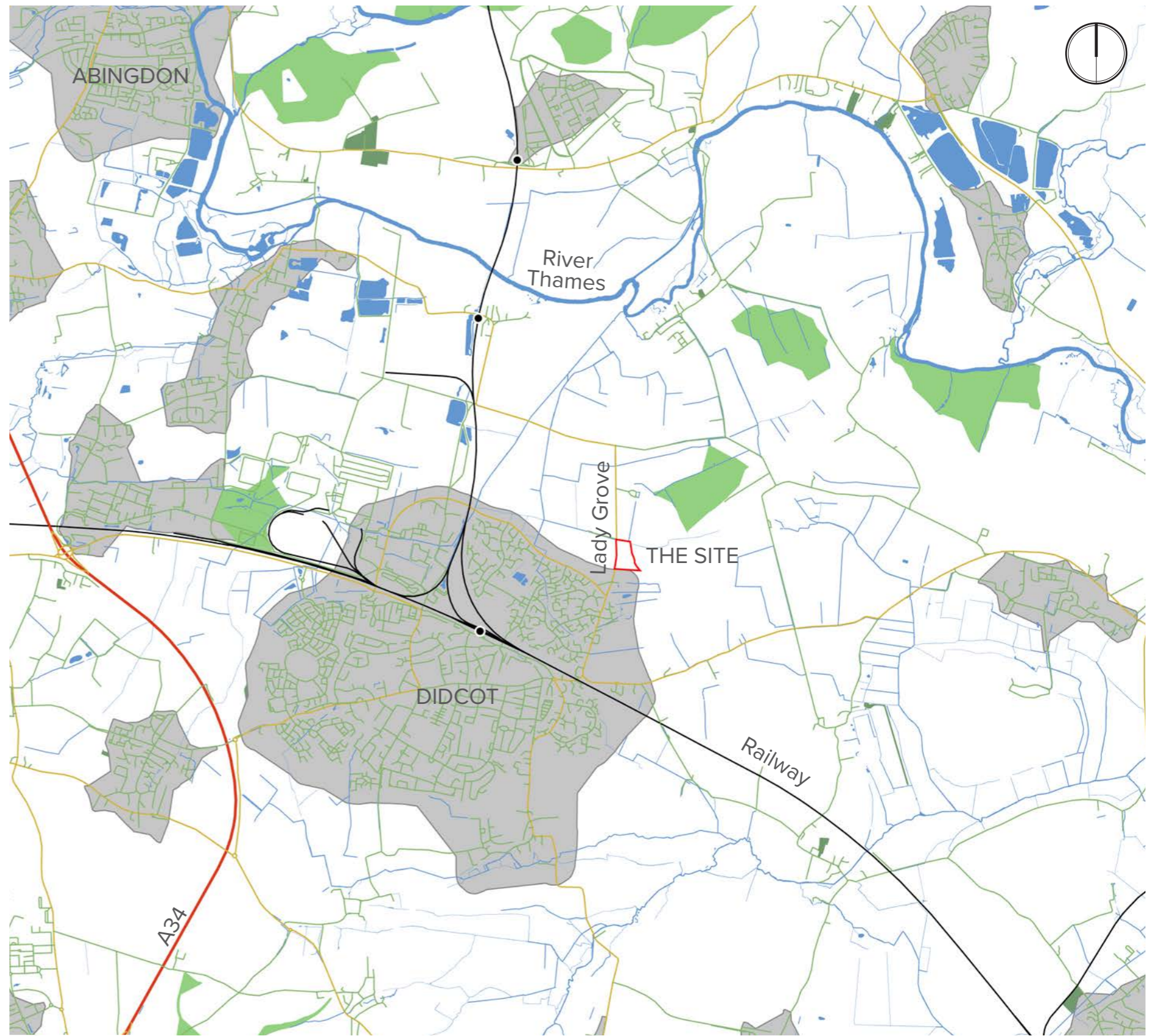




**LAND EAST OF LADY GROVE, DIDCOT**  
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT  
APRIL 2020

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SITE LOCATION PLAN

# INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared in support of an outline planning application on Land east of Lady Grove, on the north-eastern edge of Didcot.

The document outlines the site's location, constraints and opportunities, presenting a concept sketch and illustrative masterplan to show how the site could be successfully developed to provide up to 176 new dwellings.

The description of development is as follows:

“Outline application for up to 176 dwellings including public open space comprising a country park, a LEAP and additional Green Infrastructure provision with all matters reserved other than access”

The eventual tenure of housing will be provided to meet a range of local needs, whilst retaining key features like the good quality existing trees in a landscape setting, and providing an urban design solution that is consistent with the site's local identity.



AERIAL LOCATION PLAN

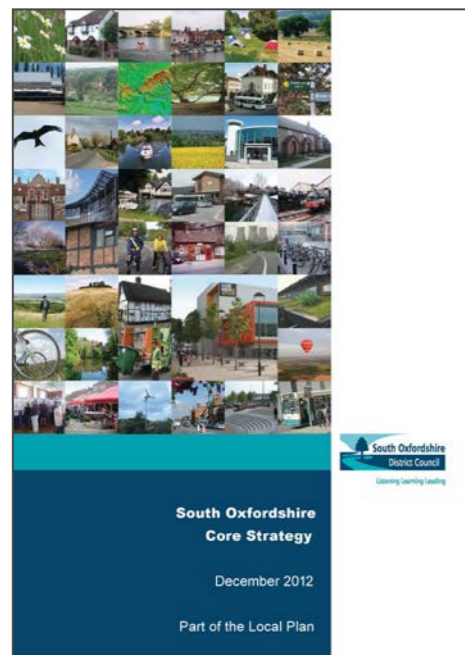
# PLANNING CONTEXT

The development plan relevant to the site comprises the South Oxfordshire District Core Strategy (adopted December 2012) and the saved policies of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (adopted January 2006). Whilst a replacement Local Plan (the South Oxfordshire Local Plan or SOLP) has currently reached examination stage it has run into significant political difficulties meaning the timescales associated with its adoption along with its future form and content are anything but certain.

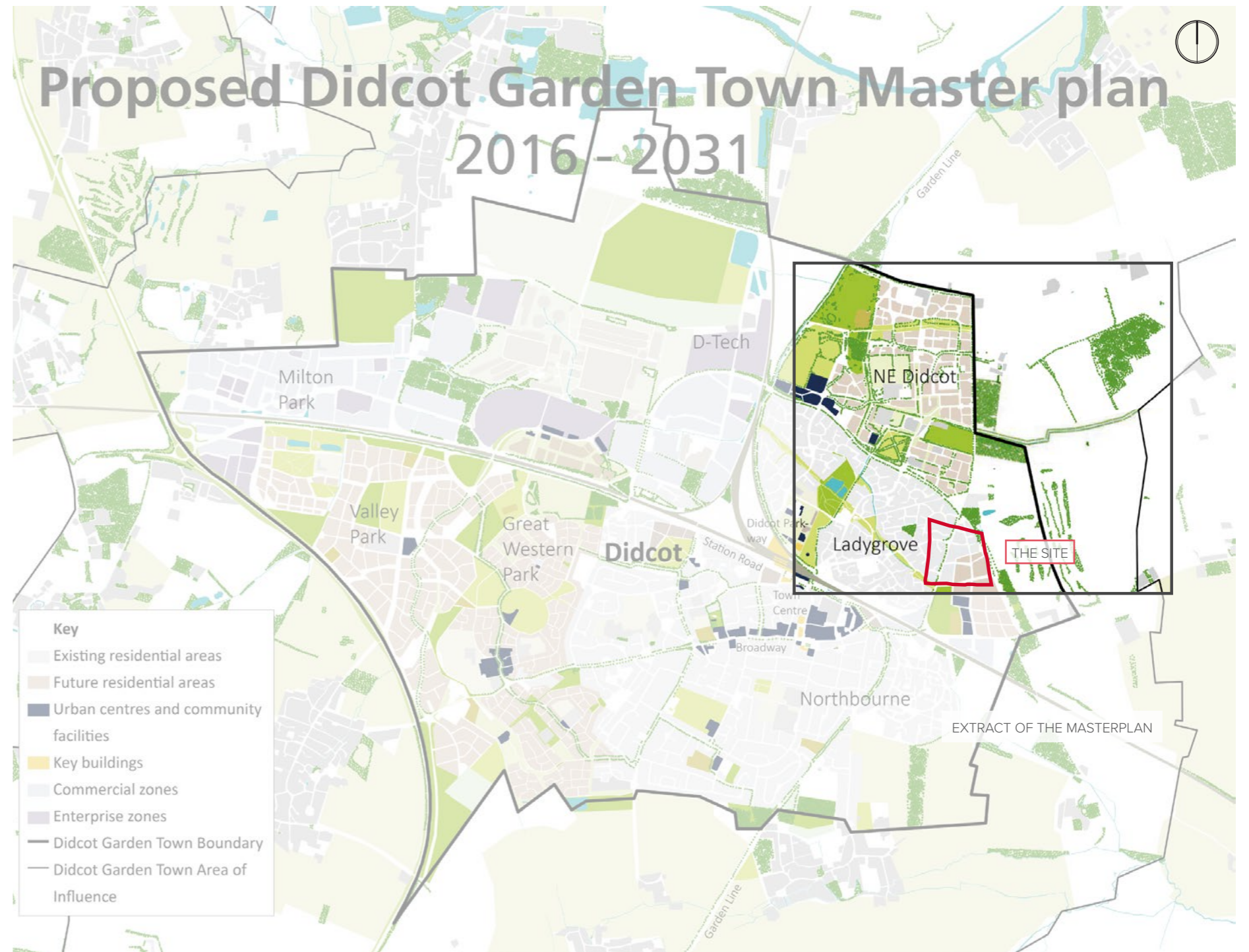
In respect of Didcot the town represents one of the principal growth points in South Oxfordshire. Resultant of the current Growth Deal the town must play a significant role in accommodating new homes both now and into the future to meet the strategic needs of the County. Didcot's role as a focus for growth is confirmed by both the adopted and emerging Local Plans and is emphasised further by the significant level of Government Infrastructure Funding directed towards the town to secure the delivery of additional highways improvements.

