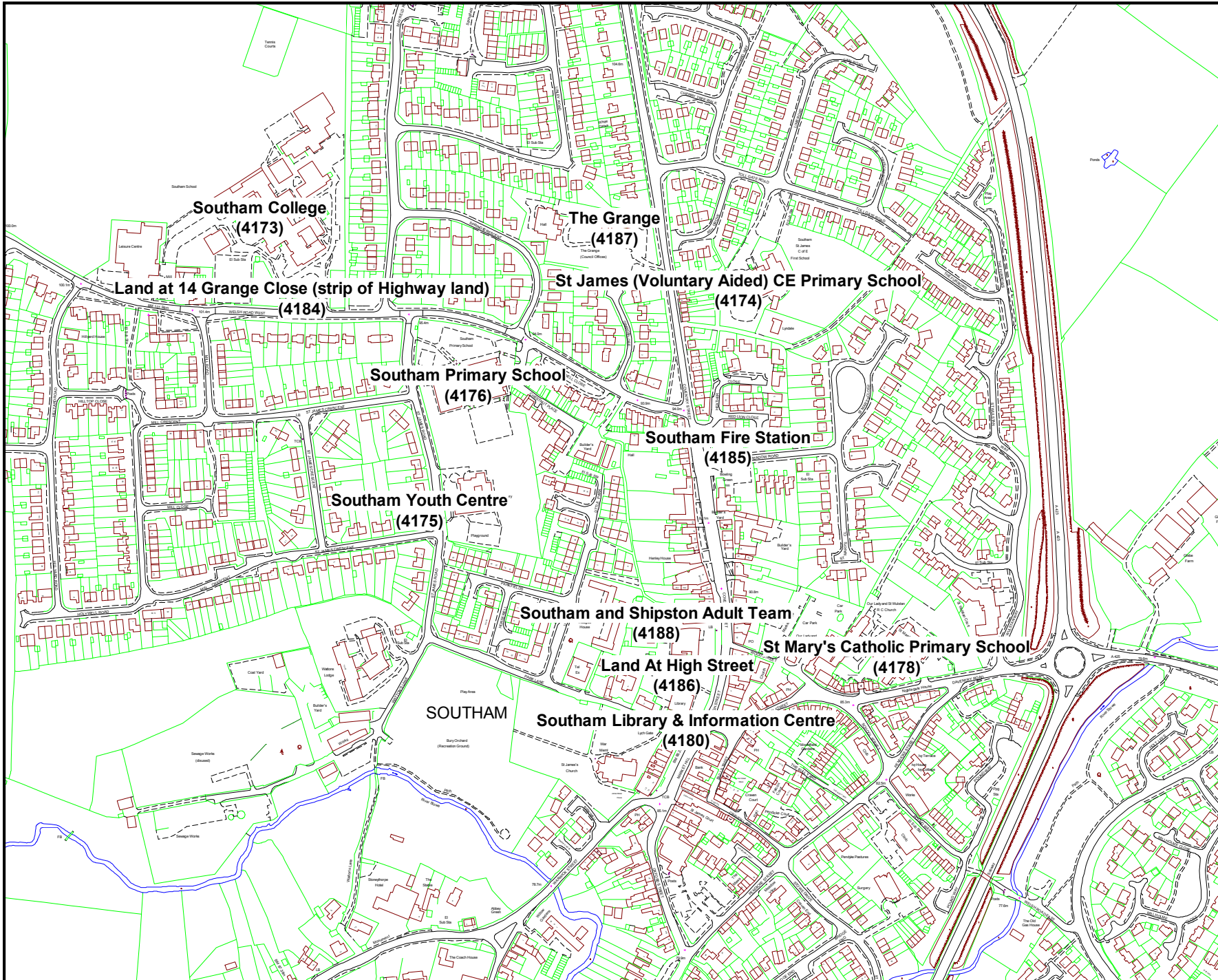
	Property	Comments
12.	7 High Street, and Land at High Street, Southam Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former police house • Now a social Education Centre for people with learning difficulties. • Government encourages small local units to access community resources • first floor room sometimes available WCC use or storage but not suitable for community use • Possibility of inclusion within proposed public service centre • Land at High Street historically held by AHCS but could be included in the land availability for the proposed public service centre <p>B – keep under review (AHCS and PS)</p>
13.	Southam Youth Centre/Graham Adams Centre Leasehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lease in respect of the Youth club in this property. • Possible requirement for other village based premises to provide further youth services • There is also a contract in respect of an Early Years Children's Centre, but the agreement does not appear to be property based, ie it is a service based agreement. <p>D - No action</p>

