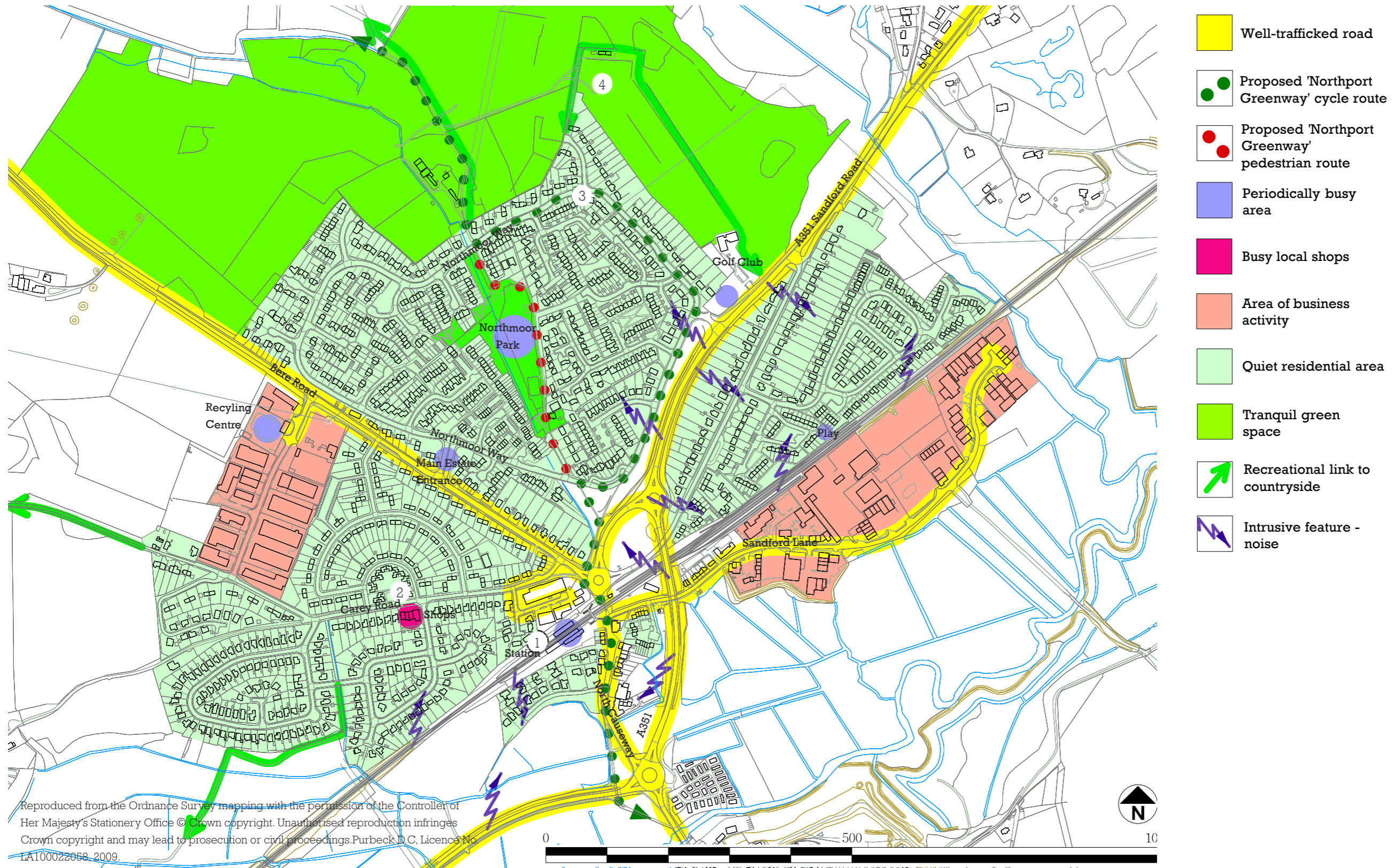




North Wareham Settlement analysis

03.6

Tranquillity and vitality



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1. The railway station generates activity and provides something of a focal point for the settlement.



2. The shops on Carey Road are busy, but isolated and fail to provide an effective focal point for North Wareham.



3. Much of North Wareham comprises quiet residential estates, but these feel rather empty and lack interest.



4. The golf course is well used but its large size and high quality setting gives it a tranquil atmosphere.

3.6.1 An analysis of the areas of tranquillity and vitality of North Wareham reveals a lack of vibrancy and large areas of quiet residential streets.

3.6.2 The main focus of activity is the railway station, which generates comings and goings throughout the day. The station, together with the bus stops just over the level crossing, forms a mini-interchange and provides something of a focal point for the settlement in terms of activity. However, the railway also generates some intrusive noise. Sandford Lane industrial estate also generates through traffic in this area.

3.6.3 The local shops on Carey Road are well used and provide another source of activity, but the parade of shops is small and isolated and fails to generate a critical mass vibrancy and interest one might expect at the main shopping area for the settlement.

