Gomm Valley & Ashwells

Development Brief







Adopted July 2017

WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Contents

The Vision

GOMM VALLEY AND ASHWELLS DEVELOPMENT BRIEF SITE WILL DELIVER A HIGH QUALITY MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY USES.

THE SITE FRAMEWORK WILL BE LANDSCAPE LED RECOGNISING THE INTRINSIC CHARACTER AND BEAUTY OF THE HILLSIDE LANDFORM, WHILST ACCOMMODATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT.

THE SITE WILL INCLUDE LARGE SWATHES OF UNDEVELOPED LAND. THE UNDEVELOPED LAND WILL RETAIN THE MOST IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE ASSETS IN THE VALLEY AND PROVIDE A GREEN LUNG THROUGH THE SITE LINKING KEY ECOLOGICAL ASSETS.

AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY WILL BE THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF ECOLOGICAL VALUE ON THE SITE WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL HUB AT ITS CORE.

THE SITE WILL NEED TO CONNECT TO ADJOINING URBAN AREAS OFFERING TRAVEL CHOICE TO EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS. THE SITE WILL EMBRACE OPPORTUNITIES TO TRAVEL BY CAR, BUS, BIKE AND ON FOOT.

THE SITE WILL HAVE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY AND DELIVER A MIX OF HOUSING TYPES, SIZES AND TENURES TO CATER FOR THIS COMMUNITY.

THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT WILL NEED TO BE IMAGINATIVE, RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGING TOPOGRAPHY ON THE SITE WHICH WILL IN MANY CASES REQUIRE A BESPOKE ARCHITECTURAL RESPONSE. THE SITE WILL DELIVER OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCEPTIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN KEY LOCATIONS THAT BENEFIT FROM DRAMATIC VIEWS.

Foreword

High Wycombe is a principal town within the county of Buckinghamshire. With a population of approximately 120,000 people, the town enjoys the benefits of a vibrant urban centre with a rich heritage dating back to the medieval period. The town is surrounded by high quality, accessible countryside contributing significantly to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents and visitors alike.

It is these attributes that make High Wycombe a desirable place to live, work and spend leisure time and why, in part, High Wycombe faces many challenges in terms of its future growth over the coming decades. Difficult choices will have to be made in respect of the management of development pressures and in this regard the town is not alone.

It is critical that growth is planned, managed and delivered in a way that benefits all - to protect what is special, re-instate what has been lost and make the most of the opportunities that growth brings.

The Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief is an important part of this strategy and will set a framework that will secure high quality development for the Gomm Valley and Ashwells Reserve Site whilst making a significant contribution to the development needs of the district.

The Development Brief is testament to the hard work of councillors, officers and the Gomm Valley and Ashwells Liaison Group and will be a document by which development proposals will be judged. Rightly, the bar has been set high and development will be expected to be sensitive to, and respectful of, its context. Innovative design solutions will be called for given the challenges presented by the sites, but the core principle of high quality that underpins the Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief must be the goal we strive for to secure the type of development fit for High Wycombe and its prosperity for generations to come.

Cllr Katrina Wood
Executive Leader
Wycombe District Council

Cllr David Johncock
Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainability
Wycombe District Council
Chairman
Gomm Valley and Ashwells Liaison Group

Section 1
Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief forms part of Wycombe District Council's (WDC) planning framework for the Gomm Valley Reserve Site ('The Site') as identified within WDC's Core Strategy 2008 and released for development at WDC's cabinet meeting of 20th October 2014.

The Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief has been produced through collaboration between L D A Design and WDC, in close liaison with the Gomm Valley and Ashwells development planning teams (formed by consultants for the various technical disciplines e.g. planning, ecology, landscape and transport) and in consultation with the Gomm Valley and Ashwells Liaison Group.

1.2 PURPOSE OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The purpose of the Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief is to provide a clear strategy for the developed and undeveloped areas of The Site, taking the opportunities available to bring forward development, whilst preserving key ecological assets and providing strong green infrastructure connections, thereby securing high quality comprehensive development.

It is however a very challenging site, needing considerable sensitivity to avoid the previous mistakes of developing on hillsides, evident elsewhere in High Wycombe. The brief has been put together on the basis of thorough, but high-level information. No work has been undertaken, for example, on detailed cross-sections of the spine road and its topographical implications.

The brief sets out clear objectives, and provides proposals on how these objectives can best be achieved. However, when more technical work is undertaken, it may demonstrated that there are better ways of delivering the objectives than those set out in the brief. Should these improvements differ significantly from the brief, amendments will be required to those parts of the brief so affected. This would also require reconvening the liaison group and appropriate public consultation, and must be done before any planning application containing such modifications could be considered positively.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

The structure of the Development Brief recognises the need to plan and manage the development of The Site as a whole, whilst also allowing future planning applications within the respective landownerships to proceed.

The Development Brief is structured as follows:

- Section 1: Introduction - provides an introduction to the Development Brief document;
- Section 2: Planning Policy Framework - summarises the policy context at national and local level;
- Section 3: The Reserve Site and its Context - sets out the existing baseline conditions;
- Section 4: Development Framework Objectives - identifies the over-arching objectives for the development of the Reserve site;
- Section 5: Brief for Development: The Reserve Site - sets out high level guidance for the development of the site based on the baseline conditions and key objectives discussed in Sections 3 and 4.

1.4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In order to allow the community to influence the development process, WDC embarked on a series of community workshops aimed at establishing and prioritising ideas and principles to be taken into account in the development of the Reserve Sites.

The session for the Gomm Valley and Ashwells site took place at the Highcrest Academy on 31st January 2015. Whilst many participants confirmed their opposition to the principle of development on the site, responses were made with a constructive mindset and provided useful insights, ideas and comments which have been considered in the development of the objectives and guidance set out in this Development Brief.

The Gomm Valley and Ashwells Development Brief will be subject to a period of public consultation the results of which will inform the final adopted version of this document.

Section 2
Planning Policy Framework

2.1 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for WDC is made up of the following documents:

- Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2004-2016;
- Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy 2008;
- The 'Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development document (2013); and
- Saved policies of the Wycombe District Council Local Plan (2004).

Taken together these provide the long term planning vision for Wycombe District.

The Gomm Valley and Ashwells Reserve Site is designated in the Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy as a "reserve location for future development" (Policy CS8).

2.2 EMERGING PLANNING POLICY

At the time of writing, the Council has started preparation of a new Local Plan for Wycombe District via the Local Plan Options Consultation Document (January 2014). Upon adoption, this Plan will replace the adopted Core Strategy (2008) and saved policies of the existing Local Plan (2004). It will sit alongside the adopted Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development (June 2012). The emerging Local Plan seeks to allocate the Gomm Valley and Ashwells site for a residential-led mixed use development comprising residential, business and associated community uses.

2.3 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS / GUIDANCE

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance (SPG) provide guidance on the way in which policies in the Development Plan should be applied. These are listed below:

- Developer Contributions SPD (adopted April 2007, fully updated and revised April 2013);
- Living within our Limits SPD (adopted July 2009);
- Community Facilities SPD (adopted October 2011);
- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (adopted November 2012); and
- Wycombe Residential Design Guide.

There are also a number of guidance documents which relate to the Reserve Sites and will inform the development briefs (including this document) and planning applications as they emerge for each of the Reserve Sites. These are listed as follows:

- High Wycombe Reserve Sites Transport Framework;
- Wycombe Reserve Sites Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
- The Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance adopted by Buckinghamshire County Council in September 2015.

2.4 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK NPPF, 2012

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policy Framework for England and how it is expected to be applied.

2.5 BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

There are a number of best practice guidance documents such as Planning Practice Guidance, The Design Companion for Planning & Placemaking, Manual For Streets, Safer Places, and so on. These will be material considerations in the assessment of any proposals on the site.

2.6 THE STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

This development brief, which has been widely consulted upon, is a non-statutory guidance document and a material consideration when considering planning applications on The Site. It provides a link between the provisions of the Development Plan and the requirements of a planning application.

Section 3
The Reserve Site and its Context

3.1. THE SITE

3.1.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Site comprises approximately 73 hectares of land located on the eastern edge of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. The town, which has a population of approximately 120,000 people, is well connected due to its position on the M40, which runs immediately south of the town, and the Chiltern Mainline railway, which provides regular services between London Marylebone and Birmingham Snow Hill. The Site is bordered to the north by the smaller settlement of Tylers Green and to the east by the rolling countryside of the Chiltern Hills. The settlement edges of High Wycombe abut the western and southern boundaries.

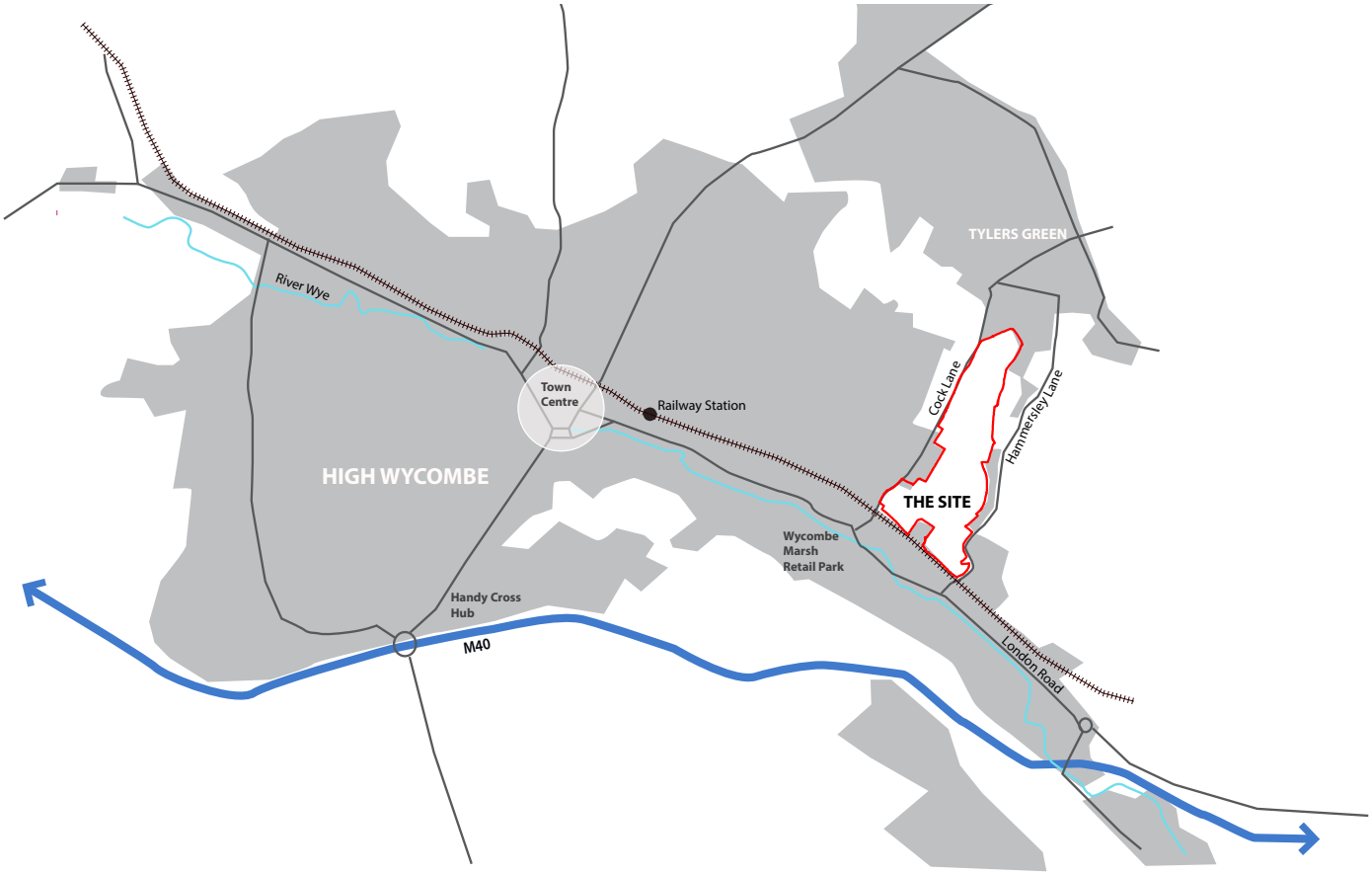


FIGURE 3.1: STRATEGIC SITE LOCATION PLAN

3.1.2 LOCAL CONTEXT

Figure 3.2 shows the location of The Site and identifies the two sub-sites that comprise The Site and referred to within the Development Brief. These are:

- The Gomm Valley site; and
- The Ashwells site.

It should be noted Figure 3.2 does not depict land ownership. The Gomm Valley site comprises land under multiple ownerships including Friends Life, Taylor Wimpey and KMP (Harrow) Ltd and the Bew/Dugan family. The Ashwells site is owned by WDC.

The Development Brief site is located approximately 2.5km east of High Wycombe town centre, immediately north of the Chiltern Mainline Railway and approximately 200m north of London Road (the A40).

The western boundary of the site is defined by Cock Lane and the rear gardens of the properties on Pimms Grove. The northern perimeter borders the rear gardens of properties at Ashwells, Carter Walk and Wheeler Avenue in Tylers Green. The gardens of some of these properties are quite shallow, and this when combined with rising topography, may increase the impact of new development on these properties.

The eastern boundary of the Development Brief site is principally defined by the large and long rear gardens of properties located along Hammersley Lane and Sandpits Lane making these properties less sensitive to new development. The boundary extends up to Hammersley Lane in the south eastern corner of The Site. Beyond Hammersely Lane, residential development gives way to open countryside, pockets of woodland and the Wycombe Heights Golf Club.

