

DEADLINE 4 SUBMISSION – JONATHAN RUSH OF BROWN & CO – AGENT FOR MR JAMES ALSTON  
 (the ‘respondent’)  
 SUMMARY OF POINTS MADE ORALLY DURING HEARINGS AND RESPONSES TO DEADLINE 3  
 RR - 059

**Background Clarification**

1. For clarification it is noted that Messrs Alston of Honingham Thorpe Farms are not immediate family of the respondent Mr Neil Alston. Assessments of routing to and from their operation base at Colton to Mr Neil Alston’s properties should not be considered when designing the scheme as they do not have a long-term relationship with the respondent’s property
2. James Alston is the chosen respondent as he holds shareholder, director and partnership roles within the collective business owned by the Alston family, headed by Ian Alston. These include, and are not limited to, Alston Farms Ltd, Honingham Farms Ltd, William Young (Dereham) Ltd, Ebony Holdings Ltd, Food Enterprise Park Ltd and Honingham Thorpe Farms (partnership).
3. The freehold ownership is split into multiple titles, all of which fall under the management and occupation of Honingham Thorpe Farms.
4. The business also farms a considerable area in the locality on long- and short-term farming contracts, however this is a matter of business interference for which compensation can be sought, whereas the matter at hand here is the impact of the A47 on the freehold interests.
5. The properties are shown on the Overview Plan attached to this document as green and purple blocks.
6. The Colton base of operations for all the Alston’s enterprises is at Honingham Thorpe, at the centre of the Green filled area. This area is approximately 680ha.
7. The Colton based property is primarily used for cereal, vegetable, root crop, pulses, legumes, and salad production. There are small areas of woodland and grass. Within the primary farmstead is a significant business park.
8. The Ringland Estate base of operations is shown as the yellow circle on the Local Access Plan attached to this document. The Ringland Estate is shown purple on the plans and extends to circa 460ha.
9. The Ringland Estate is also primarily used for cereal, vegetable, root crop, pulses, legumes, and salad production, but there is a considerable area of upland grass and lowland marsh grazing through the river valley. These parts of the farm are grazed with sheep and beef cattle. Parts of the arable land are utilised for high welfare outdoor pig breeding and farrowing for the UK’s largest independent pork producer.