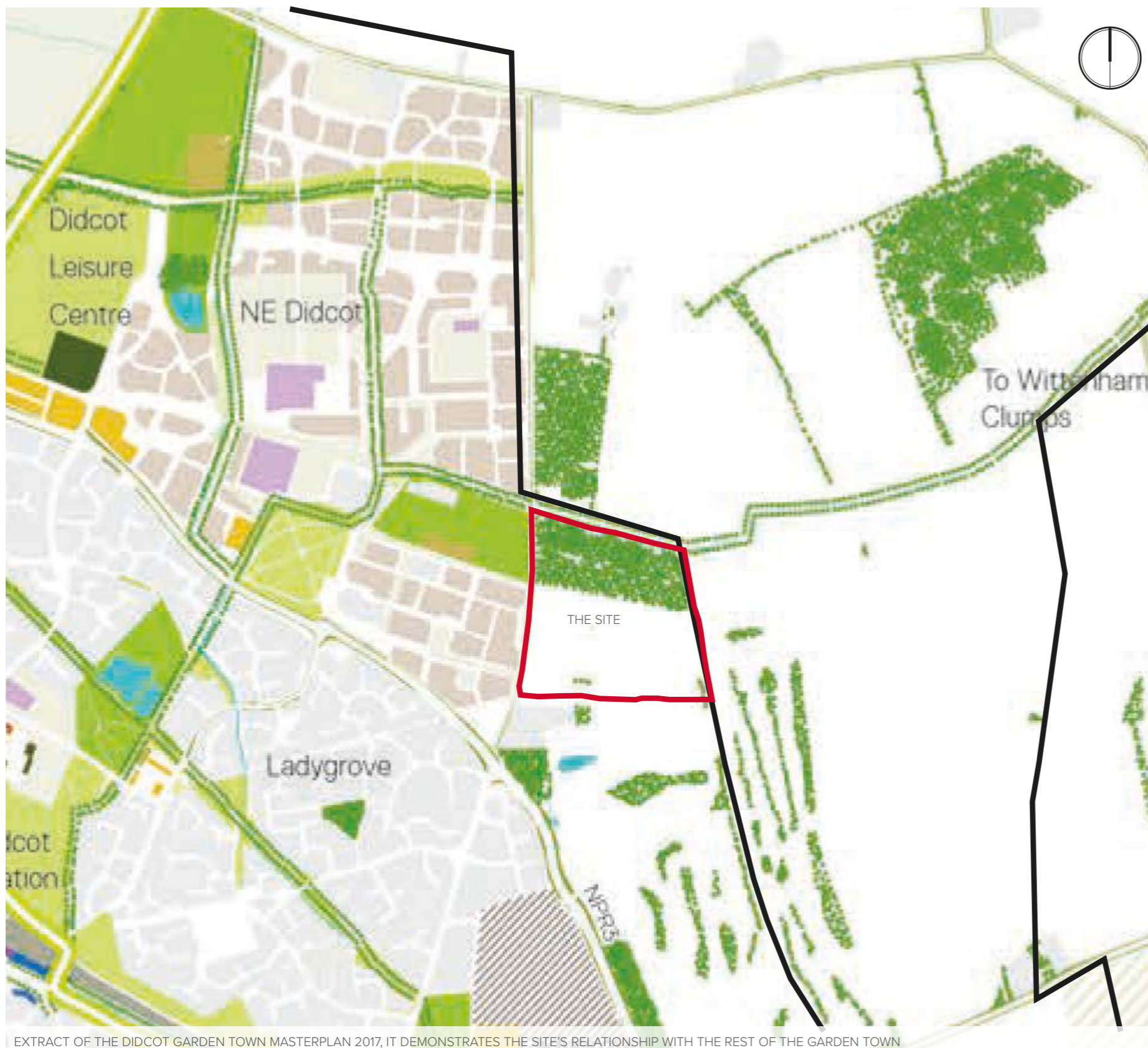
Despite this focus delivery of new homes at Didcot has been extremely slow with a deficit of over 1,000 homes since 2012. In which case there is a current compelling need to identify additional deliverable housing sites at the town that can rectify this shortfall in the short to medium term.

Delivery of new homes at Didcot is particularly important as a sufficient and consistent supply of homes is required to ensure that the Council matches jobs growth at the town whilst ensuring that the provision of associated infrastructure continues at pace.



SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE CORE STRATEGY





EXTRACT OF THE DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN MASTERPLAN 2017, IT DEMONSTRATES THE SITE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REST OF THE GARDEN TOWN (ALL LAND TO THE WEST OF THE BLACK LINE FALLS WITHIN THE MASTERPLAN AREA)

Currently the principle issue at the town appears to be down to the nature of its key sites - either the previously developed state of the site (allied with the active and ongoing use of the site in some instances) or the sheer scale of the proposals, requiring the implementation of significant infrastructure to support housing delivery. The application site offers an alternative – a greenfield site that can be delivered quickly whilst fully according with the Garden Town Strategy.

Importantly in the context of approaching the design of any scheme at the site it also falls within the area covered by the Didcot Garden Town masterplan, comprising 'white land' on the eastern fringe of the masterplan area. Whilst the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan does not have the status of an adopted Supplementary Planning Document it is considered to strongly represent the direction of travel in respect of the spatial planning of the town and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications at the town. Despite its 'white land' designation the masterplan includes an indication that the application site will accommodate additional tree planting on its northern edge to allow for the provision of a 'green corridor' into the countryside to the east. The way that the site can deliver a sustainable landscape-led development framed by the principles of the masterplan is described throughout this Design and Access Statement.

On this basis two points become clear:

- Firstly, it appears that no firm conclusion has been drawn on the role that the application site should play as part of the Garden Town framework. Whilst it naturally affords it a transitional role between the urban area and open countryside beyond it is not clear how this role is to be fulfilled.
- Secondly, whilst it clear that there is an aspiration for Green Infrastructure contributions on the site there is no clarification as to how these are to be secured.

Taking both of these points into account it is clear that an opportunity exists to make best use of a currently undefined parcel of land within the Garden Town boundary which will ensure that the additional landscaping and infrastructure contributions can be secured.

# CONNECTIVITY AUDIT

The NPPF is predicated on the assumption that new developments are located in areas that provide people with a choice of travel modes. When considered against this background it is evident that the Lady Grove site is well placed to accord with these principles. A summary of the existing transport infrastructure is provided below.

## LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK

The local highway network is focused around the B4016 (Lady Grove/Abingdon Road) and A4130, which provide connections to the centre of Didcot and also the principal north-south arterial routes that link the area with Oxford to the north as well as Reading and the M4 Motorway to the south. It is therefore evident that the site is well located with respect to key local centres and the wider region.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO TRAVEL BY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The site is well connected to an existing network of pedestrian and cycle routes that have the potential to encourage future residents to make use of these important modes of transport. For example:

- There is an established network of footways that connect the site with the existing amenities and services provided within the Ladygrove residential area; the centre of Didcot; and, Didcot Railway Station. As explained in the TA, these will be supplemented by the infrastructure and range of amenities that will be provided within the NE Didcot Masterplan.
- There is an established network of cycle routes that cater for a range of trip types, including employment; retail; and, leisure.
- An extensive Public Rights of Way network (PROW) is maintained in the local area, which provides the potential for people to access the countryside for recreational purposes without having to use the private car.

The existing pedestrian infrastructure also connects the site with the bus stops that are located on Trent Road. The bus services that operate from these bus stops follow routes that incorporate key local employment and retail centres.

