SANDHILLS, OXFORD

Design & Access Statement

on behalf of Cilldara Ltd

January 2024

Urban Design Studio | savills

CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of purpose

This design and access statement (DAS) has been prepared on behalf of Cilldara Group who control land at Sandhills. Figure 1 shows tha application area.

The DAS accompanies an outline planning application with all detailed matters reserved for future consideration except site access.

This is an important consideration: the level of detail required for the submission is not that of a full application, where detailed layouts, floorplans, elevations and landscape proposals are required. Nevertheless, an illustrative layout has been prepared to identify how the design concepts shown in this document could be implemented.

This document explains how the factors influencing the design of the proposals for this site have led to the illustrative layout shown. The site is allocated for development and provides an opportunity to deliver housing and green space to support the growing needs of residents in the wider area, and in particular in Oxford city.

1.2 Design approach / Structure of the DAS

The DAS is designed to explain how the proposals have been designed through a methodical process taking following steps:

- Assessment
- Involvement
- Evaluation
- Design
- Access

i) ASSESSMENT

The context of the site and its immediate surroundings are taken into consideration such as physical features as well as planning policies and best design practice.

ii) INVOLVEMENT and EVALUATION

The DAS explains the outcome of consultation and involvement with professionals and other stakeholders, and how this has informed the design process. The information received through the process of assessment together with initial design work and consultation with stakeholders and experts informs the design development of the proposals.

iv) DESIGN

The proposed scheme is explained in relation to scale, layout, landscape and appearance. The scale (i.e. heights and finished sizes of buildings), layout, landscape and appearance are reserved matters, and are illustrative.

v) ACCESS

The DAS also provides information regarding access and movement, including: -

- How the site interacts with the surrounding movement and transport networks, as well as how specific access points and illustrative circulation within the site will work
- How active travel is promoted on-site, with emphasis on connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist safety
- How people can move through the proposed development on equal terms regardless of age, gender etc.

1.3 Planning application

Application type

This is an outline planning application with all detailed matters reserved except for the site access, which means that it only fixes the primary access points into the site and provides information on the approximate location of the buildings, routes, and open spaces and is not obligated to provide any detailed (specific) information on the scheme's appearance, layout, landscape or scale of buildings. The proposals do, however, illustrate how these details could be delivered using an illustrative layout.

The application fixes the vehicular junctions (from Dellbush Avenue and Burdell Avenue), and provides a series of illustrations to provide certainty that the scheme can be delivered sustainably, whilst also addressing the scheme's environmental impacts and delivering a high quality design.

Proposal

The proposals are for: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for up to 121 dwellings and an 80-bed care home, including open space and green infrastructure.

Technical assessment

Various technical assessments have been carried out which are included as summaries within the DAS but submitted in detail as separate documents that accompany the outline planning application:

- Transport and Access (Highways)
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Noise and Air Quality
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Ecology
- Energy and Climate Mitigation
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Arboriculture
- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Agricultural Land Classification

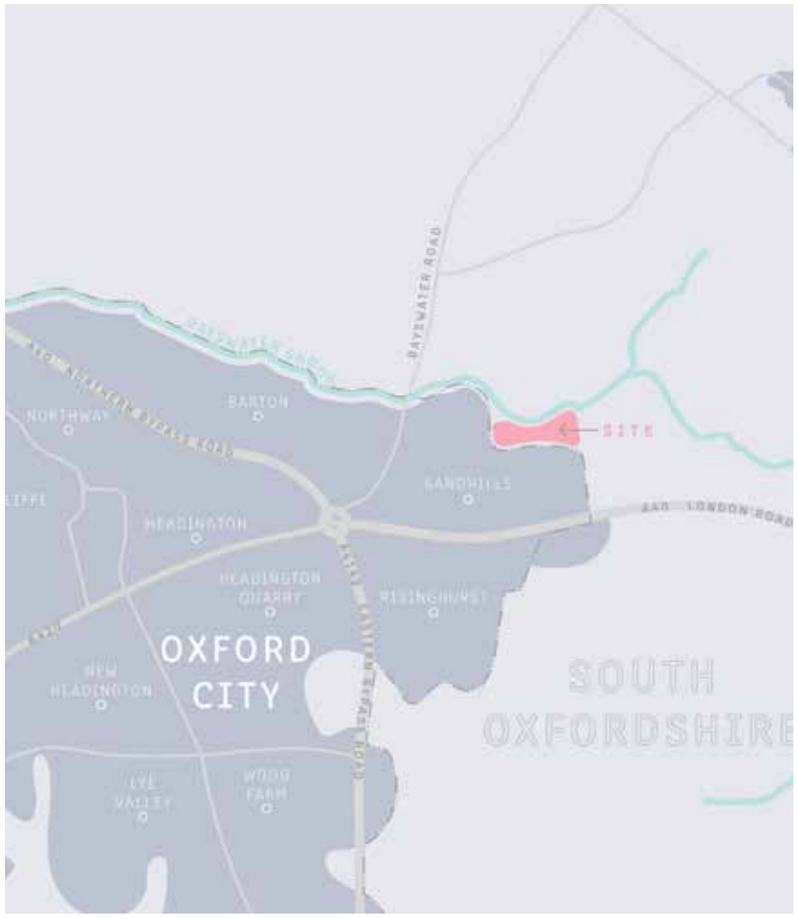
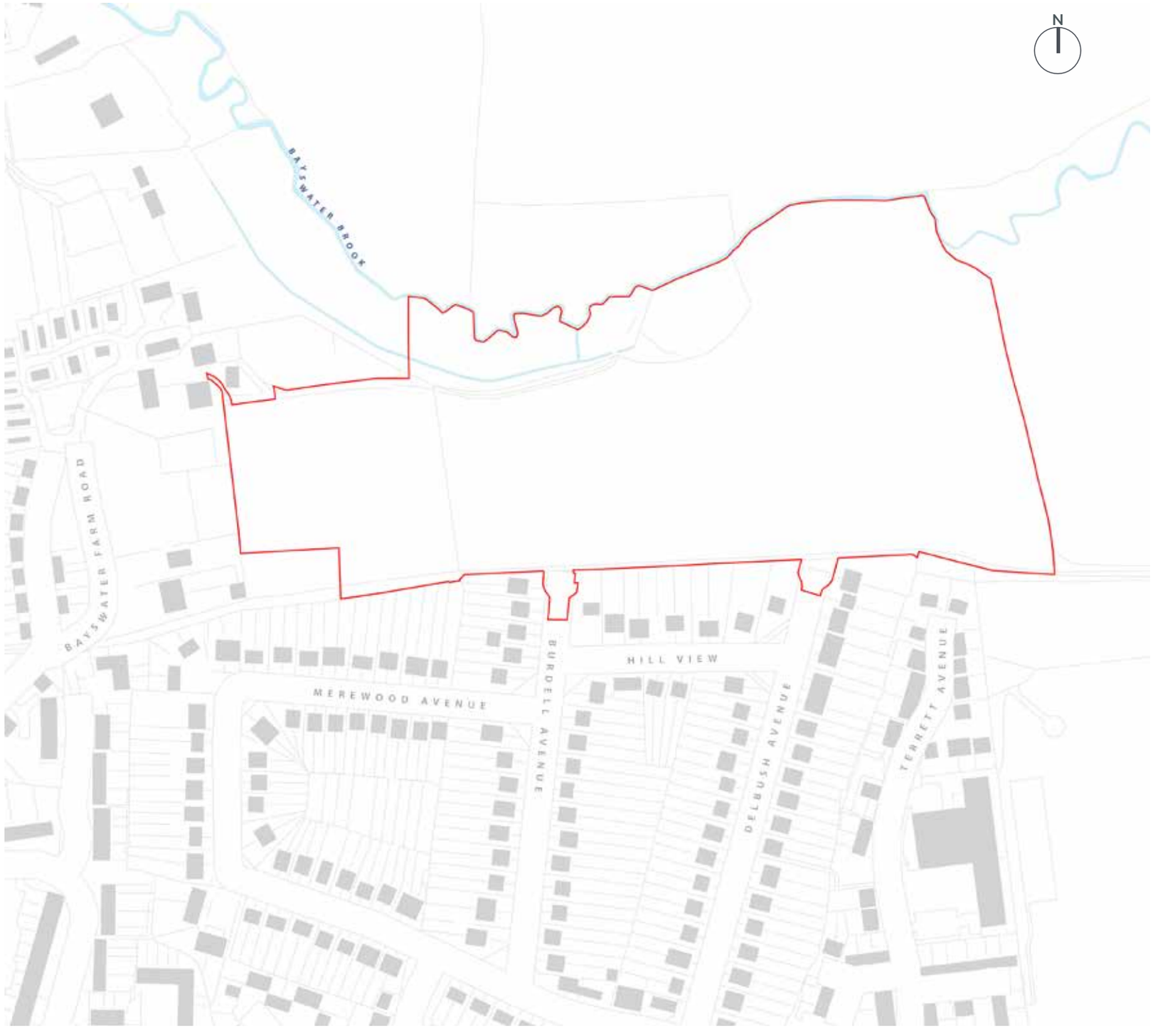


Figure 1: *Site Location in Oxford City Context*



Site Boundary

Figure 2: *Site Location Plan*

02

ASSESSMENT

2 ASSESSMENT

2.1 Planning policy context

The site is allocated for development as part of Policy STRAT13: Land North of Bayswater Brook, in order to deliver housing for Oxford city's unmet needs in the most sustainable location possible. The allocation is in two parts (see Figure 3 and Figure 5 on the next page).

The larger western parcel is controlled by Christ Church and Dorchester Homes, who have submitted a planning application for up to 1,450 homes and supporting infrastructure (see Figure 4).

Key requirements in accordance with planning policy are: -

- High quality pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to Oxford city centre and employment locations, with a movement hierarchy that promotes non-car modes and permeability
- Incorporate hedgerows and trees and use these to form a new defensible Green Belt edge
- Minimise visual impacts from the countryside
- Deliver higher densities along key frontages (45dph) that gradually reduce towards the northern landscape buffer
- Deliver a net gain in biodiversity, and a green infrastructure strategy connecting habitats, providing flood storage, and extending public rights of way

Additional relevant policies include the South Oxfordshire Design Guide, Oxfordshire Street Design Guide, National Design Guide and Building for a Healthy Life.

2.2 Site context

Sandhills community hall and primary school are 200m from the site, with access via Delbush avenue and a public right of way through to Terrett Avenue. It's about 400m or a 5-10 minute walk. Thornhill Park and ride is 500m to the south, accessible across the A40 via a subway. A range of facilities and services are available in the Barton Area, west of Sandhills.

A public bridleway runs along the southern part of the site, providing non-vehicular access east to the countryside and to the land surrounding the primary school, owned by the River Learning Trust (who also operates the school). The bridleway also provides access to the west, into the residential area of Barton.

The areas to the south are predominantly very low density housing, with the exception of some supporting infrastructure such as local schools.

Figure 3: *Land North of Bayswater Brook: Concept Plan from adopted Local Plan*

Figure 4: *Land North of Bayswater Brook - Western Parcel: extract from planning application*

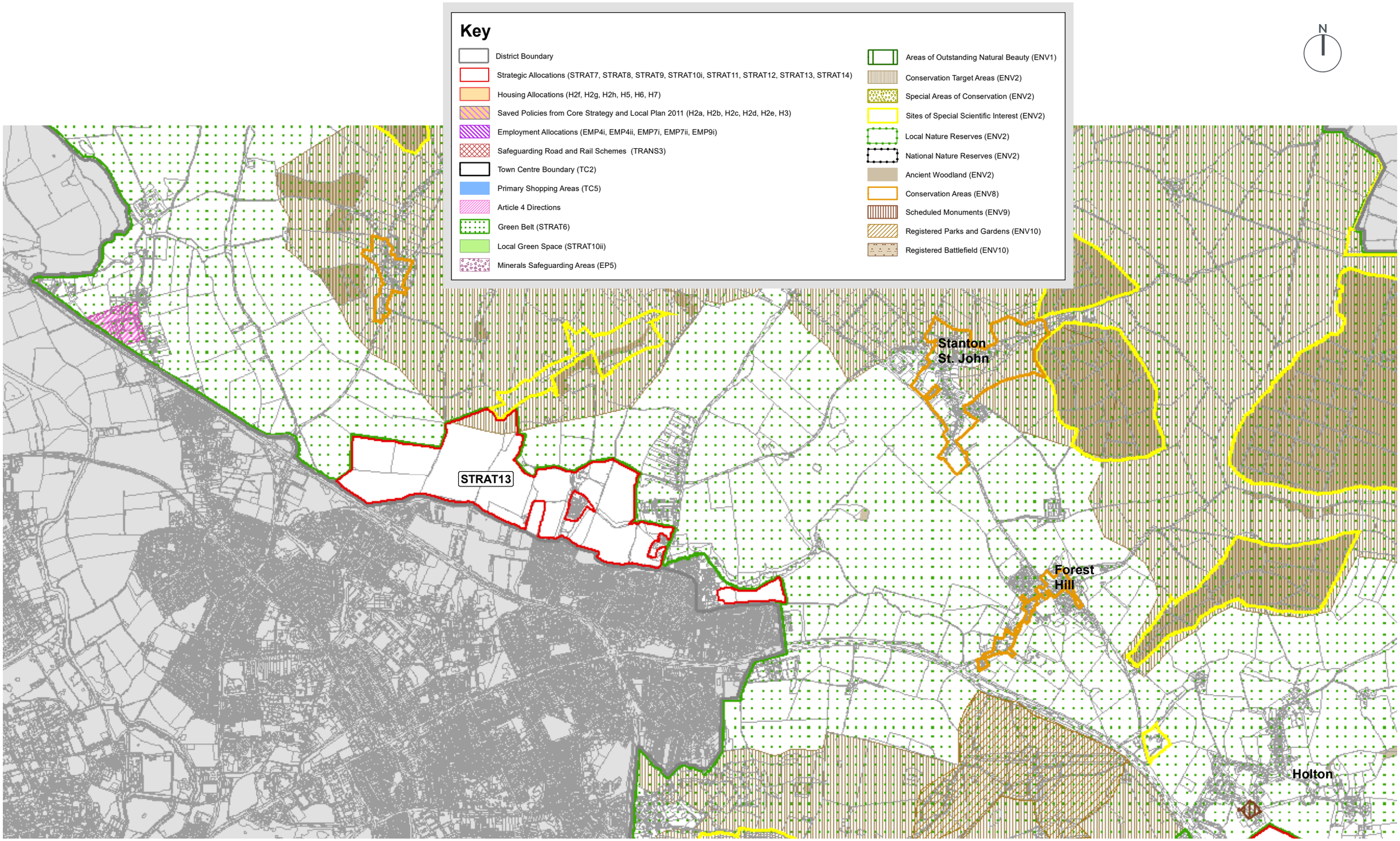


Figure 5: *South Oxfordshire District Council Adopted Policies Map*

Photographs of the surrounding area

The streets around the site can be viewed online in Google Maps or similar software, and the site is modelled in 3 dimensions in Google Earth, which also give a broad idea of the topography of the site and surrounding areas.

The site is paddock land with a bridleway running along its southern edge, and the Bayswater brook forming a key feature to the north of the site.

Photograph 1: view from Bayswater Farm Road into the north-west corner of the site.
Photograph 2: view along bridleway from west of the site
Photograph 3: view north into the site from the bridleway (at the back of Hill View)
Photograph 4: panorama of the site from the end of Delbush Avenue
Photograph 5: view east along the bridleway from the south-eastern corner of the site
Photograph 6: view from the east of the site looking west into / across the top of the site
Photograph 7: view west along the bridleway from just outside the eastern boundary of the site
Photograph 8: view from the bridleway to the east of the site, looking south-west into the existing parkland area
Photograph 9: view from the bridleway to the east of the site, looking west towards the trees / hedgerow of the site boundary and site beyond
Photograph 10: 100m east of the site, a view looking east towards the open countryside.

Figure 6: *Photographs of site and surroundings*

2.3 Local and district facilities

There are a wide range of facilities and services available near to the site within walking and cycling distance (hence the site's allocation as a sustainable location for new housing). Sandhills Pre-School and Community Primary school are nearby, within a 5-minute walk from the bridleway at the south of the site.

Shops are available at Barton and by the Headington roundabout. Barton local centre provides a supermarket (currently Spar) in a small parade of shops that include a pharmacy, take away, and hairdresser. Facilities by the Headington roundabout include a newsagent, pharmacy, cafe, grocery and butchers stores amongst other facilities.

Barton Leisure centre is to the north of the A40, about 10-15 minutes' walk from the site. Further open spaces are accessible in close proximity to the site, with Barton Park nearby and open sountryside to the east.

Headington district centre is a 10 minute cycle ride from the site. This provides a large number of shops, services and facilities.

Many residents of Oxford work in the city, which provides a wide range of employment. The city centre is accessible from the site on foot / via bus connections, and is within cycling distance.

Figure 9 identifies local facilities together with bus routes.

2.4 Movement

The site is within walking and cycling distance of a variety of amenities and facilities. The site has convenient access to public transport options at Thornhill Park & Ride, providing connections to a range of destinations in the city, to the country towns of South Oxfordshire as well as London, with approximately 14 services per hour.

Walking

The site has direct connections to Burdell Avenue and Dellbush Avenue, both of which have footways on both sides. A bridleway, Public Right of Way (PRoW) 215/8/10, runs along the southern boundary of the site. This connects the site to Forest Hill in the east, and to Barton and Headington in the west.

Based on the guidance set out in the paragraph 4.4.1 of Manual for Streets 'walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km'. Therefore, it is considered that 2km is an acceptable distance to walk to work and to local facilities and amenities. The suburbs of Sandhills, Barton, Risinghurst and the north-eastern section of Headington are within walking distance of the site. This area includes several convenience stores, Barton Leisure Centre, pubs and restaurants as well as a number of educational facilities including Sandhills Community Primary School, Bayards Hill Primary School, Endeavour Academy, Headington Quarry Foundation Stage School and St Andrews Church of England Primary School.

The site is also within walking distance of Thornhill Park & Ride.
Figure 7 identifies the 2km 'walking catchment', showing the both Barton local centre and the Headington roundabout local centre are within walking distance of the site, together with a range of other facilities.

Cycling

Cyclists would access the wider area via Burdell Avenue and Dellbush Avenue, both of which are quiet residential streets ideal for cycling that go on to connect with the A40.

Cyclists could also use the bridleway on the southern edge of the site for access to the countryside to the east. Moving further from the site, an east west off-carriageway cycle route is provided on the north side of the A40. This provides a direct connection to Wheatley in the east, and to the web of cycle routes in Oxford in the west.

5km is an acceptable distance to cycle to local workplaces, facilities and amenities. Figure 8 identifies the areas accessible within 5km from the site. Therefore, in addition to those areas accessible on foot identified above, the entirety of Headington and the eastern end of Wheatley is within cycling distance. Oxford City Centre is just 5.9km by bike from the site, which although marginally longer than 5km, is nevertheless a reasonable distance to cycle. The future residents of the site would therefore benefit from access to the wide range of employment opportunities, educational and healthcare facilities, shops and services available at these destinations by bike.