	Property	Comments
14.	Stockton Household Waste Facility Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved site, now open 7 days due to temporary closure of Rugby site Will return to 2 days use in Spring 2008. Improvement works have been undertaken which have upgraded site from poor to satisfactory. Parish Council commented that a separate drive in and out facility would improve the facility and sunken containers would make access easier; however, this would be subject to budget availability and its prioritisation in a programme of works. <p>D – No action</p>
15.	Stockton School House Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to a service tenancy <p>D - No action</p>
16.	Stockton Former Landfill site Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land still being vented for gases. Not suitable for anything but agricultural and open space Poor quality of land Development would be very difficult to achieve and costly. <p>D - No action</p>
17.	Stockton Cutting Nature Reserve Freehold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land has been restored and landscaped. <p>D - No actions</p>

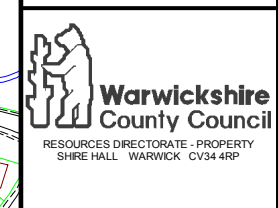
Appendix A

Southam Area Key to Map

4028 Temple Herdewyke Primary School
4031 Burton Dassett-Country Hills Park
4035 Bishops Itchington Primary School
4063 Chesterton Windmill
4073 The Dassett C.E. Primary School
4074 Fenny Compton Fire Station
4076 Land Adjacent to Former Fenny Compton Salt Compound
4080 Pineham Farm
4081 Harbury Parish Council Allotments
4082 Whitegates Farm
4083 Harbury C.E Primary School
4084 Harbury Library & Information Centre
4127 Land at Grange Farm
4128 Former Long Itchington C.E. First School
4129 Long Itchington C.E. Primary School
4140 Northfields Farm
4173 Southam College
4174 St. James CE Primary School
4175 Southam Youth Centre
4176 Southam Primary School
4178 St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
4180 Southam Library & Information Centre
4185 Southam Fire Station
4186 Land at High Street
4187 The Grange- Leased office accommodation
4188 Southam & Shipston Adult Team- office accommodation
4206 Stockton Primary School
4207 Stockton School House
4208 Stockton Household Waste Facility
4209 Stockton Former Landfill Site
4210 Stockton Cutting Local Nature Reserve
4211 Stockton Cutting
4296 Ufton Fields Nature Reserve
4301 Carpenter's Farm
4366 St Lawrence CE Primary School



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Title: Southam Area 1

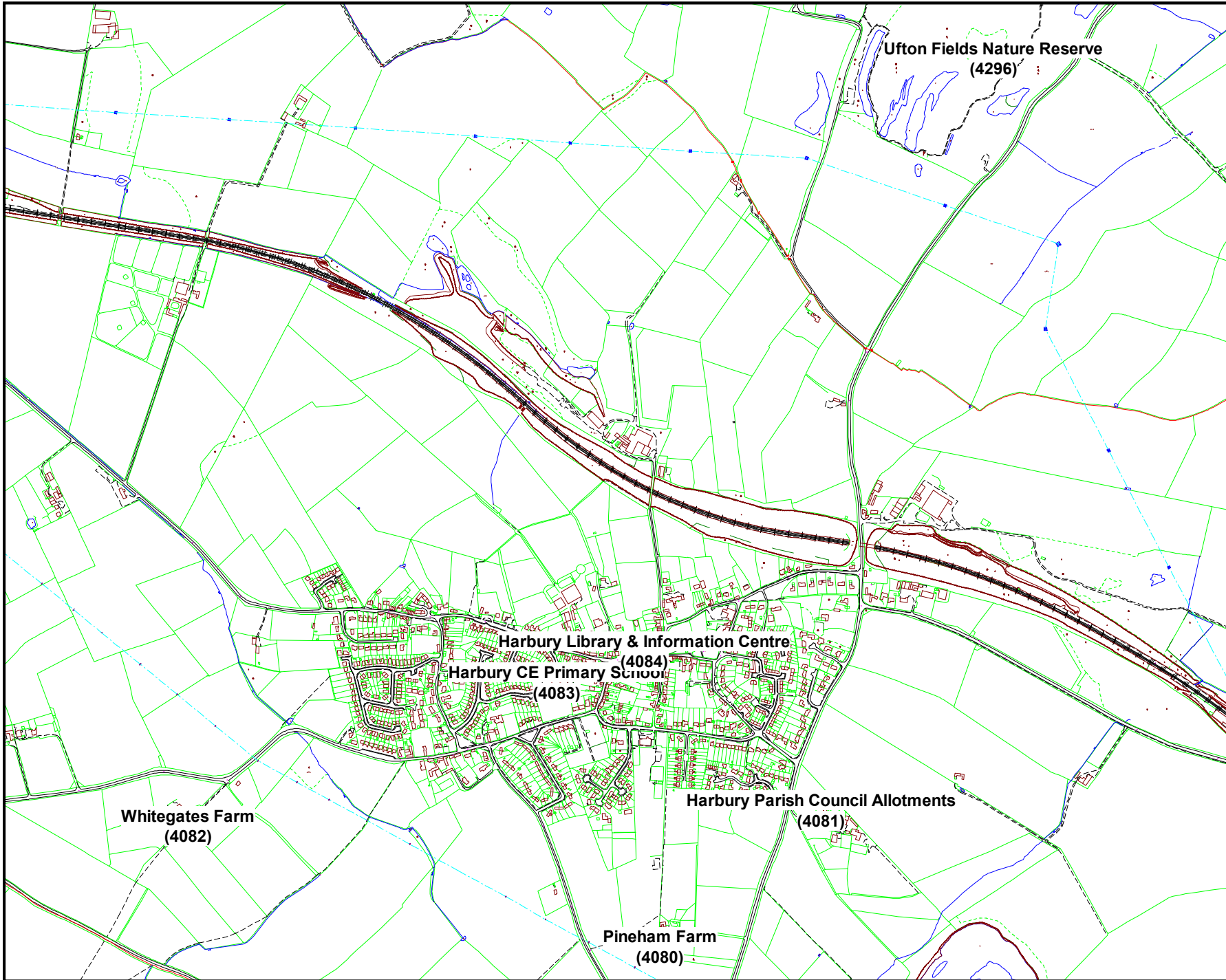
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Appendix B