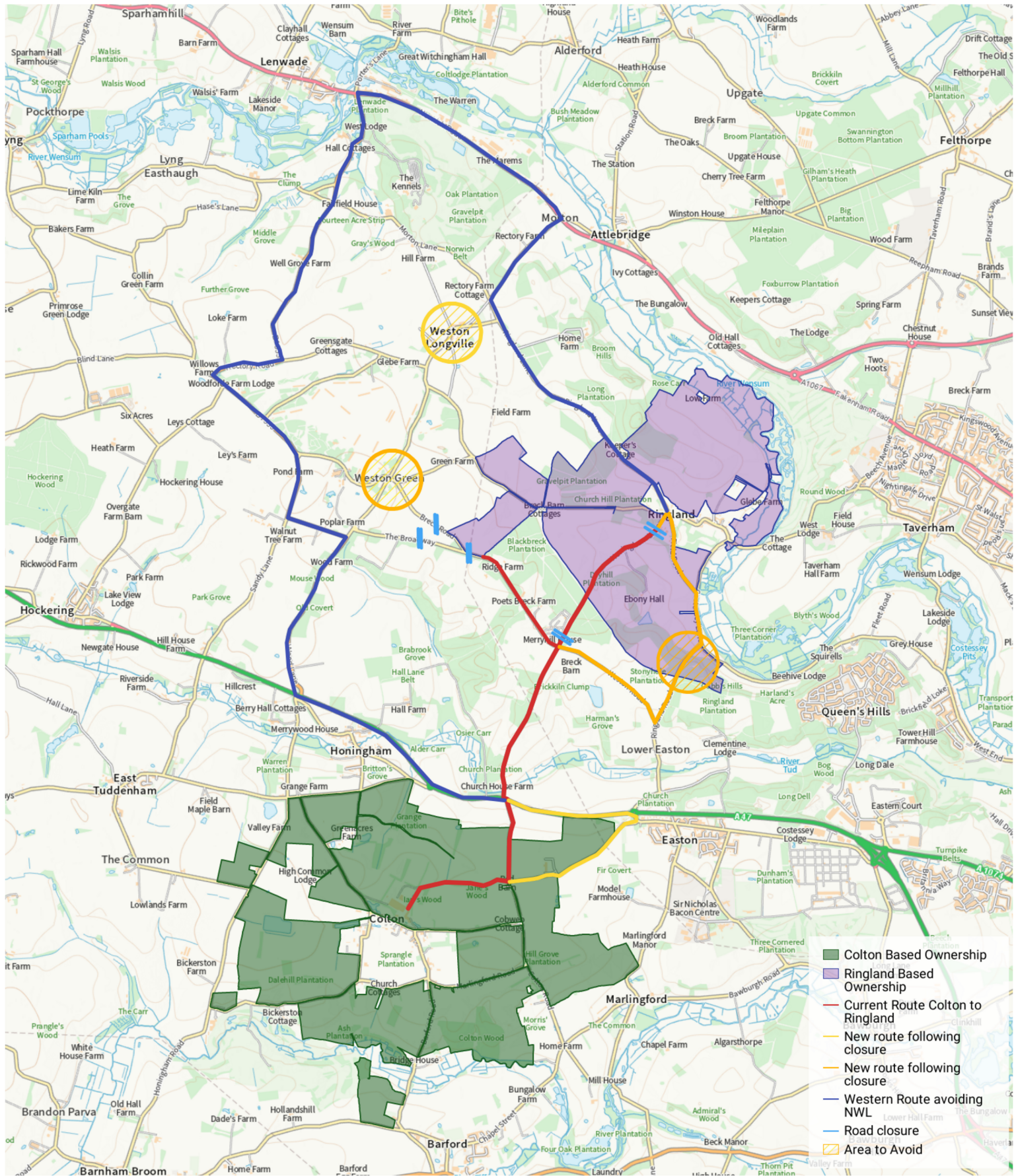
**Road Issues**

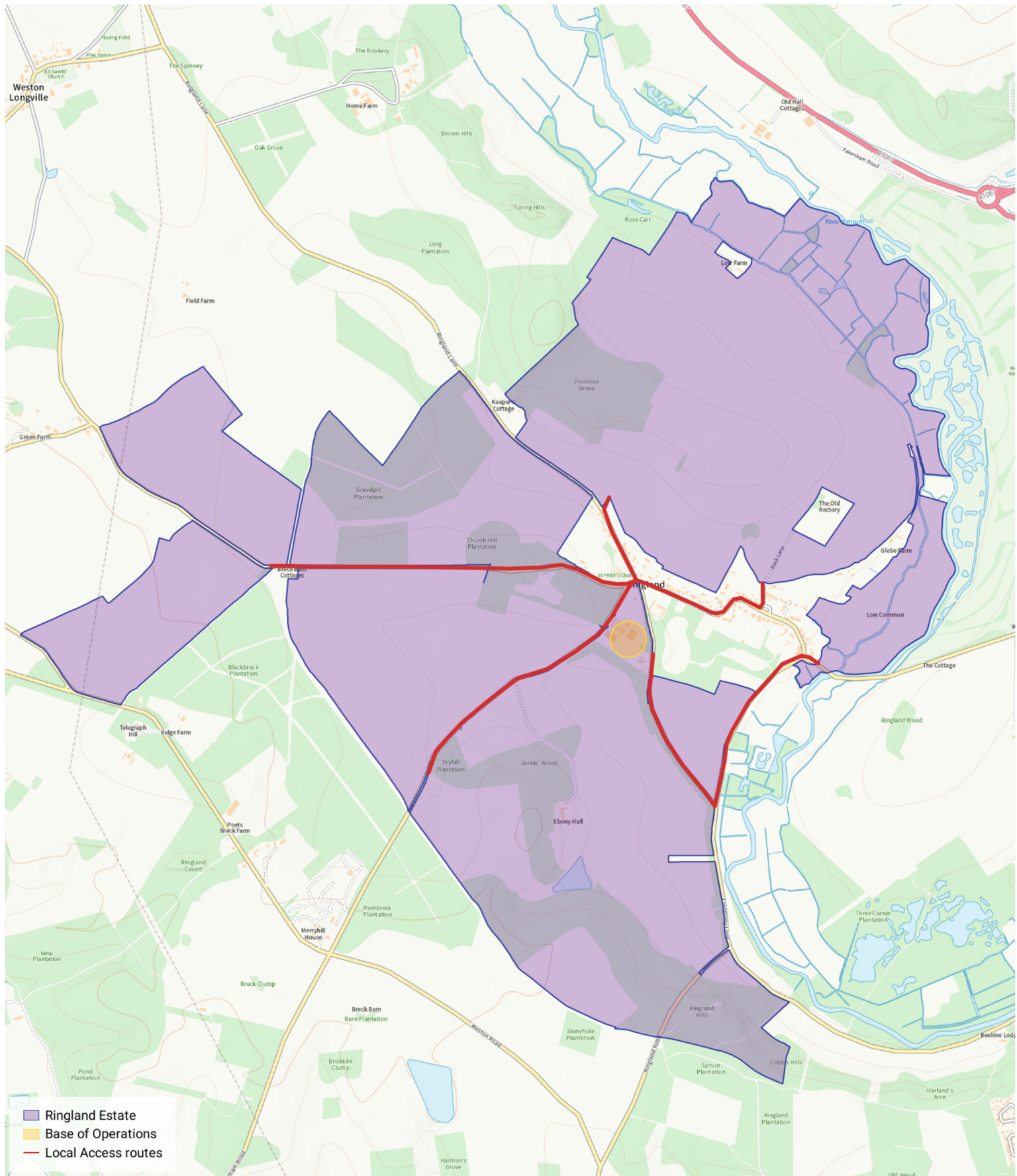
1. The current route from Colton to Ringland takes circa 5km via Blind Lane then Taverham Road and Honingham Lane. This route is shown as Red on the Overview Plan.
2. The Local Access plan shows how the Ringland Estate is accessed from the base of operations – this is shown in response to the Applicants suggested routes which stop at the periphery of the Estate and do not allow for onward journeys.
3. There is a track network within the Estate, but it spreads from the central point, not from the extremities or where the Applicant stops their proposed routes.
4. The applicants scheme involves the closure (at a point to be determined in the future) of Honingham Lane, which would interfere with access to the centre of the Ringland Estate.
5. The applicants scheme involves the closure of Blind Lane at an early stage on construction works.
6. Alternative routes are shown in yellow on the Overview Plan and fall into two parts
  - a. Traffic leaves HTF via Red Barn and at the base of Blind Lane will move East along Church Lane to Easton before doubling back along the old A47 to join the GSJ, crossing the new A47 and progressing up Taverham Road.
  - b. After travelling north on Taverham Road the traffic will meet Honingham Lane, which will be closed. Access to the centre of the Estate and the centrally based distribution network of tracks will require a journey east towards Taverham, through Ringland Hills and back into Ringland.