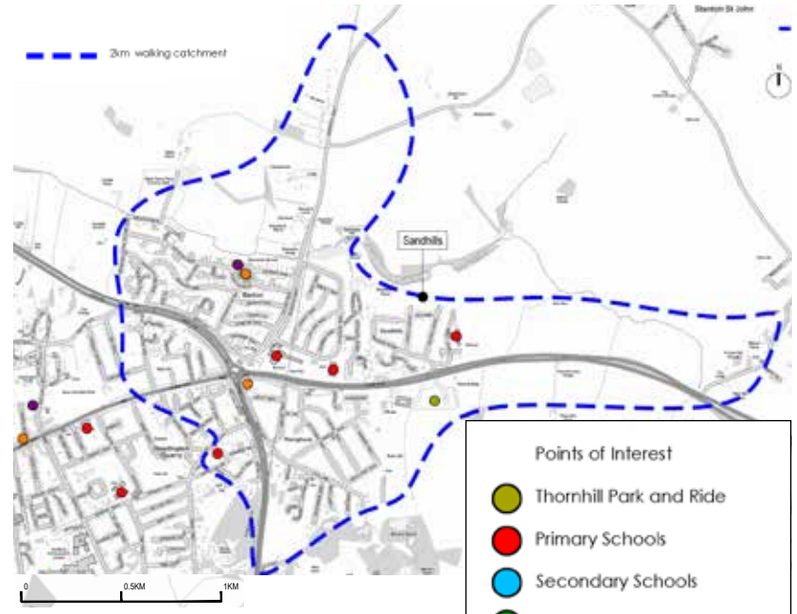


Figure 7: *Walking Isochrone*

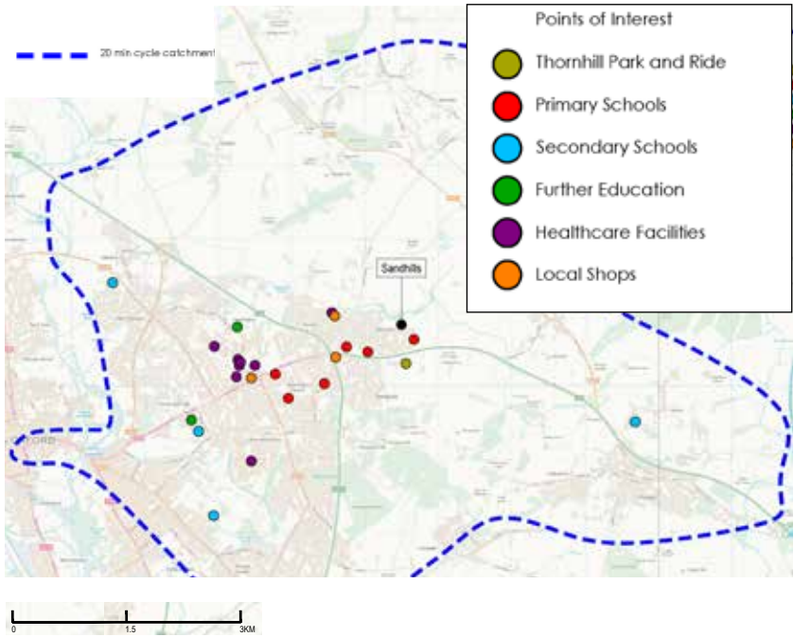


Figure 8: *Cycling Isochrone*

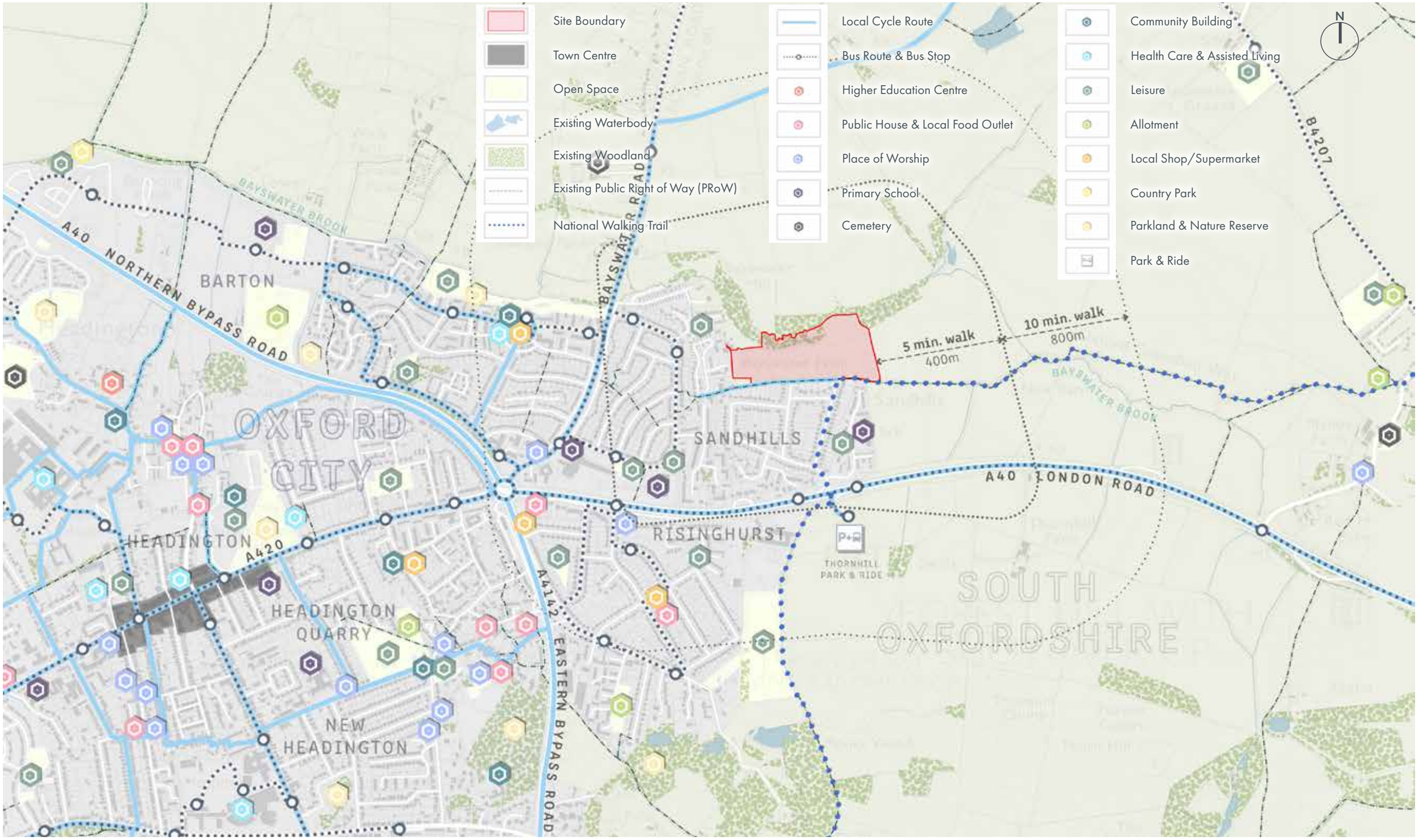


Figure 9: *Local Facilities Plan*

Bus

Figure 10 identifies the wide range of bus services available in proximity to the site. The nearest bus stops to the site are located in Thornhill Park & Ride and adjacent to the Park & Ride on the A40, approximately 550m south of the site. A pedestrian subway provides pedestrian access under the A40 along the desire line between the site and the Park & Ride.

These stops are served by 16 different bus routes including the 400 Park & Ride, Nu1 BROOKESbus, X8, 120, LGW the airline, Oxford Tube, OXF the Airline, 280, LHR the Airline, Megabus M40X, 700, Megabus OAIR, U1b, X20, 275 and National Express 210. These provide a total of around 20 buses per hour throughout the day, providing connections to the immediate surrounds, key local and regional destinations, airports, and central London.

Rail

The nearest railway service to the site is Oxford Railway Station, which is approximately 7km south-west of the site. The station is accessible via a 25-minute bus ride on almost all Oxford-bound buses from Thornhill Park & Ride, including the 280, 400 Park and Ride, U1, and 275. Oxford Railway Station provides regular direct services to a range of destinations including London Paddington, London Marylebone, Reading, Didcot Parkway and Bournemouth.

MOVEMENT SUMMARY:

Oxford has the second highest number of people in the UK who cycle at least three times a week. Overall, the number of people walking and cycling to work and to local services and facilities is further likely to increase -

- Cycling levels are increasing generally across England
- County Council is implementing strategies that will discourage car use. The County has targets to reduce car trips by one quarter by 2030, and by an additional third by 2040
- Oxford city has implemented a zero emission zone, which will be extended, and is currently introducing new traffic filters
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have created routes through Oxford that are quicker to cycle than drive
- Approximately 48% of people travel to work by walking, cycling or bus in the Sandhills/Barton Area
- 31% cycle or walk to work, similar to the national average
- Residents at the site will have excellent opportunities to cycle or walk to local services and facilities, and are increasingly likely to do so.

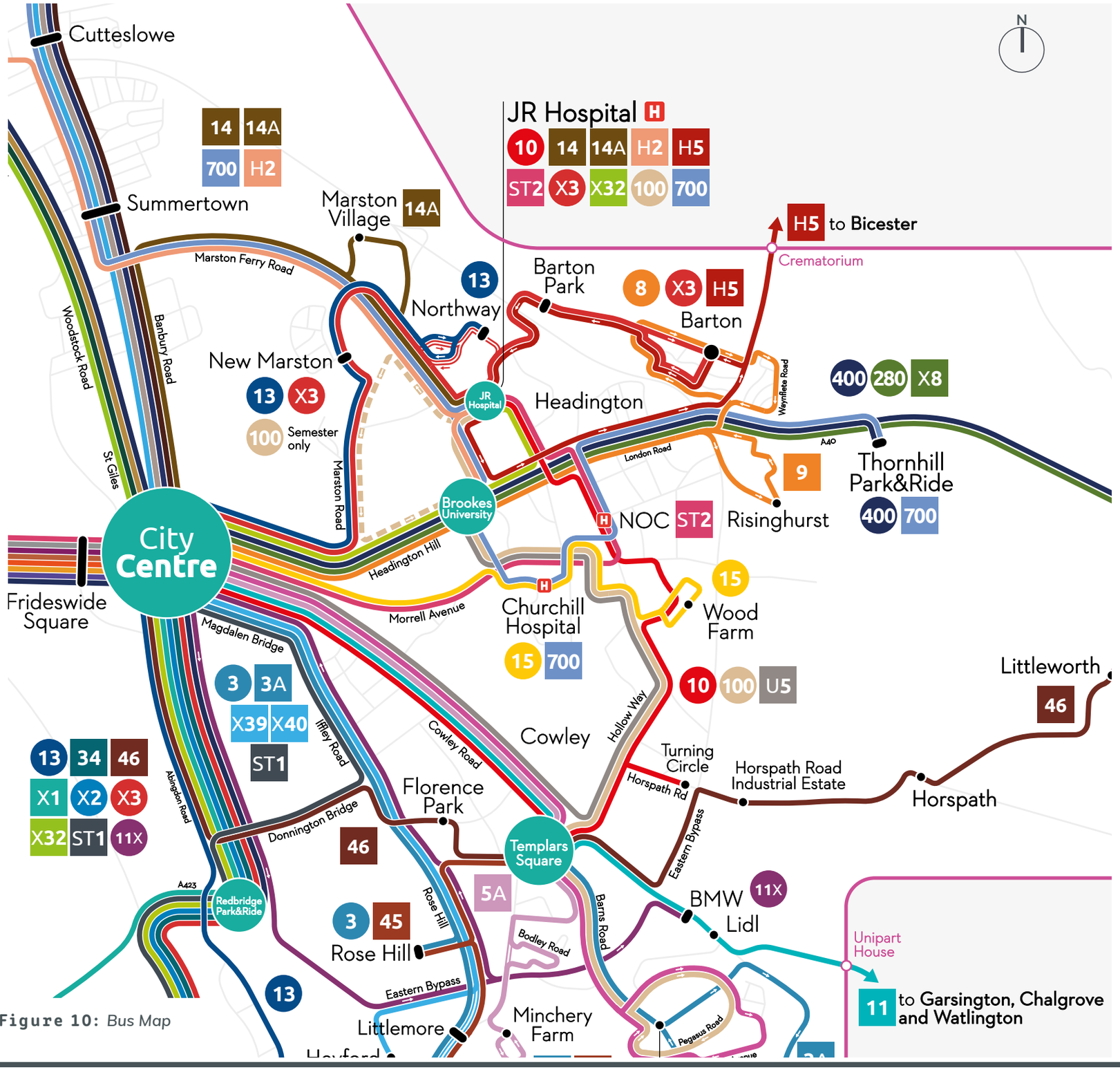


Figure 10: *Bus Map*

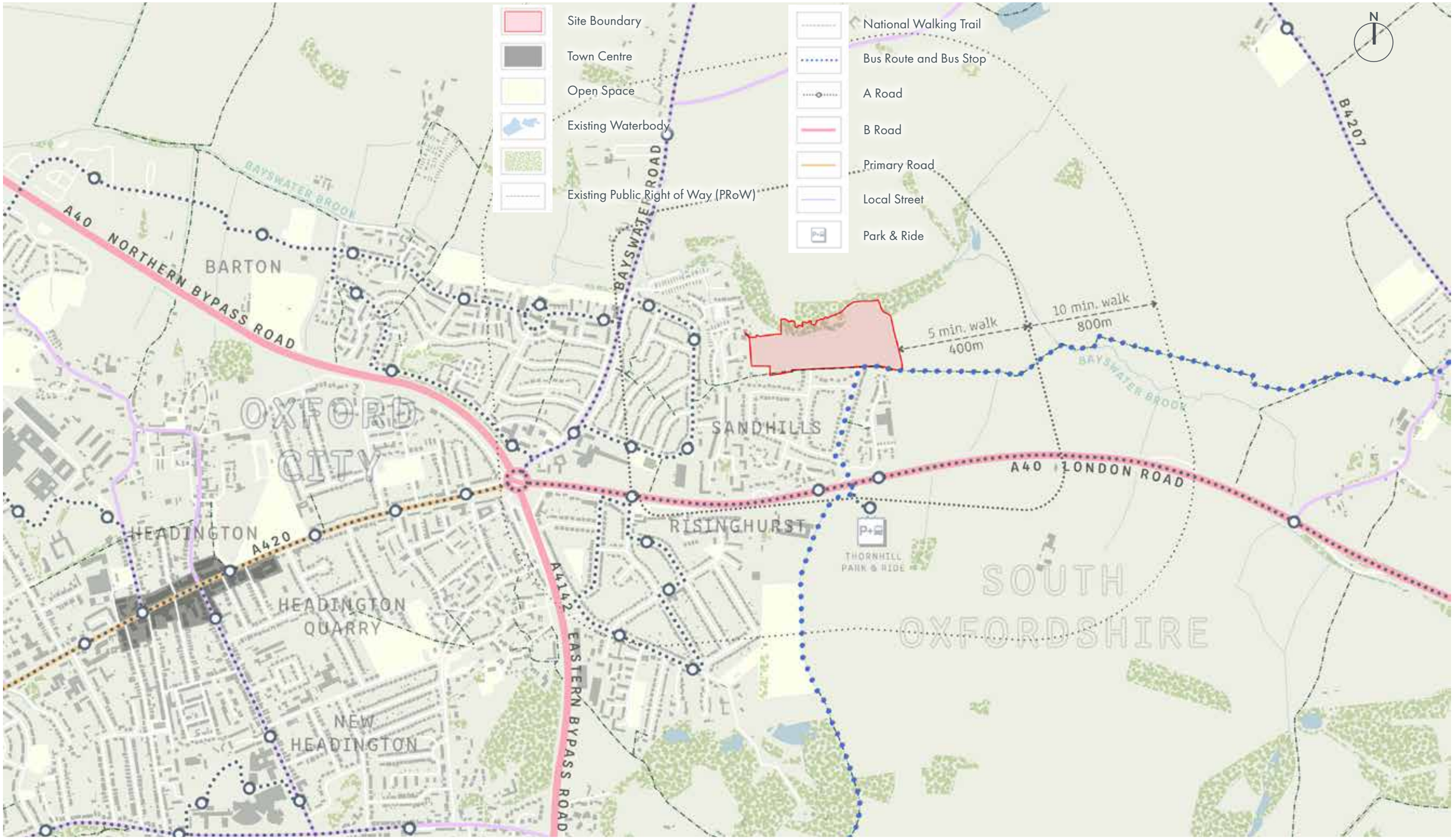


Figure 11: *Highway Network*

2.5 Flooding

The site slopes downwards towards the brook from south to north across the site. There are some overland 'pluvial' flows that result from surface rainwater in storm events. There is an area associated with the brook that floods (fluvial flooding) when there is heavy rainfall.

Fluvial flooding

The Environment Agency maps for this area have been recently updated. In storm events the Bayswater Brook floods in varying amounts depending on how heavy the rainfall is. An allowance will need to be made for this floodplain plus climate change; with no storm water storage ponds permitted in this area, no planting that would affect food flows and no development.

The area subject to flooding together with an allowance for climate change is shown in Figure 12.

Pluvial flooding

There are some 'overland flows' identified on site on the Environment Agency mapping that show where rainwater is unable to infiltrate into the ground in extreme storm events, and runs across the surface. These flows can be accommodated within development areas. They are identified in Figure 20: Constraints Plan on page 29. A surface water sewer (shown in Figure 18) currently runs across the south-east part of the site delivering surface storm water to the brook. This sewer could be opened up into a drainage feature in the new development, designed as part of the new sustainable drainage system.

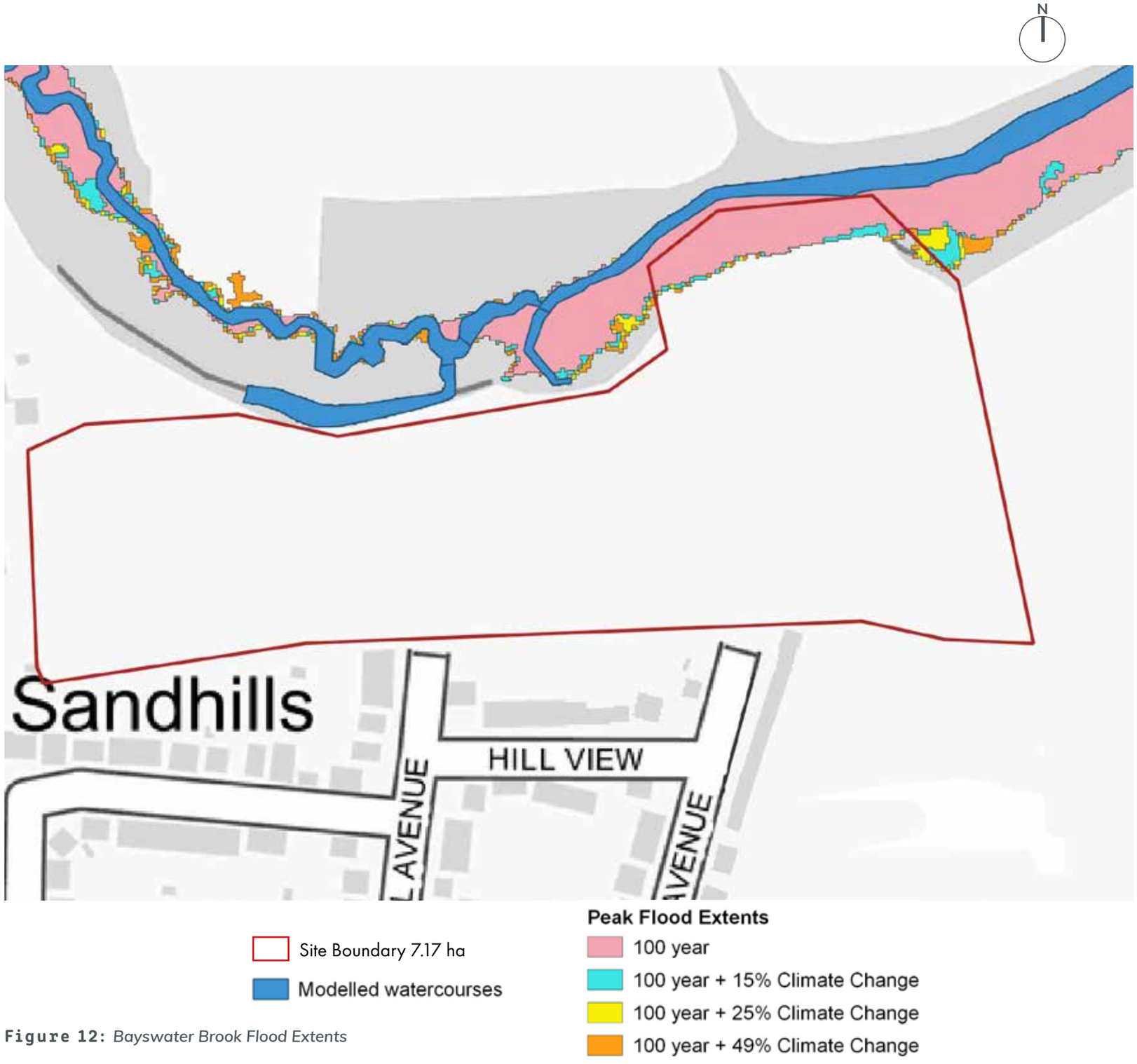


Figure 12: *Bayswater Brook Flood Extents*

2.6 Topography

The site slopes from south to north (see Figure 13). There is a change in levels of nearly 20m from the bridleway in the south to the brook in the north. Some parts of the existing topography are greater than 1 in 10 gradients. Footpaths and streets should maintain gradients of 1 in 14 or less where possible (although streets up to 1 in 10 are possible). Oxfordshire County Council does not normally adopt streets that have great gradients than 1 in 20.

The topography of the site creates a number of opportunities that could be used to inform the design of the development: -

- Creation of development blocks and streets aligned with contours
- Visual impact of buildings in the northern part of the site will be less as they will be set lower down: creating an opportunity for some taller buildings without creating visual intrusion
- Careful consideration of streets and footpaths, to minimise any steep gradients and ensure access for all, or alternative access routes are provided
- Potential for split level development units / access at first floor from the southern side of properties and the ground floor from the northern side of properties
- Surface water drainage ponds will need to be located outside of the floodplain, at the northern and north-eastern boundaries of the site

Cross sections of the existing topography are shown in Figure 14 on the next page.