The southern boundary of The Site is defined by less-sensitive uses including Peregrine Business Park and the railway line, beyond which there is a mix of development uses, including relatively dense residential development and large-scale retail and light industrial uses. Gomm Road connects Peregrine Business Park to London Road which runs broadly parallel to The Site's southern boundary approximately 200m further south.

3.1.3 THE SITE

The Site itself is a dry valley which runs broadly north-east to south-west towards the railway line and Peregrine Business Park. The Site principally comprises open agricultural land defined by a network of hedgerows and punctuated by blocks of woodland.

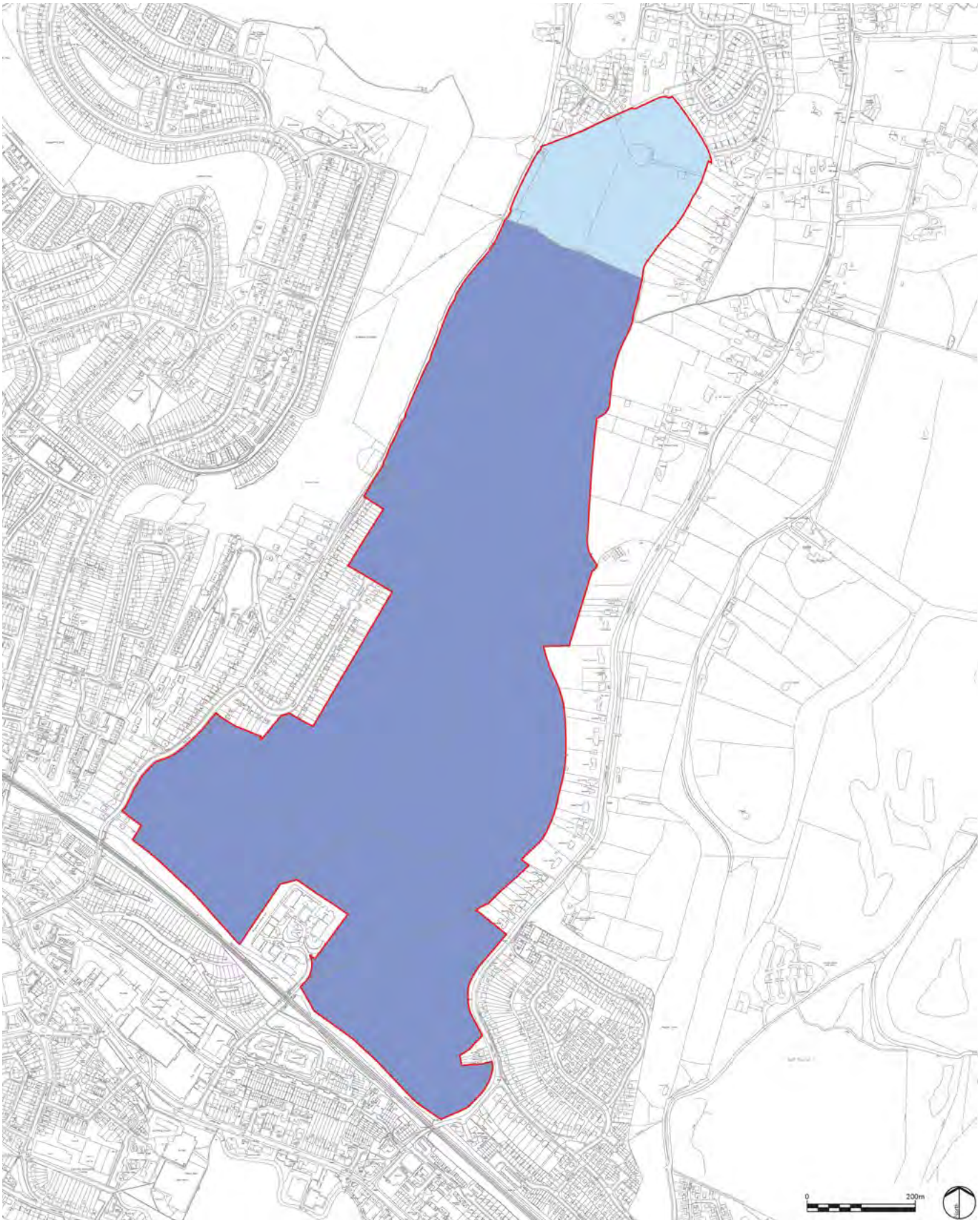


FIGURE 3.2: SITE LOCATION PLAN - 1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

Development Brief Gomm Valley site

Development Brief Ashwells site

3.2. SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Figure 3.3 shows The Site in the context of the nearby services and amenities.

The development framework needs to ensure that development parcels are well connected to key services and amenities by a range of travel modes. The package of measures necessary to make future development acceptable will be developed through WDC's Infrastructure Plan.

3.2.1 EDUCATION

The Gomm Valley site falls within the following school catchment areas:

- Marsh Infant and Nursery School (for children aged four and over);
- Beechview School (for children aged 7 and over);
- John Hampden Grammar School and the Royal Grammar School (boys grammar schools);
- Wycombe High School (a girls grammar school); and
- The Cressex Community School.

Residents are also eligible to apply for places at Highcrest Academy (no catchment) and St. Michael's RC School.

The Ashwells site falls within the following school catchment areas:

- Tylers Green County First School (for children aged four and over);
- Tylers Green County Middle School (for children aged seven and over);
- The Royal Grammar School (a boys grammar school);
- The Beaconsfield High School and Wycombe High School; and
- Sir William Ramsay School and Holmer Green Senior School.

Catchment areas may alter over time and/or if new schools are built or expanded

3.2.2 EMPLOYMENT

Peregrine Business Park is located along the southern edge of The Site. It comprises six purpose-built, low density office buildings arranged around a cul-de-sac and car parking. Kingsmead Business Park is located approximately 500m to the south of The Site and comprises five detached office buildings.

There is the opportunity to provide employment uses on The Site. Development proposals will need to ensure they do not undermine the viability of the adjacent business areas and have regard to existing noise, parking and traffic related issues.

3.2.3 RETAIL

To the west of The Site retail facilities are small in scale and generally serve a localised catchment. Micklefield Post Office and a Costcutter Convenience Store are located approximately 400m from The Site boundary as the crow flies, but the Public Right of Way that links them to The Site is very steep in places. Users travelling by car would have to travel down Cock Lane and back up Micklefield Road to access them.

To the south of The Site, retail units are generally larger and serve a wider catchment. These include High Wycombe Retail Park, which is located approximately 500m to the south of The Site and provides a number of larger retailers including Argos, Wickes and Pets at Home. These reflect other larger retail units along the London Road, including B&Q and Halfords. To the north of The Site the parade of shops at Kings Ride are located approximately 900m from The Site boundary. There is also a Londis and bookshop located at the centre of Penn and Tylers Green, just off the village green.

3.2.4 COMMUNITY

Community facilities are relatively well dispersed around the wider Development Brief site and comprise a mixture of religious facilities, libraries, community centres and public houses.

To the west, approximately 400m from The Site boundary as the crow flies, are Micklefield Community Centre, Micklefield Community Library and Micklefield Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, as discussed above, the Public Right of Way that links them to The Site is very steep in places and most users are likely to access them via Cock Lane and Micklefield Road.

Further facilities are provided to the north of The Site, including the Horse and Jockey, the Old Queens Head and the Red Lion public houses, Tylers Green Village Hall, St. Margarets Church and Trinity Church, and Penn and Tylers Green Sports and Social Club, which are located between 300m and 900m from The Site boundary. These facilities can be accessed by car via Cock Lane (a drive of approximately 1.1km to 1.3km) or by foot via the Public Right of Way that runs along the northern edge of The Site, with approximate walking distances of 0.7km to 1.1km.
To the south of The Site there are two public houses, the King George V and the Junction Pub and Kitchen, as well as the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter Day Saints and Wycombe Marsh Baptist Church.

Access to local schools, retail and community facilities, particularly by walking and cycling, should be facilitated by the layout and access to footpath/cycle links provided wherever possible.

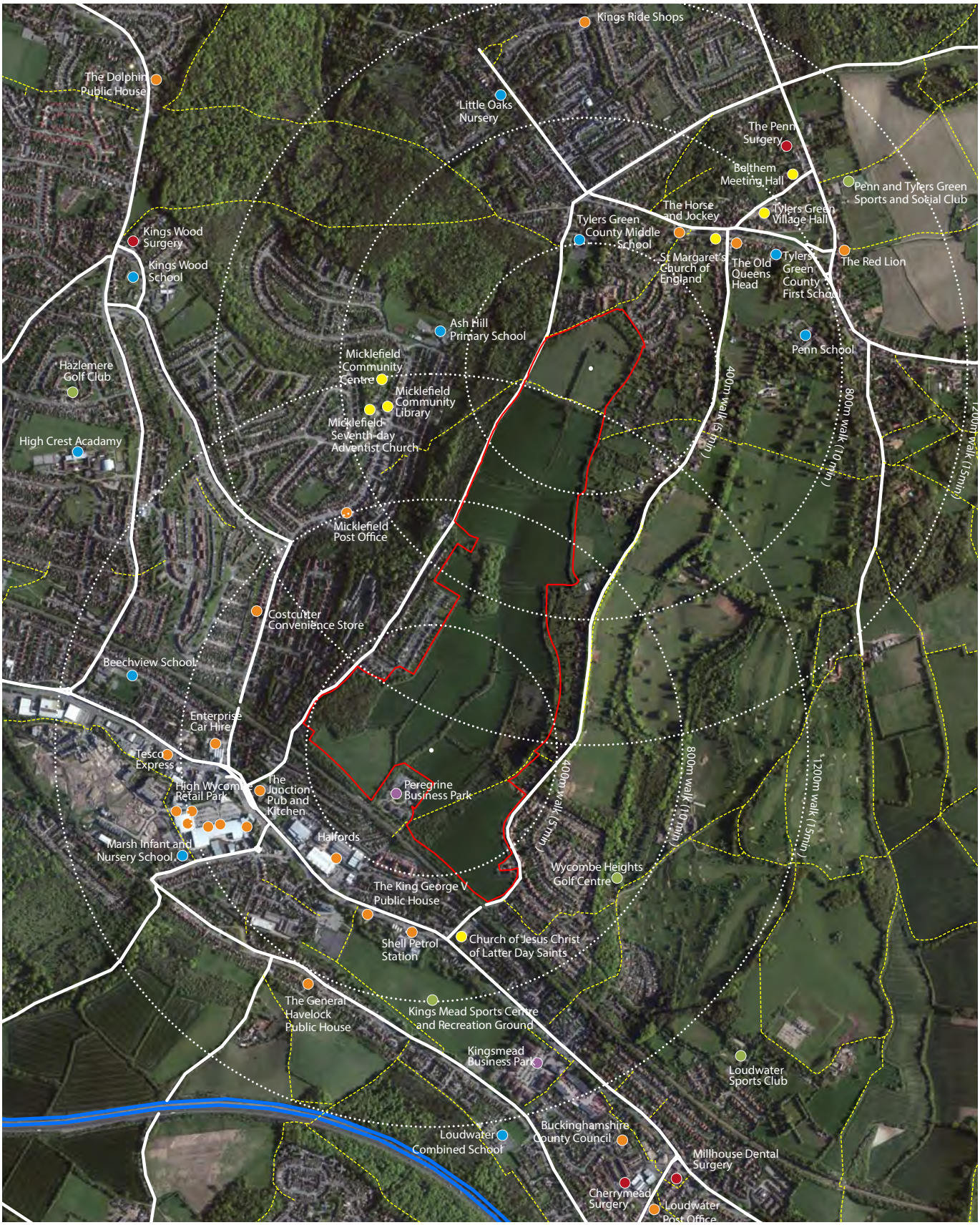


FIGURE 3.3: SERVICES AND AMENITIES

- Shops & Services
- Community Facilities
- Health Facilities
- Sport & Leisure
- Education
- Employment

3.2.5 SPORT

The following key recreation facilities are available within the vicinity of The Site:

- Penn and Tylers Green Sports and Social Club located approximately 900m to the north;
- Kings Mead Sports Centre and Recreation Ground (home of High Wycombe RUFC) located approximately 400m to the south; and
- Loudwater Sports Club located approximately 1km to the south east.

There are several recreational facilities within the locality. The package of additional recreational measures necessary to make future development acceptable will be developed through WDC's Infrastructure Plan.

3.3 BUILT FORM/CHARACTER

3.3.1 PENN AND TYLERS GREEN

The villages of Penn and Tylers Green are located on an elevated position on the Chiltern Hills, immediately north of The Site. The historic cores of the two settlements are located around Elm Road, Church Road, School Road and the main village green. Tylers Green experienced significant growth during the 20th century, principally to the north-west of the settlement, leading to it linking with Hazlemere.

Both Penn and Tylers Green remain physically separated from High Wycombe by woodland and open agricultural land and retain their own distinct identities from the town. The historic parts of the two settlements are covered by the Penn and Tylers Green Conservation Area.

The historic cores of Penn and Tylers Green developed around crossroads and of main routes through the area and smaller tracks linking them. This is a very different physical, social and economic context to that of the current edge of Tylers Green where it abuts The Site. Here houses are groups of similarly designed detached and semi-detached houses which turn their backs on the adjacent countryside and are not particularly 'local' in their architectural approach.