<b>Specific Points</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The route along Church Lane adds circa 2.8km to the journey.</li> <li>2. Using Church Lane will create interaction between HTF farm traffic and the traffic to the business park and, pre meeting of development threshold and provision of an alternative access, the FEP.</li> <li>3. There is consent for circa 860 new homes to be built around Easton, a significant element will use Church Lane for access, thus exacerbating the problems.</li> <li>4. The Church Lane route will put farm traffic into commuter traffic and will bring farm traffic into the GSJ on the Eastern side, which is expected to see higher flows of traffic than the western (Honingham) side.</li> <li>5. The route along Western Road, then Ringland Road (Ringland Hills), Costessey Lane and Field Road adds around 3.8km to the journey.</li> <li>6. This route will push all farm traffic into sharing the same routes as traffic coming out of Taverham, Queens Hills and western Norwich toward the GSJ at base of Taverham Road.</li> <li>7. The route noted at point 6 above adds 5.8km to the journey to the base of operations at Ringland.</li> <li>8. Ringland Road, aka Ringland Hills is a very well know pinch point in the local highways network and in no way appropriate to take increased traffic of a size, nature, and frequency as that required for the operation of the Ringland Estate.</li> </ol>
<b>Farming Operations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Farm traffic is slow and large – often with high gross train weight and being wider than typical vehicles on the highway.</li> <li>2. Ringland Estate is capable of growing high value root and vegetable crops because it is light soil with the benefit of irrigation.</li> <li>3. Root crops, vegetable and salads require a high number of application passes with crop protection and enhancement products compared to normal cereal crops. Furthermore, the harvested product is generally much bulkier requiring significantly more journeys to take the crop from field to store.</li> <li>4. In a typical year there are 80 to 100ha of root crops, herbs and salads – or more easily referred to as non-cereal crops. These crops are grown to very exacting standards and must be closely monitored for signs of disease and stress and point of harvest. Missing these points can result in total crop rejection. Furthermore, these crops require irrigation which is an incredibly labour-intensive undertaking. The simple husbanding of these crops results in significant man hours and journeys from the Colton base of operations.</li> <li>5. In terms of harvested produce, in the current rotation one can expect around 40ha of potatoes, 20ha of carrots and 20ha of parsnips. An average potato yield of 60t/ha is expected, and 50t/ha would be expected for carrots and parsnips. This should mean that 2400t of potatoes, 1000t of parsnips and 1000t of carrots would be produced off the farm in any one year. The balance of the farm producing cereal crops at 10t/ha and sugar beet at 80t/ha.</li> <li>6. None of the produce is stored on Ringland Estate – it is all either carted back to Colton in 14 to 16t trailers on the back of tractors or taken direct from farm by 30t articulated lorries direct to factory or cold stores.</li> <li>7. The traffic on the local highways network is significant in volume and physical size. The sugar beet and root crops are increasingly moved by bulk HGV, as is the maize that is proposed to be grown for the Anaerobic Digester Plant.</li> <li>8. Even if every tonne produced on the Estate left the farm in a 30t HGV there would be a total of 295 HGV movements just for the non-cereal crops. The sugar beet and cereal crops need to be added to this, although they will vary according to rotation. 50ha of sugar beet would produce 266 HGV movements.</li> <li>9. The Estate also lets around 40ha per annum (on 4 year agreements) for outdoor pig production. These pigs are high welfare and require multiple stockmen to travel to site, weekly feed deliveries in 30t HGV blower lorries, muck removal (cannot all go on Estate due to FSA regs for non-cereal crops) and straw deliveries.</li> <li>10. The countryside is a factory floor and some parts of it are used more intensively than others. The Honingham Thorpe Farms team seek innovative and alternative uses for their land and these crops and uses require much higher levels of management and husbanding than your standard cereal based arable rotation.</li> <li>11. A final factor that must not be overlooked is the beef and sheep enterprise. These will play an increasingly important role on the Estate as the marsh grass habitat is improved and some of the lower quality upland arable, such as where there is a soil erosion risk, is planted to grass and grazed with sheep. Livestock require significant husbanding, which is the reason why most Agricultural Occupancy Condition tied dwellings in the UK are tied to a livestock unit. Anything which interferes with ability to efficiently care for livestock should be viewed negatively.</li> </ol>