Figure 13: *Existing Site Topography*

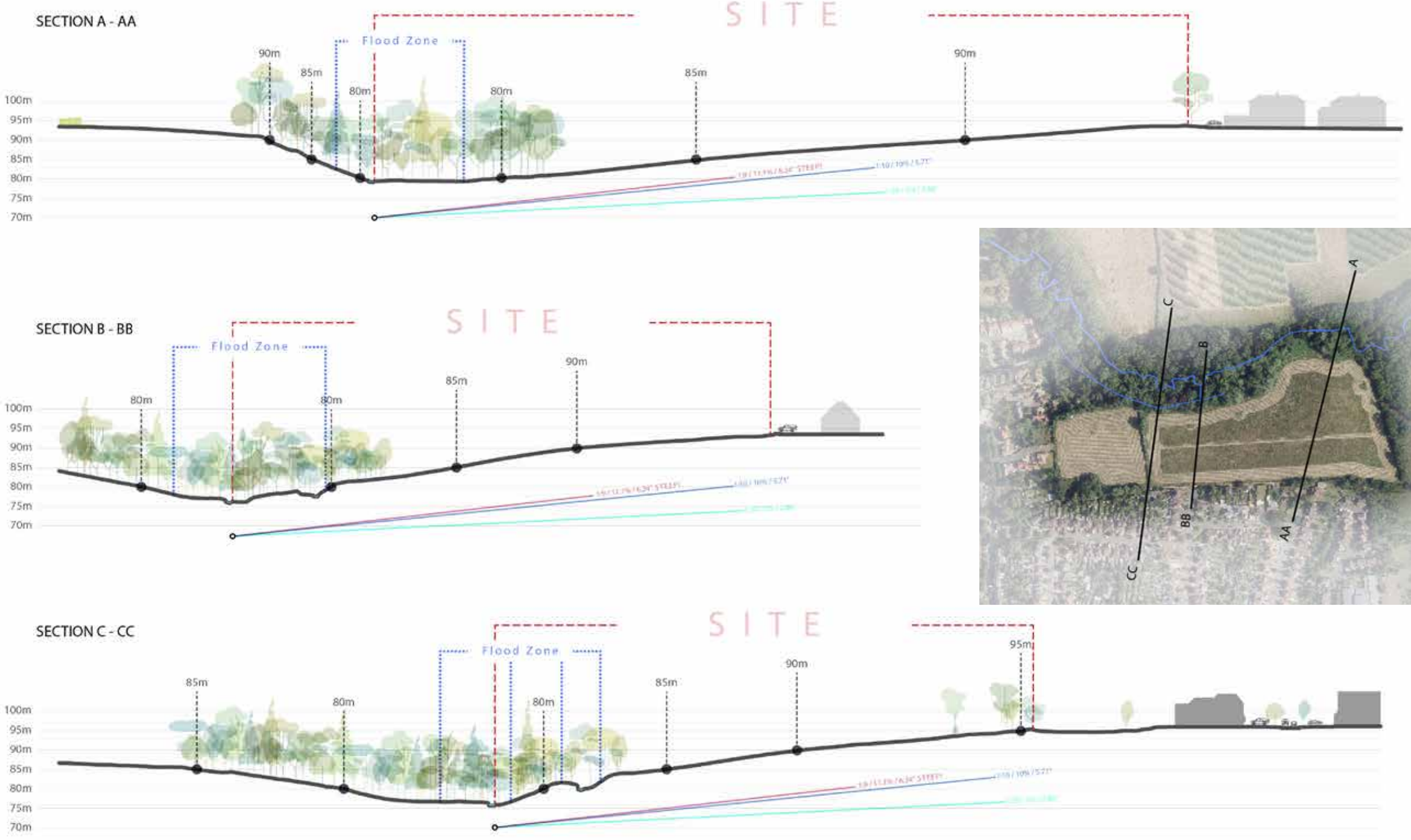


Figure 14: *Existing Site Sections*

2.7 Landscape and visual appraisal

The presence of generalised landscape fabric features within the site and its immediate context includes grassland land use, field pattern scale, and field boundary treatments. It has a close relationship with the settlement edge and associated urban influences.

In local context, the visual receptors largely experience the open character of the site from the adjacent PRoW (Oxford Greenbelt Way) and from a number of existing residences and local roads within close proximity to the site boundary also experience close ranging intervisibility with at least part of the site.

The enclosed nature of the site alongside the presence of mature woodland and vegetated field boundaries and urban form heavily limits the extent of views available from the wider landscape, however longer distance views are possible from higher ground to the north and east from which the site can be seen set within in the context of Sandhills Estate and settlement edge.

The key considerations in relation to landscape and visual terms at this preliminary stage are summarised below:

- Consideration of the sloping ground within the site with particular regard to the perception of a 'new' edge of Sandhills in both local and more distant views
- Consideration of visual amenity of residential properties with existing views of the site and receptors using the Oxford Greenbelt Way, namely receptors immediately adjacent to the site boundary
- Celebrate the proximity to the Bayswater Brook watercourse adjacent to the Site, by providing new Public Open Space and the potential to include areas of wet meadow grassland and unimproved grassland to increase biodiversity value
- Retention and reinforcement of key vegetated boundaries such as the woodland to the north, and mature trees and hedgerows that contribute to local landscape character and ecological connectivity with wider off-site habitats

A separate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is submitted with the application, together with verified views of the proposed development. These show the limited impact that development of this site will have on wider views, as expected from this enclosed site.

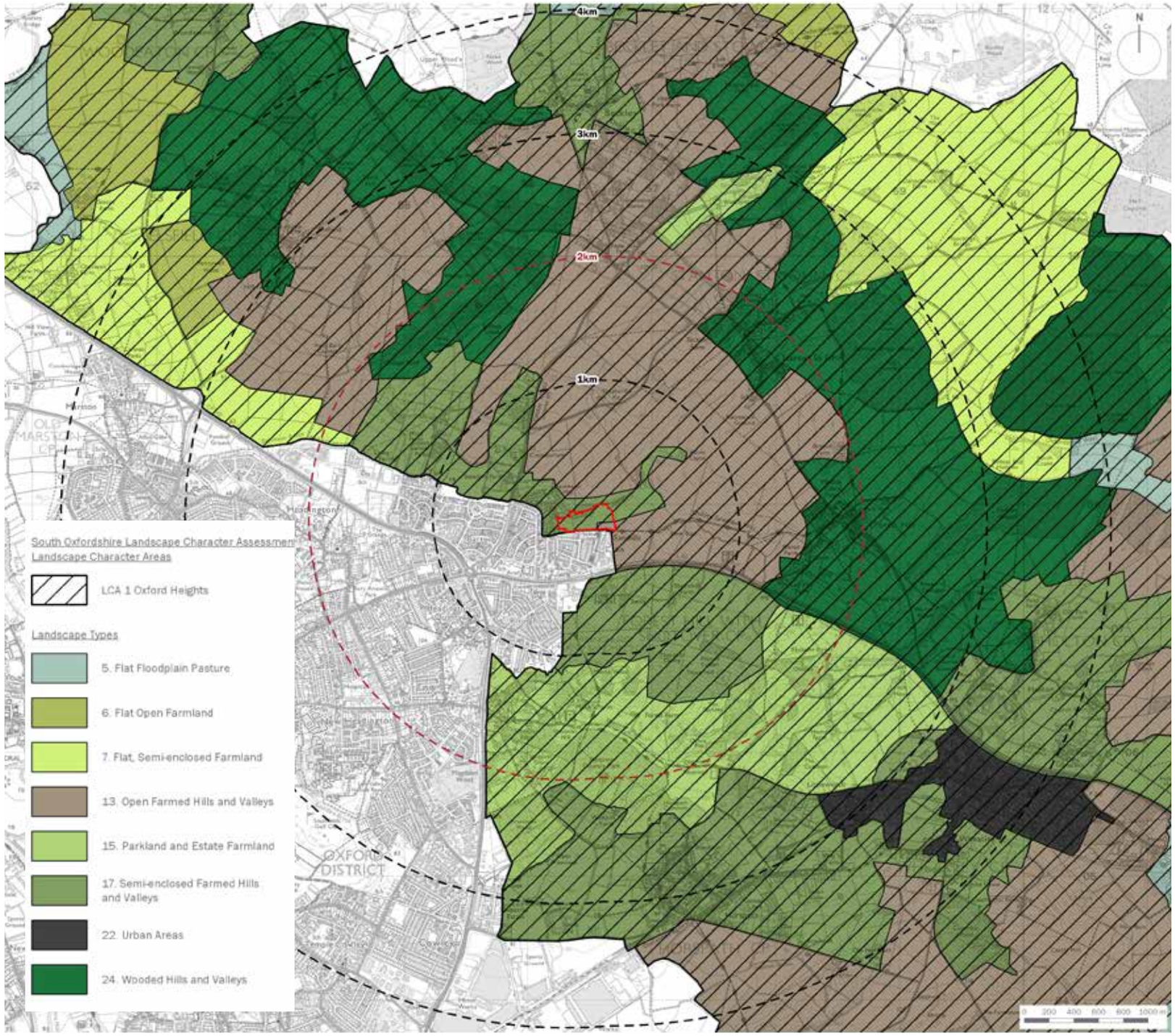


Figure 15: *Landscape Character and Context Appraisal*

2.8 Arboriculture

All of the individual trees and groups of trees within and close to the boundary of the site have been assessed. An arboricultural report that accompanies the planning application provides the detail of all the trees and groups of trees assessed.

Trees are categorised as Class A, B or C, or U. Class A trees are high quality, with an estimated remaining life-expectancy of at least 40 years. Category B trees are of moderate quality with an estimated life of at least 20 years. Category C trees are of low quality with an estimated remaining life of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem below 150mm. All class A, B and C trees are proposed to be retained where possible, with particular emphasis on the retention of Category A and B trees. Category U trees are in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained, and are (unless exceptional circumstances arise) proposed to be removed.

Figure 16 identifies the trees and tree groups on site and their assessed categories.

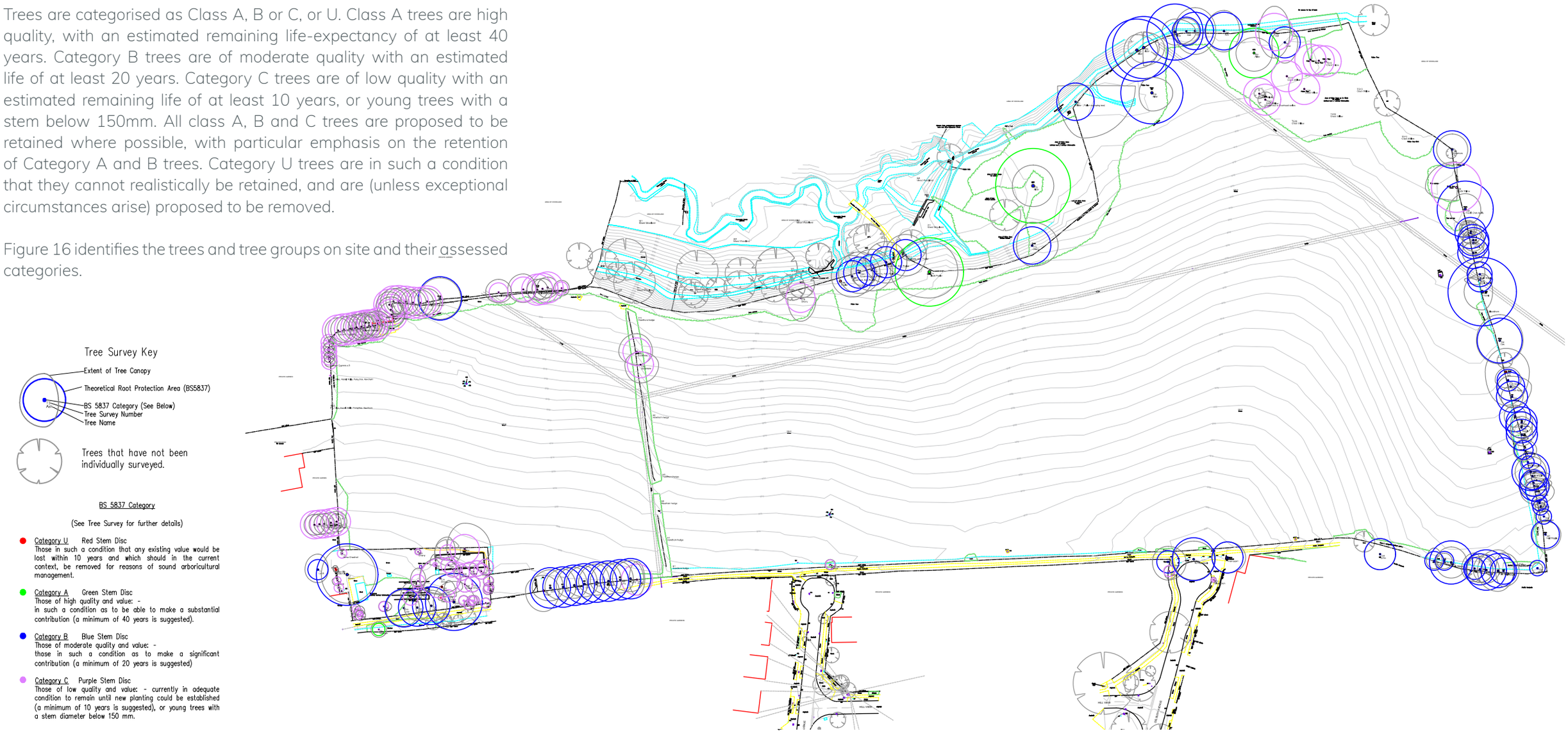


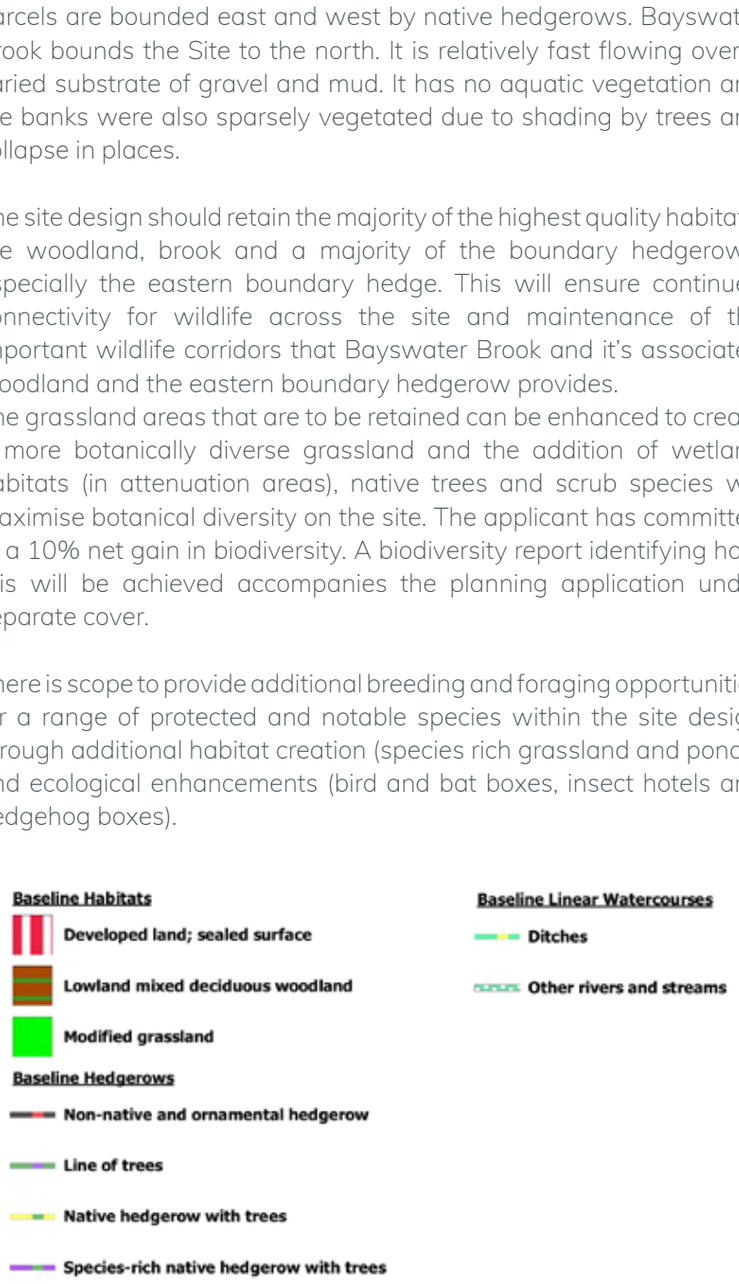
Figure 16: *Tree Survey*

2.9 Ecology

The majority of the site is covered by a tussocky modified grassland of limited botanical diversity and a tall, rank sward. It is bounded to the north by lowland mixed woodland in good condition and the two field parcels are bounded east and west by native hedgerows. Bayswater Brook bounds the Site to the north. It is relatively fast flowing over a varied substrate of gravel and mud. It has no aquatic vegetation and the banks were also sparsely vegetated due to shading by trees and collapse in places.

The site design should retain the majority of the highest quality habitats; the woodland, brook and a majority of the boundary hedgerows, especially the eastern boundary hedge. This will ensure continued connectivity for wildlife across the site and maintenance of the important wildlife corridors that Bayswater Brook and it's associated woodland and the eastern boundary hedgerow provides.
The grassland areas that are to be retained can be enhanced to create a more botanically diverse grassland and the addition of wetland habitats (in attenuation areas), native trees and scrub species will maximise botanical diversity on the site. The applicant has committed to a 10% net gain in biodiversity. A biodiversity report identifying how this will be achieved accompanies the planning application under separate cover.

There is scope to provide additional breeding and foraging opportunities for a range of protected and notable species within the site design through additional habitat creation (species rich grassland and ponds) and ecological enhancements (bird and bat boxes, insect hotels and hedgehog boxes).



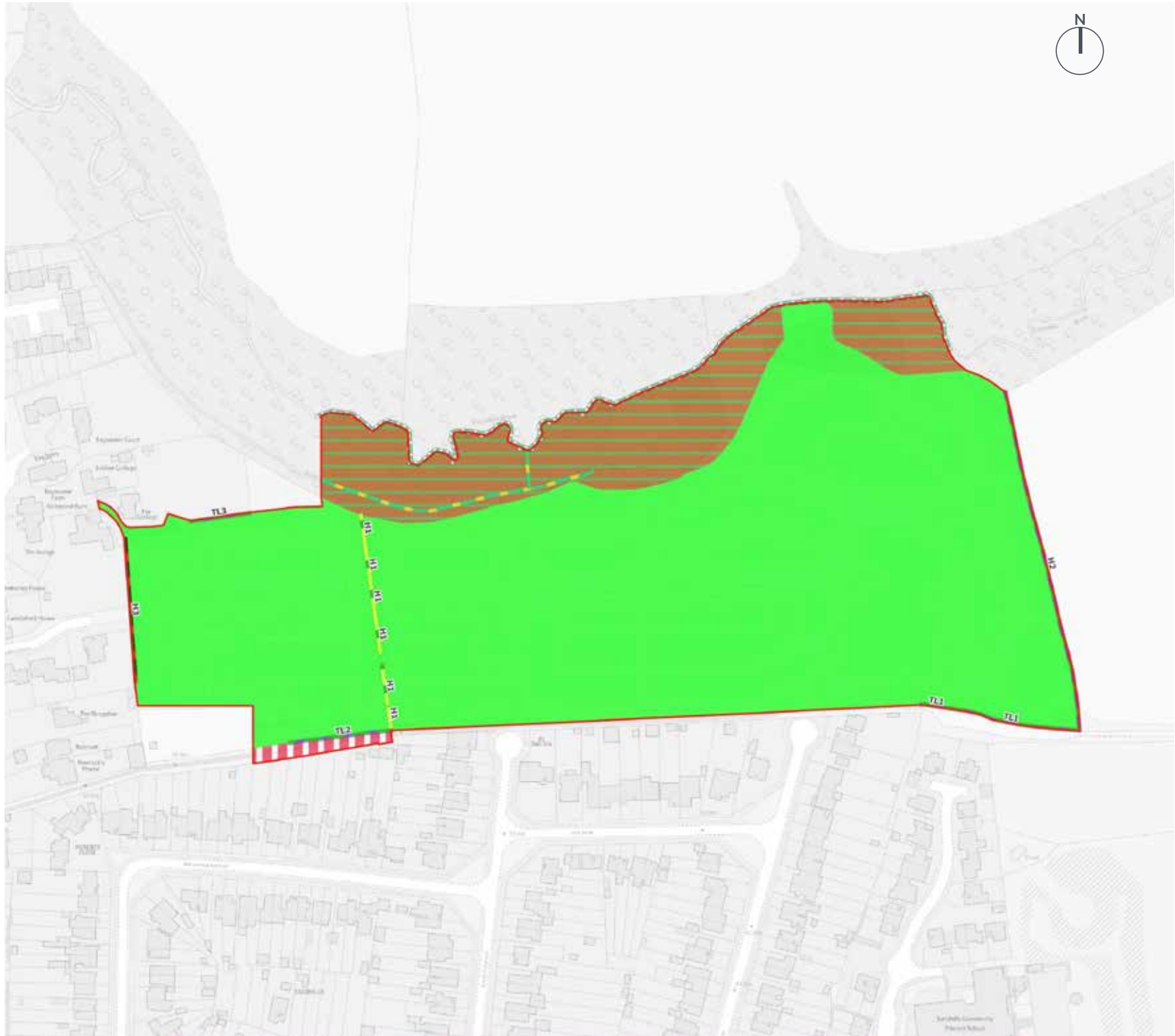


Figure 17: *Baseline Habitats*

2.10 Foul drainage

As part of the proposed development, it is anticipated that the existing foul sewer running across the site will need to be diverted to accommodate the new development layout. It is anticipated that the foul sewer will be used as part of the new on site drainage system to take foul flows from the new development, with as much of the drainage system being offered to Thames Water for adoption as possible.