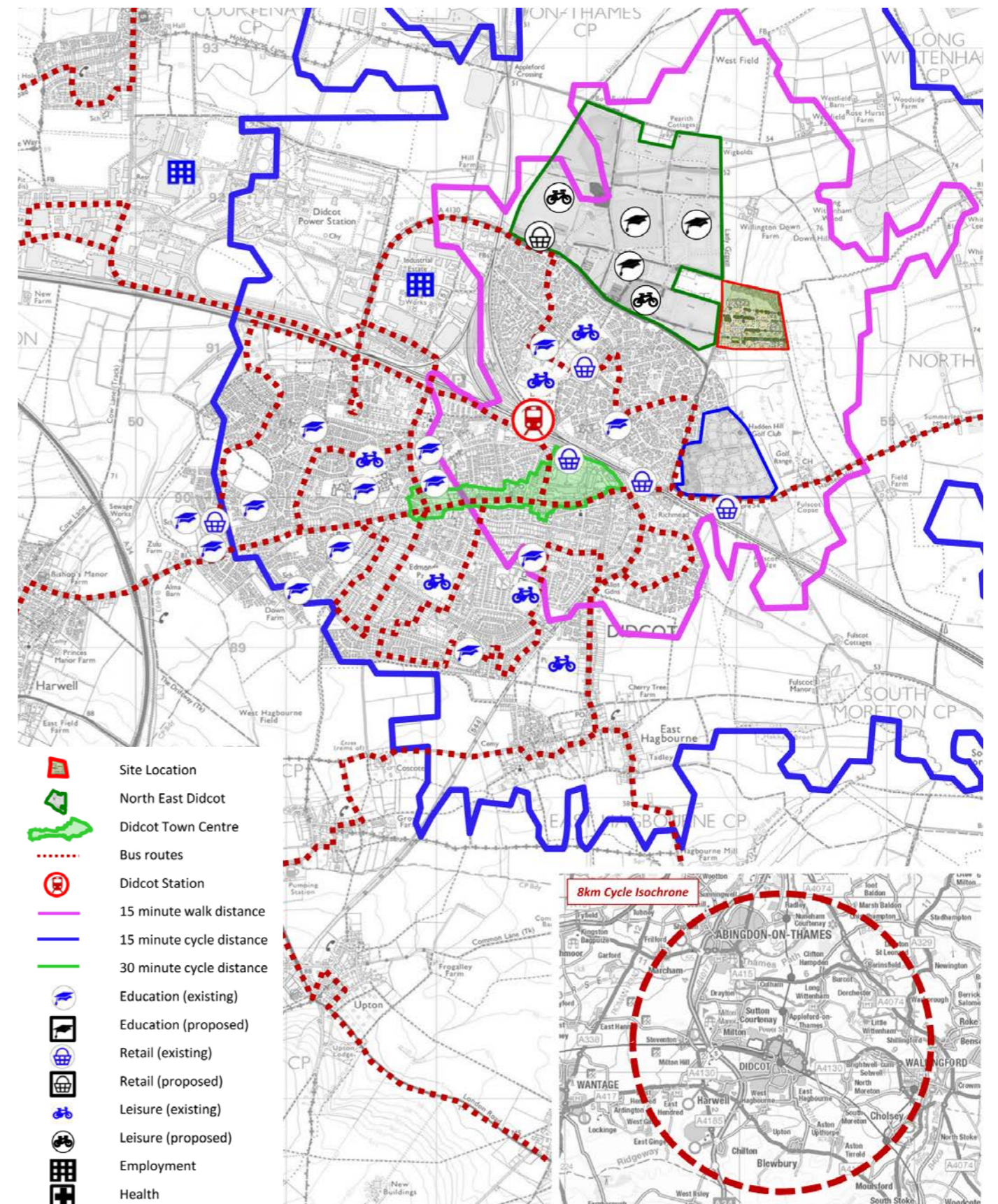
Notwithstanding this, it is worthy to note that the site is well located to benefit from the sustainable transport improvements that have been secured from the 'North East Didcot' development, which is currently under construction. As set out in the Transport Assessment, these include:

- A new uncontrolled crossing between Cow Lane and Halse Water.
- The introduction of a traffic signal control junction at the A4130/Lady Grove junction.
- Pedestrian and cycle improvements over the Lady Grove Bridge.
- Bus services that operate with the following frequencies:
  - Monday to Saturday: Four buses per hour between 07:00 and 19:00.
  - Monday to Saturday: Two buses per hour between 07:00 and 23:00.
  - Sundays: Two buses per hour between 08:00 and 22:00
- A number of on-site bus stops that will be within a short walk of the Lady Grove site.

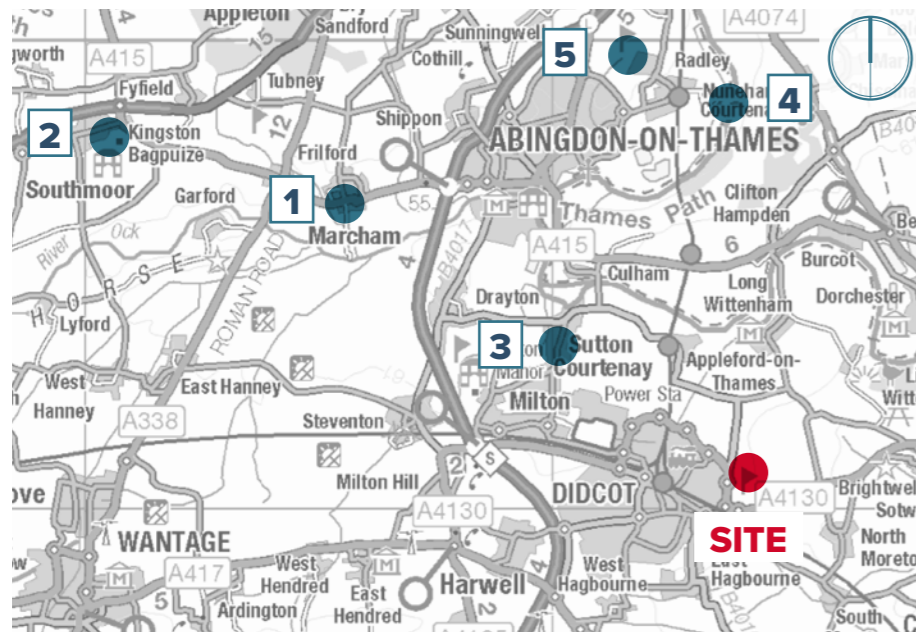
## CURRENT TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

A review of the 2011 Census indicates that the predominant mode of transport for travelling to work amongst existing residents is the private car. However, it is noteworthy that approximately 25% of people travel to work via sustainable modes of transport (i.e. public transport, walking and cycling).

It is therefore considered that the sustainable transportation options provide residents that live in close proximity to the site with the potential to travel to work by modes other than the private car. Indeed, it has been established that approximately 40% of current residents travel to destinations for work purposes that can be accessed either on foot or cycle, or via a longer combined trip with the rail services that operate from Didcot Parkway. Development in this location is thus well placed to discourage the use of the private car and accordingly make a positive contribution towards reducing carbon emissions associated with day to day travel.



# LOCAL CONTEXT

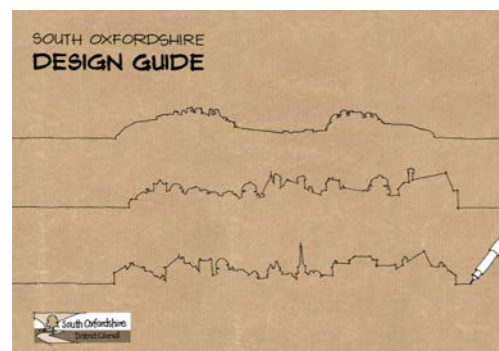


LOCATION MAP

The context area analysis is visual and is not going to cover every single building type that could be designed for the proposed masterplan. It does however give a palette of existing built forms, massing and scale and how the historic local character has been interpreted in more recent (21st century) developments. Any proposed development will need to align with the principles outlined within the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.

The next sections cover the following local areas highlighted on the location map:

- 1** Marcham
- 2** Kingston Bagpuize
- 3** Sutton Courtenay
- 4** Lower Radley
- 5** Radley College



SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DESIGN GUIDANCE

## 1. MARCHAM

Marcham is located about 9 miles to the north west of the site.

### Pre 21st Century

Residential buildings are often organised in rows of terraced houses addressing the main streets and creating a continuous frontage, or in courts around a central space.

Buildings are generally of 2 storey height with some 1.5 storey cottages. Main materials are rubble stone, render or painted stone and red brick. Red brick is used in the rubble stone as quoins and dressing. Common use of gabled dormers; ends and tile roofs.



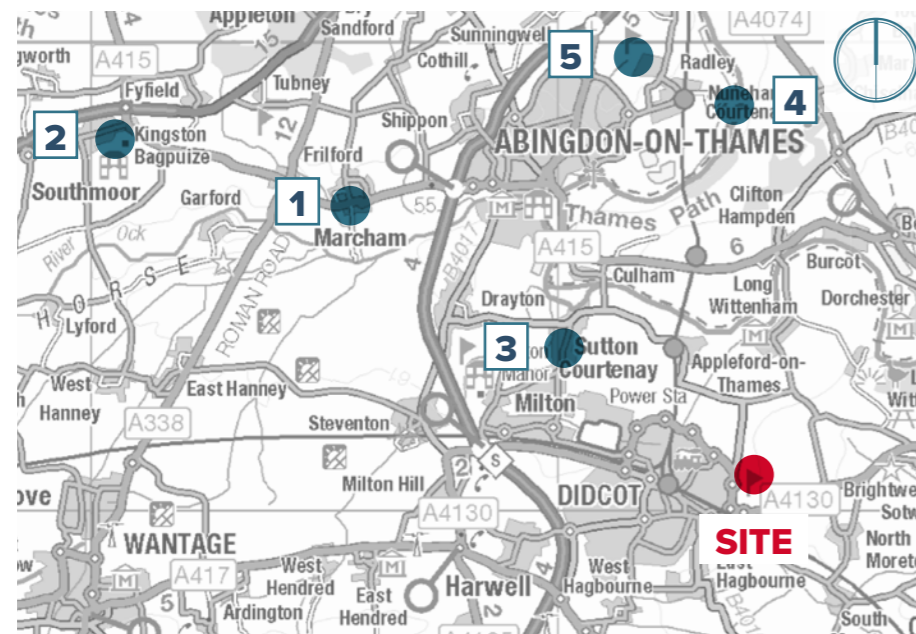
### Post 21st Century

Recent residential buildings are generally of 2 and 2.5 storey detached and semi-detached houses with some terraces. The best types recall the rural character of the historic character.

Recon rubble stone and brick (buff and red) are the main material with clay and slate tiles for the roofs. Common use of gable ends, dormers and pitched roofs. Windows are mostly casement in white UPVC with reconstituted or rendered cills and arches.



# LOCAL CONTEXT



## 2. KINGSTON BAGPUIZE

Kingston Bagpuize is located about 10 miles to the north west of the site.

### Pre 21st Century

Limestone rubble and bricks are used in quoins and are the main materials throughout the historic areas of the village. Roofs are in slate with brick stacks.

Most of the buildings are 2 storey in height with gabled and hipped/half hipped roofs.

Large detached houses with spacious gardens are common types across the village.