The density of the historic core of Tylers Green varies but is approximately 16 DPH whilst more recent development such as along Carter Walk and Ashwells is approximately 15-19 DPH. It should be noted that density is not an indication of character

Development of The Site will need to relate well to the existing settlement edge whilst establishing a new settlement edge to Tylers Green which also relates to the open spaces beyond. Above all it will need to deliver the Framework Objectives for the site set out in Section 4.

There are a number of features and attributes of the existing settlement of Tylers Green which could potentially be reinterpreted in the design of development in the Ashwells site to help reinforce the identity of the existing settlements.

These include the following:

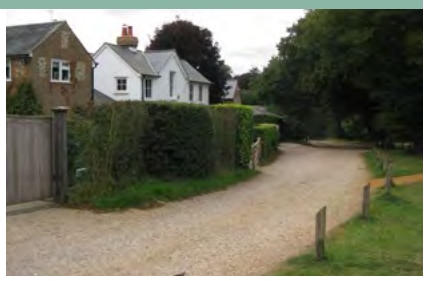
- Informal lanes of gravel or aggregate and/or shared surface streets serving dwellings which overlook public open spaces;
- Communal recreational spaces that provide important focal points, addressed by active frontages of adjacent dwellings;
- Small open spaces where roads fork or intersect at tight angles which accommodate mature trees and/or vegetation;
- Plot boundaries commonly defined by native hedges (yew, laurel, privet), walls constructed from brick or a mixture of brick and flint. Timber fences (often painted white) are also common, particularly along lanes;
- Good quality local brick and timber (usually painted black) for building walls, timber for doors, windows and gates, and plain clay tiles and slate for roofs;
- Variation in terms of plot sizes and building scale & typology with some plots large enough to accommodate large trees and other soft landscape; and
- Variation in architectural idiom.

The Ashwells site, closest to Tylers Green, should reflect the varied character of Tylers Green and create an appropriate new edge of settlement.

TYLERS GREEN AND PENN

STREETS / SPACES






PUBLIC REALM / BOUNDARIES






BUILDINGS






3.3.2 HIGH WYCOMBE & LOUDWATER

The historic core of High Wycombe is located in the valley floor of the Wye Valley, at the intersection of the roads between London and Oxford (A40) and between Marlow and Amersham (A404). The town initially grew in a linear form along the valley bottom, with significant growth occurring during the 19th century in association with the development of the furniture industry.

Growth was also associated with extension of rail lines into Buckinghamshire, some of which was later referred to as 'Metroland'. Edwardian architecture gradually gave way to mock-Tudor as leafy suburban development spread up the valley sides. In High Wycombe the Amersham Hill Conservation Area epitomises the best of this type of development, with detached and semi-detached dwellings set within spacious gardens capable of accommodating robust structural tree planting which screens and softens the appearance of the development within views. The use of detached and semi-detached building types set within gardens capable of supporting robust tree planting is an important characteristic of successful development on steeply sloping sites.

During the inter-war and post-war periods the town expanded further to the north and south along the Wye valley, up steep slopes which had previously been undeveloped. Much of the housing constructed during this period was based on standard typologies, many terraced, on small plots at relatively high densities. These developments often showed little regard for topography or the need to respond to it through architecture or robust planting to mitigate impact on views. As a result these developments have been less successful in integrating successfully or contributing positively to the High Wycombe townscape.

It is critically important when developing steeply sloping sites that the layout and architecture is designed in response to topography and views from surrounding areas. Development should provide for the functional and amenity needs of future residents whilst accommodating robust structural planting to soften the appearance of the development and mitigate the impact on long-distance views. Section 5 of this Development Brief sets out guidance to inform the design of high quality development that responds sensitively to its context.

FIGURE 3.4 EARLY DEVELOPMENT ON SLOPING SITES IN WYCOMBE INCORPORATED ROBUST PLANTING BOTH ON-STREET AND WITHIN RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS, SOFTENING THE IMPACT ON VIEWS OF THE TOWN

FIGURE 3.5 INTER AND POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT IN WYCOMBE WAS NOT DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO INTEGRATE INTO THE TOWNSCAPE, UTILISING STANDARD HOUSETYPES AND FAILING TO PROVIDE SCOPE FOR ROBUST PLANTING WITHIN AND AROUND THE RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS.

3.4 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

3.4.1 VEHICLES

As shown in Figure 3.6, The Site is defined by Hammersley Lane to the east and by Cock Lane/Pimms Grove to the west, both of which provide connections across the railway line to London Road (A40) to the south and Church Road to the north. Gomm Road provides an additional connection to London Road from the southern edge of the Gomm Valley site, immediately adjacent to Peregrine Business Park.

Capacity

A town wide highway capacity impact assessment has been undertaken by Jacobs. The study has identified capacity issues across the town, which will be exacerbated by the Reserve Sites. This includes the impact on Cock Lane, Hammersley Lane, Gomm Road and the London Road. Of particular significance it has identified that Cock Lane, a single track road with passing bays, would be unable to accommodate a material increase in traffic volume and has advised the provision of a new spine road to address the issue.

Any proposal will need to address highway capacity issues by ensuring that the transport requirements of the new development are met through new road provision rather than relying upon the existing network. New provision will need to balance the need for highway capacity with environmental impacts (ecology/landscape) and the need to retain the separate identities of High Wycombe and Penn and Tylers Green.

Access

As shown in Figure 3.6, vehicular access into The Site could potentially be provided in the following locations:

- Southern end of Hammersley Lane where the road runs adjacent to the site boundary. A lower access point closer to the railway line would be preferable to avoid the prominent eastern valley shoulder;
- Gomm Road, adjacent to Peregrine Business Park. This access will need to retain the easement for the Scottish and Southern Electricity (refer to 3.13 Utilities);
- Through Peregrine Business Park, though this is contingent on 3rd party agreement;
- Southern end of Pimms Grove;
- Pimms Close, however, due to geometry of the road and the limited planning benefits, this option may not be feasible for vehicles;
- Cock Lane. The provision of any vehicular link to Cock Lane would require improvements to provide a minimum road width of 6.5m plus a footway along the eastern side;
- Extension of Ashwells; and
- Extension of Wheeler Avenue, however, due to land ownership issues, geometry of the road, and the limited planning benefits, this option may not be feasible.

Design

The valley gradients are steeper in many parts of The Site than recommended maximum road gradients. Where this is the case roads will either need to be aligned with the contours or cut diagonally across them to reduce the need for extensive cuttings and retaining structures and other such works.

The topography of The Site is challenging and access and movement routes within The Site must work with and not against topography. Roads will either need to be aligned with the contours or cut diagonally across them to reduce the need for extensive cuttings and retaining structures.

3.4.2 PEDESTRIANS

The following Public Rights of Way run through, or immediately adjacent to, The Site:

- Public Right of Way CWY/61/1 in the south eastern corner of the Gomm Valley site connecting Gomm Road with Hammersley Lane;
- Public Rights of Way CWY/15/1 running along the boundary between the Ashwells site and Gomm Valley site between Cock Lane and Hammersley Lane. This footpath turns sharply south, along the boundary of the site before continuing East;
- Public Right of Way CWY/14/1 running along the northwestern edge of the Ashwells site between Cock Lane and Carter Walk.

The Chiltern Way Long Distance Path traverses to the east of The Site, shown in figure 3.7.

A number of informal footpaths also exist within The Site. There is an opportunity to improve the existing public access on the Site and the Sites links to the wider Public Right of Way Network. The creation of a footpath network will need to take account of their ecological impact.

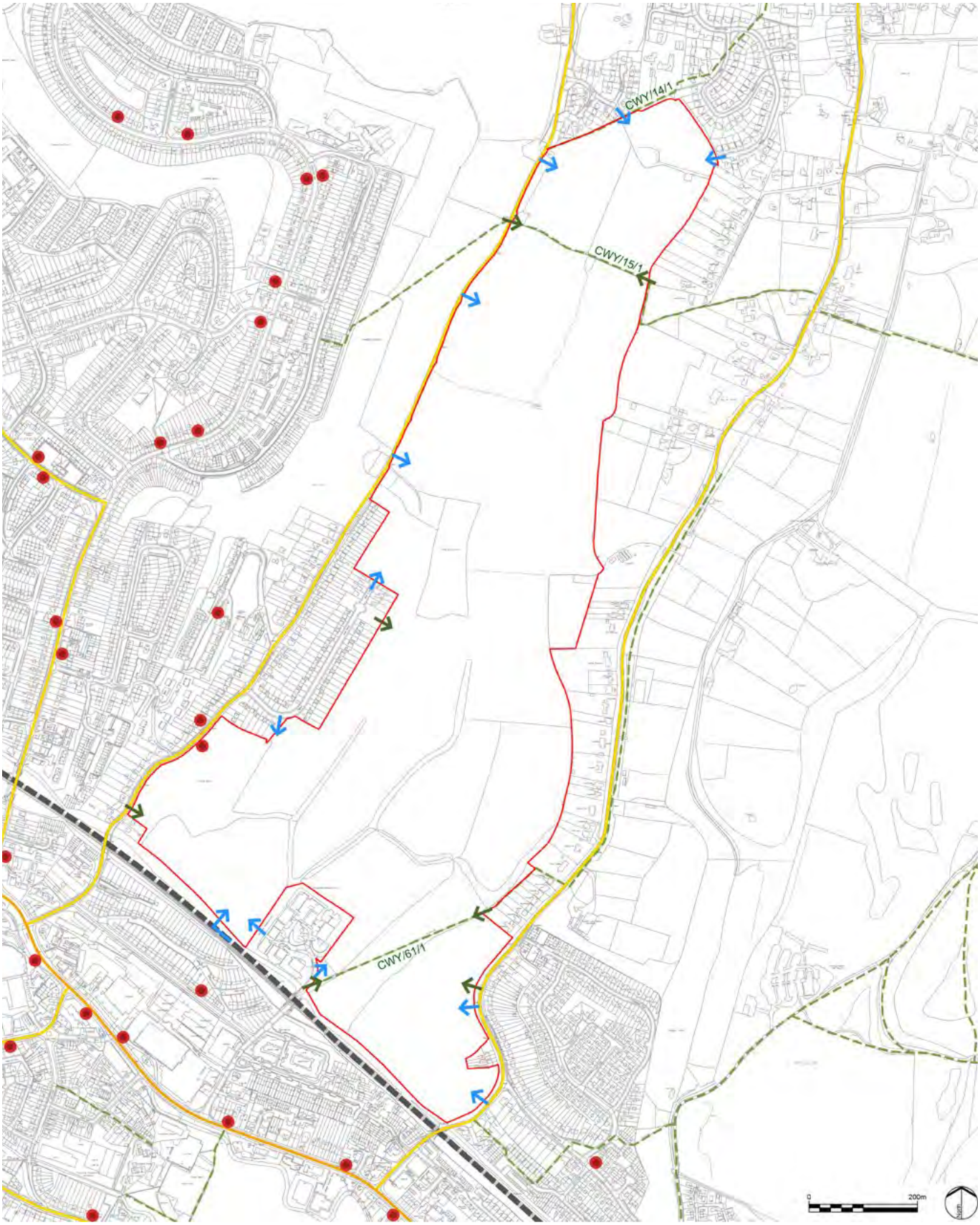


FIGURE 3.6: ACCESS AND MOVEMENT - 1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

Primary roads

Secondary roads

Potential vehicular access points into site

Potential dedicated pedestrian access points into site

Bus stops

Railway line

Existing Public Rights of Way

In addition to the Public Rights of Way and potential vehicular access points identified above, there is potential for additional footpath connections through the site in the following locations:

- In the southeast corner of the Gomm Valley site where Hammersley Lane abuts the site boundary;
- In the southwest corner of the Gomm Valley site, around the southern edge of the ancient woodland, linking Cock Lane with the rest of the site; and
- From the village green located at the northern end of Pimms Grove.

There is formal and informal access across The Site and a good wider network of Public Rights of Way. Access should be improved within The Site, balancing the need to protect sensitive ecological habitats. Routes should connect and contribute to the wider Public Right of Way network.

3.4.3 CYCLISTS

There are no official National Cycle routes within close proximity to The Site. However, Sustrans identifies a partly traffic free cycle route between The Site and the town centre following the alignment of the River Wye/The Dyke. Buckinghamshire County Council is also currently working on a cycling strategy for Buckinghamshire.

There may be an opportunity to provide a strategic cycle route through The Site as part of a recreational corridor along the valley bottom. Other proposed cycle routes will need to be carefully considered to achieve realistic gradients.

Opportunities should be taken to improve cycling provision in the area by providing links through the site, linking to routes outside the site whenever possible

3.4.4 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Buses

As shown in Figure 3.6, there are existing bus services in the following locations within close proximity of The Site:

- To the south of The Site on London Road (services 27, 35, 37, 74, 336, 580, 740, A40, X74, X336, BB15, A), Orchard Road (service 27) and Cock Lane (service 27). The bus services on London Road serve destinations including Maidenhead, Beaconsfield, Slough, Amersham, Uxbridge and Heathrow airport. There are regular services along the London Road connecting The Site with the town centre; and
- To north of The Site on Church Road (school service BB13), New Road (services 31 and 577) and School Road (services BB13, 31 and 577).

There is potential to serve the site through existing bus services in the area. There are two relevant routes:

- The No.27 which could serve the southern end of the site via Pimms Grove and/or the Gomm Road/ spine road, and/or exiting onto Hammersley Lane;
- The No. 31 which currently serves Tylers Green. It is not possible to extend this service into the site, but the site would be just over 400m from its current route. Whilst not ideal it is acceptable in the circumstances;

Any routes which may need to accommodate a bus route should be designed accordingly

Trains

High Wycombe Railway Station is located approximately 3km west of The Site and provides regular services on the Chiltern Line between London and Birmingham.