2.11 Surface water

Site investigations have determined that to the south, the site is underlain by the Beckley Sand Member formation, and to the north, the ground consists of alluvial deposits associated with the nearby watercourse floodplain. Infiltration testing confirms that the Beckley Sand formation is suitable for soakaways. Any properties in the southern part of the site will drain to individual 'house soakaways' located within the curtilage of the respective plots. To the north, where the ground is less suitable for infiltration, surface water run-off will be collected and discharged into the Bayswater Brook to the north at the equivalent Greenfield Run-off Rate (GFRR). Any flow which exceeds the discharge rate will be held within an attenuation basin which has been sized for storm event up to and including the 100 year, with an additional allowance for climate change.

2.12 Utilities

Gas, electric, telecommunications and potable water services are all present within close proximity to the site. As such, connections for new utility supplies to serve the development should be relatively straightforward. In due course, plans and service loadings will be provided to each service provider to obtain detailed proposals for the provision of new supplies to be obtained.

2.13 Noise

The main source of noise affecting the development site is road traffic noise from the A40. A full noise assessment identifies that closed standard thermal double-glazed windows with trickle ventilation would likely be sufficient to achieve internal noise levels compliant with design criterion in BS 8233:2014 for proposed dwellings in all areas of the site. For proposed dwellings closest to the eastern site boundary, uprated glazing and ventilation may be required

2.14 Air quality

The application site is set well back from the A40 trunk road. An air quality assessment demonstrates that future residents of the proposed development will experience acceptable air quality, with pollutant concentrations well below air quality objectives.

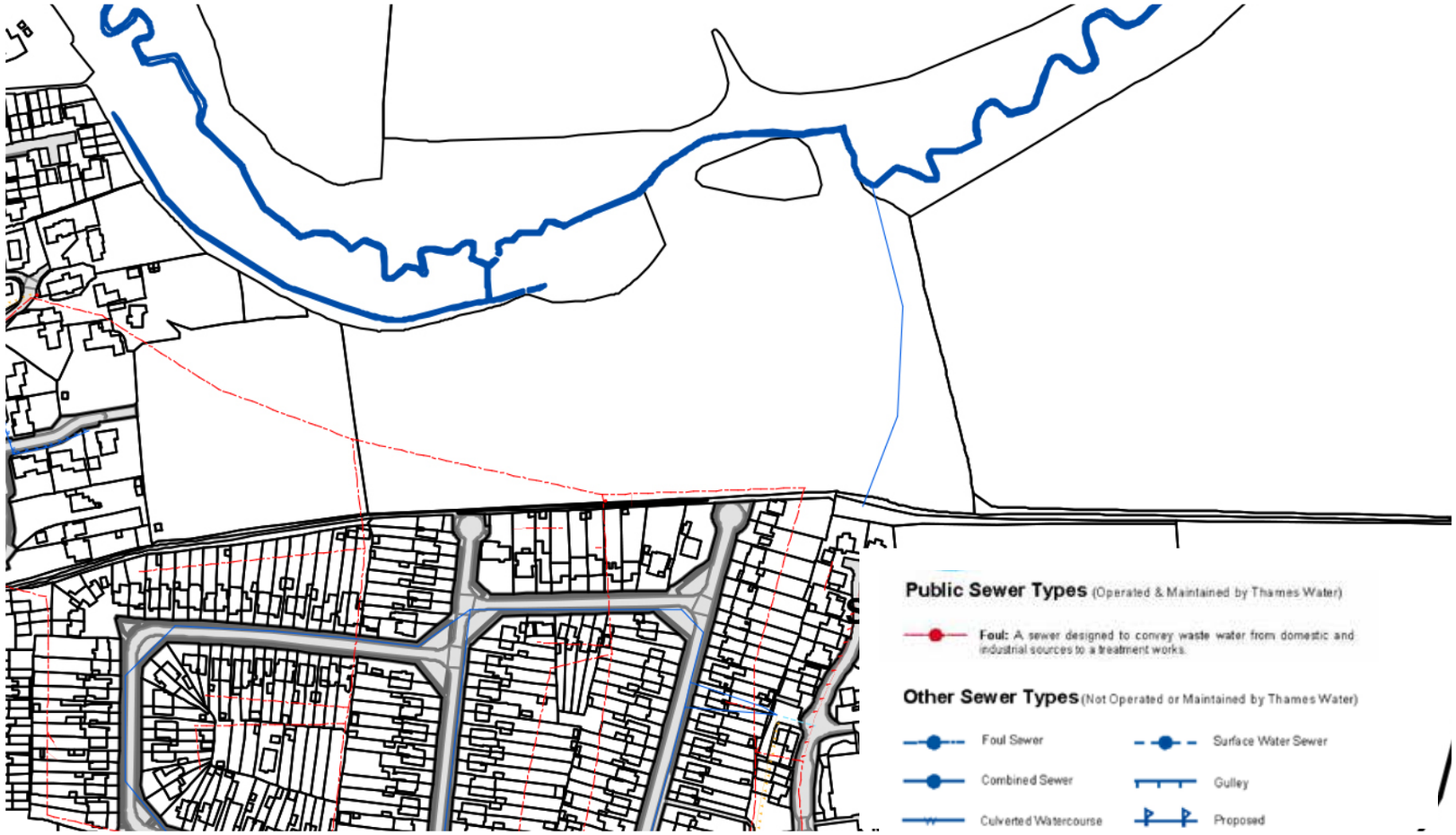


Figure 18: Sewer Map

2.15 Character

The streets directly to the south of the site provide a spacious setting for 1930s housing, with tree-lined verges connecting residential areas into the fabric of Oxford. These streets provide a homogeneous character typical of their time, with long back gardens and very low densities. Housing blocks show a profligate use of land: for example, the block defined by Hill View, Burdell Avenue, Meredith Avenue and Delbush Avenue is some 100m x 200m. This kind of block size is less permeable and less walkable, and does not optimise the use of residential land with a density of some 20-25dph.

To the west there are also streets originally built in the inter-war period but also including some more recent infill, with a range of densities, house types and styles. Some of these streets (for example Waynflete Road) have a very 'open' character, with long distance views to the countryside; others are more contained (Watermill Way, Bayswater Farm Road), but still with a green / leafy character.

Barton Park is a strategic site west of Barton. The site is partially developed and includes a wide range of housing typologies from 5-storey apartment blocks to smaller houses. Most of the garden sizes are small, optimising the use of land, with some interesting linked homes and parking arrangements that minimise the impact of cars in the public realm. Barton Park is quite different to the neighbouring area of Barton, which is much lower density.

We do not propose that the existing street or architectural characters seen in the area, and directly adjacent to the site, should be replicated in this application. The site feels quite separate to the adjacent residential areas and is visually contained. It can create its own character appropriate to the site, with densities that better reflect the current importance of optimising green field land, and a design that responds to the specific characteristics of this site.

Figure 19: *Areas of Character Study*

Delbush Avenue, Sandhills

Net Density
about 25 dwellings per hectare

Key Design Elements:
- residential street with narrow verges including small street trees
- footpaths on both sides
- on plot parking with additional on-street parking
- predominantly brick front boundaries with some timber fencing, hedges or open boundaries

- semi-detached houses predominantly 2 storeys, up to 2.5 storeys
- buildings set back from street with 6-8m front gardens of planting interspersed with hard-surfaced parking areas
- Brick and render façades with symmetric bays
- Hipped roofs with central chimneys

Comments
- low densities inappropriate to optimise land use
- high parking levels for Oxford location

Waynflete Road, Sandhills

Net Density
about 30 dwellings per hectare

Key Design Elements
- residential street with footpaths on both sides
- on street parking bays
- on plot parking
- hedgerows to front boundaries with some timber fencing, block and brick walls, hedges or open boundaries

- terraced and semi-detached houses predominantly 2 storeys
- buildings set back from street with 6-8m front gardens of planting interspersed with hard-surfaced parking areas
- brick and render façades
- low pitch roofs

Comments
- low densities inappropriate to optimise land use
- high parking levels for Oxford location

Wood Avens Way, Barton Park

Net Density
about 50 dwellings per hectare

Key Design Elements
- mews style design
- integrated on plot parking and on-street parking
- shared surface streets with integrated on-street parking
- narrow planting strips to property frontages
- adjacent and overlooking shared pocket park

- two storey facade with third storey behind mansard roof
- bespoke designs of linked detached and terraces
- contemporary brick façades
- single pitch, flat, and mansard roof types

Comments
- appropriate densities for city location, achieved through smaller gardens
- high quality public realm materials and planting

Barton Fields Rd and Norah Way, Barton Park

Net Density
about 40 dwellings per hectare

Key Design Elements
- tree-lined main street with mews behind
- traditional block arrangement with mews through centre
- on plot parking generally to side of properties, additional shared space on street

- three storey apartments to main street, traditional two-storey detached to the rear
- smaller front and rear gardens
- contemporary vernacular brick façades to detached properties with vertical emphasis to windows
- flat roofs to apartments, pitched to houses

Comments
- high quality materials, mixed contemporary vernacular style
- variety of brick colours

Colewell Drive, Sandhills

Net Density
about 55 dwellings per hectare

Key Design Elements
- rural shared drive with some trees and verges
- one-sided development on vehicular cul-de-sac with permeable footways
- parking in under-croft and to the fronts of properties

- three storey apartments and terraces with parking on ground floor
- front garden parking broken up with trees
- rear gardens vary with apartments and terraces
- Juliet balconies and post-modern detailing
- bricks with timber doors and windows
- pitched roofs with gable details

Comments
- higher density delivered with some larger gardens using undercroft parking
- simple shared street with street trees delivers pleasant rural feel

2.16 Character Summary

The area directly to the south of the site is dominated by low density semi-detached housing on broad streets with large plots, and large front and read gardens. The density of these streets (e.g. Delbush Avenue and Burdell Avenue) are too low to be justifiable in the proposed development, and would not optimise the use of this land for housing. A different character of development is proposed for the site that draws on housing characteristics of the wider area, in addition to the unique landscape and topographic elements of the site itself. The site is visually separated from the adjoining streets, particularly the lower parts of the site (from which the streets to the south will not be visible), so whilst there is an opportunity for a transition, delivering a unique character for the site, there is no pressing need (or desire) to replicate the characteristics of the low density streets to the south.

This outline application does not seek to gain consent for the detailed appearance of the scheme, which will be subject to reserved matters submissions. There are some interesting precedents nearby that could inform future development.

Barton Fields Road and Norah Way at Barton Park comprise a mix of apartments and larger bespoke detached units. Something similar in terms of the building volumes and forms would sit easily closest to the existing urban area adjacent to the south of the site, albeit at more suitable densities. There is also potential for higher densities on the site, drawing on the examples from Barton Park, which has more bespoke, contemporary architecture, or from the higher density areas nearby, including 3-storey developments of terraces and apartments at Colewell Drive, Green Ridges, Sweet Green Close and Terrett Avenue.

Materials in the area are dominated by brick, but there are opportunities to follow a ‘colour-based’ approach to materials, drawing on the site and wider area, in addition to the potential to use similar materials.

Most streets in the area benefit from either trees, verges, or both. This is a characteristic that could be incorporated into the proposals regardless of the architectural style, materials or appearance of buildings.

2.17 Analysis summary

A key characteristic of the site is its topography. With some cross sections through the site identifying gradients greater than 1 in 14, topography will be a key determinant of the design for the site.

The lower levels of the site are associated with both the brook and its floodplain, and a number of good quality trees and tree groups. This part of the site is likely to form a key open space, with potential for habitat creation in addition to informal / amenity space for residents to enjoy. This lower part of the site is also suitable for taller buildings.

The bridleway is a key element of the site. It is a public right of way and an established route connecting Barton in the west to the countryside in the east. Although the bridleway is behind existing properties, 'backing' new housing onto this route would enclose it with rear gardens / private spaces. This would be contrary to best practice. A potential design solution is to overlook the bridleway with new housing, set back a little from the (mainly) long gardens of the housing to the south, using trees and new planting to enhance the route.

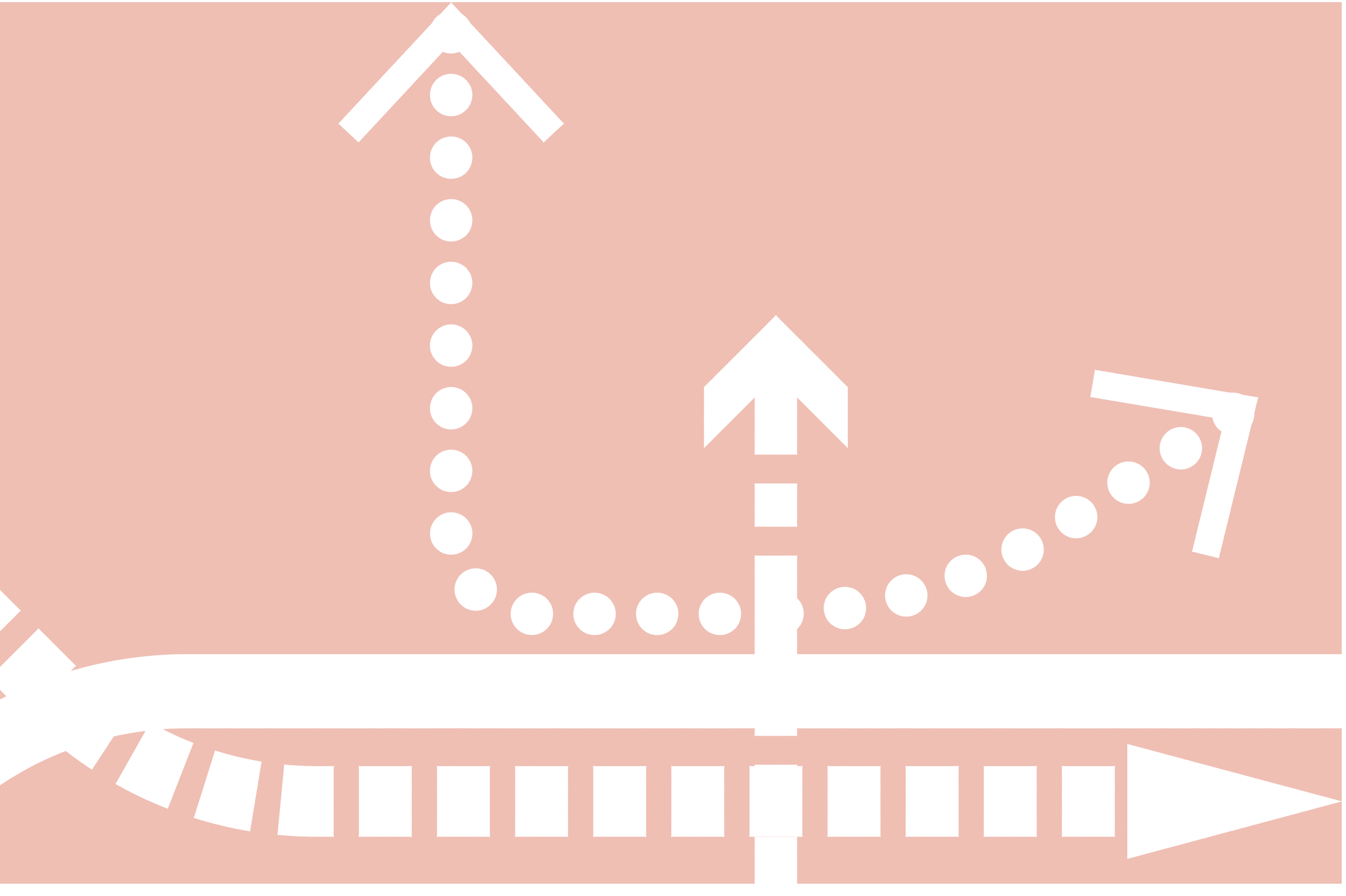
The drainage of the site will need to work together with the design response to the site topography. There are opportunities to provide swales within the streets, and to control the eastern overland flow with a new exposed suds channel. These features would deliver a high quality environment.

Most streets in the area benefit from either trees, verges, or both. This is a characteristic that could be incorporated into the proposals regardless of the architectural style, materials or appearance of buildings.

Figure 20: *Constraints Plan*

03

DESIGN EVOLUTION



3 DESIGN EVOLUTION

3.1 Pre-application consultation strategies

The early strategy for green space was to:

- retain all trees to the north of the site around the brook, and manage this area for biodiversity, flood events and residential amenity;
- retain the north-south hedgerow and associated trees in the western part of the site
- provide new open space to the north of the site, outside of any areas that flood, delivering further (more formal) open space between development and the more natural areas associated with the brook.

The initial strategy for development was to create a series of east-west streets, with east-west plateaus responding to the contours of the site. The land form is such that (see Figure 21) as the levels drop away towards the north of the site, 3- or 4-storey buildings would be no taller than the two storey properties directly to the south of the site. Potential was to be explored for using the contours to create split level housing or undercroft parking.

Layout

The initial layout for the site was therefore based on a series of blocks aligned east-west across the site, following the unique topography in this location. The block structure associated with this strategy is shown in Figure 22.

When this strategy is developed further, it becomes apparent that the appropriate depth of north-south blocks means that only one full 'back-to-back' block can be created in the available depth of the site. This means that the northern 'block' must either comprise apartments (dual aspect), or a bespoke narrow-block solution with, for example, homes facing north and south with gardens to the west or east. We proposed a solution that used a combination of these options (see Figure 23).

During the preparation of the initial design work it became evident that there was demand for a care home in this location. various options were tested for the location of the care home - key requirements being that it should be located as close to the site entrance as possible providing an independent access so that it could be delivered early on / in conjunction with the housing development.

A pre-application drawing pack was prepared identifying the analysis work carried out, and how this had informed the initial design concepts and strategies, so that they could be tested with the Council. A pre application presentation was given to council officers (including the design officer) in June 2023 to test these ideas and ensure that the strategy going forwards was considered sound.