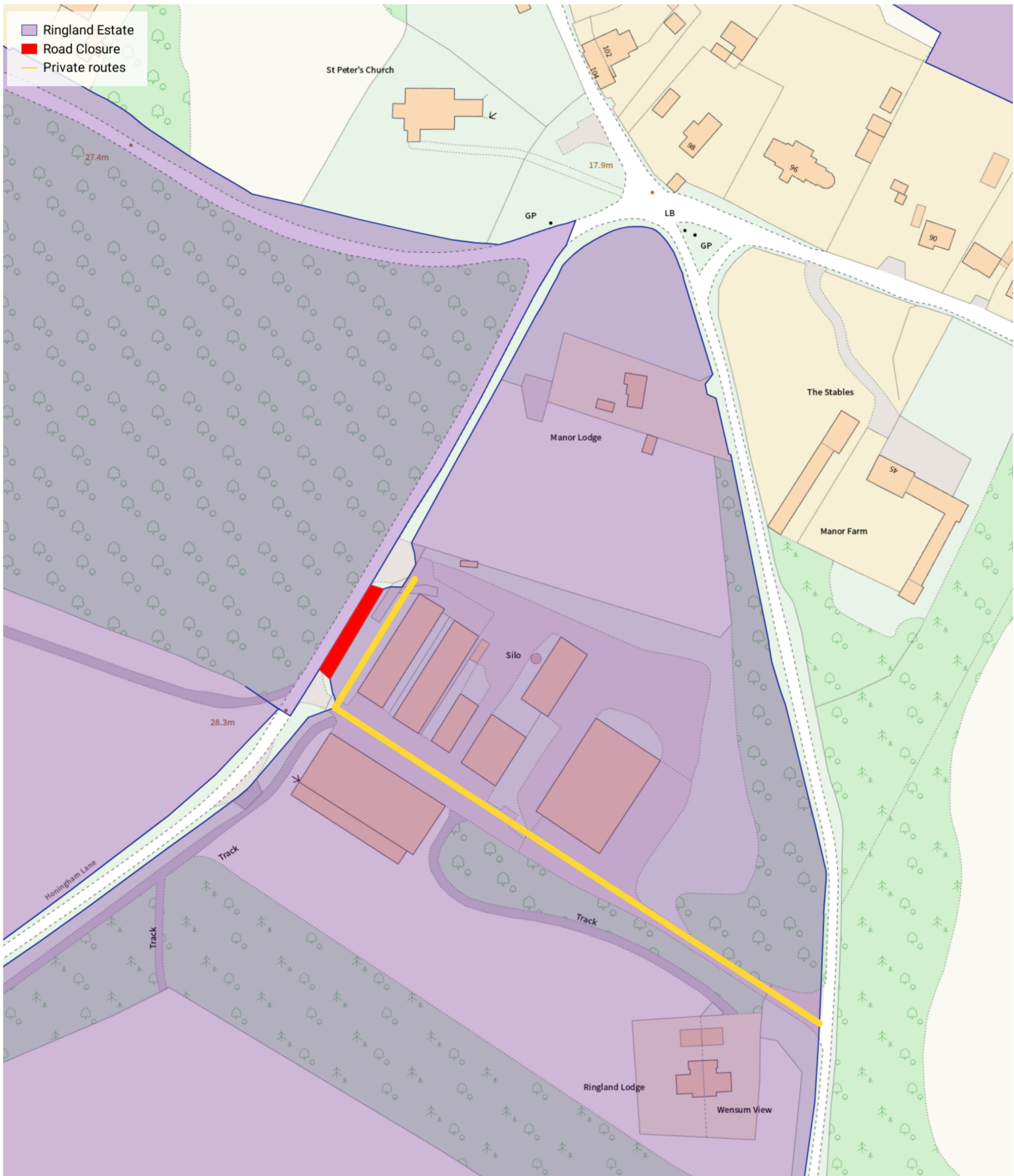
<b>Proposed Solutions</b>	<p><u>BLIND LANE CLOSURE</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain a link between Red Barn and the new GSJ at the southern end of Taverham Road.</li> <li>2. Utilise the new access that is required for the FEP to lead into a private access road that serves Honingham Thorpe Farms and the respondent's business only.</li> <li>3. Accept closure of Blind Lane to vehicular traffic on condition that the applicant provides a spur/connection (as previously designed) from the Honingham spur road to the FEP.</li> <li>4. The respondent can create an access track from the FEP access road to Red Barn on private land thus stopping any issues of rat running along Blind Lane. No public traffic will be able to proceed beyond the FEP access.</li> <li>5. The applicant to create the private access road and the connection of the FEP to the highways network to mitigate against the compensation claim that might arise from the severance of the two blocks of land, thus delivering better value for money from the scheme.</li> <li>6. This option is shown on the plan Blind Lane Options. The adoptable access to the FEP is shown as purple and attaching to the Honingham spur of the GJS rather than direct to the GJS. The respondent would then be able to utilise a private access (constructed by the Applicant) to continue the journey into the yard at Colton. Blind Lane is totally bypassed.</li> <li>7. The access from the A47 to the FEP would not need to cross 3<sup>rd</sup> party land.</li> </ol>
	<p><u>HONINGHAM LANE CLOSURE</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Honingham Lane to remain open to all traffic associated with the ownership and use of Ringland Estate.</li> <li>9. A suggestion would be to block the road at a point just north of the farmyard at Ringland as shown on the Honingham Lane Closure plan as a red block in the highway.</li> <li>10. This option closes the road beside the yard where the respondent could then use the private access through the yard to gain access to the village and Field Lane. This would mean little interference to the farming of the Estate. These routes are shown yellow.</li> <li>11. This option would also allow access to Ringland Lodge and Wensum View.</li> </ol>

# OVERVIEW PLAN








# HONINGHAM LANE CLOSURE



# OPTIONS OVERVIEW

Plan to show proposed shared access with FEP compared to Church Lane

## Legend

-  A47 - as planned
-  Post works route
-  Proposed Route



# BLIND LANE OPTIONS