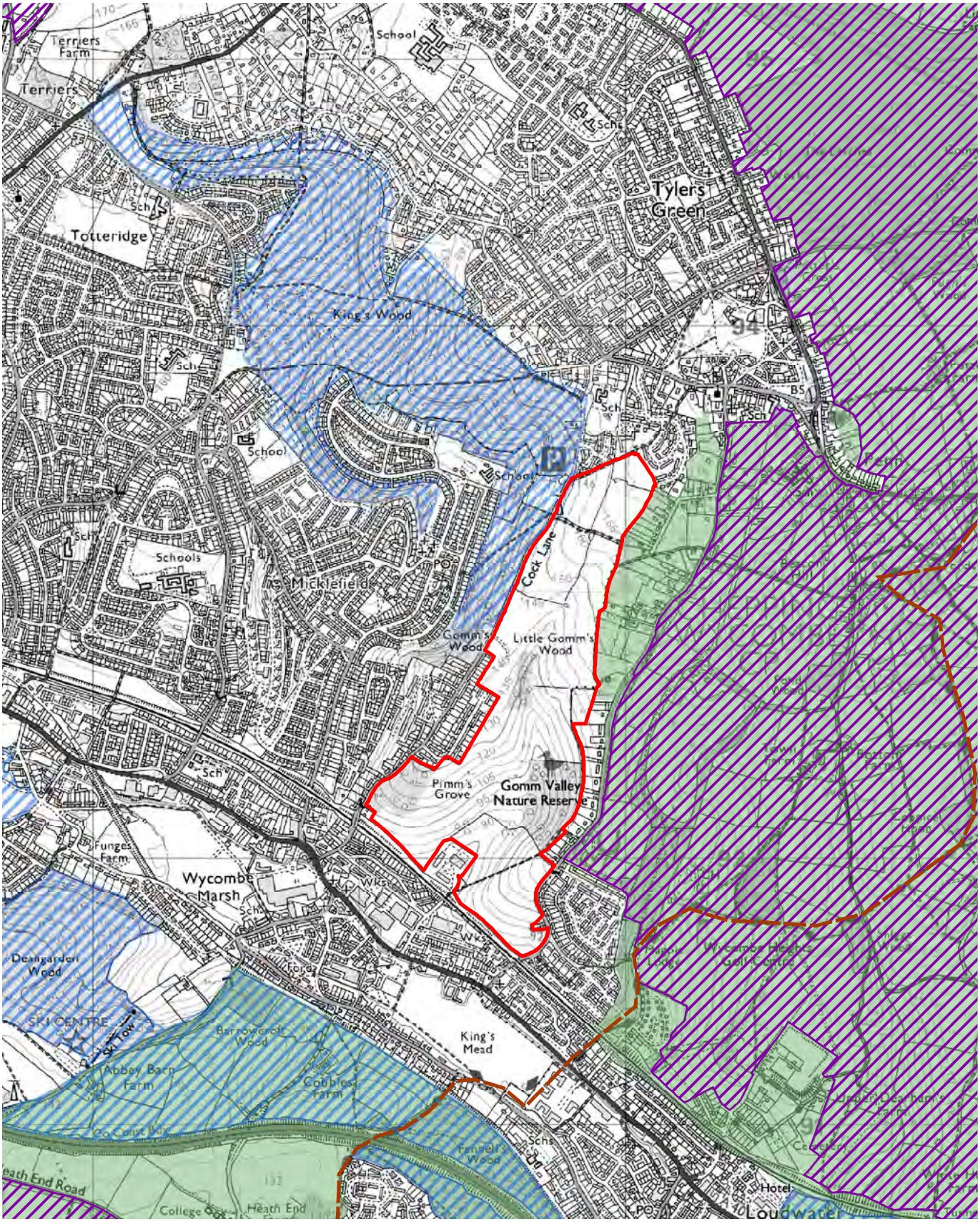


FIGURE 3.7: LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS - 1:20,000

Site Boundary

Green Belt

Chilterns AONB

Local Landscape Area (Saved Local Plan Policy L2)

Chilterns Way Long Distance Path

3.5 LANDSCAPE

3.5.1 LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

There are no landscape designations within The Site. However, there are several landscape designations within the vicinity of The Site as shown in Figure 3.7. These are:

- Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - to the east, but separated and screened from The Site by existing housing along Hammersley Lane.
- Kingswood, Tylers Green and Micklefield Local Landscape Area - adjacent to the northwest. This area is also covered by a number of nature conservation designations.
- Wycombe Abbey School, The Rye, Holywell Mead, Warren Wood, Deangarden Wood and Fennel's Wood Local Landscape Area - across the Wye valley to the south.

An extent of land to the east of the site is designated as part of the London Metropolitan Green Belt. This includes some of the contiguous back gardens of existing dwellings along Hammersley Lane as illustrated in figure 3.7.

Although there are no landscape designations within The Site there are a number within the locality. Development proposals for The Site will need to demonstrate if and how these landscape designations would be affected and provide appropriate mitigation if adverse impacts are identified.

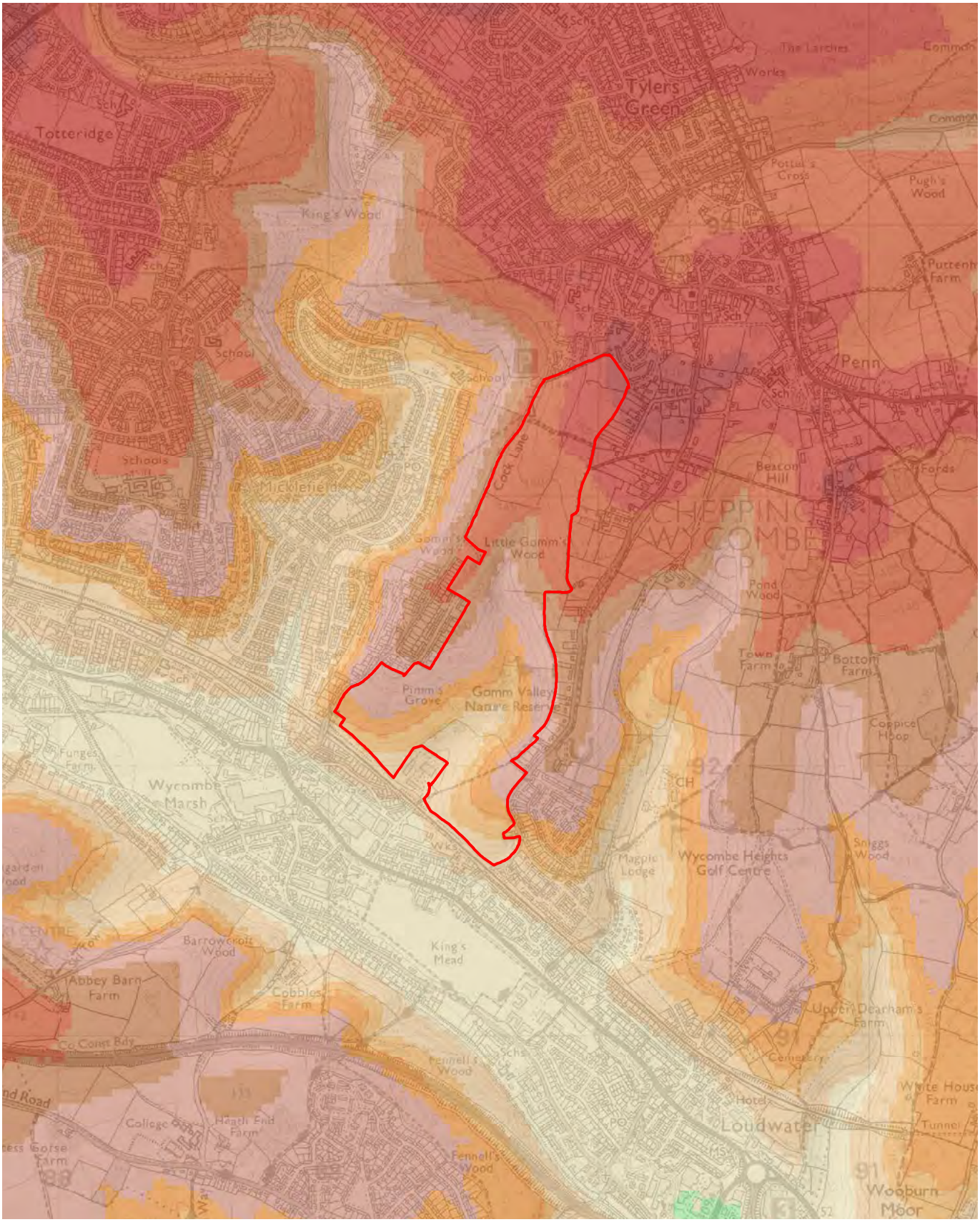


FIGURE 3.8: TOPOGRAPHY - 1:20,000

Site Boundary

40 - 50m	90 - 100m	130 - 140m	170 - 180m
50 - 60m	100 - 110m	140 - 150m	180 - 190m
60 - 70m	110 - 120m	150 - 160m	
70 - 80m	120 - 130m	160 - 170m	

3.5.2 TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 3.8 shows the topography in and around The Site.

High Wycombe is sited within the Wye Valley, a chalk river valley running northwest to southeast which the growth of the town has followed.

The Site is located in one of a series of northeast to southwest valleys which run perpendicular to the Wye Valley.

The relief of The Site is most pronounced at the mouth of the valley where the concave 'shoulders' of the valley form characteristic features and where the valley landform can be most readily discerned.

Steep valley sides are characteristic of the middle parts of the valley around Little Gomms Wood where the contrast between the valley floor and rising slopes to the Gomm Valley SSSI to the east and Pimms Grove to the west are visible. Strong, grown out hedgerows are also characteristic of this area accentuating the valley landform.

Further north within The Site the relief of the landform reduces and the topography flattens to a gentle undulation, rising to Penn and Tylers Green. There is an east to west slope across the Ashwells site.

The least constrained areas of Development Brief site in terms of slope gradient are:

- The eastern area of the Ashwells site;
- The land north of Pimms Grove; and
- The land located immediately north of Peregrine Business Park.

The most constrained areas of The Site in terms of slope gradient are:

- The 'shoulders' of land at the mouth of the valley;
- The land to the south of Little Gomm's Wood, particularly immediately adjacent the wood;
- The land to the east and north-east of Peregrine Business Park;
- The land immediately to the north of Little Gomm's Wood; and
- The land immediately north of the SSSI.

3.5.3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Figure 3.9 shows the landscape character areas identified in the Wycombe District Landscape Character Assessment (2011).
The Site is located within Landscape Character Area 19.1: High Wycombe Settled River Valley and exhibits a number of the following key characteristics of this area:

- Chalk river valley cutting the dip slope and containing the River Wye between High Wycombe and Bourne End where it flows into the Thames;
- High Wycombe spreads linearly along the valley floor contained by steep wooded and farmed valley sides with a small number of farmsteads;
- The River Wye is hidden in the wider landscape by settlement and is often culverted, although it is prominent at The Rye where the river and valley setting forms a distinctive part of the townscape;
- Interspersed arable and pasture farmland comprising medium sized fields delineated by hedgerows. In the south arable dominates the west facing slopes and pasture the east;
- Large blocks of ancient beech and yew woodland occur on valley slopes in the north. Woodland is sparse in the rest of the area with small blocks interspersed with farmland or along valley tops;
- Isolated areas of chalk grassland on the west facing valley slopes are SSSI and LNR. Some remnant areas of orchard also occur;
- Main roads and railways are integrated by settlement along the valley floor and the M40 crosses the valley on pillars. Winding rural roads climb the valley side often contained by tall hedgerows or woodland;
- The Rye open space, through which the River Wye flows, lies on the southern edge of High Wycombe. Formerly common pasture and the site of a Roman Villa and Pan Mill;
- Historic parkland occurs at Wycombe Abbey which extends up the valley slopes to wooded valley tops;
- Fields are predominantly pre-18th century irregular enclosure interspersed with 20th century enclosures. Some remnant orchards occur on west facing valley slopes;
- Views are from either side of the valley to the other, to development climbing up the valley sides in the west and wooded and convex farmed slopes in the east. The valley slopes in the south and east, including woodland, farmland and parkland provide an important setting to High Wycombe which extends along the valley floor;