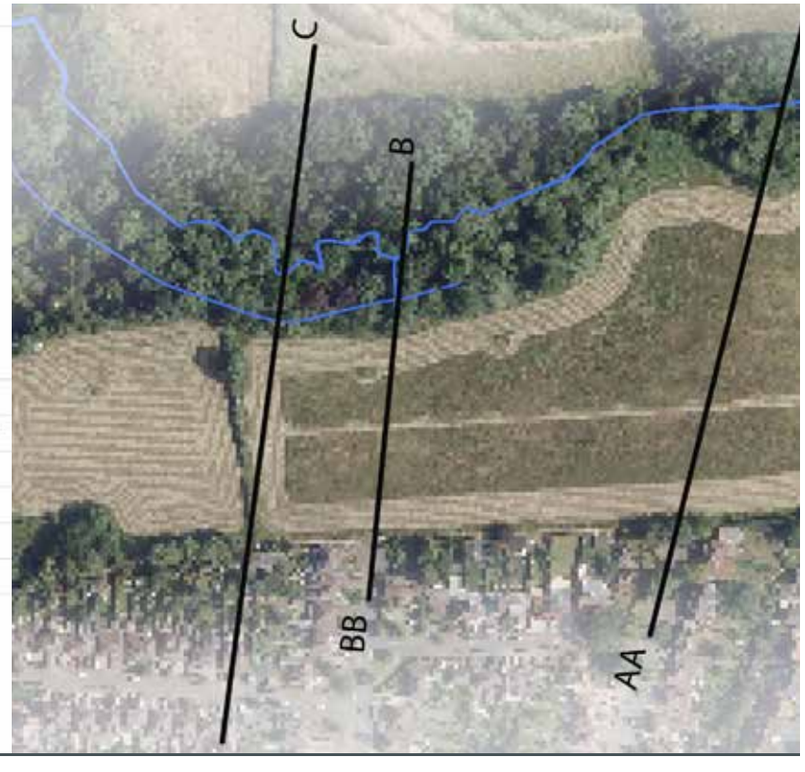


Figure 21: *Section B-BB Concept*

Figure 22: *Concept Plan*

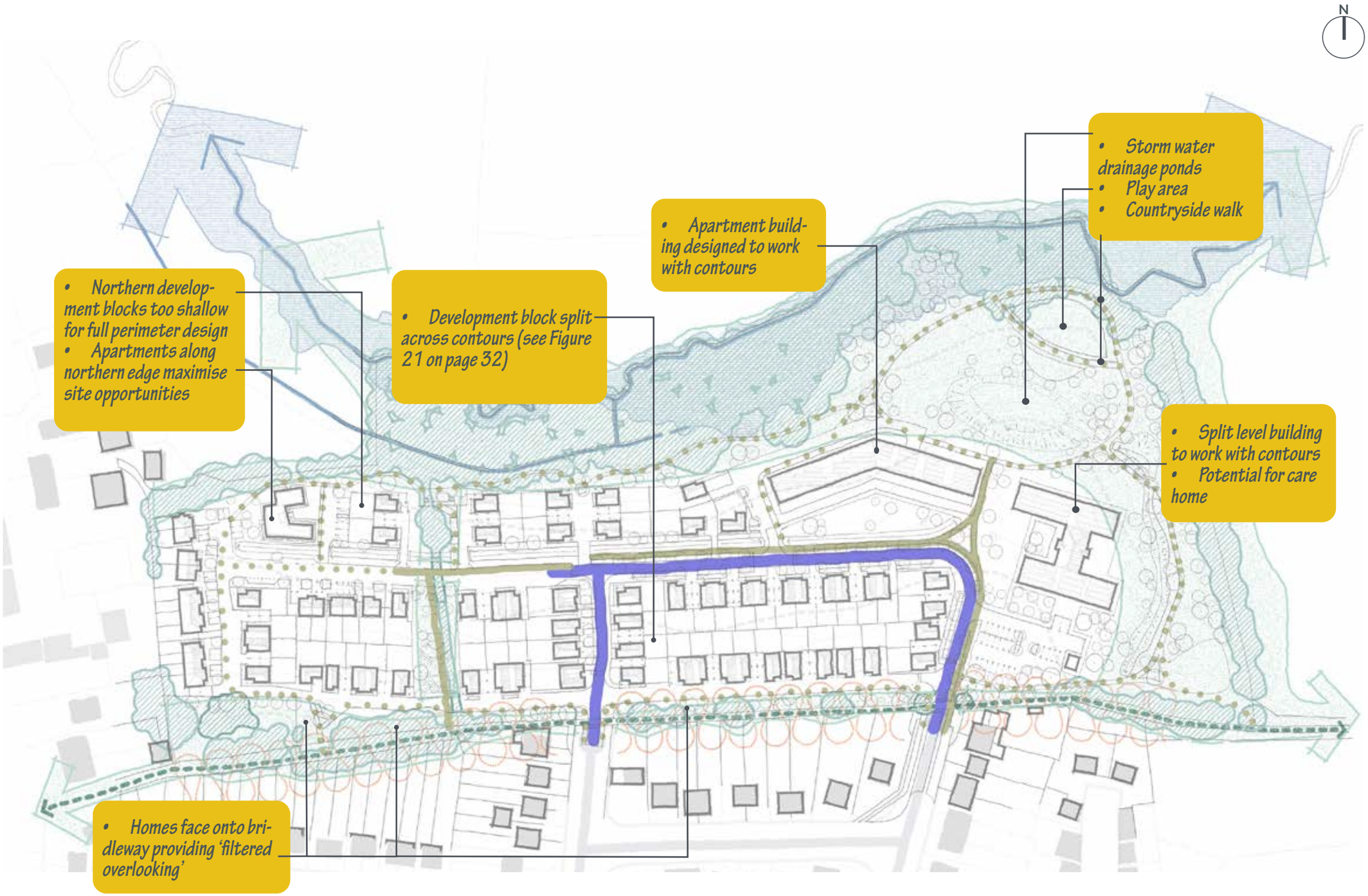


Figure 23: *Key Design Principles*

3.2 Council response: key design issues

A comprehensive response to the initial design work (amongst other issues of strategy and housing mix etc) was provided by the Council in a letter dated 7 September 2023. The key design issues were:

- The need for a care home had not been demonstrated, but was supported in principle
- New dwellings and the care home should be located outside of the Green Belt boundary (as revised in the Local Plan)
- Access to the site, and how this addresses the bridleway needs to be clarified
- Careful consideration of levels is required in relation to landscape and design, with a recommended maximum gradient for walking of 5% (1 in 20) and a maximum of 8% (1 in 12.5)
- Recognition that the creation of a new character for the site may be a more suitable approach responding to the unique topography (and other features) of the site - that would need to be supported by a clearly justified design rationale
- The overall layout of perimeter blocks makes an efficient use of the site and creates a clear and permeable hierarchy of streets and routes
- The emphasis on lateral east-west routes appears to be in appropriate response to the topography of the site
- Careful consideration is needed to be given to amenity and overlooking, and wider visual impact, with the approach to levels. In particular, building heights of the proposed apartment blocks and care home, and the need for retaining structures should be considered in more detail
- Justification supporting the volume and form of scale and massing of the larger footprint buildings will need to be provided
- the relationship of the larger buildings to the open space and woodland north of the development area needs careful consideration
- Any subsequent outline application should be supported by land use parameter plans identifying green infrastructure and heights, with indicative site sections
- A central area of open space would provide better accessibility and overlooking by surrounding properties

Subsequent to the initial pre-application meeting and formal response, the issues raised above have been tested and considered in detail to inform the preparation of the illustrative layout, proposed cross sections and other details outline in this DAS.

Figure 24: *Site section testing*

3.3 Response to pre-application

The comprehensive response from the Council was welcome, confirming the design strategies adopted in principle, but with some concerns requiring further testing.

We agreed that the treatment of the northern edge of the site requires sensitivity, and a further series of sections and testing was therefore carried out in order to inform the final design approach adopted at this edge. A number of further cross sections were produced, reviewing the relationship of the development plateaus to the existing land form and testing these with street gradients. The relationship of the northern edge of the site to existing trees and levels was also tested to ensure that there would be no areas were large retaining structures are required, or that root protection areas for trees would be impacted.

Figure 24 shows the further testing carried out on the 'pre-app' layout. This shows that a large area of 'fill' is needed to ensure that the levels work to deliver housing at the northern edge of the development. The steep bank at the northern edge of the site is likely to impact on Category A and B trees. A different design solution is required.

Figure 25: *Section testing 'single row' of housing on northern block*

Figure 26: *Section testing ground levels engineering, apartment block and potential impact on trees*

Figure 25 shows that with only one 'row' of homes across the northern frontage of the site, it is possible to reduce levels to the north of the properties sufficient to reduce and potentially avoid any impacts on the woodland edge / root protection areas. This design solution means that housing is needed that faces south and north, and therefore requires garden spaces to their east or west. This in turn leads to a number of side gardens facing onto streets or other public spaces. There are precedents that show how this can work, but the design is not optimum. Alternative solutions were therefore tested.

Figure 26 shows how the approach adopted for the 'v' shaped apartment block can be used along the northern edge of the development area to deliver a design solution that works with the contours. The creation of a semi-basement for parking has a number of benefits: -

- parked cars are hidden from the public realm, creating a better street environment; and
- access can be provided at 'ground floor' to the south of the block at street level, with vehicular access the level below.

This approach delivers two storeys to the 'Suds' street to the south of the apartment blocks, and three storeys to the north. Figure 26 shows that the height of a 2- and 3- storey block is much lower than the housing blocks to the south. There is a balance needed between the heights of apartment blocks, and the impact that they create to the north along the woodland edge.

It may be possible to add a further storey to these apartment blocks, set back from the northern elevation in order to minimise impacts to the north. This is a detailed matter that could be explored further should outline consent be granted.

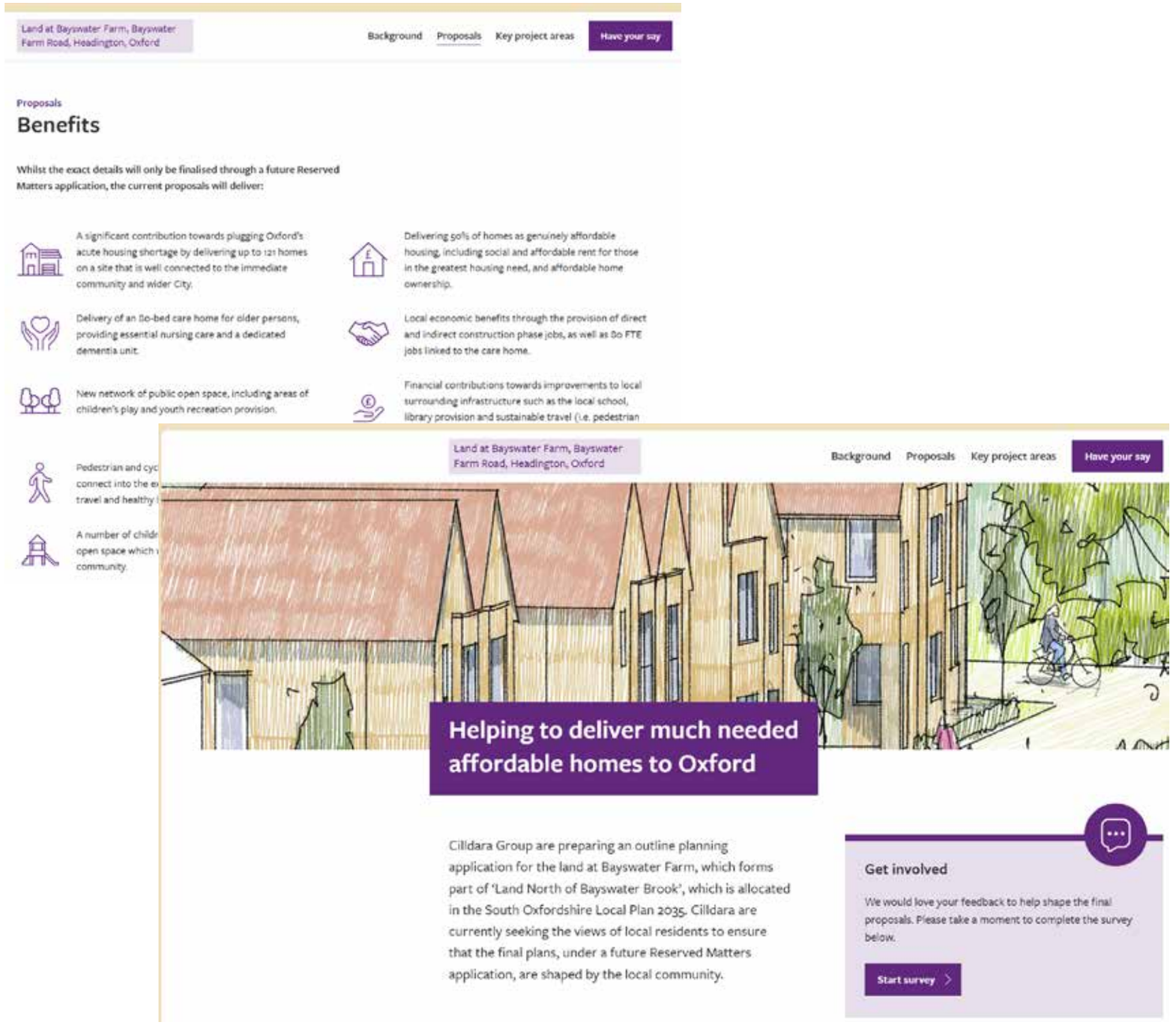
3.4 Public consultation

AA Statement of Community Engagement is submitted with the outline planning application. It provides details of the full range of stakeholder and public engagement that has informed the proposals.

A dedicated project website, Sandhills-consultation.co.uk (www.sandhills-consultation.co.uk) was launched December 2023 to act as an online hub of information on the proposals and to provide channels for feedback. 633 unique users have visited the website and 209 individuals have completed feedback forms online.

Most respondents were opposed to development at Land at Bayswater Farm, primarily citing concerns about development on the green belt, the impact of an increase in traffic on local roads, and a lack of community facilities / amenities in the proposals.

There was some recognition in the feedback of the need for more affordable homes around Oxford, which led to some respondents showing support for the proposals. The most popular types of homes within the proposals were family homes (3-4 bed) and the most popular benefits in the proposals were the integration of existing green spaces, and pedestrian and cycle-friendly streets.



04

PROPOSAL

4 PROPOSALS

4.1 Key design strategies

Three key elements inform the overarching design strategy for this site, determined through the analysis, evaluation and consultation on the site's unique characteristics, technical work, and design iterations informed by technical studies, analysis and consultation:

- The sloping site topography
- Existing green infrastructure
- A movement strategy

Working with topography

This site has a unique topography. The land slopes away from the bridleway along the southern edge of the site towards the Bayswater Brook that defines the northern edge of the site. The proposals create a development that works with the site topography - including the forms of development blocks, the movement around the blocks and through green spaces, and the drainage strategy.

As set out in the previous section, analysis shows that blocks following the contours of the site can be designed to overlook the bridleway, leaving a narrow block to the northern development edge. The northern block requires a more bespoke design as it is too narrow for a 'back-to-back' block. Apartments are proposed that will provide active frontages to both north and south elevations, overlooking the street to the south and the brook to the north. Transect studies have identified an opportunity for these apartments to be taller buildings - responding to the topography - although due to concerns raised by South Oxfordshire District Council the heights of these buildings have been limited to two storeys, with under-croft parking making the best use of topography to hide cars from public areas.

Although this is an outline application, considerable work has been carried out to ensure that street gradients are generally less than 1 in 20, with a maximum 1 in 14.

Green infrastructure

The green spaces, in particular to the north of the site, are a unique benefit to the site, and provide a strategic east-west open space along the length of the site, following the Bayswater Brook. This provides and area for storm water storage, protects the bat habitats within the woodland, but also provides some controlled access to the edges of the woodland. There are additional opportunities for green spaces that have been incorporated in the illustrative layout: a further east-west linear green space following the course of the bridleway, green spaces to the east of the site bordering the countryside edge and a north-south corridor associated with the existing north-south hedgerow (and trees) to the west of the site.

A further green corridor is created as part of the street network, with a sustainable urban drainage channel and verge running east-west through the site, complemented with tree planting.

Movement

The movement structure for the site works in conjunction with the site topography and overall strategy for development. East-west streets serve the housing blocks along the contours of the site, avoiding the need for significant engineering works. The southern east-west street works with the bridleway, providing a low-key shared surface for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles - but without a full through-route for vehicles. The bridleway is separated from the street with a verge and planting, and connects into the movement network. This provides additional options for pedestrians and cyclist, with wider links west to the urban areas of Sandhills and Barton, and east to the countryside.

The development strategies (together with the site analysis and evaluation) has informed a series of development principles, used to ensure that the unique aspects of the site are used to inform a proposal that maximises the benefits that arise from them.

The three strategies above are explained in more detail as part of the following sections of the DAS.

Key design principles

- The layout of housing blocks and movement network should responds to the key site features, topography and landscape
- No development in floodplain
- Development blocks split across contours and orientated along contours
- New homes set back from existing housing to face onto bridleway providing 'filtered overlooking'
- Connect existing streets into site and along contour lines to work with the gradient: makes access for all easier to deliver
- Maximise permeability
- Pedestrian / cycle routes follow contours (desire lines)
- Leisure routes for wider walks follow brook corridor and hook into existing bridleway
- Taller apartment buildings along northern edge nearer to brook responds to level changes and maximises housing opportunities; and
- Existing vegetation and integrate floodplain / brook corridor to expand green infrastructure and create new wildlife connections.

4.2 Land use and amount

Housing

The housing typologies proposed emerge from the design strategies for the site, which leads to a range of houses and apartments. Housing is proposed on the upper levels of the site, adjacent to the existing suburban housing area of Sandhills. To the north of the site, where the land falls away, a range of dual aspect apartments are proposed. In total, the illustrative layout accommodates 61 houses and 60 apartments, in a mix broadly in accordance with the Council's strategic housing market assessment.

Green infrastructure

The quality and design of green infrastructure is examined in more detail in subsequent sections. In relation to the Council's policy for open space, the table in Figure 27 sets out the requirements and provision on site. The proposals deliver a range of public open space features in excess of the policy requirements, and significantly in excess of the total open space required. Financial contributions will be made towards the deliver of allotments off-site. There are opportunities open to the Council to explore financial contributions towards nearby existing play areas (if appropriate), as the application progresses.

Illustrative Layout Housing Mix				
Type	Houses	Apartments	No.	%
1b	-	22	22	19
2b	1	32	33	28
3b	41	6	47	41
4b+	19	-	19	12
TOTAL	61	60	121	100
Care Home		80 bedrooms		

Open Space Provision			
Typology	Standard ha/1,000	Requirement (ha)	Amount delivered (ha)
Parks & Gardens / Amenity Space	1.40	0.71	3.21
Equipped Play Space	0.25	0.08	0.08
Teenage / MUGA	0.30	0.09	0.11
TOTAL		0.88	3.40

Figure 27: *Illustrative layout*

4.3 Layout

Development blocks

Section 4.1 identifies that one of the key influences on the design of the proposals is the sloping topography of the site, (see Figures 13 and 14, which show the existing topography and site sections). The layout is derived from the following principles that inform the general layout of development blocks:

a) they should form 'perimeter blocks' that look outwards onto public space and securely contain private space to the rear

b) blocks need to overlook existing spaces, i.e. the bridleway corridor and the green spaces to the north and east of the site (to the west it is possible to 'back' onto existing dwellings

c) streets should generally follow the contours, forming longer east-west streets and shorter north-south streets, avoiding large amounts of land movement and engineering works and instead working with the contours.

Following these principles, the most southern development block needs to provide some space for the bridleway to be widened and accommodated within a green corridor, associated with housing that overlooks this route. A shared street is proposed with a green verge and tree planting adjacent to the bridleway to minimise infrastructure in this location. With a back-to-back distance of 21m in accordance with the South and Vale design guide this block there is not sufficient space to the north of the block to provide a further full 'perimeter block' to the north.

The northern part of the site therefore requires a bespoke design, to maximise overlooking of public spaces. Section 3 of this DAS shows how different options were tested in relation to these block structures. The design solution is to deliver dual aspect apartment blocks along the northern development edge that will overlook the street to the south, and the open space to the north. Working with the contours, these blocks will have a perceived height of two storeys from the street to the south, with parking hidden underneath the ground floor in a semi-basement cut into the slope of the site and accessed from its northern edge.

Perimeter block structures follow best practice and the advice in the South and Vale design guide. They assist in 'designing out crime' by maximising overlooking of surrounding streets. The use of dual aspect apartment blocks at the lower part of the site ensures further overlooking of surrounding public areas.