### Post 21st Century

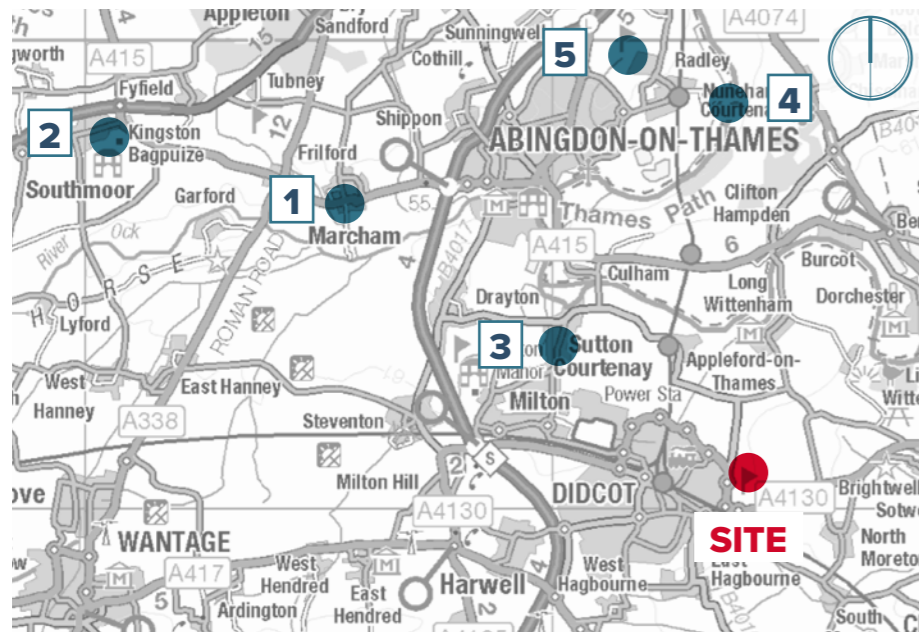
Buildings are generally of 2 storey with some 2.5 storey detached and semi-detached symmetric houses.

Facade materials are a mix of recon rubble stone, red brick and some render. Roofs are mainly pitched with the use of gabled ends and some gabled dormers. Windows are mostly casement or mock sash in white UPVC with common use of bay windows. Often houses have gabled porch or lean to roofed entrances.





# LOCAL CONTEXT



## 3. SUTTON COURTENAY

Sutton Courtenay is located about 4 miles to the north west of the site.

### Pre 21st Century

Mainly red brick with some render. Some arts and crafts buildings have decorative tile hanging. Limited use of contrasting 'black' brick and simple brick detailing. Windows are predominantly casements. Roofs are in plain tile with brick stacks.

Most of the buildings are 2 storey in height with gabled and hipped roofs. Some 1½ and 2½ storey buildings with dormers.

Mixed hierarchy of larger detached houses with terraced cottages across the village.

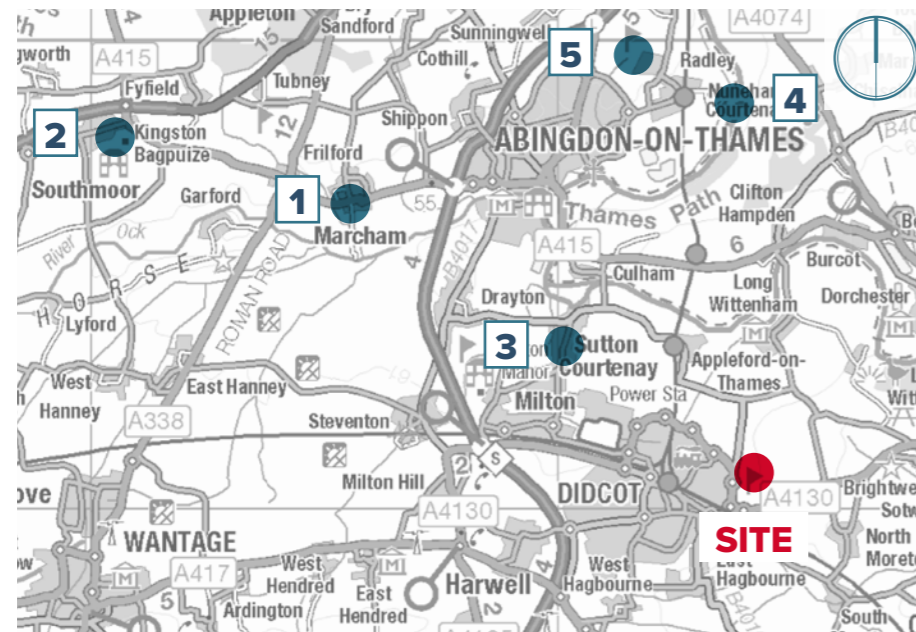
### 20th / 21st Century

The only relevant new example appears to be the conversion of an existing barn into a new residence

Façade materials for this solitary example are red brick and dark stained boarding. Roofs are pitched with plain tile and flat roofed dormers. This could be a useful precedent in the proposed design. Windows are UPVC casements in a forest green colour.



# LOCAL CONTEXT



## 4. LOWER RADLEY

Lower Radley is located about 9 miles to the north west of the site.

### Before 21st Century

Mainly red brick with some render. Simple brick detailing at eaves and 'band course'. Windows are predominantly casement. Roofs are in plain tile with brick stacks.

Most of the buildings are 2 storey in height with gabled and hipped roofs. Some 1½ storey with dormers.

Mixed hierarchy of larger detached farmhouses with terraced cottages across what is a rural hamlet.

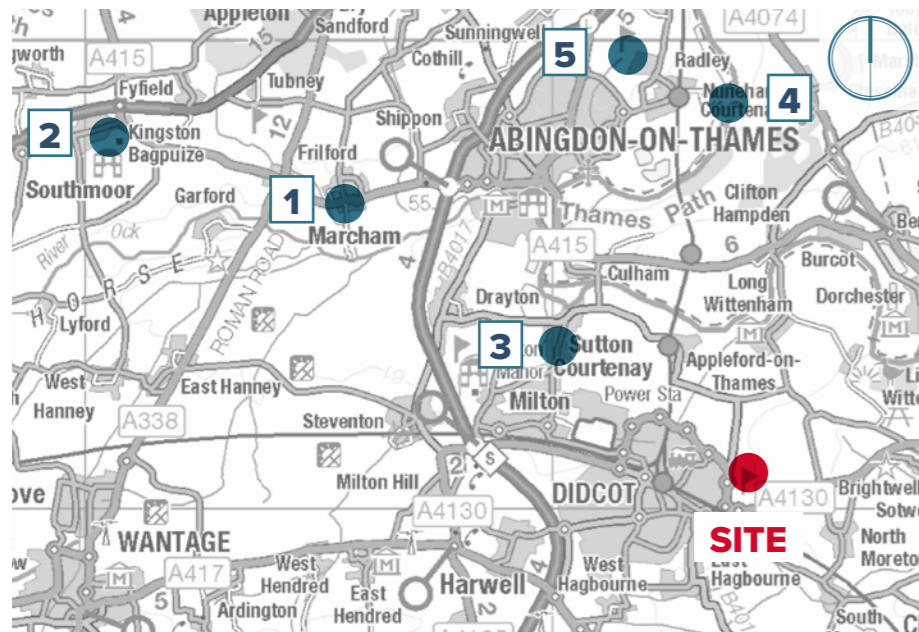
### 20th / 21st Century

Mix of bungalows and 2 storey detached houses. Mix of render, red brick and boarding. Most fail to make reference to the traditional character of the older parts of the village.

Windows are UPVC casements with a recent example in forest green colour. Roofs are mainly plain concrete tile.



# LOCAL CONTEXT



## 5. RADLEY COLLEGE

Radley College is located about 8 miles to the north west of the site.

### Before 21st Century

This is included as it has some very good precedents for a new residential development, many typifying the best of the Oxfordshire vernacular. It is almost a 'model' village with some rubble stone and brick farmhouses amongst the Arts and Crafts college buildings that are mainly red brick with some render. Good examples of brick detailing at eaves and 'band course'. Windows are predominantly casement. Roofs are in plain tile with brick stacks.

Most of the buildings are 2 storey in height though the college has some fine well-proportioned 2 ½ and 3 storey buildings.



# THE SITE

The site is characterised by strong established vegetation. Mature trees and hedgerows running east-west provide strong divisions between the individual fields. These landscape features should be retained where possible.

The site has a gradual slope from east to west, from a high point of 72m AOD in the north east corner to a low point of 56m AOD in the south west.

Lady Grove defines the western edge of the site, with the proposed North East Didcot Masterplan Area located the other side of the road. Existing established vegetation forms the north, east and southern boundaries. The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) borders the eastern boundary, extending further east.