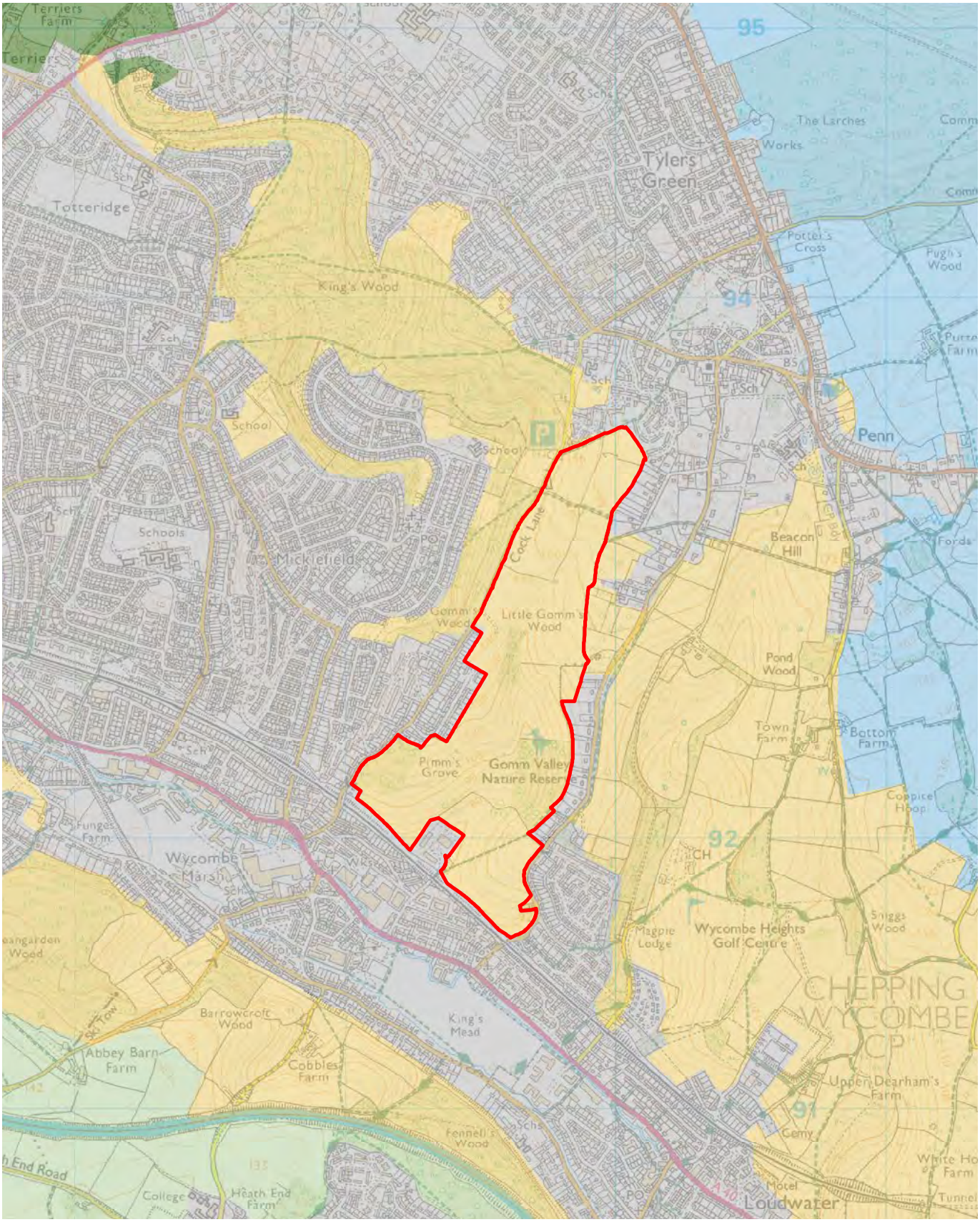


FIGURE 3.9: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER - 1:20,000

Site Boundary

Landscape Character Areas

- Great Kingshill Settled Plateau
- Great Marlow Rolling Farmland
- High Wycombe Settled River Valley
- Penn Rolling Farmland
- Urban

- The valley is crossed by the Chiltern Way long distance path and a number of local footpaths ascend the valley sides or pass through woodland. Two golf courses occur on the valley sides;
- High Wycombe has a medieval core and grew up around the furniture industry; and
- Its modern extensions have spread along the valley floor contained by valley slopes which retain a rural character.

The character and features of The Site epitomise many of the best characteristics of the High Wycombe Settled River Valley. A landscape led design approach should be used to ensure these characteristics are retained whilst accommodating development.

3.5.4 SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Informed by the descriptions above, the following are considered important landscape characteristics and features of The Site:

- Dry chalk valley forming a continuous green finger of countryside to the urban fringes of High Wycombe;
- Sloping topography;
- Undeveloped open slopes, particularly at the southern shoulders;
- Woodland blocks;
- Mature hedgerows;
- Chalk scrubland;
- Arable farmland; and
- Sinuous valley form.

There are a number of positive landscape features within The Site. The ability to appreciate the valley landform is an important characteristic of The Site. Development proposals must respect landscape features of value and the valley form.

3.5.5 VISIBILITY

Visual context

The general visual composition of the area is dominated by the built form of High Wycombe and its urban fringes which extend along the River Wye Valley and its connecting tributaries. The landform serves to frame the town in many views setting it within the surrounding, undulating countryside.

A patchwork of predominantly arable farmland interspersed with occasional pastoral fields of medium to small size is prevalent. These are often punctuated by numerous woodland blocks that tend to occupy the steep valley slopes, forming a generally continuous green cloak along the River Wye valley.

Outlying settlements such as Tylers Green , Penn and Flackwell Heath nestle amongst this wooded backdrop.

The M40 and London to Birmingham railway are visible built features within many views.

Views outside The Site

The strong vegetative network and topography of the surrounding landscape help restrict views of some areas of The Site from the wider environment.

The topography and aspect of slope mean that longer distance views from the wider environs of The Site are principally to the south, southeast and southwest. In these views the valley 'shoulders' are discernible features of The Site and contribute positively to the green backdrop setting of the town.

In views from the south looking directly up The Site, the valley profile is apparent, forming a continuous green finger of countryside into High Wycombe and the Wye Valley.

Views are also possible from immediately north of The Site. There are views to the Ashwells site from the rear of residential properties on Ashwells, Lancaster Rise and Sandpits Lane. Filtered views through vegetation are also be possible from properties on Carter Walk and Wheeler Avenue, although many views at street level are obscured by built form along these roads.

Longer distance views further north are restricted by the levelling of the topography, vegetation and the built form of Tylers Green.

Views across the Gomm Valley are possible eastwards from the rear of properties on Pimms Grove and westward from the rear of properties on Sandpits Lane.

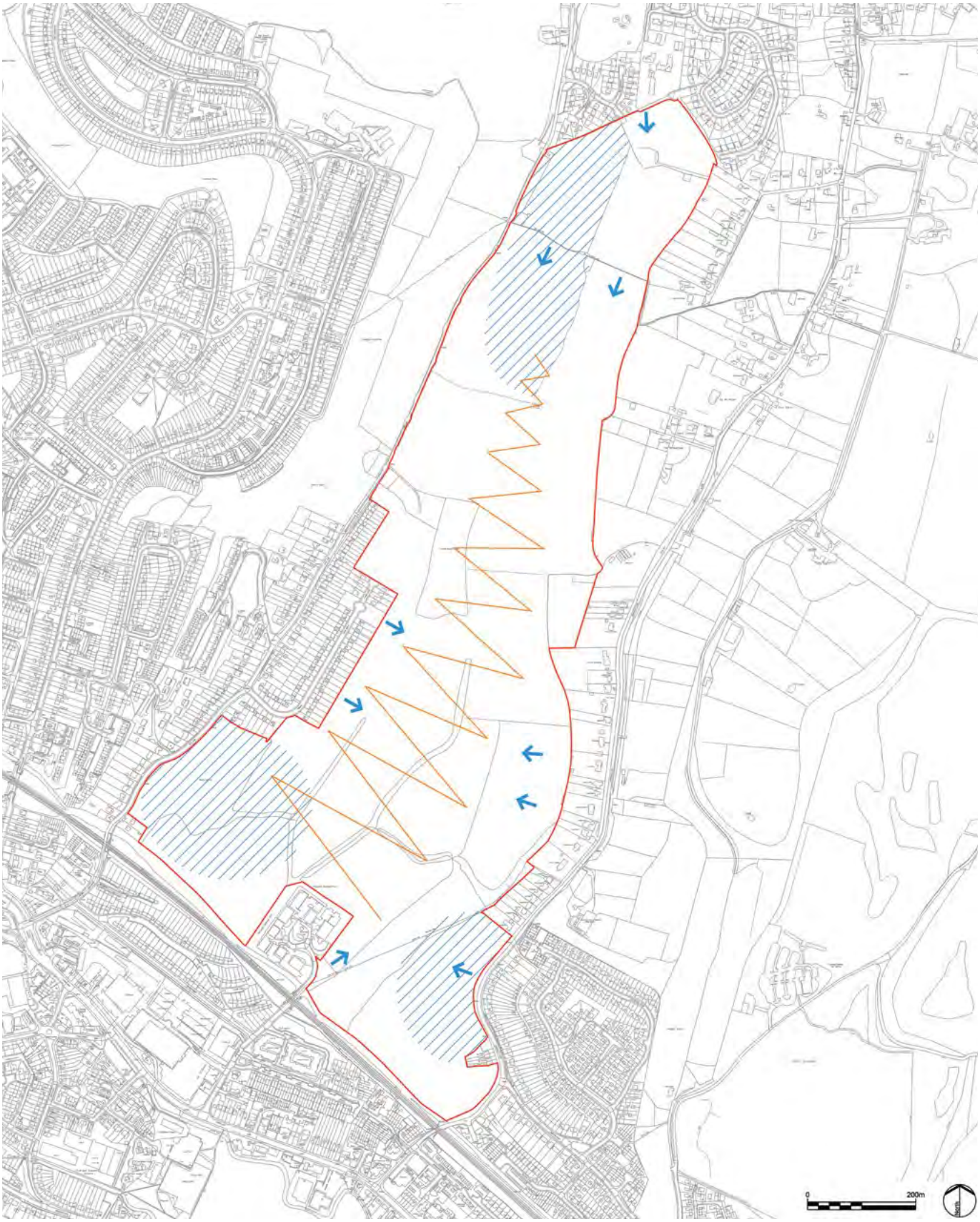


FIGURE 3.10: VISIBILITY- 1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

More visible areas of the site from the surrounding environment

Internal views across the site

Valley landform topography

Views westward across the mouth of the valley from Hammersley Lane are also possible. It is from these locations that the valley landform can be most readily appreciated.

Views from the immediate south of The Site at Gomm Road northward looking up the valley are possible. In this location, views of the western valley slopes are blocked by Peregrine Business Park although open views of the undeveloped eastern slopes are available.

Views of the northern areas of The Site are possible from the Micklefield Valley to the west however, the built form of this area limit viewing opportunities to glimpses between buildings. Intervening vegetation both in the close and medium distance further restrict views of the Development Brief site from this area.

Internal views

Three footpaths and the publicly accessible Gomm Valley SSSI allow for internal views within The Site. There are also a number of informal footpaths across The Site. Within these views the following features are characteristic of the visual composition:

- Dry chalk valley;
- Sloping topography;
- Undeveloped open slopes;
- Woodland blocks;
- Mature hedgerows;
- Chalk scrubland;
- Arable farmland;
- Peregrine Business Park; and
- Settlement edges of Pimms Grove, Ashwells and Hammersley Lane.

Views across the valley are possible from footpath CWY/61/1 which runs from Gomms Road to Hammersley Lane in the southeast of The Site where the sloping valley sides, chalk scrub, woodland blocks and dwellings on Hammersley Lane are visible.

Arable field and hedgerows are characteristic in views southward down the valley from footpath CWY/15/1 which links Cock Lane to Hammersley Lane at the northern end of The Site. The valley landform is less pronounced but long distance views across High Wycombe and the Wye valley are possible.
From footpath CWY/14/1, along the northern boundary of the Ashwells views are relatively limited to the immediate fields backed by mature hedgerows and the rooflines of built form at Ashwells.
Views across the valley to the edge of Pimms Grove, and up and down the valley are possible from Gomm Valley SSSI. In these views the valley landform can be appreciated along with mature hedgerows and the woodland blocks of Little Gomms Wood and Pimms Grove. Dwellings on Pimms Grove are also visible.

Figure 3.10 illustrates the areas of The Site that are most visible from the surrounding environment and where long distance views over the surrounding landscape are available. Key internal views where the valley landform can be most readily appreciated are also illustrated.

Views out from The Site

Long views southward down the valley are possible from footpath CWY/15/1 within The Site where the southern slopes of the Wye Valley form the horizon to the composition.

Long, panoramic views from this area southwestward over High Wycombe to the eastern edge of the Chiltern Hills are also possible.

The shoulders of land at the mouth of the valley allow long views along the Wye Valley.

The Site plays a positive role in the landscape setting of High Wycombe in views to and from the town.