3.6.4 The settlement is dissected by several busy roads which create movement and energy but which mostly help traffic pass through the settlement rather than bring people into it. The A351 is a busy bypass and traffic noise is intrusive into the areas either side of this road, including the water meadows and footpath to the south of the settlement.

3.6.5 Bere Road is also a busy road connecting to the north-west. Where it joins the A351 access ramp at the Bere Road roundabout (just north of the station) this area experiences busy vehicle movements and is a hostile pedestrian environment, particularly for those walking between the station and the Northmoor estate.

3.6.6 The majority of the settlement comprises relatively quiet residential estates. These large single use areas are designed around a series of loop roads and cul-de-sacs. This means that they do not generate through movements. Consequently they are quiet neighbourhoods but their environment feels somewhat sterile and empty.

3.6.7 Northmoor Park is both an attractive green space and a focus of activity in the centre of the settlement. It is the only significant green space for recreational activity and as such is well used.

3.6.8 North Wareham is surrounded by high quality countryside but access to this land is very limited. The path from the south-west edge of the town connects to a footpath route but its quality is compromised by traffic noise from the bypass. Another short path on the north-east side of the settlement takes short loop through part of the golf course but does not connect to the wider countryside.

3.6.9 There are currently proposals to create another route, known as the Greenway, between the golf course and Wareham Forest. This would also pass through the settlement via the railway station and continue on to old Wareham. This should help redress the imbalance between the proximity of the settlement to the countryside and the very limited public access currently available.

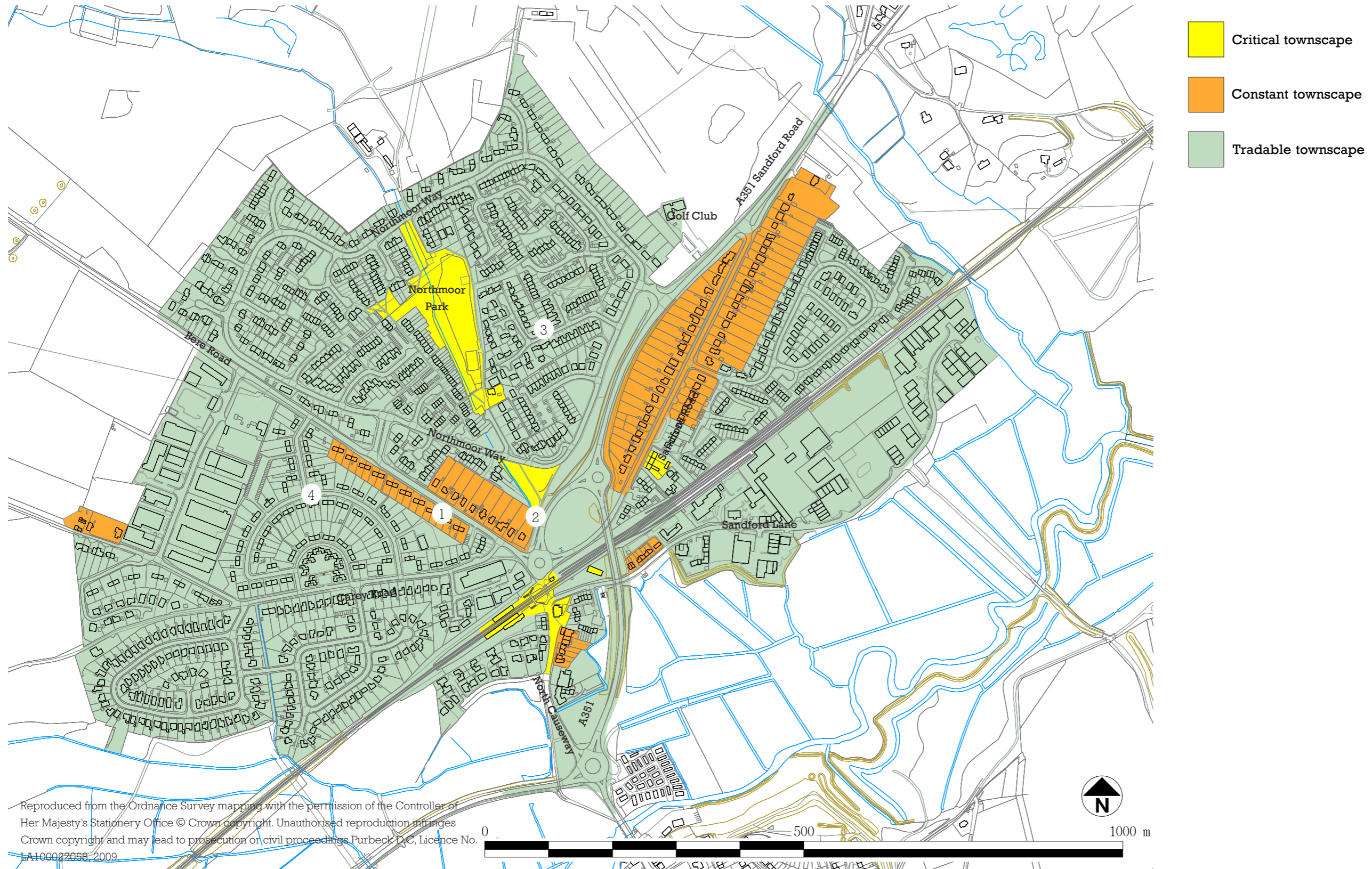
3.6.10 The golf course wraps around the northern side of the settlement and generates a significant amount of activity. However, the openness of the landscape, views to the wider countryside and the dispersed nature of the users of the course is such that this area is the most tranquil part of the settlement in terms of landscape setting and peacefulness.