# SITE PHOTOS



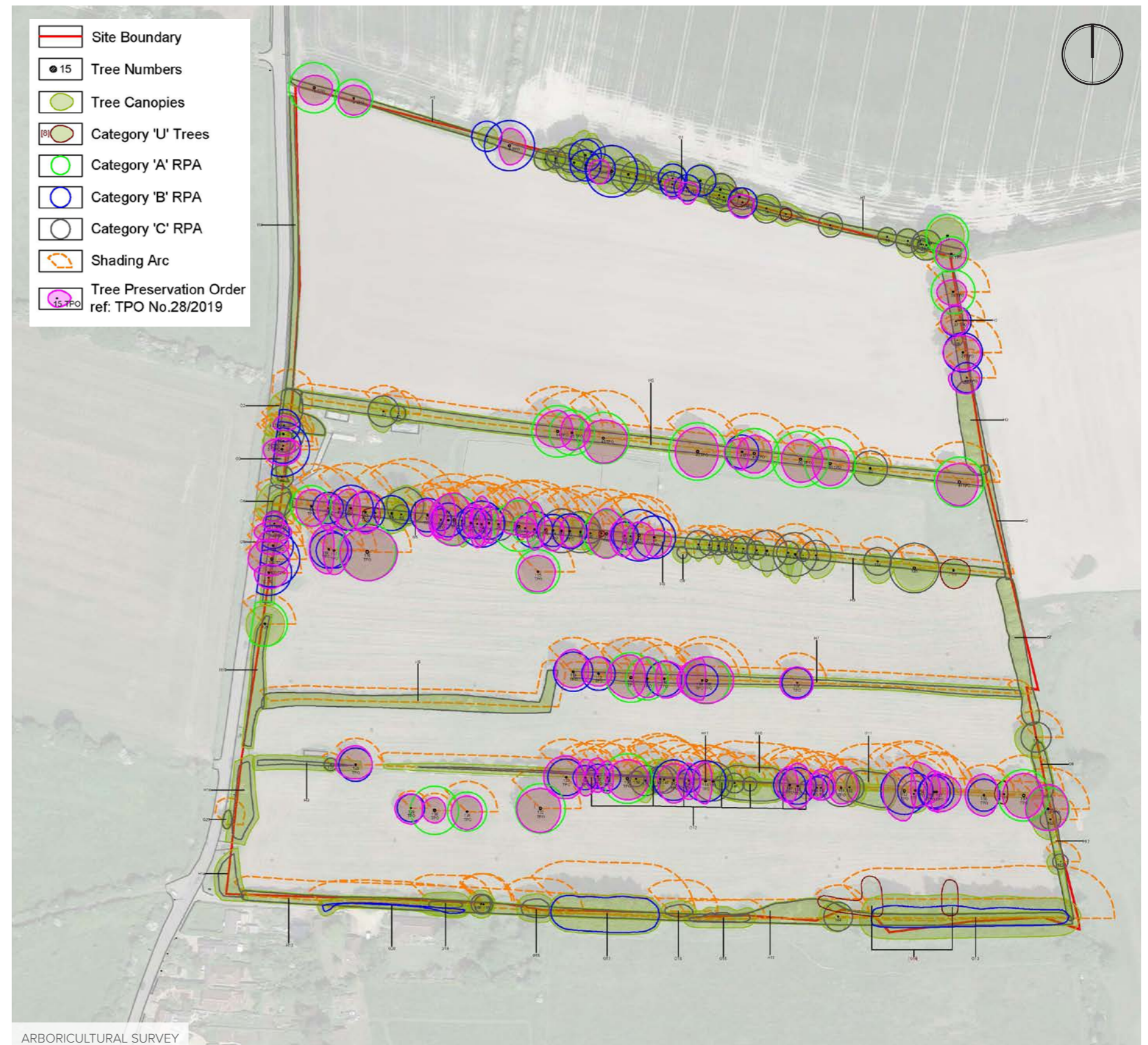
# ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT

## ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY

An arboricultural survey of the site has been undertaken by Aspect Arboriculture, drawing on the guidance provided by British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations'. The site comprises five agricultural fields, which are separated by established linear collections of trees. The application area's extant tree stock comprises a mixture of deciduous broadleaves, majoring on English Oak, which are afforded protection within TPO no. 28/2019.

Aspect introduced the survey information at a pre-application site meeting on the 29th November 2019, during which the priorities for retention and the anticipated extent of tree loss was introduced. Review focused on ensuring the retention of the high quality mature English Oak set within the linear collections separating and defining the field boundaries. Subsequently the proposals have been designed to major the removals on low quality tree cover and sections of hedgerow, and all trees afforded protection within the TPO are retained within the scheme.























An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been produced to establish and report on the arboricultural impact of the proposed development, supplemented by a strategy for safeguarding retained trees during construction. Within the AIA, the effect of the proposed development has been assessed against South Oxfordshire District Council's adopted Policy tests CSEN1, C9, emerging Policies ENV1, ENV2, DES5 and the NPPF.



# CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

An assessment of the site identified the following key constraints and opportunities:

- The site is immediately adjacent to land upon which housing development is planned within the eastern edge of the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan
- Opportunities to access the site are provided along Lady Grove for vehicles and pedestrians
- A street hierarchy could include a primary spine with secondary routes leading to the edges of the development
- There is a public right of way along the northern boundary
- The site is on the western edge of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- A buffer zone should be retained along the western and northern edges to protect views from the AONB and the edge of development character of this area
- Opportunities to improve biodiversity on site through additional planting.
- North south green corridors could integrate the existing east-west vegetation to improve natural corridors
- There are opportunities to create a pedestrian and cycle network across the site using the existing and enhanced green infrastructure
- Existing properties to the south define a sensitive edge
- Sustainable Drainage Systems could be located within the lower parts of the site

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  Public right of way   |  Potential primary access point                                 |
|  North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty                                       |  Potential field access points                                  |
|  Didcot garden town masterplan boundary  |  Potential green links/corridors through developable areas      |
|  Potential footpath link between site & north eastern extents of Didcot                      |  Potential location for woodland buffer                         |
|  Potential link to 'Garden Line' cyclelink & Didcot Train Station                            |  Watercourses   |
|  Potential green fingers as POS, allows retention of historic field pattern                  |  Potential Sustainable Drainage System                          |
|  Retained trees RPA  |  Indicative primary spine road                                  |
|  Key trees   |  Indicative secondary route                                     |
|  Key panoramic views from elevated ground towards lower lying setting to the north of Didcot |  Existing properties to the south                               |
|  Lower value vegetation with potential for removal   |  Sensitive Edge - Existing properties boundary                  |
|   |  Proposed indicative density decreasing towards woodland buffer |
|   |  Contours   |
|   |  Roadside hedgerows   |



# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

The adjacent diagram explains the key principles of the design approach to the masterplan.

Principal amongst these is the strong green infrastructure running through the site. This is focused around the retained high quality existing mature trees and hedgerows, creating green corridors which break up the built form.

The opportunity to provide pedestrian and cycle links through these spaces ensures that residents are well connected to the wider public rights of way network and local services and amenities of Didcot to the southwest.

The green swathe in the north of the site continues the proposed large areas of open space located within the North East Didcot Masterplan Area to the west. It provides the opportunity for a link from this wider masterplan area through to the North Wessex Downs AONB in the east.

Considerable tree and vegetation planting is suggested to the eastern boundary to reinforce the buffer to the AONB and reduce any visual effects of the development within the wider countryside.

Many of these retained green corridors will be the focus of a definitive landscape strategy to create these areas as parkland.

The development parcels and vehicular routes are secondary to this strong green infrastructure, with development located around existing mature retained vegetation.

Low density, scattered dwellings are suggested to the northern and eastern periphery of the site. These are likely to have a more rural architectural appearance and arrangement.



CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



# INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN

The indicative masterplan builds on the established elements of the concept masterplan, respecting the existing mature vegetation and facilitating the pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links suggested in the concept masterplan.

Proposed tree planting is suggested throughout the scheme to soften the development and screen proposals from causing any adverse visual effects on the wider countryside.

Development parcels are located around the existing vegetation and retained trees and have been designed to be relatively informal blocks.

Adjacent to the main access point, parcels in the southwest corner will have a more continuous frontage to create a rural village aesthetic.

Moving north and west, development parcels reduce in density, with the use of semi-detached and detached units and mews lanes.

Dwellings on the northern and eastern periphery of the development are scattered within proposed planted woodland, with those adjacent to Lady Grove having a lower-scale farmyard architectural aesthetic.

Those dwellings facing Lady Grove will have an architectural aesthetic appropriate to their location, becoming more “rural” in their use of materials going north.

A considered drainage strategy has been suggested, with SuDS attenuation basins located in the north, central and western parts of the site.



INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN

# LAND BUDGET PLAN

The proposed illustrative masterplan has been assessed to establish the potential number of units that could be provided on site. In total, the site can accommodate around 176 dwellings, with around 9ha of public open space.

Market dwellings will be provided in a mixture of tenures and housetypes, from 1 bed flats through to 5 bed detached houses in accordance with South Oxfordshire SHMA guidance (extract reproduced below).

SUB AREA	1 BED	2 BED	3 BED (5 PERSON)	4 BED
SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE	5.7%	26.7%	43.4%	24.2%

In terms of affordable housing provision it is noted from review of the Council's Strategic Housing Team in respect of other current major applications that the required mix for Didcot sites is based on an updated understanding of local need as follows:

	1 BED	2 BED	3 BED (5 PERSON)	3 BED (6 PERSON)	4 BED
RENTED	14%	58%	12%	11%	5%
SHARED OWNERSHIP	19%	56%	25%		
OVERALL	15%	57%	24%		4%

PARCEL	AREA (HA)	DENSITY	DPH	UNITS
Parcel 1	0.31	HIGH	45	14
Parcel 2	0.19	MID	35	6
Parcel 3	0.22	MID	35	8
Parcel 4	0.54	MID	35	19
Parcel 5	0.22	LOW	10	2
Parcel 6	0.27	MID	35	9
Parcel 7	0.33	HIGH	45	15
Parcel 8	0.42	HIGH	45	19
Parcel 9	0.35	HIGH	45	16
Parcel 10	0.25	MID	35	9
Parcel 11	0.52	MID	35	18
Parcel 12	0.09	LOW	10	1
Parcel 13	0.09	LOW	10	1
Parcel 14	0.33	MID	35	12
Parcel 15	0.26	MID	35	9
Parcel 16	0.15	HIGH	45	7
Parcel 17	0.20	MID	35	7
Parcel 18	0.47	LOW	10	5
	<b>5.2</b>			<b>176</b>



LAND BUDGET PLAN

# SCALE & MASSING

The site is configured to have higher densities and heights towards the main road and primary access point. Both high and density gradually decrease further into the site and towards eastern and northern boundaries.

Buildings closer to the main road will be of 2 and 3 storey in height, in order to reflect existing and proposed neighbouring development to the west.

Towards the eastern and northern edges of the site, building heights are reduced to between 1.5 and 2 storeys.