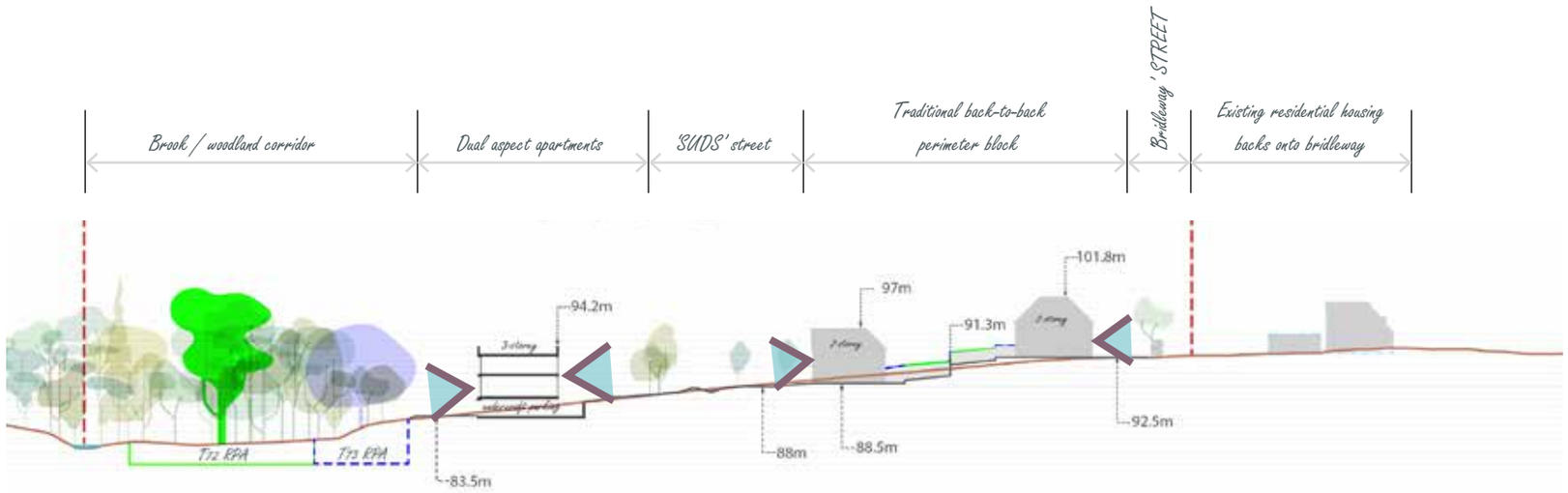


Figure 28: Section CC' showing block relationships

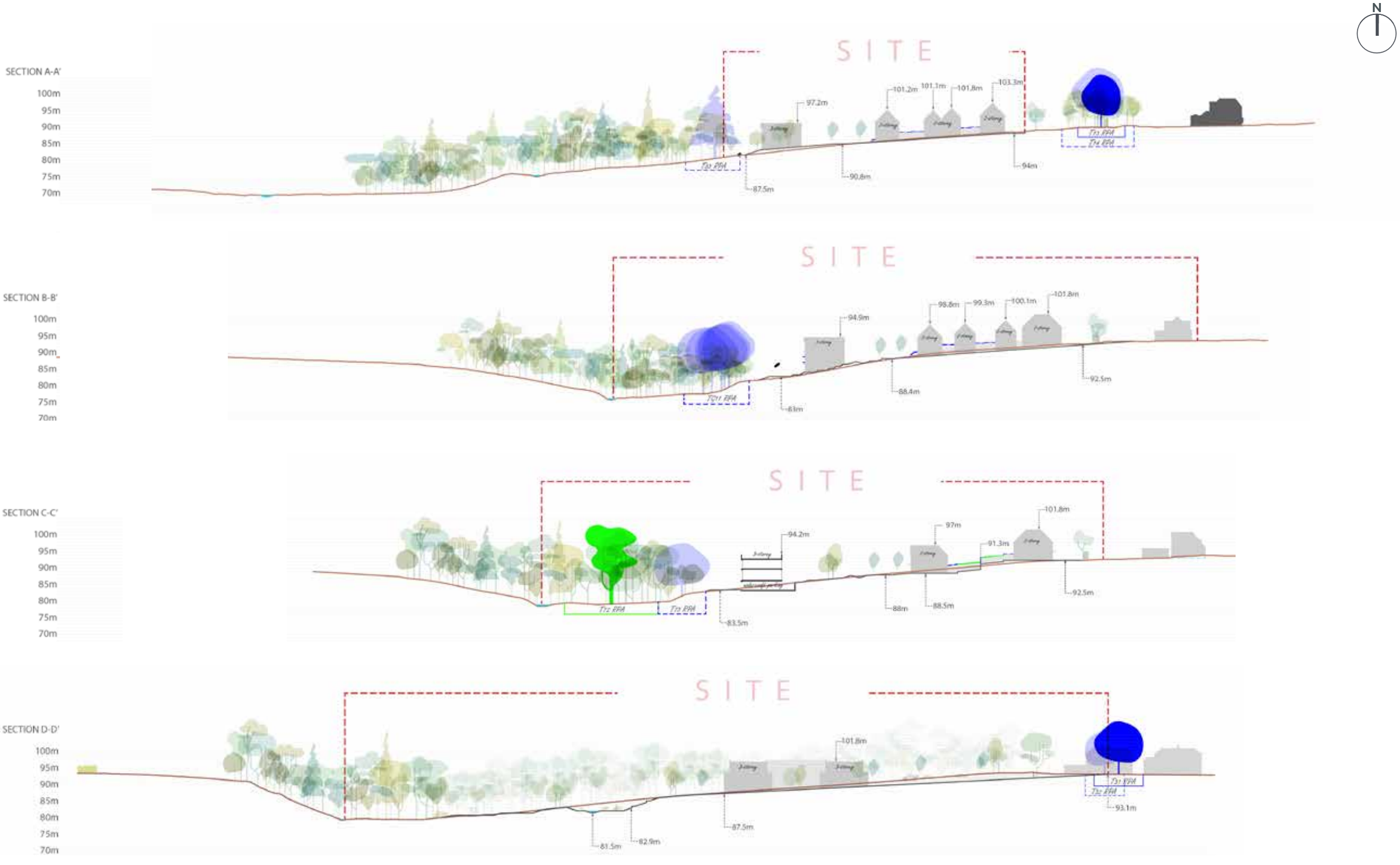


Figure 29: *Proposed Site Sections*

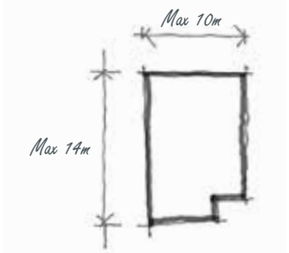
Scale, massing and building heights

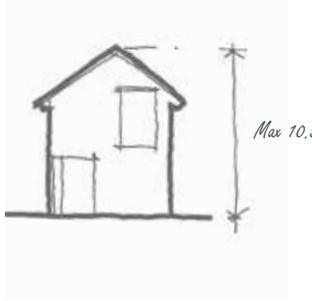
The cross sections in Figures 28 show the proposed building heights will work with the levels of the site. Housing is proposed to be generally two storey with pitched roofs. Ridge heights above external ground level are a maximum 10.5m. A building height parameter plan has been included with the outline application that sets maximum building heights above ordnance datum.

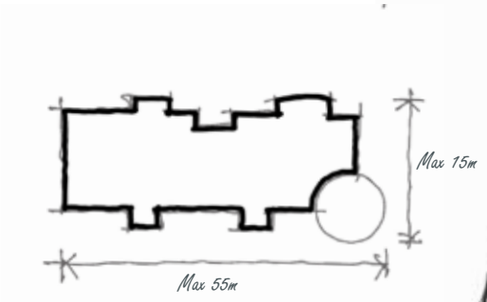
The housing includes detached and semi-detached properties, and a few terraces (at the western part of the site). Individual housing footprints shown are 13m x 9m, with a maximum of 14 x 10m suggested in case a future builder agrees with the Council that some larger homes are required. The larger volumes created by terraces will be broken up as the terraces step down the street, with breaks in the roofs in order to accommodate level changes.

The largest volumes will be created by the apartment blocks and care home. The illustrative masterplan indicates three separate blocks, and two linked blocks to the east (that will be at different levels associated with changes in contours in this location). The widths of the apartment blocks shown are generally about 12-13m. It is likely (and desirable) that the apartment buildings will have elevations articulated with features, voids and balconies that will mean the actual widths vary. A maximum of 15m is shown on the illustrative layout. The lengths (east-west) of apartment buildings ranges from 44m to 53m. The 'v' shaped block comprises two apartment buildings linked together. The shape of the building and split in levels will articulate this building form (or it could be separated into two buildings in detailed submissions).

The care home is set within sloping land and has a plan form and cross section that minimises its visual impacts. The 'H' shaped building means that each individual wing has a width of no more than 12m (this increase to a plan measurement of about 15m at the centre of the building). The building is set into the site contours, and the upper floor is proposed to be set back, considerably reducing the visual impact of the building (see section in Figure 29).







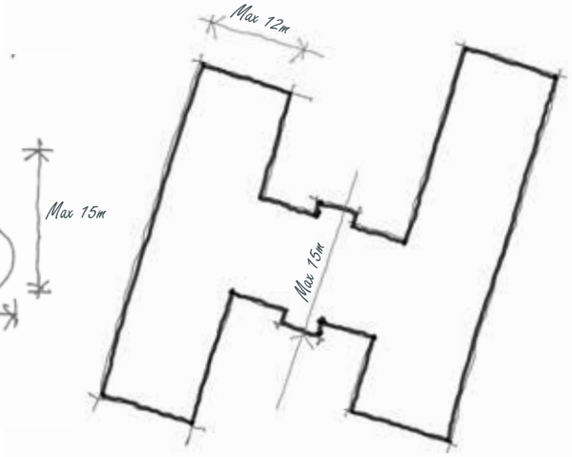


Figure 30: *Building Height Parameters*

Movement

The movement network is design to:

- link in to the existing footpath network including the bridleway, the footpaths on Delbush Avenue and Burdell Avenue, and be able to provide a potential future link to the north-west of the site should this become available
- provide vehicle links to Delbush Avenue and Burdell Avenue
- provide a clear street network that aids navigation and helps define different parts of the site, focussing on the character of streets rather than the needs of vehicles

Walking and cycling

The proposals have been designed to provide first for pedestrians and cyclists, then equestrians, before the needs of vehicles. The streets used to serve dwellings (and the care home) are focussed on the quality of the public realm and the environment, rather than on the needs of cars and (for example) refuse and delivery vehicles (although these have also been considered). Streets provide some of the main routes through the site for pedestrians and cyclists, but these are supplemented with further walking and cycling routes.

Figure 31 shows additional pedestrian links through the site. The bridleway is a right of way for pedestrians (together with horses), linking the site to the urban area of Barton to the west and the countryside to the east. The bridleway is supplemented in the site with further connections to the east and west, providing walking and cycling links.

New pedestrian / cycle links will provide connections to the play areas in the north-east and east of the site, providing access for new and existing residents in the area. New paths will also provide informal routes through the edges of the woodland (carefully designed to avoid impacts on ecology), with the potential to link through to the north-west of the site linking to Bayswater Farm Road. This is currently a private road, but if adopted in the future could provide additional permeability for pedestrians or cyclists heading west towards the leisure centre, green spaces, or other facilities in Barton.

Streets

Figure 31 shows how different streets within the site will deliver a structure and character to the proposals. A primary street is proposed from Delbush Avenue that will carry the most vehicular traffic (although vehicular traffic levels will be low in any case), and links round to Burdell Avenue, providing a choice of vehicular routes through the site. The primary street has a vehicular carriageway for most of its length, with footpaths separated from the carriageway by a kerb. The main east-west part of this street is also proposed to deliver a verge and regularly-spaces street trees, along with a sustainable drainage channel as part of the blue-green infrastructure for the site. The primary street has further street trees on the north-south connections.

Further information on the access arrangements from Delbush Avenue and Burdell Avenue are submitted with the transport assessment, and applied for in detail as part of the outline planning application (see also Section 7 of this DAS). There is an opportunity at the detailed design stage to ensure that these junctions are designed as 'entrance spaces' to the site, focussed on environmental quality, potentially with shared surface spaces framed by trees and other public realm street furniture, indicating the priority to be given at these junctions to pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

The sustainable drainage channel in the primary east-west street continues west from the primary street, forming part of the secondary street to the west. The verge associated with the drainage channel also continues, but with less formal tree planting (making a distinction between the primary and secondary streets). This street also becomes a shared surface, where pedestrians and cyclists are given priority over the car. Trees on the northern side of the primary and secondary street are proposed to be a significant size (5m+) with room for growth, creating a strong green character to the whole of this east west street.

The 'SUDS' street (comprising the east-west primary street and the secondary street) will provide access for delivery and refuse vehicles for the apartment buildings - these will be designed to be serviced from the south.

Tertiary streets are proposed for the remaining parts of the site where vehicular access is needed, with narrower widths and less infrastructure (for example kerbs and separate footways) so that they remain low-key with clear pedestrian and cycle priority. To the north of the proposed apartment blocks, a low-key shared surface street provides for access for pedestrians, cyclists and residents parking (found underneath the buildings). To the south, adjacent to the bridleway, a tertiary street with associated verge and street tree planting (with trees in verges and potentially also within the streets) ensures a more rural approach to the neighbouring bridleway. The bridleway is enlarged to ensure it is a minimum 3m width through the site, and is separated from the neighbouring street by a verge of minimum 2m.

The bridleway and the east-west streets are all relatively flat. North-south streets are shorter, and deal with level changes. None of these are greater than 1 in 14 gradients. For walking (and wheeled transport) where steps are proposed, alternative routes are also available using ramps designed to accommodate wheelchair users, buggies, scooters or other wheeled mobility.

Figure 31: *Street Hierarchy*

Green and blue infrastructure

The site delivers a significant amount of green and blue infrastructure. There key elements to the green infrastructure strategy are: -
a) the significant 'woodland and brook corridor' to the north of the site, that incorporates the floodzone of the Bayswater Brook and the existing woodland.
b) a strategic area of open space to the east of the development area, comprising a new SUDS channel and basin that will incorporate and control surface water flows, together with a large play area
c) An east-west 'SUDS street' providing a drainage channel along its length together with a verge and significant street trees
d) The bridleway corridor, and
e) north-south green links, including the 'hedgerow corridor' incorporating the existing north-south hedgerow and trees through the site, and on the eastern edge of the site.

Brook and woodland corridor

The brook and woodland corridor is a significant existing feature of the site, that forms part of the Bayswater brook floodzone. The arboricultural report that accompanies the outline application notes that this woodland requires some management. It already provides ecological benefits and is also accessed by local residents for informal play. These dual uses for public access and wildlife could be defined through a woodland management plan, that allows some limited public access to the southern edge of the woodland, with the majority of this area protected as a wildlife area. The green infrastructure parameter plan shown in Figure XX identifies this area as a 'woodland management area'.

The brook and woodland corridor provides an east west link through the northern part of the site to the strategic corridors associated with the brook and surrounding tree planting.

Strategic SUDS and play

The eastern and north-eastern parts of the site provide semi-formal landscaped areas, where footpaths meander through informal open space, landscaped with trees and planting associated with the drainage ditches and ponds. Footpaths link in to the residential pedestrian network, to the bridleway, and to the play areas - a potential multi-use games areas and local equipped area of play (a MUGA and LEAP).

SUDS Street

The SUDS street provides an east-west link through the site as part of the street network. This street ciomprises significant street trees, together with a verge and channel associated with site drainage. The channel will feed into the water storage / drainage pond to the north-east of the site. The SUDS street provides a significant green element within the development area.

Bridleway corridor

The bridleway corridor within the site is part of a much wider east-west corridor extending beyond the site's limits. The bridleway is currently narrow in parts, and hard up against existing rear garden fences. Although seemingly seldom used by equestrians, the route should provide for walking, cycling and equestrian use along its length. The bridleway is proposed to be set in the site within a green corridor, comprising a bridleway of appropriate surface, widened to a minimum of 2m, with a further minimum 2m verge incorporating planting and trees. The illustrative layout shows a verge that varies in width, mostly around 3m wide with some limited areas of 2.5m and up to 7+m in others. Tree, hedgerow or shrub planting will be a matter for detailed submissions.

North-south links

There are two key north-south links across the site. The eastern site boundary comprises an existing hedge and tree line that is to be retained as part of the proposals. There are significant existing trees in this corridor that provides green / wildlife links from the bridleway to the brook / woodland corridor. This boundary is retained with open space surrounding it.

Towards the west of the site there is a further north-south green link that incorporates an existing hedgerow and two mature trees. An open space corridor of some 20m is proposed around the hedgerow and trees, to be landscaped informally. The illustrative layout indicates how there is potential for ramps and steps, interspersed with planters (potentially including a communal herb garden) and other 'landscape' furniture (such as benches / seating etc). Whilst not formally proposed as a 'local area of play' this green corridor could provide a naturally landscaped communal area, where residents could meet and neighbouring children play together.

Photo: natural play at the woodland edge

Photo: sustainable drainage channel incorporated into development area

Woodland / brook corridor

Strategic open space with semi-natural managed / controlled access

Children's play spaces

Bridleway

SUDS Street (Avenue)

North-south links

N

Figure 32: *Green Infrastructure Framework*

Figure 33: *Landscape Typologies*

Character and appearance

The character of the proposals is a matter for detailed submissions as this outline planning application reserves issues of appearance, scale, layout and landscape for future consideration.
Nevertheless, some ideas and illustrations are submitted in this DAS to inform the potential reserved matters submissions on these issues.

There are two main building typologies within the site: the housing blocks that form the southern part of the site, and the apartment blocks that form the northern part of the site.

Existing housing adjacent to the south of the site comprises low density suburban semi-detached housing. Although existing housing is designed in clear perimeter blocks (similar to that proposed) the densities are too low for this pattern of layout to be replicated on the site. The bridleway and its associated corridor of trees and planting forms a strong visual divide between the site and the existing urban area, creating a helpful visual break between the existing urban area and the proposals.

The character of the proposals adjacent to the bridleway and existing built edge of Oxford is proposed to respond to the existing area with lower densities of between 30-35 dwellings per hectare (the existing urban area has a density of about 20 dwellings per hectare). Densities on the site will increase towards the brook, where the apartments deliver a slightly higher density of around 45 dwellings per hectare. This increase in density adjacent to the countryside is not favoured by planning policy, which requires a decrease in density towards the countryside edge. In this case, the unique characteristics of the site lead to this approach - in fact, ignoring the site characteristics and not allowing them to guide the approach to development on the site would be contrary to the South and Vale design guide and to national planning design guidance.

The illustrative layout leads to the potential for a number of different character areas associated with parts of the site:
i) housing by the bridleway
ii) the SUDS street
iii) parkland edge
iv) care home

Some further ideas and illustrations associated with these areas are set out below.

Housing by the bridleway

The housing associated with the bridleway will be characterised by its lower density, and the low key street associated with it, including a shared surface, and planted verge delineating the bridleway route.
Housing should be no more than two storeys, with parking to the sides of properties assisting in ensuring that the street is free of clutter and can be used for play / for residents to meet and chat with each other.
We suggest a contemporary form of semi-detached dwellings that reflect the existing properties to the south, but with a site coverage that assists in optimising the use of the site.
The view below shows a view of the 'bridleway street' looking east across the proposed play area, with a large verge and trees separating the street from the bridleway

Character and appearance

Suds street

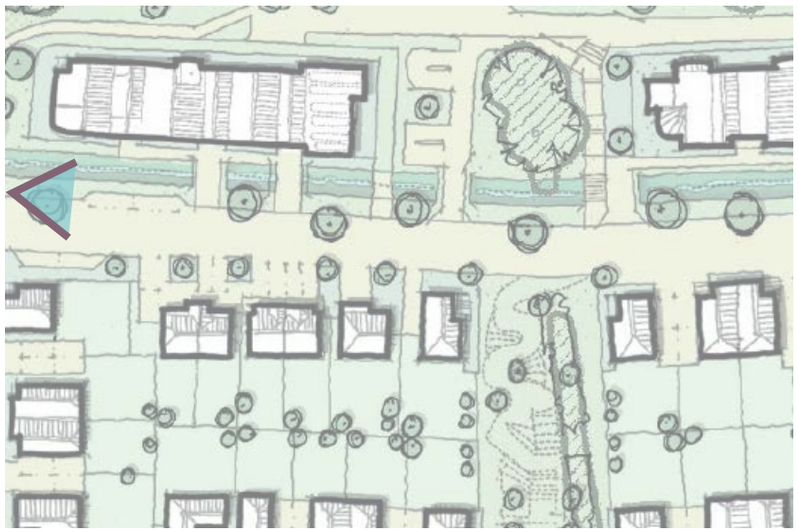
The character of the SUDS street will primarily be informed by the street itself. Key elements of this will be the SUDS (drainage) channel, verge, and street trees. In particular the trees to the northern side of the street which should be of significant size and with the space to grow.

To the east, this street is likely to have a carriageway with a verge and footpaths on either side (as part of the primary street) - with more formal, regular spaces tree planting. To the west, the street will be more informal, with a shared surface and trees located sometimes in the verge and sometimes in build-outs in the street.

The SUDS channel itself will be a key feature, with bridges over the channel on the northern side in order to access the apartments. Apartment buildings will be seen as two storeys from the SUDS street although to the north the land slopes away and the blocks become three-storeys in height (with parking in the semi-basement).

The detailed design may articulate the levels of this street further.

It is expected that the apartment blocks would overlook this street with balconies at first floor.

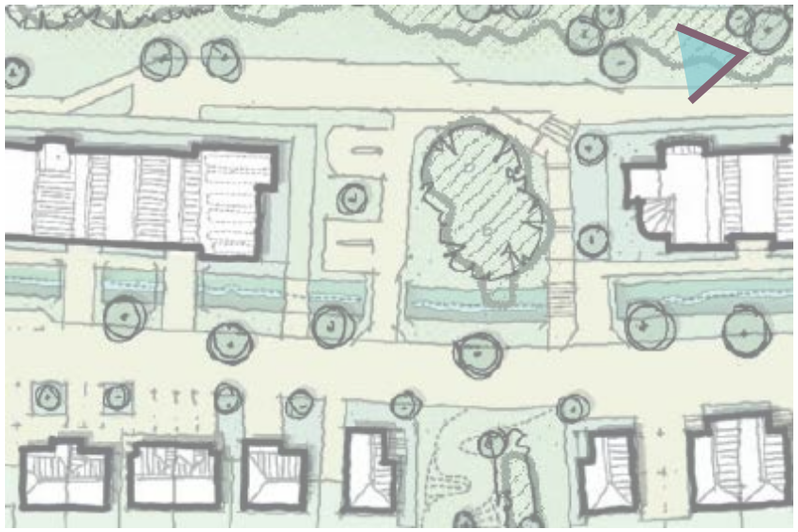


Parkland edge

The parkland edge will have a character derived from the interface between apartment blocks and the woodland corridor. It will partly be defined by the detailing, form and materials of the apartment blocks and partly by the design of the public realm.

The main north-facing façades of the apartment buildings will need to be articulated to provide views of the parkland edge, but to minimise light spillage (see the Code section of the DAS). Timber or other natural materials would work well in proximity to the woodland, with potential features such as sliding timber external louvres on this north-facing elevation. Balconies should be kept to a minimum - these will be more prominent on the southern facade of the dual aspect units.

The public realm will be carefully designed to integrate access to naturally landscaped open space with the edge of the development, but to protect the wildlife associated with the brook and woodland corridor. Public realm features could include natural timber features for children's play. Lighting should be low level and low key.