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Title:
Southam
Area 2

Scale: 1:13000

Grid Ref: 437243,260382

Operator: MDRU

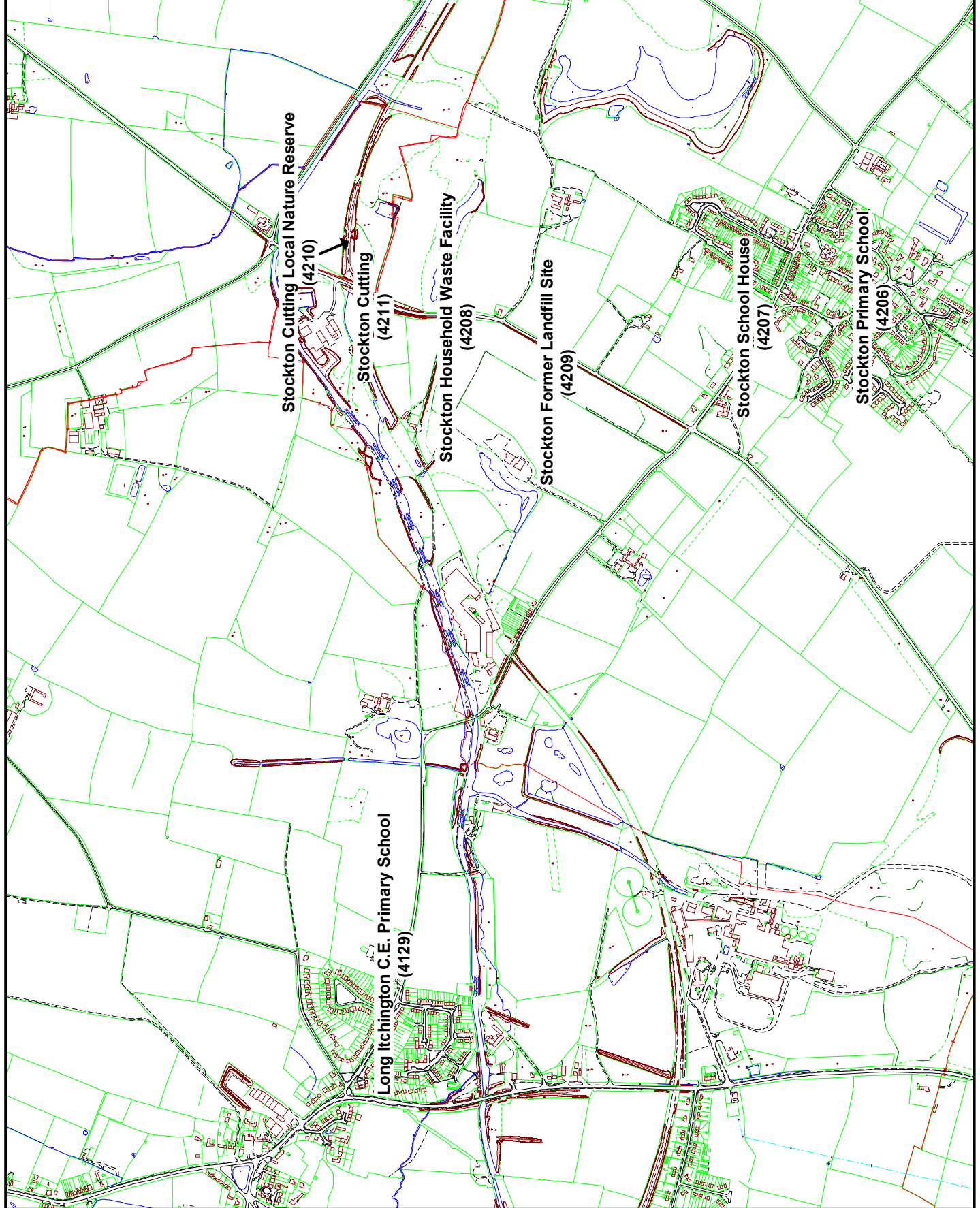
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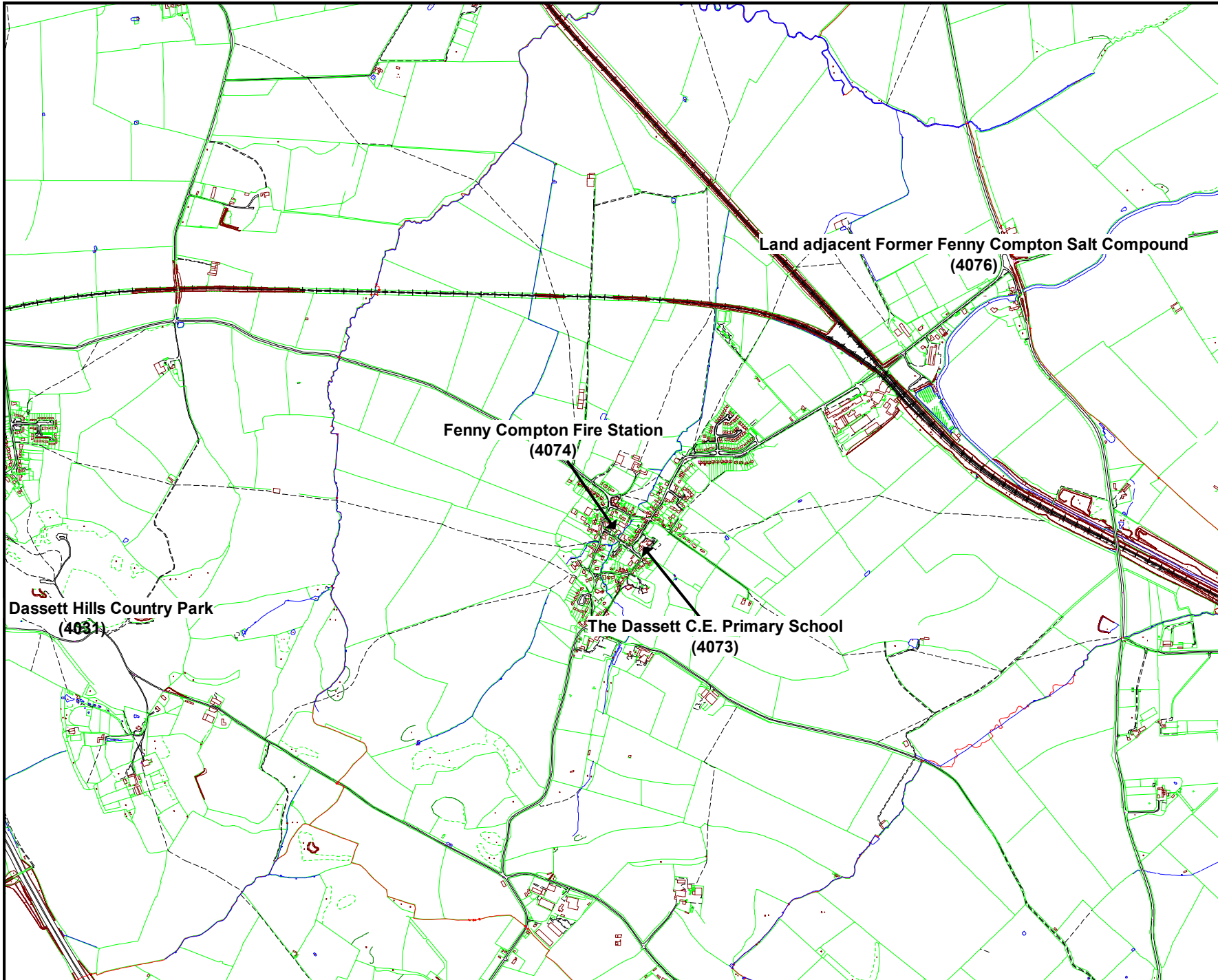