STOREY HEIGHT PLAN

# MOVEMENT & ACCESS

The NPPF is predicated on the assumption that new developments are able to provide safe and suitable access for all. It also considered that new developments will be acceptable in highways and transportation terms provided that the residual impacts are not severe, and that there would not be an unacceptable safety impact. The Transport Assessment provides a detailed overview of the access strategy and potential impact of the proposed development.

In summary it shows:

## VEHICULAR ACCESS STRATEGY

The main site access, which has been designed having regard to guidance contained within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, will connect the existing local highway network with the main spine road of the development. It therefore benefits from visibility splays that are appropriate for the prevailing speeds of the local highway network and incorporates radii that accommodate the largest vehicles that are anticipated to access the development on a regular basis.

The internal roads will be constructed to a standard that will be suitable for adoption by OCC, and as such will be designed in accordance with national (i.e. Manual for Streets) and local (i.e. Residential Road Design Guide) guidance. To this end, the internal network will be people-orientated, providing a strong relationship between built form, the street and open space, to create locally distinctive places that are linked to the settlement character and pattern.

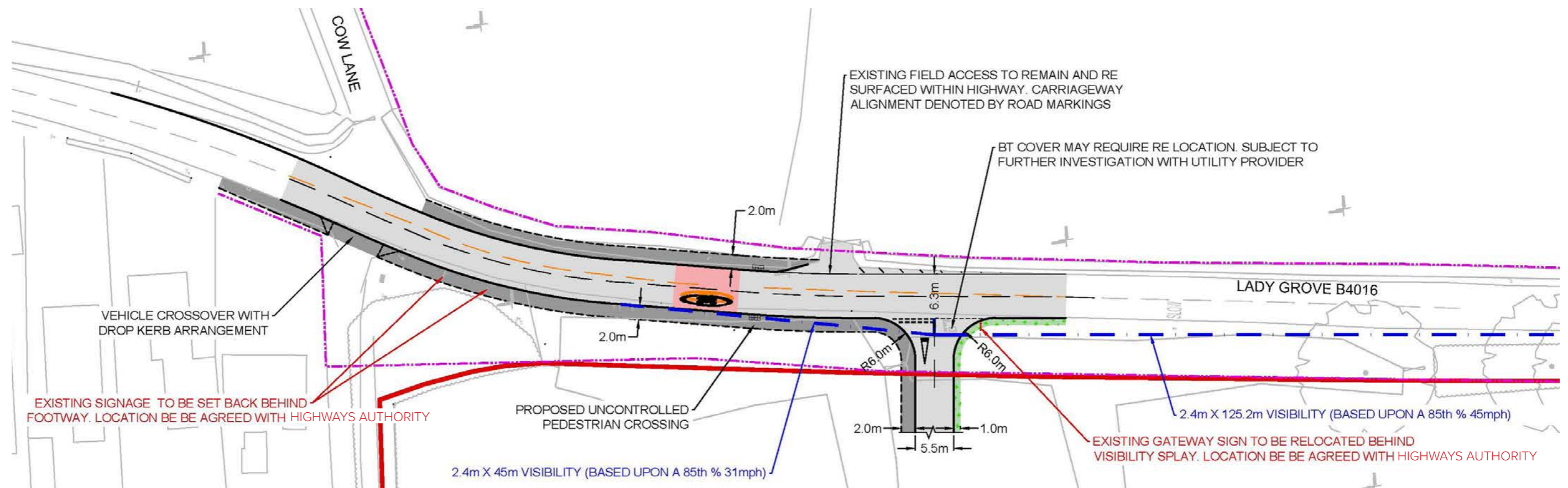
## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ACCESS STRATEGY

The primary vehicular access incorporates two new pedestrian footways on either side of Lady Grove. This will connect the site with the current sustainable transport network and the community facilities for the benefit of existing and future residents. They will also link the site to the community facilities that are being delivered at the Lane North East of Didcot site, as well as the sustainable transport measures that have been secured by that scheme.

In this regard, the use of more sustainable modes of transport amongst future residents will be actively encouraged. A fact that will be reinforced through the Residential Travel Plan that will be operated to inform future residents about the range of travel modes that can be used when travelling for a range of purposes.

## DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

The proposed development is anticipated to generate approximately 160 and 150 additional trips by all modes of transport in the weekday morning and evening peaks. Of these, approximately 50% are expected to be vehicle trips. The analyses that are contained within the Transport Assessment demonstrate that increases of this magnitude will not lead to the severe impact that is referred to within the NPPF as being a legitimate reason to resist a proposed development on highways and transportation grounds. Notwithstanding this, a Travel Plan will be operated to reduce reliance upon the private car.



MOVEMENT STRATEGY PLAN

# MOVEMENT & ACCESS

The site is accessed by vehicles through a singular access point and the spine road creates a route from west to east through the site.

Secondary roads branch off from the spine road and permeate the site to the north and south as well as to the south east.

Splintering off from that are private drives and mews streets, making all properties accessible with a vehicle.

Pedestrians and cyclists can access the site through the primary point as well as several other parts of the site.

There is potential to create a link from "Garden Line" cycle link & Didcot train station to the site which would increase permeability and accessibility to the area.

As the intergrating pedestrian and cycle routes through the site, would link up the an established







- ↔ Existing road - Lady Grove
- Public right of way
- Potential link to "Garden Line"
- ⊙ Primary access point
- █ Spine Street
- █ Secondary Street
- █ Mews Street
- █ Private Drives
- Pedestrian Routes

MOVEMENT STRATEGY PLAN

# REFUSE STRATEGY PLAN

The refuse and servicing strategy utilises the road and movement network previously defined. Each dwelling has on plot bin storage. Bin collection will be from kerbside and bin collection points near the entrance to private drives. Turning heads have been positioned appropriately to improve the manoeuvrability of the vehicles.



-  Vehicular access
-  Refuse vehicles route
-  Turning heads
-  Bin collection points

REFUSE STRATEGY PLAN

# DRAINAGE STRATEGY

## FLOOD RISK

The proposed development site is location within Flood Zone 1 and is at a low risk of flooding from all other sources.

The proposed development's vulnerability classification is compatible with the Flood Zone therefore the development is appropriate.

## SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

The key proposed surface water parameters are:

- Discharge rate: 13.2 l/s
- Outfall: watercourse

Attenuation requirement:

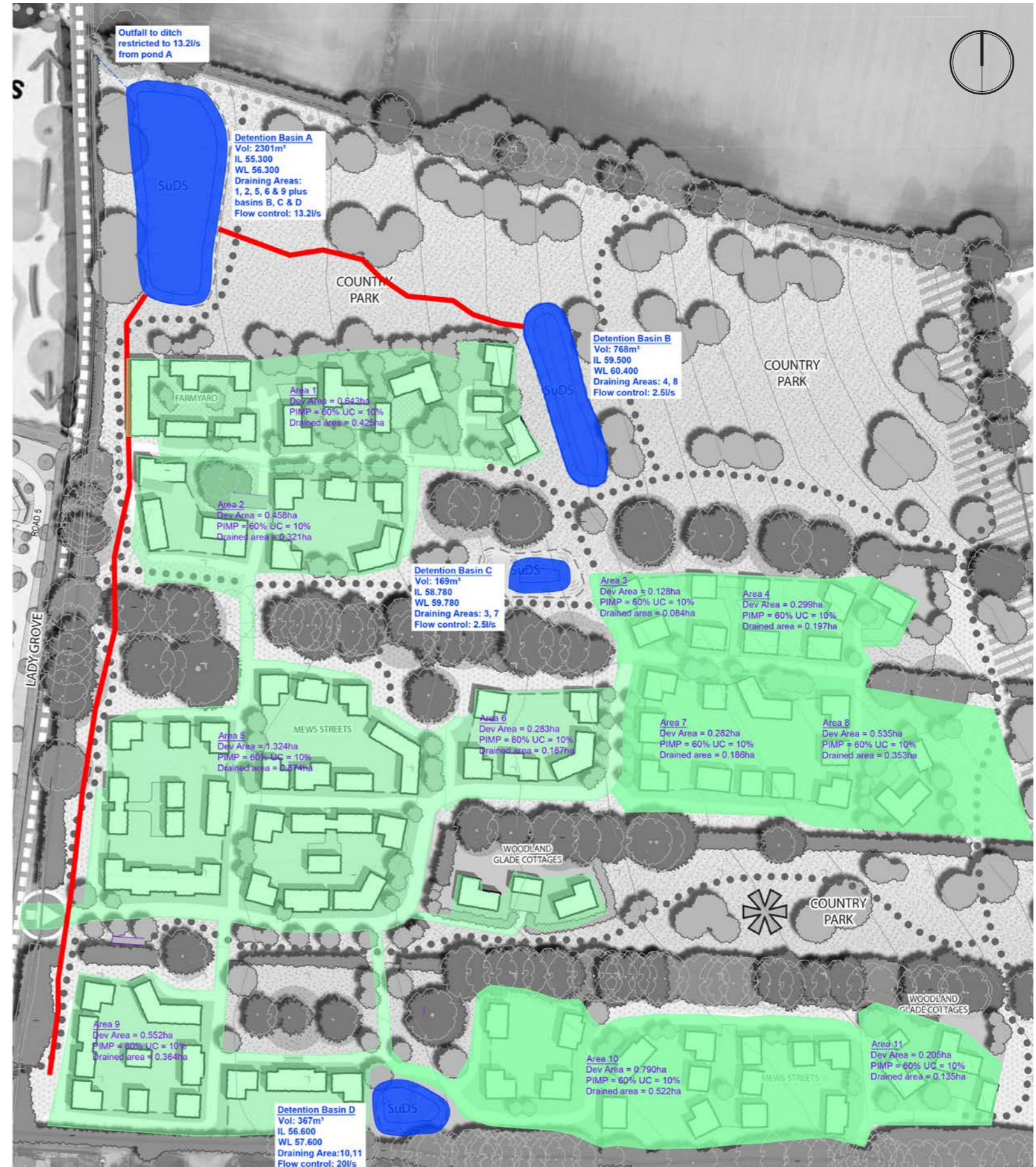
- Basin A – 2301m<sup>3</sup>
- Basin B – 768m<sup>3</sup>
- Basin C – 169m<sup>3</sup>
- Basin D – 367m<sup>3</sup>

SUDS features:

- Hydrobrake flow control;
- Detention Basin – online
- Permeable paving to private drives – tanked
- Swales through areas of public open space.