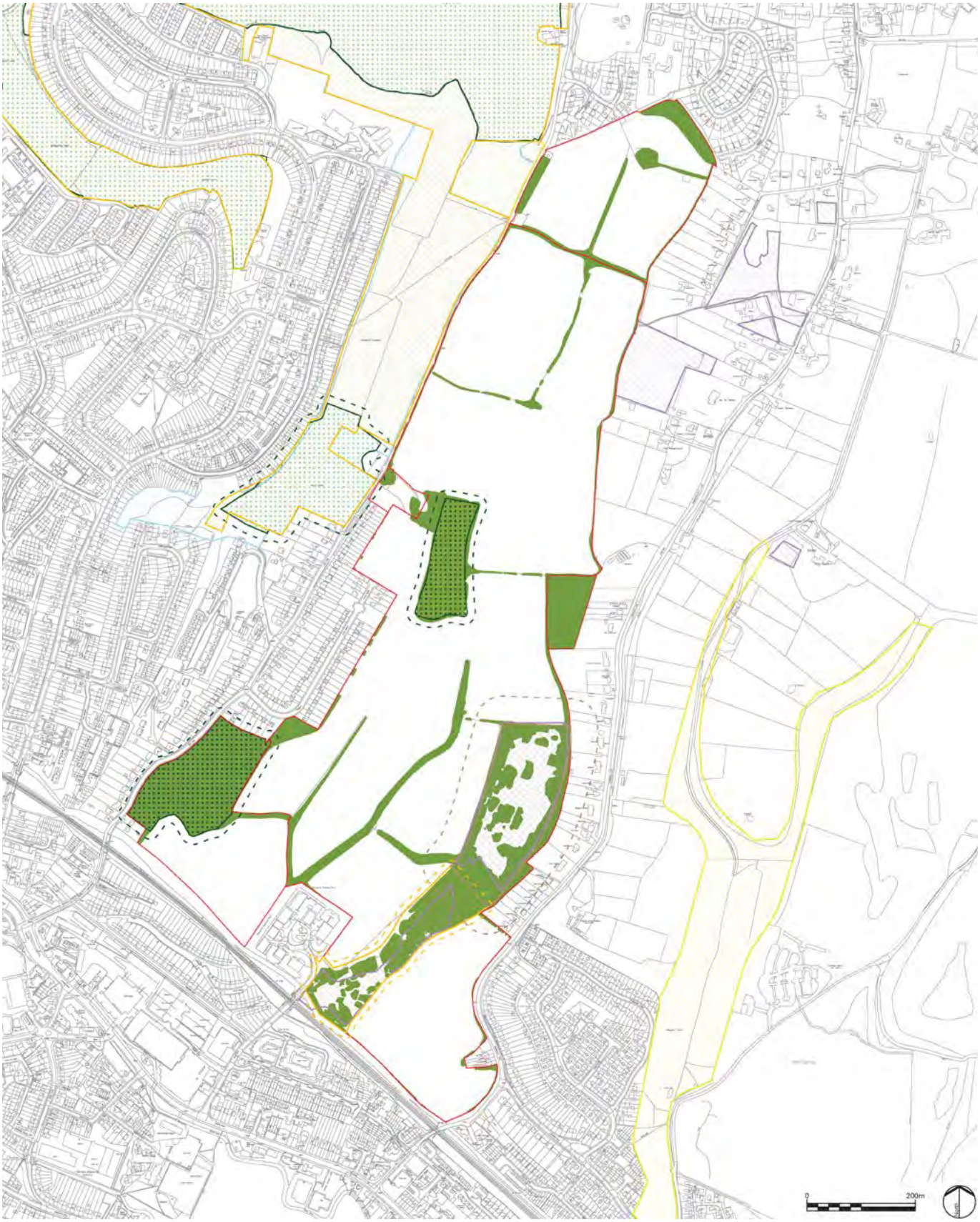


FIGURE 3.11: ECOLOGY
1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

Gomm Valley SSSI

50m buffer to SSSI

Ancient Woodland

Minimum 15m buffer to Ancient Woodland

Local Wildlife Site (LWS)

Minimum 10m buffer to LWS / BNS

Biological Notification Site (BNS)

Local Nature Reserve

Priority Habitat (does not show hedgerows or arable field margins)

Existing hedgerows

3.6 ECOLOGY

The Site has a rich and diverse range of ecological habitats, some of which are designated as statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites.

3.6.1 DESIGNATED NATURE CONSERVATION SITES

Figure 3.11 shows designated nature conservation sites within The Site. These are:

- Gomm Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - located to rear of the properties on Hammersley Lane and designated for its chalk grassland to chalk scrubland habitat which supports a diverse assemblage of butterflies and moths, glow worm, slow worm and common lizard. A 50m buffer to development required.
- Gomm Valley Local Wildlife Site (LWS) - located between the SSSI and railway line and designated for its chalk scrubland habitat which supports a similar assemblage of fauna to that of the SSSI. A 10-30m buffer to development is required depending upon the design and effectiveness of the buffer.
- Ancient Woodland at Pimms Grove and Little Gomm's Wood. A minimum 15m buffer from the edge of the woodland to the development is required.
- Little Gomm's Wood is also designated a Biological Notification Site (BNS).

The Site is identified as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) by WDC. These areas seek biodiversity enhancements at the landscape scale. Development will need to contribute positively to the aims of the BOA through habitat creation and improvements to connectivity and the wider ecological network leading to an overall net gain in biodiversity.

The following local ecology designations are present adjacent to The Site:

- Kingswood ancient woodland and LWS - adjacent to the northwest;
- Gomm Valley Local Nature Reserve (LNR) - adjacent to the northwest;
- Gomm's Wood, Micklefield LWS adjacent to the northwest; and
- Cock Lane Cemetery BNS adjacent to the northwest.

3.6.2 HABITATS OF PRINCIPAL IMPORTANCE

In addition to designated sites, The Site contains a number of Habitats of Principal Importance as defined within the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. These are:

- Arable field margins;
- Hedgerows (minimum buffer of 5m);
- Lowland calcareous grassland; and
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

3.6.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

The Site supports badgers, reptiles (slow worm and common lizard), birds, invertebrates and bats (common and soprano pipistrelle, noctule, Natterer's and serotine).

3.6.4 SPECIES OF PRINCIPAL IMPORTANCE

The Site supports numerous species of bird classified of nature conservation importance including the linnet, willow warbler, skylark, starling and song thrush. The site is also likely to support hedgehogs.

3.6.5 ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS

The hedgerow network is currently fragmented in parts and there are significant opportunities within The Site to improve connectivity.

The Site contains a number of ecological assets. Any development proposals will need to identify and minimise the impact on ecologically designated sites and protected species through, for example the careful (re)alignment of footpaths, cycle routes and roads and the provision of buffers and appropriate design solutions. Where it is not possible to avoid impacts, appropriate mitigation will be required. Ecological enhancements will be sought where practical, leading to a net gain in biodiversity.

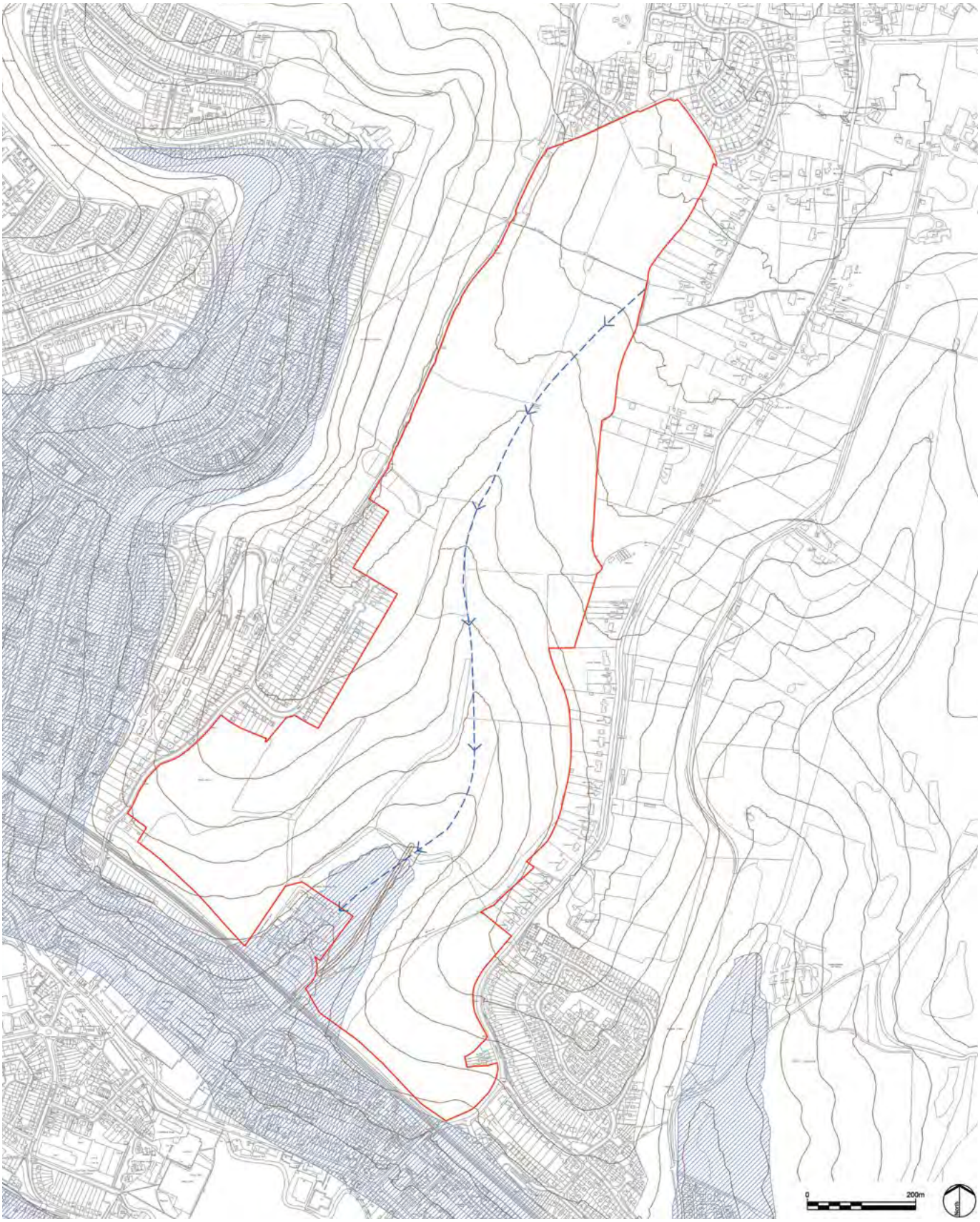


FIGURE 3.12: FLOOD RISK, DRAINAGE AND GROUND CONDITIONS – 1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

Potential groundwater emergence zone

Dry channel - possible overland sheet flows

10m contours

3.7 FLOOD RISK, DRAINAGE AND GROUND CONDITIONS

The Site is a dry valley with no surface watercourses historically. With respect to fluvial flood risk, The Site is in Flood Zone 1, low probability, with a less than 0.1% annual flood probability.

Small areas of the overall site downstream of the proposed development areas are however potentially affected by surface water flood risk in extreme conditions. This can occur from over-surface flows on the valley slopes and at the base of the valley. In particular ponding may result immediately up-valley from Peregrine Business Park because of the existing constructed development platform which can obstruct flow further down base of the valley. The development proposals will need to provide compensatory storage volumes to cater for this current and future risk arising from climate change impacts including further measures to store and discharge to ground extreme runoff from development areas.

The base of the valley near Peregrine Business Park is also identified on Groundwater Emergence Maps within WDC's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as being potentially susceptible to shallow groundwater or groundwater flooding (see Figure 3.12h), although the Environment Agency is not aware of any incidents of The Site or adjacent areas being adversely affected by high groundwater levels. There is little risk of fluvial flooding within the site, however, mitigation measures for extreme events may be required.

The Surface Water and Groundwater flooding risks trigger the need for a Sequential Test, which could affect the principle, type and/or layout of development. This will need to be addressed as part of any future application. The outcome of a Sequential Test could necessitate the need to alter the layout of development on the site, in particular the site upstream of Peregrine Business Park.

Mitigation measures for intercepting and managing high groundwater levels in extreme events may be required. A Flood Risk Assessment will be required to set out how flood risk will be managed.

3.8 ARCHAEOLOGY/HERITAGE

3.8.1 DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

There are no scheduled monuments, conservation areas or listed buildings within The Site. The closest Scheduled Monument is at St John the Baptist Chapel approximately 2km to the southeast in High Wycombe. The closest conservation area is Penn and Tylers Green Conservation Area north of the site. The Grade II Church of St Ann is the closest listed building approximately 250m to the south.

3.8.2 NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Some hedgerows within The Site are likely to be historic under the criteria set out within the Hedgerow Regulations Act 1997.

3.8.3 FIND RECORDS

There are a number of find records dating to a range of periods within The Site. These are concentrated in the northern half of The Site and comprise primarily of surface finds located through a programme of field walking that was undertaken in the late 1980s.

The surface finds indicate the potential for buried archaeological features dating to the later prehistoric, Roman and medieval periods.

There are no recorded heritage assets within the southern half of The Site, but this may result from the lack of previous archaeological investigation rather than a true absence of archaeological potential. Further investigation will be needed to inform the development proposals.

Geophysical and archaeological trial trenching indicates there to be some limited potential for buried archaeology within The Site, likely attributed to the Roman and possibly Iron Age periods.

An understanding of the effects to the archaeological and heritage resource with appropriate mitigation (if required) will be needed to support any development proposals for The Site.