KEY POINTS

- The railway is the principal generator of vibrancy and activity within the settlement;
- Local shops are well used but too small to generate the vitality of a town centre location;
- Traffic noise from the bypass is intrusive into adjoining areas of the settlement and countryside;
- Most of the settlement consists of quiet residential roads;
- Northmoor Park can be both a quiet place and an area of activity and vitality;
- Vegetation within and around the industrial estates means that they are relatively discrete in the wider landscape;
- Existing access to the surrounding countryside is currently very limited;
- The golf course provides a tranquil edge to the northern part of the settlement with some public access.



North Wareham Settlement analysis 03.7 Townscape quality





1. The skyline created by the housing along Bere Road forms one of the more memorable street-scenes in the settlement.



2. The main entrance to the settlement is via the Bere Road roundabout. It provides little sense of place or arrival.



3. Many residential areas have garaging and parking directly addressing the street. This is unsightly and forms negative areas of townscape.



4. Much of the settlement comprises pleasant housing estates of neutral quality architecture and interest.

3.7.1 The townscape quality of North Wareham has been graded against the following criteria:

Critical: Those elements of the urban environment which are irreplaceable but vulnerable to damage or loss – they should remain unchanged or virtually unchanged. (Typically those elements which hold historic significance and vernacular distinctiveness, which play an essential role in terms of local identity).

Constant: Those elements which are important for their individual value or for their contribution to a wider whole – some changes may be acceptable and sustainable if the overall character is maintained. (Typically elements of lesser historic significance holding varying degrees of vernacular distinctiveness but nonetheless play a role in providing local identity).

Tradeable: Those elements which could potentially be sacrificed in return for other benefits. (Typically developments of more commonplace type or those which fit poorly into their context).

3.7.2 Critical

The settlement's areas of critical townscape relate primarily to its open spaces rather than the built environment, although a few buildings are individually important.

The area south of the station represents the earliest development in the settlement and includes the buildings of the most architectural interest, notably the station building and the signal box. Other railway buildings such as the various workers cottages nearby are also of interest. Some of these enclose the space south of the Railway Hotel which is an important urban space of some character, which is lacking elsewhere in the settlement. The buildings and space have an organic quality and combine to create a sense of history and place.

Northmoor Park is an important space of some quality. While, most houses turn their back on the park it remains an attractive location and resource.

The wooded triangle between the Bere Road roundabout and Northmoor Way provides a positive transition between these two areas and is an attractive informal space in an otherwise largely built up area.

3.7.3 Constant

A number of locations represent constant townscape and are somewhat more distinctive, with greater

architectural character than the tradable parts of the settlement. These are the areas of ribbon development along Sandford Road and Bere Road. In addition, the staggered line of early Council houses along Bere Road, with their prominent chimneys which appear to march up the hill, are one of the town's more memorable street-scenes.

In addition, smaller groups of buildings are also located elsewhere which have a collective value that contributes favourably to the quality of the townscape. However, given North Wareham's essentially modern history the amount of constant townscape is relatively small.

3.7.4 Tradable

The majority of the settlement's residential estates are of tradable character being of neither architectural nor historic interest. The large estates are generally homogenous in character and appearance.

The garage courts and parking areas are significant features of these areas. Many are tucked away discretely, although others face the street and the quality of the environment in these places is poor. In addition, many of the alleyways are narrow and feel unwelcoming. The presence of electricity pylons across the northern half of the settlement is also a negative feature of this area.

The industrial estates appear functional and are of commonplace design. However, their siting, together with boundary planting means they are not easily seen in the wider landscape.

The weakest area of North Wareham's townscape is situated around the Bere Road roundabout which is effectively the principal entrance point to the settlement. It is dominated by the road and roundabout, and lacks any sense of having arrived at a 'place'.

KEY POINTS

- There are few critical areas, and those which are present relate primarily to early railway development and important spaces, rather than the built environment;
- Areas of constant townscape follow those areas of the settlements early residential growth, being of more distinctive architectural character than later estates;
- The majority quality of North Wareham's townscape is tradable in character.