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Southam
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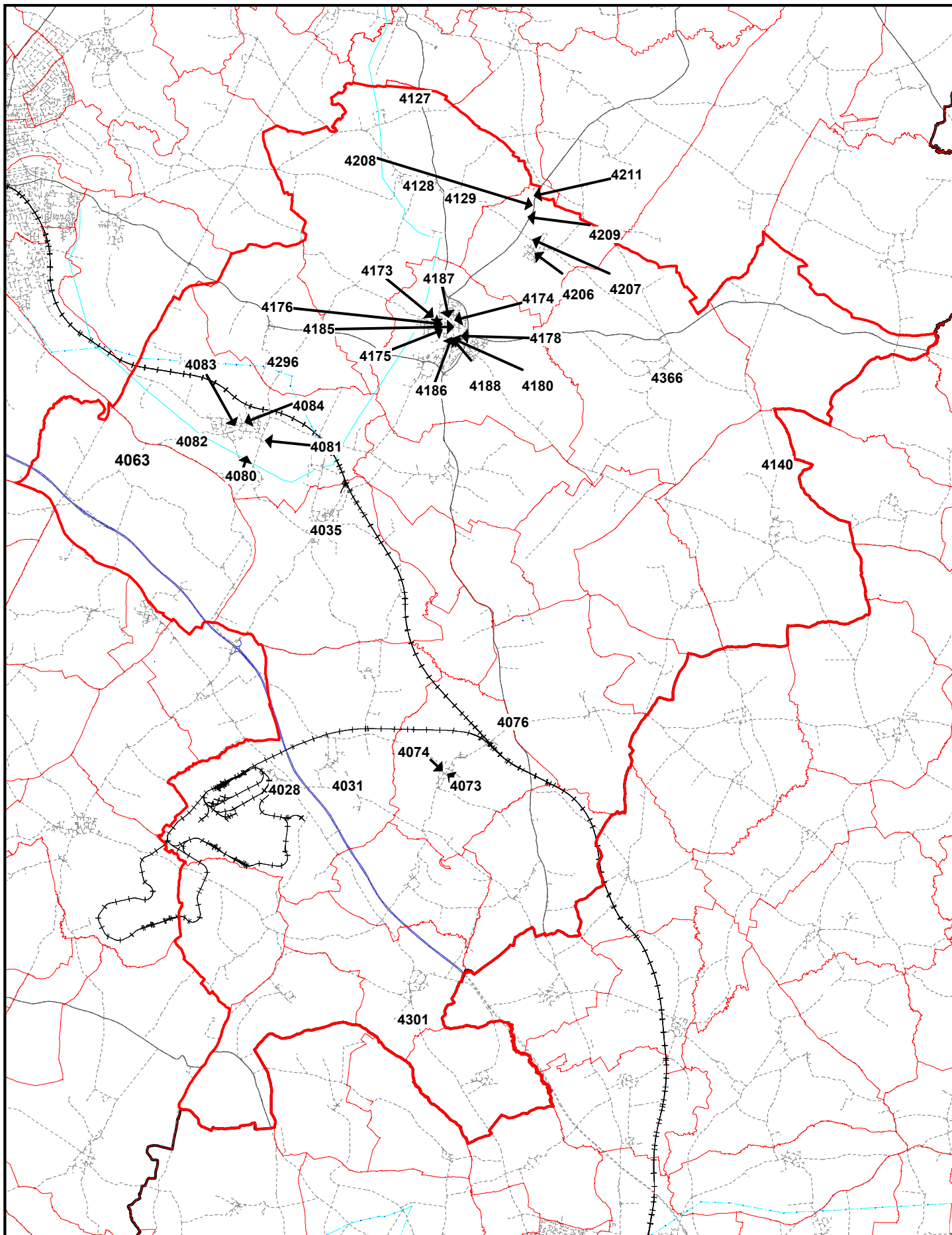


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Area 4

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Title:
Southam
WCC Properties

Scale:	1:110000
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Operator:	MDRU
Date:	30/11/2007



AREA PROPERTY REVIEW PROCESS