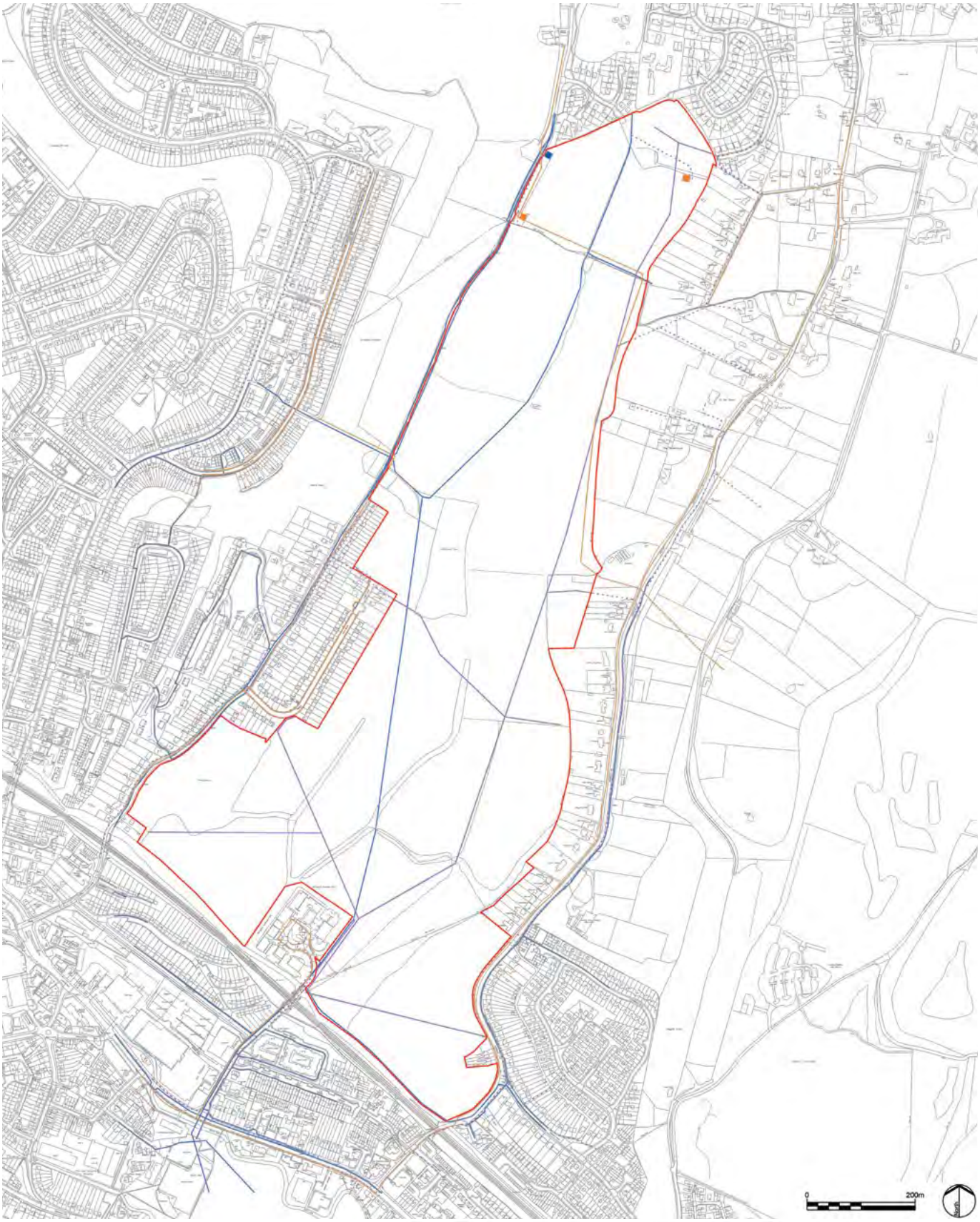


FIGURE 3.13: UTILITIES - 1:10,000

Development Brief site boundary

11kV overhead power lines

Power lines beyond site boundary

Gas pipes

Water pipes

Pumping station and transformer

Phone masts

Precise location of rising main unknown at this time

3.9 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

Approximately half of the potential agricultural land within The Site i.e. the land not subject to an ecological designation, has been assessed to be of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) quality (grades 2 or 3a). The majority of this BMV quality land is located at the northern end of The Site. There are also small areas of BMV quality land located immediately east of the housing on Pimm's Grove, between Peregrine Business Park and Little Gomm's Wood and between Gomm Valley Local Wildlife Site and Hamersley Lane.

Agricultural land will be lost as a result of development within The Site. Areas of lower quality agricultural land are generally preferred but this consideration must be balanced with other planning considerations. In some instances this may result land of higher agricultural quality being designated for residential development.

3.10 UTILITIES

Figure 3.13 shows the existing utilities within The Site. There are three major utilities that cross The Site.

- A 12" trunk main (clean water) owned and operated by Thames Water. The clean water trunk main traverses the centre of the site in a north/south alignment and would require a 3m wide service strip either side of the pipe if it is to be retained in its current location;
- Pumping station and transformer in northwest of The Site. There is a 15m exclusion zone around any pumping station;
- A network of 11kv overhead electricity cables owned and operated by Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) Power Distribution; and
- A National Grid intermediate pressure gas main feeding off Hammersley Lane. This main runs parallel with the north-east boundary of the site before bisecting the site on an east-west axis
- A 6" pumped sewer and its 6m wide exclusion zone running from the pumping station along the side of the Ashwells houses up to Ashwells Road, then directly across the top field to the side garden of #47 Wheeler Avenue; and
- A 11.5kV electric cables (3) running from the transformer up to Ashwells Road.

A number of utilities are within The Site. The requirement for new connections and off-site upgrades will need to be determined by each utility service provider once masterplans for the Ashwells and Gomm Valley sites have been prepared.

3.11 ARBORICULTURE/VEGETATION

Figure 3.11 shows the existing trees and hedgerows within The Site.

There are two Ancient Woodlands within the site (Pimms Grove and Little Gomm's Wood), which represent significant constraints to future development.

In the event development occurs within close proximity to Ancient Woodland, a minimum buffer of 15m is provided.

There is a network of hedgerows within The Site, including a number of category A tree groups and individual specimens.

The starting point for development is that mature trees, scrub and hedgerows are positive features of The Site and should be enhanced and retained. Appropriate buffers between development and vegetation should be maintained.

3.12 NOISE AND VIBRATION AND AIR QUALITY

Potential noise, vibration and air quality sources within and near to the Development Site include:

- Trains on the Chiltern Mainline Railway to the south;
- Traffic on the A40 London Road to the south;
- Traffic on the M40 motorway to the south;
- Traffic on Hammersley Lane;
- Traffic on Cock Lane;
- Traffic on Gomm Road;
- Traffic on Pimms Grove;
- Traffic at Ashwells; and
- Traffic at Carter Walk.

The Site is not within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

There are a number of potential noise, vibration and air quality sources within and near to The Site. An understanding of the constraints posed by noise and vibration and air quality along with appropriate mitigation (if required) will be needed to support any development proposals for The Site.

3.13 SUMMARY CONSIDERATIONS

Figure 3.14 shows a summary of the key considerations affecting The Site.

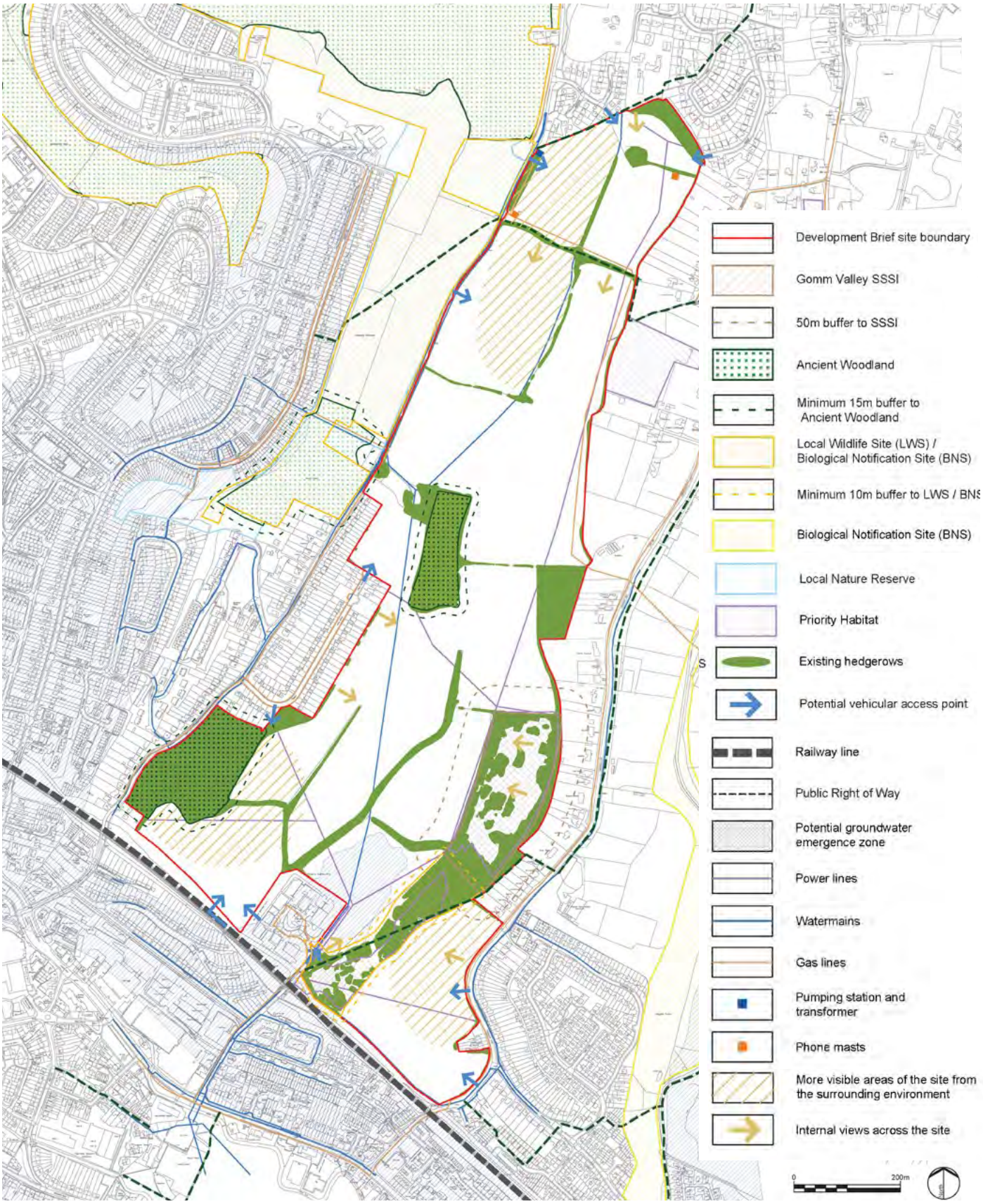


FIGURE 3.14: SUMMARY CONSIDERATIONS – 1:10,000

Section 4

Development Framework Objectives

This section of the Development Brief identifies the over-arching Development Framework Objectives (DFOs) for the development of the Reserve site. These objectives are taken forward in Section 5 (along with the baseline conditions discussed in Section 3) to set out a Development Framework and provide high level guidance for the development of the site.

4.1 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

DFO 1. Deliver Transport improvements on and off site in accordance with the Wycombe Reserve Sites Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 16).

DFO 2. Provide vehicular access into and through The Site, to include a link/ spine road designed to both accommodate public transport and to minimise and distribute the impact of additional traffic on the existing local road network.

DFO 3. Provide a road network that facilitates the provision of a sustainable bus service within reasonable walking distance (approximately. 400 metres) of any development on The Site.

DFO 4. Provide safe, attractive, and legible residential streets, footpaths and cycle routes to meet the needs of both residents and visitors, and which links effectively with the new and existing movement network.

4.2 LANDSCAPE AND VISIBILITY

DFO 5. To respect the character of the valley and provide enhanced visual quality and recreational and ecological value by:

DFO 5a. Adopting a landscape led design approach to the site. This should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the hillside landform, whilst accommodating opportunities for development. Particular regard should be had to the landscape character and views of the area from the south.

DFO 5b. Respecting and retaining key features (green shoulders and sinuous valley form) which are fundamental to the character of the valley;

DFO 5c. Avoiding the requirement for extensive manipulation of the topography; and

DFO 5d. Laying out the scheme in such a way to facilitate the provision of structural planting (large trees) throughout the development to mitigate the visual, environmental and ecological impacts of the development.

DFO 6. To maintain important public views out of, towards and within The Site, ensuring they remain free from development and publicly accessible.

4.3 ECOLOGY, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & HERITAGE

DFO 7. Conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest and green infrastructure within The Site and beyond its boundaries by providing appropriate buffers to designated sites and valuable habitats to limit adverse effects from development, and by enhancing the existing network of priority habitats to enhance the site's biodiversity and ecological value.

DFO 8. Maximise opportunities for habitat creation and connectivity as outlined in the Gomm Valley Biological Opportunity Area (BOA) description with an emphasis on the creation, restoration and management of lowland chalk grassland, woodland, lowland meadows and hedgerows to create a resilient habitat network within the site that connects well with habitats beyond the site boundary.

DFO 9. Avoid the severance of areas and networks of ecological significance. Where a degree of severance is unavoidable minimise harm, mitigate and compensate.

DFO 10. Deliver net gains in biodiversity that reflect the site's exiting nature conservation interests and its designation as a BOA.

DFO 11. Retain undeveloped areas to deliver both ecological and recreational benefits alongside each other whilst at the time respecting the valley's landscape character by:

DFO 11a. Creating an enhanced network of undeveloped green space comprising chalk grassland, amenity grassland, hedgerows, trees and woodland characteristic of the valley;

DFO 11b. Securing public access to appropriate areas of the valley for play and recreation. Amenity areas should be created in close proximity to development and respect landscape and ecological sensitivities;

DFO 11c. Providing a sustainable management framework, to be secured via legal agreement, for the delivery and ongoing maintenance of the undeveloped area including new and retained chalk grassland habitat;

DFO 11d Identify, record and where necessary/ appropriate preserve archaeological remains identified on the site; and

DFO 11e. Provide an area within the site for use by the Chiltern Rangers or similar organisation as a community facility related to the Landscape and Ecology functions on the site.

4.4 COMMUNITY

DFO 12. To engage with the local community through the development brief stage and through appropriate pre-application consultation, and to listen and give serious consideration to alternative proposals from the local communities.

DFO 13. To create a community that is well connected and integrated with neighbouring communities and allows existing and future residents to benefit from existing and new amenities and services.

DFO 14. To limit the potential impact of the proposed development on the neighbouring communities e.g. in terms of traffic generation and privacy.

DFO 15. To incorporate the findings of the Wycombe Reserve Sites Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 16) with particular regard to school and formal open space provision.