## FOUL WATER MANAGEMENT

Foul water will discharge into the nearest adopted sewer.



# LANDSCAPE APPROACH

The emerging development proposals have been shaped by a robust, landscape-led strategy, based upon the following key principles:

- Acknowledging Didcot's status as a 'Garden Town' and compliance with the 'Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan' whilst ensuring that the proposals are fully in line with the 'Garden Town Masterplan' within which the Site is located;
- Acknowledging the Site's location within the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB and ensuring that the emerging proposals comply with the North Wessex Downs position paper in relation to 'Development Affecting the Setting of the North Wessex Downs';
- Ensure a site responsive contextual approach to the emerging development proposals is adopted, that will respect the above principles and ensure that the development retains and enhances the 'sense of place' and character of the site and its localised setting.

The landscape strategy has been informed by analysis of the Site's opportunities and constraints, established through a detailed Arboricultural Assessment and a meeting on site with South Oxfordshire District Council's Tree Officer to confirm the Site's key vegetation; a visual appraisal of the Site establishing potential key views and an analysis of the landscape character of the Site and its localised setting. An overview of the proposed landscape strategy is provided as follows:

## LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- Retention of the Site's key treescape: to provide a mature landscape setting from Day One; to retain the Site's unique field pattern and character; to visually integrate the proposed built form within the settlement edge and wider rural landscape setting;
- Incorporation of extensive areas of POS: This will have multiple benefits:
- Establishment of a high quality 'Country Park' within the Site's northern and eastern areas and will protect the setting of PRoW 189/23 established along the Site's northern boundary and the Site's important eastern boundary vegetation, which borders the AONB;

- Key Treescape and Hedgerows**  
To be retained to maintain historic field pattern and provide a mature landscape setting from 'Day One'.
- Site Access**  
Site access is to be taken through lower quality boundary vegetation.
- Lower Quality Boundary trees**  
To be pollarded to improve long term health and enhance light levels within adjacent properties.
- Enhanced Green Links**  
Enhanced green links across the site to provide wildlife corridors and physically connect the development to the more landscape setting. Key trees and hedgerows will be retained along the east-west axis with new tree, shrub, hedgerow and wildmeadow planting enhancing the north-south axis corridor.
- Maintained Views**  
Views are maintained across site to wider setting from edge of the AONB.
- POS / Country Park**
  - Enhanced setting to retained PRoW 189/23
  - Enhanced setting to AONB
  - Allows retention of key boundary vegetation
  - Will incorporate new informal and formal foot & cycle paths in accordance with the adopted Garden Town Development Principles.
  - Enhance the visual amenity of the village approach
  - Native specimen trees to enhance the parkland setting and provide Natural focal points within it.
- Attenuation Zones**
  - Will be landscaped to form a natural feature within the POS areas
  - Wetland meadow planting to enhance biodiversity
  - Incorporation of Elder, Crack Willow, Cornus, Hazel and Hawthorn stools within the base of the attenuation zones where conditions will be more damp.
- New Formal Foot & Cyclepath**  
Proposed Cycle & Pedestrian Link to connect to the north eastern extents of Didcot, wider countryside setting and the 'Garden Line' cycle link
- 1 Existing boundary hedgerow and trees**  
Retained to protect setting of Lady Grove Road.
- 2 Amenity Woodland Planting:**  
To reinforce the northern and eastern boundaries in accordance with garden town development principles. An open understorey will be maintained to improve natural surveillance and accessibility within the P.O.S.
- 3 Copse Planting**  
Copse planting with native understorey to reflect wider landscape features.
- 4 Green Fringe**  
To draw influence of wider landscape into the heart of the development.



LANDSCAPE STRATEGY PLAN



# LANDSCAPE APPROACH

- Incorporation of a diverse ‘amenity woodland’ within the POS, to reinforce the Site’s positive boundary vegetation, improve visual amenity within the POS and comply with the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan requirements;
- Retention of the key visual link between the Site and wider AONB setting. This is actioned through the incorporation of the proposed POS, allowing for views of the sloping topography and key treescape within the Site, when approaching from the north along Lady Grove road.
- Assist in establishing a high quality landscaped village gateway immediately adjacent to the built-up setting established within the adjacent North East Didcot Masterplan Area;
- Incorporation of a significant ‘green finger’ which will extend from the edge of the AONB into the heart of the development and will draw in the positive rural influence established to the east and allow for natural play features to be incorporated that are easily accessible;
- Housing Density: the housing density and parameters have been guided by the baseline studies and survey work. Relatively higher density housing will be focused within the Site’s least sensitive lower lying western extents, immediately adjacent to the existing settlement edge and emerging development area, with low density housing located within the Site’s more sensitive northern and eastern areas respectively acknowledging the presence and setting of the adjacent AONB and internal PRoW;
- Development Pattern: housing is provided in clusters, allowing for the incorporation of extensive green links and a high quality landscape setting to be incorporated within the internal development areas. This will allow for positive and diverse green corridors to be established which will connect with the Country Park POS and localised green infrastructure.

- The lower density parcels will be formed around ‘woodland glades’ to reinforce the woodland character within the Country Park and the landscaped-led design approach. The extent of the developable area, particularly along the Site’s more sensitive eastern extents, will positively respond to the topography of the site and will follow the natural contours to retain a sense of place and ensure excavation work is kept to a minimum.
- AONB Setting: the Site’s location within the immediate setting of the AONB is acknowledged. A substantial offset formed along the Site’s eastern boundary will ensure that development is set down within the lower central and western Site areas, with proposed properties positioned beyond the intervening (retained) boundary treescape and proposed amenity woodland, significantly reducing intervisibility between the proposed development and localised PRoW network within the AONB. Further POS within the northern Site area also ensures that views into and out of the AONB, particularly from the Site’s north eastern corner, are not harmed. And that the positive treescape which informs the setting of the AONB is enhanced.
- Access: vehicular access is proposed within the Site’s south western corner and has been coordinated with the project’s Arboricultural Consultant to ensure that any vegetation loss is kept to a minimum and would not affect any of the key trees. Substantial footpath and cycle links are proposed throughout the development and within the areas of POS. These will tie in and with the localised PRoW network to ensure compatibility with the Garden Town Masterplan and improve access within the countryside for existing and future residents alike.

The emerging landscape strategy noted above, is considered to positively respond to the opportunities and constraints associated with the Site and its localised setting and represent a sustainable high-quality design approach. The proposals are considered to be compatible with national and local planning policy and importantly conform with the following measures proposed within the AONB position statement in order to avoid harm to the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB:

- “measures to consider impact on the setting of the AONB, including where required through Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments;
- care over orientation, site layout, height and scale of structures and buildings;
- consideration not just of the site but also the landscape, land uses and heritage assets around and beyond it;
- careful use of colours, materials and non-reflective surfaces;
- restraint and care over the installation and use of street lighting, floodlighting and other
- external lighting to prevent harm to the dark night skies of the AONB;
- the grouping of new structures and buildings close to existing structures and buildings to avoid new expanses of development that are visible and out of context (though detrimental impact on historic buildings/groupings will need special consideration to avoid insensitive development); and
- detailed mitigation measures, for example including native landscaping (where possible contributing to BAP targets), and noise reduction (though again landscaping in certain contexts can be damaging to historic features/deposits/landscape/character so again will require careful consideration).



CROSS SECTION A-A THROUGH EASTERN BUFFER

# ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The appearance, details and palette of materials will be consistent to give a cohesive appearance to the whole development. Two character areas will however be varied to suit the grain of the layout, and it will be the streetscape of continuous frontage or buildings separated by 'gaps' and a varied eaves line which will create an urban design scheme of interest that reflects the local identity.

## VILLAGE STREETS

This is the part of the site that is closest to the approved Willowbrook Park masterplan to the east and Lady Grove Road. The perimeter block structure will comprise of 2 ½ storey apartments, with 2 storey houses arranged in short terraces and semi-detached groups creating a continuous streetscape. Setbacks from the pavement edge will be between 0.5m and 2.0m.

Good local precedents and sketches indicate an area built mainly of red brick with some tile hanging, render and keynote buildings or groups of reconstituted rubble stone creating the look of a 'model' village. The public realm would include low walls or hedges and some metal railings.



AXONOMETRIC VIEW SHOWING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND GREEN CORRIDORS



SKETCH ELEVATION OF CONTINUOUS FRONTAGE



INDICATIVE SKETCH ELEVATIONS OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES





INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN EXTRACT SHOWING HIGHER DENSITY AREA



SKETCH ELEVATION OF SEMI-DETACHED HOUSES



SKETCH ELEVATION OF LARGE DETACHED HOUSE



LOCAL PRECEDENT



LOCAL PRECEDENT

# ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

## PARKLAND EDGE

This will include the development parcels that face towards the country parkland, retained trees and hedgerows. This will mainly comprise detached or semi-detached houses, including 'corner turn' units that are grouped to appear as a single detached house, houses with a rear wing or add-on, or houses with a room above a garage.

These buildings will be separated by gaps and walls, and will use other rural edge typologies such as 1½ storey units and single storey barn style buildings arranged in a courtyard form.

Setbacks from the pavement edge will be from 2.0m up to 5.0m.

Materials would be red brick and render with use of reconstituted rubble stone for larger single units and focal point buildings. The public realm would include houses with front areas enclosed by low walls in stone or brick, estate style railings or hedgerows.