Care home

The care home will have an architectural character of its own, designed to integrate in terms of its scale and volume with the surrounding buildings and landscape.

4.4 Sustainability and climate mitigation

The proposed development will adopt the nationally recognised energy hierarchy of reducing energy demand, using energy more efficiently and, subsequently, providing clean renewable and low carbon energy, if appropriate. A series of design principles have been adopted within the masterplanning process and will be considered in building designs to both passively and actively reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency. Several opportunities for incorporating renewable and low carbon energy generation technologies have been identified including solar photovoltaic panels, solar water heating, and air source heat pumps which will be considered as the detailed design progresses.

- Low carbon construction material to help reduce embodied carbon by 50%
- Enhanced tree planting to increase on-site carbon capture and urban shading
- Use of renewable technology including air source heat pumps and PV panels on roofs to generate electricity
- Electric vehicle charging points for all homes
- High water efficiency standards for new development through sustainable drainage strategies
- Promoting active, zero carbon transport such as walking, cycling and public transport

Photo: Electric car charger

Photo: Heat Pump

Photo: Photovoltaic roof panels

4.5 Health and wellbeing

Active lifestyle

The site is designed to encourage active travel, with a series of footpaths and streets designed to promote walking and cycling, and to connect with local facilities. Streets are designed to accommodate street trees, sustainable drainage networks and verges, providing 'nature on the doorstep'. The network of open spaces and leisure routes provides direct access to green space and the countryside, including places for meeting friends, for play and quiet contemplation.

Community

The site provides a residential community of its own, that will integrate over time with the wider 'social community' of Sandhills, including the community hall and primary school. Linkages with the existing area will allow surrounding residents wider access to the countryside in this location, providing benefits that in time will knit the communities together. Streets designed for people and pedestrians rather than cars are proven to encourage neighbours to engage with each other, and also for children to play in the street. 'Formal' locations for Local Areas of Play (LAPs) and a Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) a re identified in the plans, but there are also opportunities for further areas designed into the layout for communal planting and seating areas, encouraging residents to use the streets, talk and become friends.

Financial contributions towards improvements to infrastructure (where the development may have an impact) such as education, the community hall, and off-site improvements to cycle and pedestrian links will ensure that infrastructure currently serving the existing communities are provided with additional capacity and funding to accommodate the new residents.

Stewardship

Management of green spaces and some of the streets will be discussed with the District and County Councils as part of the dialogue following submissions of the planning application.

05

DRAFT CODE PRINCIPLES

5 DRAFT CODE PRINCIPLES

5.1 Draft code principles

A number of key issues have been raised by the Council where detailed considerations needs to be given to elements of the scheme to ensure that it delivers a high quality place that minimises environmental impacts. The application is in outline with all matters except access (junctions) reserved for future consideration. It is expected that if planning consent is granted there would be a condition for the production of a design code that would control detailed elements of the site.

This section of the DAS sets out in principle, at the request of the Council, what elements should be given further consideration in a future design code. The key issues are: -

- Building heights and volumes and their visual impact
- Dealing with cross sections and level changes with minimal ugly infrastructure (such as dominant retaining walls), and
- The woodland edge and its interface with built development.

Care home levels and landscape

The parameter plans accompanying this outline application include a heights parameter plan (shown in Figure 30) that limits the overall height of development across the site. The maximum heights are based on two storey housing, and three storey apartment blocks, where a semi-basement is cut into the contours of the site to hide parked cars. Housing and apartments sit on relatively level plateaus that follow the contours of the site, enabling streets to be generally less than 1 in 20 gradients, and a maximum of 1 in 14. The maximum building heights have been tested with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, together with verified views of the site from key surrounding view points.

The site is divided into three different built elements: houses, apartment blocks, and a care home. Section 6 of this DAS shows how the care home sits within the contours, minimising its impact. The cross-section in Figure 35 below shows the edge of the care home, and its relationship with the proposed drainage pond.

The following principles should be followed to ensure the delivery of a high quality landscape around the drainage pond, its relationship with the care home, and this eastern end of the woodland corridor:

- Drainage pond to be landscaped to create visual interest and wildlife habitats, with opportunities for decked public viewing access, and associated footpaths
- Where (or if) larger gradients are necessary, the land should be tiered to minimise retaining walls and in any case none more than 1.25m. Where greater level changes are needed, landscaped terraces should be used with associated planting / gabions
- The area around the care home, drainage pond and local equipped area of play should have integrated functionality - play potentially associated with some of the (shallow) drainage zones and planting that is both visually attractive and creates opportunities for wildlife
- The zone at the edge of the woodland should be subject to planting and management controlled through a woodland management plan. The plan will enable some limited access at the edge of the woodland, whilst limiting accessibility to areas where wildlife needs stronger protection
- Lighting should be limited at the woodland edge so that there is no significant effect on bat populations.

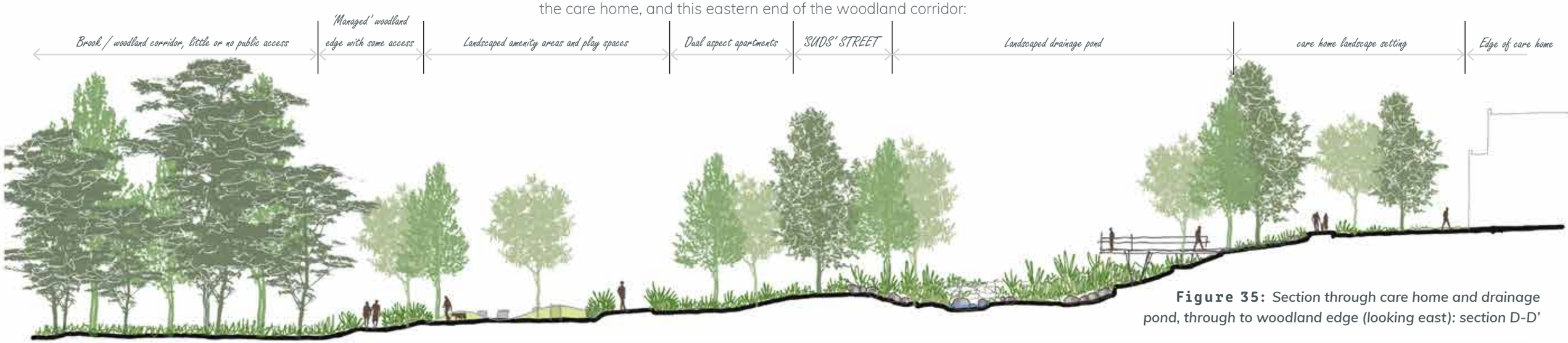


Figure 35: *Section through care home and drainage pond, through to woodland edge (looking east): section D-D'*

Apartment/ woodland edge

The relationship of the apartment buildings, their volume / bulk and the level changes associated with them will need further consideration with the submission of reserved matters. The cross-sections in Figure XX (page X) of this DAS show how the general arrangement will work across the site. Figure 36 below shows an illustration of how some of the principles could be embedded into the proposals. These include principles that will minimise the visual impact of the apartment blocks, enable gradients to be incorporated in a positive way to deliver a high quality environment, and ensure that ecological impacts on the woodland edge are minimal. This is not an exhaustive list, but some key principles are: -

- Access should be provided from the SUDS street to the woodland edge in a variety of forms, with steps and ramps interspersed with landscape / trees / planters, providing access for everyone
- Seating should be provided on the woodland edge every 100m to ensure that elderly or infirm residents or visitors have somewhere to rest
- Materials to the northern façades of the apartment blocks should: -
  - be non-reflective, to minimise light reflections from the building towards the woodland, particularly at night
  - be of natural, aphotic material to minimise visual intrusion and to provide a visual link with the natural woodland area
- Balconies to the apartments should be focussed on the southern side of the block. Most of the apartments will be dual aspect to enable southern balconies. Where balcony space is provided to the northern edge, its impact should be minimised and external lighting should only be provided if vital
- Lighting to the access streets for apartment blocks should be bollard down-lighters with minimal light spill
- The woodland management zone will consider lighting in detail, ensuring that where possible night-time lighting is provided as down-lighters in bollards or similar luminaires that minimise impacts on ecology. Where necessary to protect the woodland ecology, night-time lighting will not be provided
- The woodland management zone and management plan will consider how planting, paths, and any public realm furniture (such as benches, picnic area or other seating /shelter) can be integrated to allow limited public access, but ensure that existing wildlife can prosper.

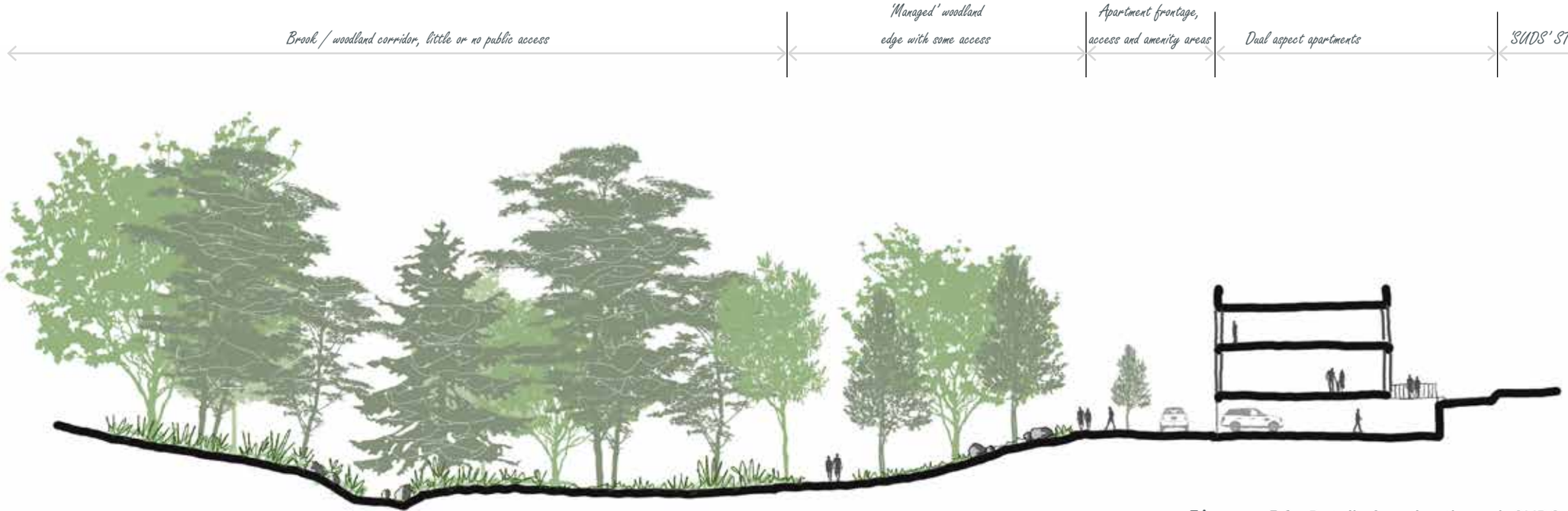


Figure 36: *Detail of section through SUDS street and apartment building, through to woodland edge (looking east): section C-C'*

068

CARE HOME

6 CARE HOME

6.1 Benefits of a care home

The assessment study by HPC on behalf of Care UK details the total statistical bed requirement (current and forecast) within the District. In terms of supply, there are currently 1,269 en suite bedrooms in 2023. This level is detailed in the charts shown in Figure 37 by the horizontal blue line. As identified on the chart, virtual supply / demand parity currently exists, with an undersupply set to increase rapidly post 2025. Future dynamics exclude both attrition and new development, the level and timing of neither being known with certainty.

Paragraph 63-001 of PPG states that the need to provide housing for older people is critical and that a positive approach should be taken to schemes which propose to address that need. Care homes provide a plethora of social, economic and environmental benefits to meet the three strands of sustainable development (as per paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework).

6.2 Type of care home

Residential care homes and nursing homes, including dementia homes: a purpose-built building with individual rooms that consist of a bedroom and an en-suite wet room (in the modern and fit-for-purpose homes that Care UK build). Living facilities would be communal to those who are able to access them and spend time with other residents and their families. Care homes provide a high level of care (usually 24 hours by registered nurses), meeting all activities of daily living. They do not include facilities or services for independent living – for example, the rooms do not have kitchen or living facilities.

Social benefits:

- Providing 80 care bedspaces to elderly people in the local area, where there is currently an undersupply, on a previously developed site and in a sustainable location. The proposal will provide 24/7 nursing care will therefore make an important contribution to meeting the local and national need;
- Relieving pressure on local community and health facilities (including GP services);
- There would be reduced loneliness through the provision of a care home with facilities and enhanced community interaction through community activities;
- Making a material contribution to housing land supply – as per paragraph 035 Reference ID: 68-035-20190722 of the National Planning Policy Guidance, housing for older people, including care homes, count towards housing land supply calculations; and
- Freeing-up market housing - the care home will free-up additional market housing in the area as a result of elderly

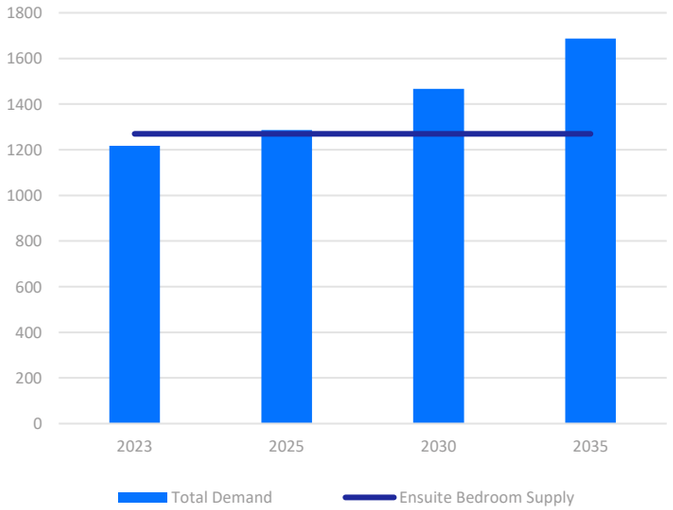
Economic benefits:

(to be afforded significant weight as per paragraph 81 of the Framework)

- The creation of 88 new jobs associated with the provision of a new high-quality care home (carers, registered nurses, gardeners, receptionists etc.);
- The development will create additional construction jobs for local people during the construction phase of the development; and
- The staff will also contribute to the economic prosperity of the area through additional expenditure in local shops, and the area when staff and visitors use sustainable modes of transport.

Environmental benefits:

- The retention and necessary maintenance to existing trees on site (as necessary), as well as planting of new trees and other species;
- Biodiversity net gain, along with a wide range of additional ecological enhancements that will be incorporated within the design including bird and bat boxes, log piles and the planting of flora to attract wildlife;
- Improvements to the thermal efficiency of the walls, windows and roof, reducing air permeability and where possible, will use renewable energy as part of the heating and hot water provision; and
- Providing renewable sources of energy, including solar panels on the roof, electric charging vehicle spaces, and air source heat pumps.



	2025 Total Elderly	2030 Total Elderly
Demand		
Statistical demand (incl. forecasts)	1,286	1,467
Supply		
Current supply of en suite bedrooms	1,269	1,269
Outstanding Need		
Under supply of Appropriate Accommodation	17	198

The table above identifies the level of outstanding need across the District – a level approaching 200 ensuite bedrooms by 2030 in the absence of further development.

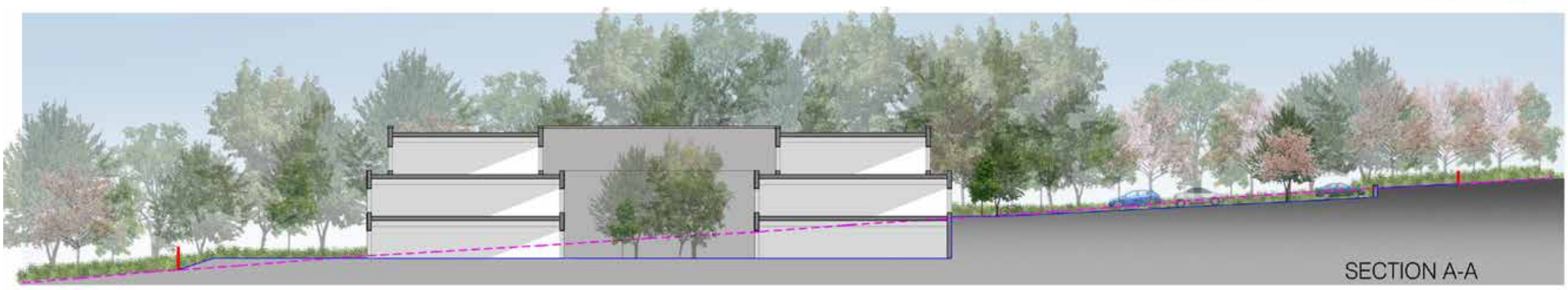
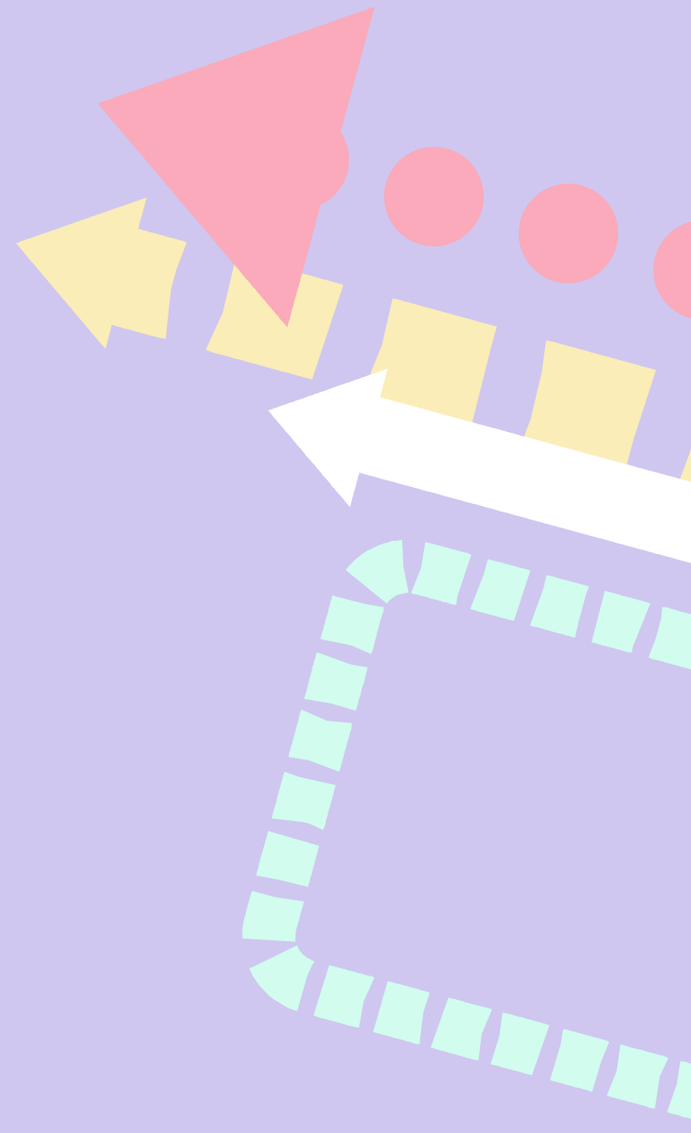
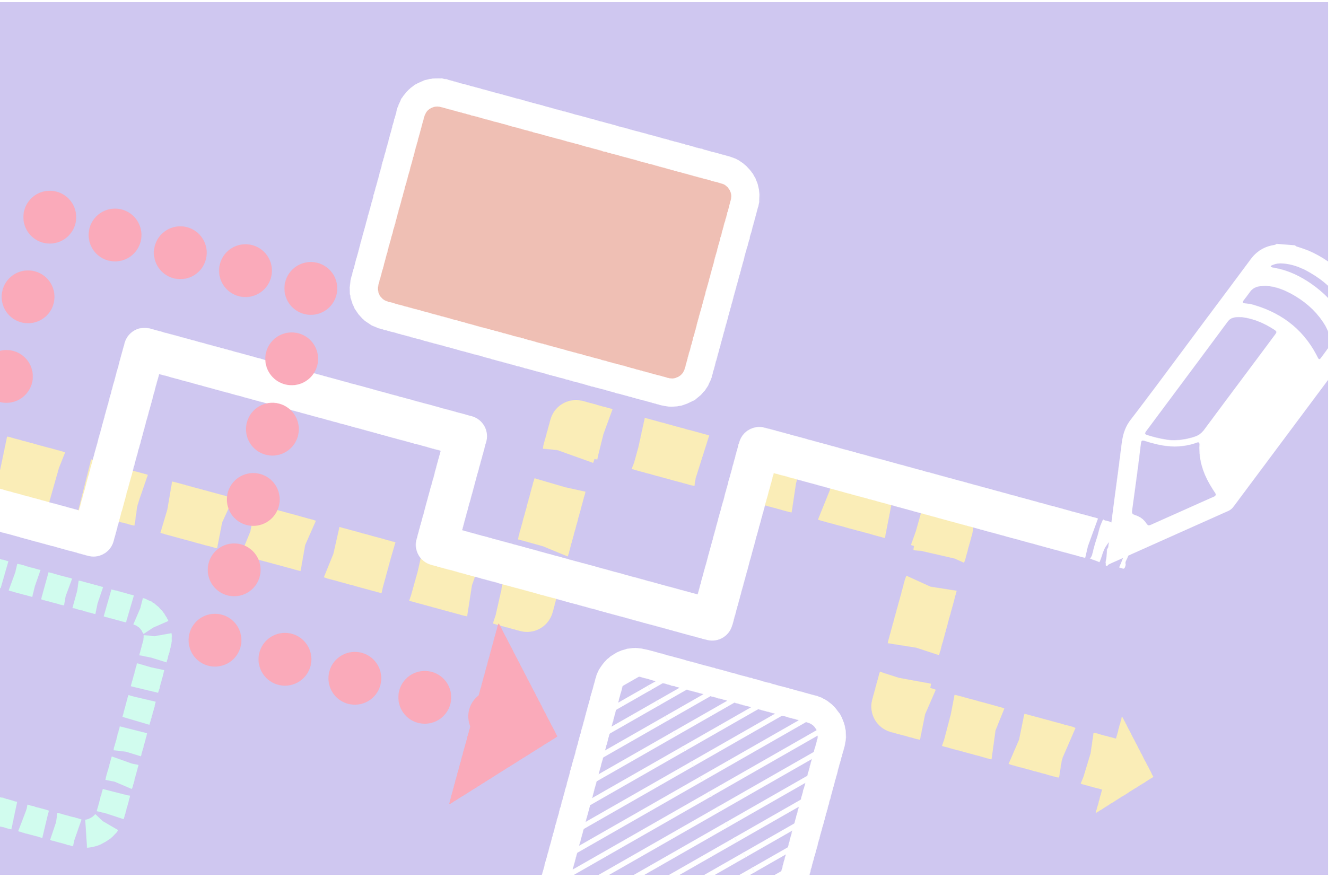


Figure 37: *Care Home Cross Section*

07

ACCESS





7 ACCESS

7.1 Site access

A full transport assessment is submitted with the outline planning application. The application seeks planning consent in detail for access (which also includes a slight diversion to the bridleway in order to deliver the safest possible crossing arrangements). The application drawings are replicated here in Figures 39 and 40.