INDICATIVE SKETCHES OF DWELLINGS IN A VARIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND MATERIAL FINISHES



INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN EXTRACT SHOWING LOWER DENSITY AREA



PRECEDENT IMAGES OF DETACHED DWELLINGS IN LOCAL AREA





SINGLE AND 1.5 STOREY HOUSES IN THE FORM OF A MODEL FARM WITH WINGS AND BARNs AROUND A COURTYARD



1.5 TO 2 STOREY HOUSES ALONG GREEN CORRIDOR



PHOTOS OF LOCAL BARN STYLE BUILDING



INDICATIVE SKETCH ELEVATIONS OF 1.5 STOREY HOUSES OVERLOOKING PARKLAND

# ECOLOGY STRATEGY

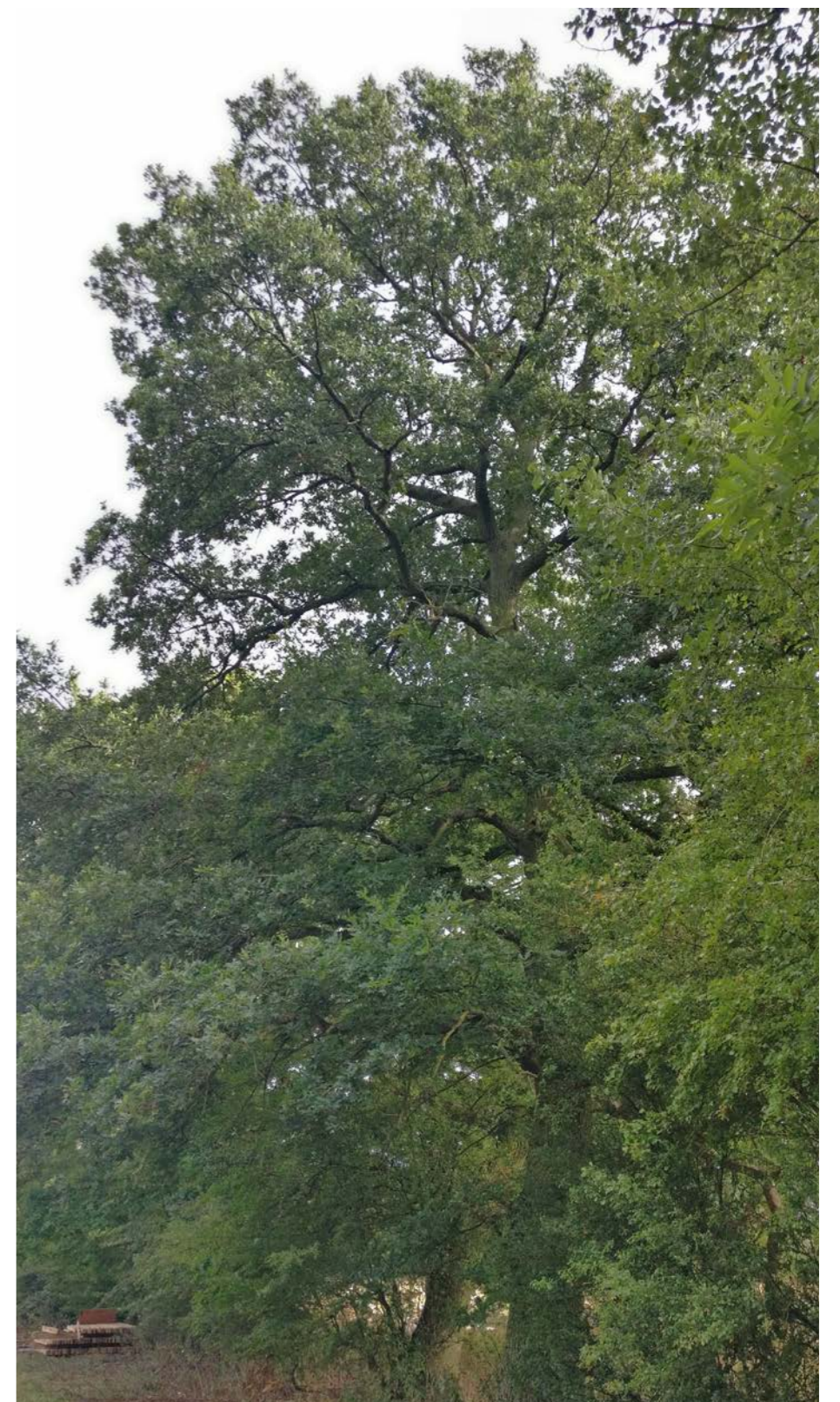
The site has been subject to ecological habitat and general faunal survey work by Aspect Ecology Ltd during September 2019, in order to identify the broad habitats present and inform initial consideration of likely constraints and considerations associated with the potential development of the site. Survey work undertaken at that time has included extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and desk-based assessment of biological records undertaken using methodologies recommended by Natural England. During the survey work undertaken, specific attention was paid to the potential presence of faunal species, including protected species groups in order to identify any need for further surveys or consideration in order to inform the proposals.

Based on the available information reviewed, there are no identified statutory ecological designations within or adjacent to the site, whilst all such designations are sufficiently separated from the site that they are unlikely to provide a significant constraint on the development of the site.

Habitats of ecological value at the site include substantial tree lines and hedgerows forming a number of the existing field boundaries, which therefore represent significant constraints on the proposed development masterplan and accordingly, the masterplan has been specifically designed to allow the retention of key tree lines and corridors within substantial open space following the existing field pattern and character (along with suitable buffer zones and associated protection measures), including within a new Country Park and integrated within the proposed development areas to ensure a mature landscape setting remains at the site. Internal areas within the individual fields are composed of arable land and agriculturally improved grassland, which are unlikely to represent ecological constraints on the proposed development, whilst offering significant potential for the incorporation of ecological enhancements within proposed open space areas, which have been incorporated into the proposed masterplan.

In terms of fauna, the boundary habitats and trees in particular provide opportunities for a range of species, including protected species (particularly bats and birds). Much of the site is removed from any ponds or waterbodies providing potential for amphibian species, albeit limited potential for amphibians and reptiles have been identified within specific areas at the site. Where potential for individual protected species has been identified, the need for specific survey work has been considered (with any necessary surveys to be undertaken during the appropriate seasonal period) and appropriate mitigation strategies identified, to be incorporated into the proposed development.

Overall therefore, the proposed layout has been designed to take into account key ecological features, constraints and concerns, including where these interface with valuable offsite habitats and corridors. Where potential for protected, or other notable faunal species has been identified, suitable mitigation strategies have been identified and incorporated into the development proposals in order to ensure such species can be appropriately safeguarded and opportunities remain at the site. Indeed, the proposals will incorporate substantial new wildlife habitats and enhancements (including new ponds, hedgerows, tree planting and implementation of suitable ongoing management measures) which (subject to appropriate safeguards and implementation during the construction period, in line with the information prepared) will provide substantial benefits for wildlife at the site in the long term.



EXISTING MATURE TREE WITHIN THE SITE

# SECURED BY DESIGN

The reduction in opportunities for crime through the design of the proposed development is a key element in creating a secure sense of place. The layout is designed to create natural surveillance and sense of ownership of private areas. The aim will be to ensure that every part of the scheme is easily identified as either being private or public realm.

The development has been designed to address the key principles, highlighted within the guidance literature for 'Secured by Design' as follows:

- Defensible Space - All houses have a private garden.
- Appropriate Permeability - No rat runs.
- Natural Surveillance - Houses face access drive.
- Car Parking - On plot garages are provided.
- Well designed, attractive, clearly defined and well maintained environments are likely to be a source of pride for residents. This encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility, thus discouraging crime.

The proposals respond to Secured by Design criteria, including the creation of active frontages as follows:

- Houses are to be arranged to address the street or individual spaces and to give positive enclosure to these areas so they are overlooked and create a sense of ownership.
- Vehicular and pedestrian entrances are 'policed' by overlooking these spaces.
- Care has been taken to ensure activity to the frontages.
- The scheme provides a clear definition between public and private areas that are secure and well defined.
- Parking is on plot where there is good surveillance.

# SUSTAINABILITY

Overall, the development site at land east of Lady Grove, Didcot can be considered to be contributing positively to the sustainability of its immediate surroundings as well as within the local and regional government areas.

South Oxfordshire District Council is committed to achieving sustainable development. As a result, the current planning policies for this area emphasise the importance of sustainable growth with particular emphasis on the encouragement of energy efficiency and green energy and industry. It is important, therefore, that the proposed development site contributes to the Council's sustainability aims as well as meeting regional and national objectives for sustainable development.

The sustainability statement accompanying this planning application demonstrates that the proposals satisfy a number of key objectives, responding to local needs and requirements and conforming to current good practice.

The design team are aiming for an improvement of CO2 emissions through implementation of energy efficiency measures within the building and the installation of LZC technologies (photovoltaic panels) for the space and water heating needs.

Through these objectives, the design team are ensuring that they have maximised the opportunities to enhance the environmental performance of the design and ultimately that the best practice sustainability standards will be implemented in practical terms within the proposed development.

In summary, the sustainability statement has informed the design process by identifying opportunities and constraints for sustainable development, and the process has highlighted the proposals sustainability performance against national, regional and local planning policy.







Access

PROW



NORTH WESSEX  
DOWNS AONB

POTENTIAL LINK TO  
"OPEN LINE" CYCLE  
& DIDCOT TRAIN  
STATION

COUNTRY  
PARK

COUNTRY  
PARK

FARMYARD

SuDS

SuDS

LADY GROVE

MEWS STREETS

WOODLAND  
GLADE COTTAGES

COUNTRY  
PARK

WOODLAND  
GLADE COTTAGES

MEWS STREETS


SuDS





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