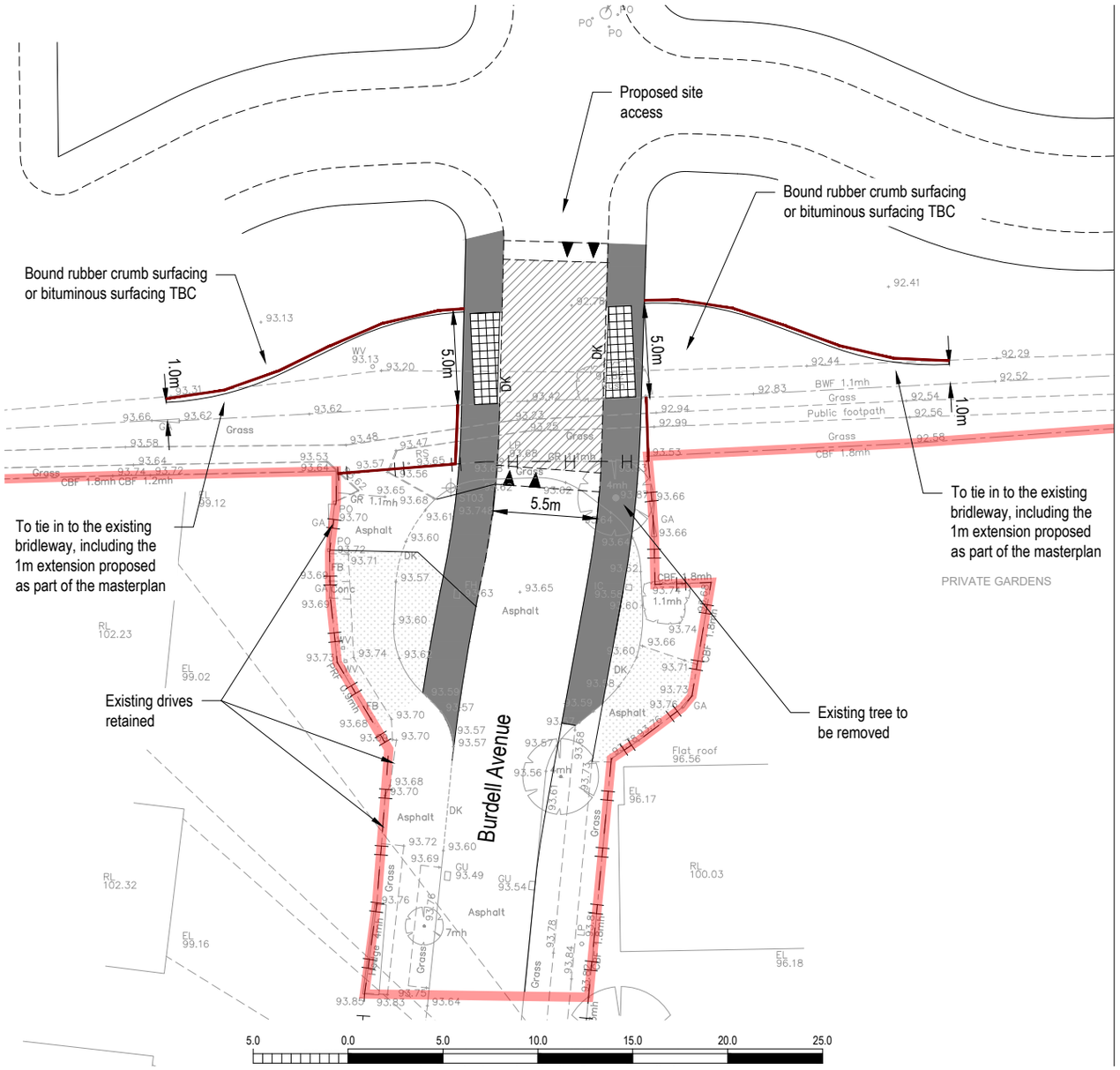


Figure 38: *Access from Burdell Avenue*

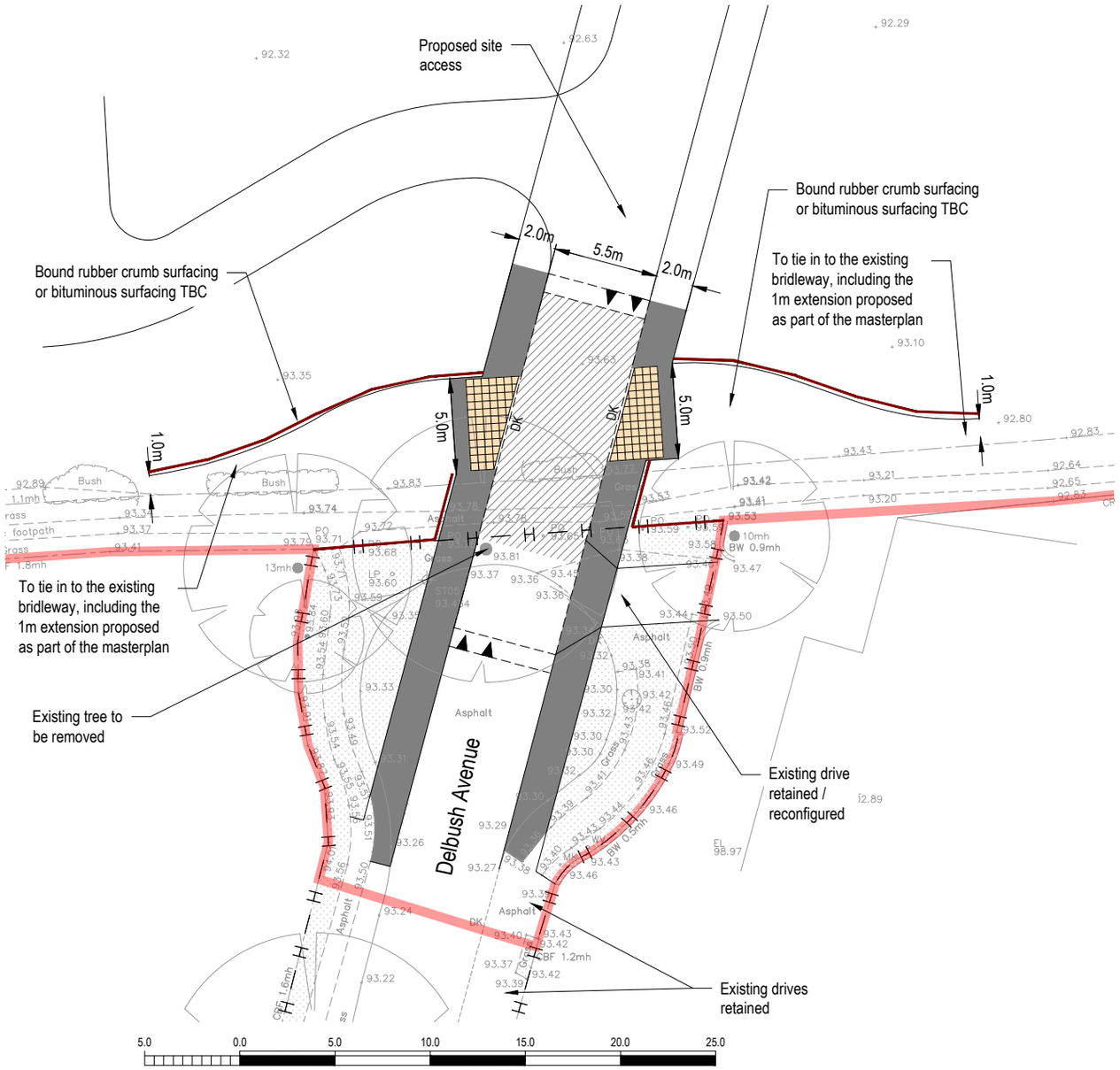


Figure 39: *Access from Delbush Avenue*

08

CONCLUSION

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL AND BENEFITS

The proposals for this allocated housing site have followed a rigorous process of assessment, analysis, evaluation and design. There is a clear, strong rationale that has been tested by technical experts and in pre-application meetings.

The design process did not begin with a need to provide a specific site capacity. Instead, development on the site has been optimised through careful consideration of the site's unique characteristics, and how the proposals can best deliver housing in a high quality place, whilst minimising environmental impacts.

Key elements and benefits of the proposals are: -

- The **existing brook and woodland corridor** form a key feature providing visual amenity, some limited access and enhanced habitats for wildlife
- **The bridleway** is enhanced and provides part of a wider network of footpaths and cycleways linking to the surrounding areas
- **A new 'SUDS' street** will deliver a 'blue/green' corridor east-west through the site, creating a strong sense of place and bringing nature into the residential area
- **A care home** will deliver a much needed and sought-after facility for those in need of care
- **Play areas are integrated** with nature and with the shared surface residential streets and paths, allowing active lifestyles, and neighbours to meet, strengthening community and mental health
- **Sustainable drainage** channels and ponds provide new wildlife habitats in addition to visual amenity and control of storm water
- A **network of new footpaths and cycle ways** provide informal walking/ cycling, running and dog-walking routes encouraging healthy lifestyles for existing and new residents
- A wide **variety of types and tenures of housing** will assist in providing homes for Oxford's housing needs
- The proposals, as a whole, will deliver **a high-quality place** with a unique identity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: BHL ASSESSMENT

BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

Building for a Healthy Life is a design tool, rather than an assessment tool, although if 9 out of the twelve design criteria are given a green rating and there are no red ratings, the scheme qualifies for BHL Commendation.

The draft pre-app assessment is set out on the following pages. This is an early assessment, so the ratings will be subject to further outline design and reserved matters submissions. The green ratings identify that, at this stage, the design elements are in place to deliver a scheme that scores highly against the BHL criteria - subject to detailed submissions.

Project: Sandhills

Assessment by Savills Urban Design Studio

Scheme assessed: Sandhills

Reference: 478190

16/03/2023

Andrew Raven MRTPI, Recognised Practitioner of Urban Design, Academician of Academy of Urbanism

About 125 homes and and 80-bed care home

Building for a Healthy Life (July 2020) Development Design Criteria

Ref	Recommendation	✓		x	COMMENT ON HOW THE CRITERIA IS MET	ADDITIONAL NOTES/ COMMENT
	INTEGRATED NEIGHBOURHOODS					
IN1	Natural connections	✓			The layout connects to its neighbours wherever possible: with vehicle and pedestrian / cycle links to the two streets adjoining the site and sensible footpath and cycle connections to the bridleway at the south of the site. Pedestrians and cyclists are prioritised through a network of shared streets. Wildlife corridors link the wider area through the site along the brook corridor, and green links are retained along the bridleway; hedgeline and tree through development retained and protected in localised open space.	Provision could be made for a potential connection at the north-west of the site, which could in future form a route along the brook. Extensive use of disconnected private drives should be avoided in the detailed proposals. Careful consideration of levels needed at detailed stages to ensure access for all.
IN2	Walking, cycling and public transport	✓	?		Pedestrian and cycle friendly, permeable streets. Shared streets good for pedestrians. Cycle / pedestrian priorty over junctions. Younger children to get active to school - good footpath links to nursery and primary schools. Relationship of new housing provides overlooking to public bridleway. Hooks in to existing ped/cycle network, including links to nearby park and ride. May be opportunities for wider improvements to cycle links.	With detailed street design, ensure corner radii are tight to allow easy pedestrian crossings, and shared streets designed for pedestrians and cyclists first. Consider links to wider destinations, and potential for car club on site.
IN3	Facilities and services	✓			Active frontages to streets with planting, larger green spaces in close proximity to all homes and numerous opportunities for play. No facilities proposed (by policy) on site but nearby community facitlies at Barton (including a local supermarket) are 15 minutes walk (5 mins cycle) away along low traffic streets and the 'Little Joy Park' by Bayswater Brook. The parade of shops at The Roundway is a similar distance, with underpasses to navigate the A40.	Detail will need to ensure buildings are 'fronting' onto public streets / spaces. In the detail, ensure seating / benches provided in appropriate locations for those with mobility. Financial contributions to Barton community centre.

IN3	Facilities and services			Active frontages to streets with planting, larger green spaces in close proximity to all homes and numerous opportunities for play. No facilities proposed (by policy) on site but nearby community facitlies at Barton (including a local supermarket) are 15 minutes walk (5 mins cycle) away along low traffic streets and the 'Little Joy Park' by Bayswater Brook. The parade of shops at The Roundway is a similar distance, with underpasses to navigate the A40.	Detail will need to ensure buildings are 'fronting' onto public streets / spaces. In the detail, ensure seating / benches provided in appropriate locations for those with mobility. Financial contributions to Barton community centre.
	DISTINCTIVE PLACES				
DP1	Making the most of what's there		?	Existing trees and hedgerows have been incorporated and retained in green spaces and will be part of a management plan. High quality ecological areasa are retained. Overland flows will be incorporated into a sustainable drainage system, including exposing an existing surface water sewer to enhance the site. Layout works with site features including topography and brook. Materials / housing design is for reserved matters.	Distinctiveness, character and identity could be brought in to street names, landscape design, materials, colours, street furniture and other public art. This is a reserved matter.
DP2	A memorable character	?	?	Much of this will be in the detail, including choosing a materials palette, colours and detailing. Interesting, distinctive spaces are proposed in the form of the brook corridor, use of topography, 'internal' green space around retained hedge and tree. Planting 'brought in to the development' could be used to inform character and legibility (see below).	Some elements are already present to deliver a distinctive place: a strong concept, existing retained trees, landscape, brook and bridleway. Further detail could deliver a strong and memorable, distinctive character. Subject to RM.
DP3	Well defined streets and spaces	?		Strong framework of perimeter blocks - with the exception of northern development area which becomes narrow and is proposed as dual aspect apartments to ensure streets are overlooked and separation between public / private areas. Well defined streets and spaces with front doors and windows overlooking public areas / streets, including incorporation of bridleway into new street, adding security of 'filtered' passive surveillance.	Needs to be delivered in detailed submissions: dual aspect corner units, careful design of 'northern blocks'. Consideration of street vistas. Multiple access to apartment blocks.

DP4	Easy to find your way around			Network of permeable streets and pedestrian / cycle routes that are well-connected. Pedestrian / cycle routes connect to bridleway and wider countryside. Street hierarchy provides legibility with main street 'loop' shown with regular tree planting and shared streets with more informal design. Cul-de-sacs avoided (except for some vehicular access near to bridleway to limit traffic movements).	Opportunities to frame views with street locations and use street design as part of character. Detailed planting and public realm strategy could be used to further provide character and legibility. Key buildings could aid legibility. Much is related to RM submission.
	STREETS FOR ALL				
SA1	Healthy streets			Illustrative layout identifies streets designed with pedestrian and cycle priority in mind, even on major junctions. A number of shared streets will aid the 'place function'. Street trees are provided in all streets, with an informal arrangement on shared streets and regular planting on primary street loop. Outline design allows for low speeds with priority to pedestrians and cyclists.	Ensure in the detail that tight corner radii are delivered at junctions, places to sit provided, and landscape / planting makes streets places rather than roads (simply for moving through).
SA2	Cycle and car parking	?	?	Secure cycle parking will be needed in the detailed submissions. Car parking levels are low. Detailed landscape proposals needed, but on-street parking has the ability to be broken up with planting and landscaping, and potentially use of levels. Primarily resovled at detailed level, but allowed for in illustrative layout.	In the detail, secure cycle storage will be needed close to front doors, to make cycles more convenient than cars for short trips. Ensure range of parking types at detailed stage and no over-reliance on integral garages.
SA3	Green and blue infrastructure			Landscape has been considered from the start. Drainage typologies shown will create great places and habitats along with providing necessary water storage. Management of brook corridor and delivery of public open space in excess of policy requirements will create a development focused on green space around the brook and bridleway. Suds drainage chanel brings blue green infrastructure into the housing area.	Will require further consideration at detailed stages and management as part of s106 arrangements.

SA4	Back of pavement, front of home	?	Delivery of this criteria is in the detailed design. Strong frontages and block structures will set the scene for well-designed front gardens. Clearly defined private gardens can be delivered through boundary treatment and relationship to street.	Detail needed to ensure delivery of this criteria. Careful consideration of the way level changes are dealt with.

Summary note from assessor:	**Assessor name: Andrew Raven BSc(hons) Arch, DipUD, MRTPI, UDG, AoU**

9 green lights and no red lights is the minimum requirement for BHL Commendation. The illustrative layout presents a clear strategy for development, using the landscape to integrate drainage and green spaces into the proposals, and enhancing the brook / bridleway corridors. Green spaces and links to the countryside will provide health benefits. There is a clear street and block structure, albeit slightly compromised by the site constraints, and requiring careful detailed treatment of the blocks adjacent ot the brook. The movement network is clear and puts pedestrians and cyclists first. The illustrative masterplan and its guiding principles already secure many of the building for a healthy life criteria, and further detail has potential to ensure 11 or 12 green lights. The stewardship strategy will be a key element that can deliver requirements for a healthy place with long-term green infrastructure management.

APPENDIX 2: INDICATIVE PARAMETER PLANS

INDICATIVE PARAMETER PLANS

This outline planning application is not subject to the more formal Environmental Impact Assessment process, and is therefore not submitted with parameter plans that are intended for approval. Nevertheless, the Council has indicated that the conditions attached to an outline planning permission might include the need for a Design Code to be produced in order to guide future development. It is unusual for a Design Code to be required for a site of this size, as it is likely to be delivered in a comprehensive manner, where detailed submissions are not made separately and therefore need to be co-ordinated.

In this case, therefore, indicative parameter plans have been produced to assist in guiding future development. The illustrative masterplan prepared as part of this outline application falls within the parameters identified.

The drawings replicated below (in this Appendix) are also submitted separately as Drwg.Nos. SK13, 14, 15 and 16.


LAP
BURDELL AVENUE
BUSH AVENUE
HILL VIEW
MEREWOOD
N
Primary street
Secondary street
Tertiary street/shared surface
Bridleway
Formal footpath / cycle network
Informal / future footpaths


100m
LEAP
SuDS
LAP
SuDS
SuDS
MUGA
LAP
400m
100m
HILL VIEW
BUSH AVENUE
N
Woodland
Woodland Management Area
Parks & Gardens/ Amenity Green Space
SuDS / Amenity Space
LAP/LEAP (0.11ha)
MUGA (0.11ha)
Indicative LAP locations


BURDELL AVENUE
HILL VIEW
BUSH AVENUE
N
Green Infrastructure (3.21ha)
Residential (3.34ha)
Care Home (0.55ha)

Zone 1 up to 104.0m AOD

Zone 2 up to 101.0m AOD

Zone 3 up to 98.0m AOD