4.5 LAYOUT/BUILT FORM

DFO 16. To establish an appropriate urban edge to High Wycombe and Tylers Green and avoid the coalescence of the two settlements. An undeveloped gap of approximately 200 metres or more at their closest point, informed by landscape impact ecological requirements and character issues, is to be retained.

DFO 17. To establish a strong sense of place and distinctive attractive and functional living environment through a sensitive design response to the local context including topography, landscape, habitats, ecology, and the environment by:

DFO 17a. Designing the layout - including access, public and private spaces and parking - to minimise requirements for earth moving and retaining walls;

DFO 17b. Utilising layout and architecture designed to work with and sit into the existing topography and carefully arranged massing and roof forms to ensure the overall building height is as low as possible;

DFO 17c. Taking an imaginative approach to amenity space provision such as terraces, roof gardens and balconies to reduce pressure on garden space, which can then more easily accommodate structural landscape planting;

DFO 17d. Utilising materials in natural and/ or local colours and matt finishes to reduce the prominence of the development within views; and

DFO 17e. Designing the buildings to a high standard and constructing them responsibly to respond to climate change through low carbon technologies and sustainable construction practices.

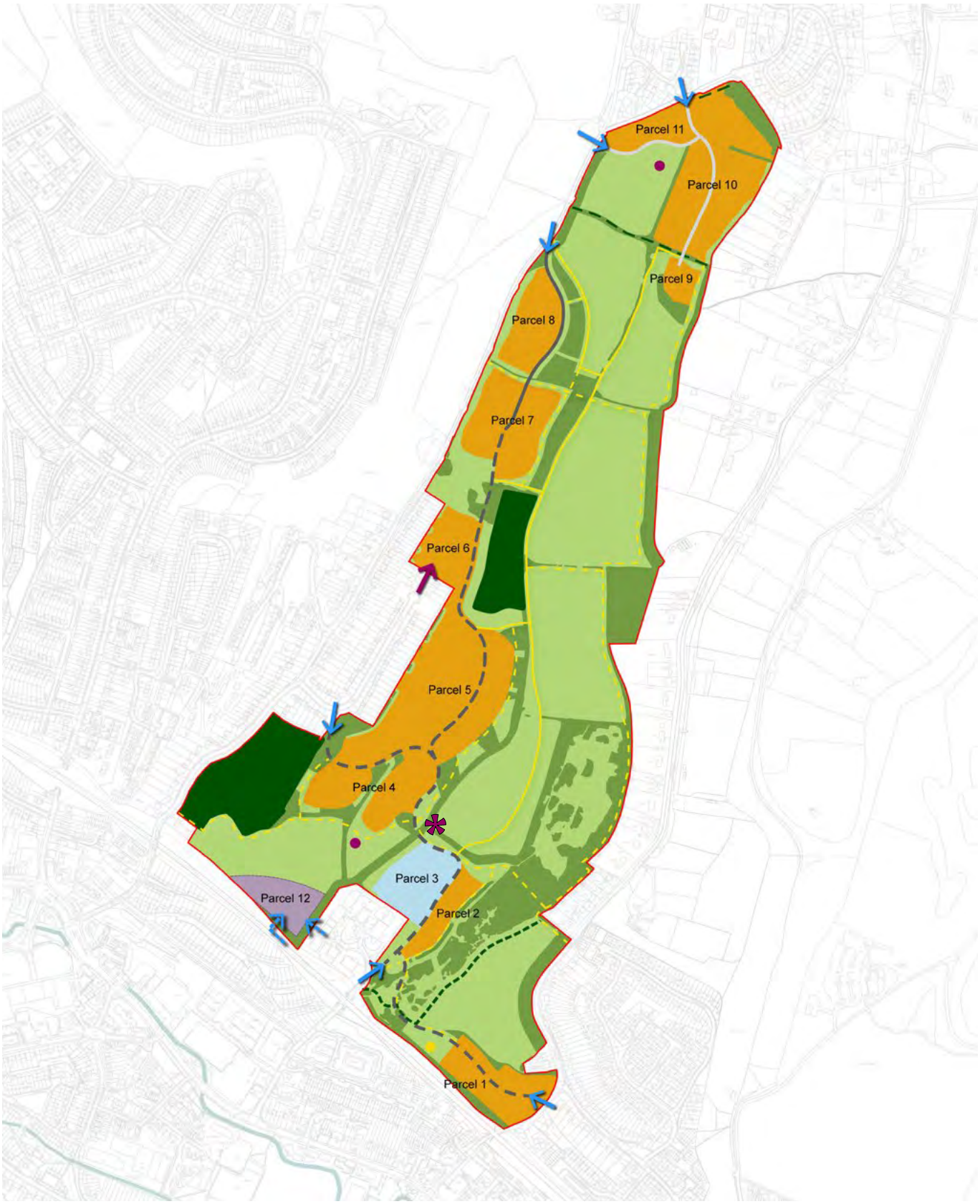
4.6 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY

DFO 18. To deliver a balanced development, comprising housing, employment and associated infrastructure (as appropriate) in suitable locations, in conjunction with the other reserve sites identified within Wycombe District Core Strategy & Emerging Local Plan, to help accommodate the District's housing and employment needs to 2033 and contribute to the five year housing supply.

DFO 19. The future of the undeveloped land will need to be secured in perpetuity through the creation of a trust, designation as a Village Green or Country Park, or some other suitable legal or statutory mechanism, secure the status and management of the undeveloped land in perpetuity.

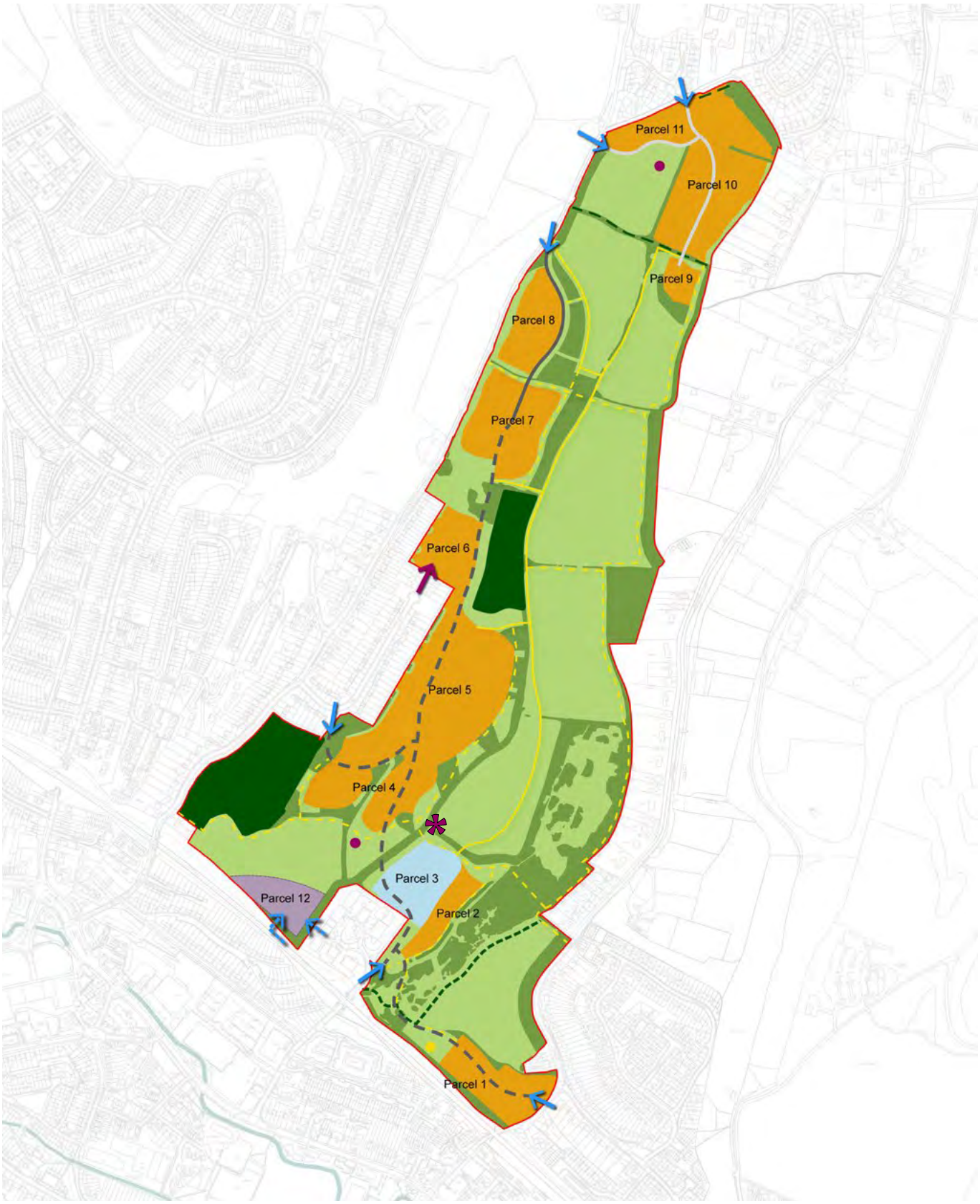
Section 5

Brief for Development: The Reserve Site



Development Brief boundary
Residential development
One form entry primary school
Potential employment
Potential vehicular access points to potential employment (requires third party land)
Vehicular access points
Pedestrian/cycle access points
Indicative road actual alignment may vary
Indicative secondary road through Ashwells
Indicative strategic footpaths
Public Rights of Way
Potentially realigned Public Rights of Way
NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)
Indicative strategic footpaths/ cycle routes
Land not identified for development
Land not identified for development: Ancient Woodland
Indicative location of Environment Centre/community use building
LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play)

FIGURE 5.1 - DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN SPINE ROAD OPTION A



Development Brief boundary

Residential development

One form entry primary school

Potential employment

Potential vehicular access points to potential employment (requires third party land)

Vehicular access points

Pedestrian/cycle access points

Indicative road actual alignment may vary

Indicative secondary road through Ashwells

Indicative strategic footpaths

Public Rights of Way

Potentially realigned Public Rights of Way

NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)

Indicative strategic footpaths/ cycle routes

Land not identified for development

Land not identified for development: Ancient Woodland

Indicative location of Environment Centre/community use building

LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play)

FIGURE 5.2 - DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN SPINE ROAD OPTION B

5.1. ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

5.1.1. VEHICULAR ACCESS AND SPINE ROAD: GOMM VALLEY SITE

DFO 1. Deliver Transport improvements on and off site in accordance with the Wycombe Reserve Sites Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 16).

DFO 13. To create a community that is well connected and integrated with neighbouring communities and allows existing and future residents to benefit from existing and new amenities and services.

Access into the Gomm Valley and Ashwells site should be provided in the following locations, as shown in Figure 5.3:

- At the southern end of Hammersley Lane (into parcel 1) (subject to further testing in terms of road safety) and linking to Gomm road (subject to further testing in terms of landscape and ecological impact);
- Off Gomm Road, adjacent to Peregrine Business Park;
- Potentially at the southern end of Pimms Grove;
- At the northern end of Cock Lane (into Parcel 8)
- From Cock Lane, as close to the pumping station and transformer located at the south-west corner of the existing development at Ashwells as possible, given junction design requirements, and
- Via Ashwells.

All vehicular routes should be designed to work along rather than across the contours as much as possible. Routes will be designed to accommodate two-way traffic and include measures to slow speed.

The access point off Cock Lane is located to reduce as far as possible the length of lane northwards that would need to be widened, whilst retaining the gap required by DFO 16 .

Development parcel 12 is identified for employment; providing a viable access via either Peregrine Business Park or the Network Rail land to the south can be achieved.

5.1.2 SPINE ROAD

By providing a number of access points at the southern end of the Gomm Valley site will ensure the new development is well integrated with the existing movement network and will also help to minimise the impact of development on the existing road network by distributing traffic over the three London Road junctions and improving resilience of the road network.

Development proposals will need to provide a continuous spine road through The Site from Cock Lane to Gomm Road, avoiding the gap specified by DFO 16,

DFO 2. Provide vehicular access into and through The Site, to include a link/ spine road designed to both accommodate public transport and to minimise and distribute the impact of additional traffic on the existing local road network.

and potentially linking to Pimms Grove and Hammersley Lane, providing access to the new developments and interconnection between the development site and surrounding urban area. It should be emphasised that the route of the spine road illustrated in figures 5.1 and 5.2 and elsewhere in this brief are indicative only at this stage. Further technical work will be required to determine the precise alignment of the road.

Design specification for the spine road:

1. Focus for pedestrian and vehicular activity.
2. Follow natural contours of the land to minimise the need for engineering operations. Where engineering operations and land remodelling work is required:

   a. Vehicular and pedestrian routes may be split across levels if necessary to minimise earth moving and retaining walls;

   b. Soft (i.e. landscaped banks) rather than hard retaining features will be used wherever possible.

3. Slow speed through changes to the street environment at 60-80m intervals, which may be achieved through any of the following:

   a. Variation in width of the carriageway and degree of enclosure (for example with buildings or street trees) so that the road pulses. In particular the street environment should change at points where character areas change.

   b. Use of horizontal deflection or features which must be driven-around. Avoid the use of speed bumps or humps;

   c. Restricting forward visibility or introducing arresting views;

   d. Integration of on-street parking, broken up by planting;

   e. Trees planted along the street up to a maximum of 12 metres apart depending on street type and tree specification. Tree planting at key junctions and spaces should be semi-mature;

   f. 2 metre wide footpaths (3 metres if it is a shared footway/cycleway);

   g. Materials should reinforce the slow-speed environment; and

   h. Maximising wildlife movement (i.e. it should not sever wildlife corridors with significant engineering features).

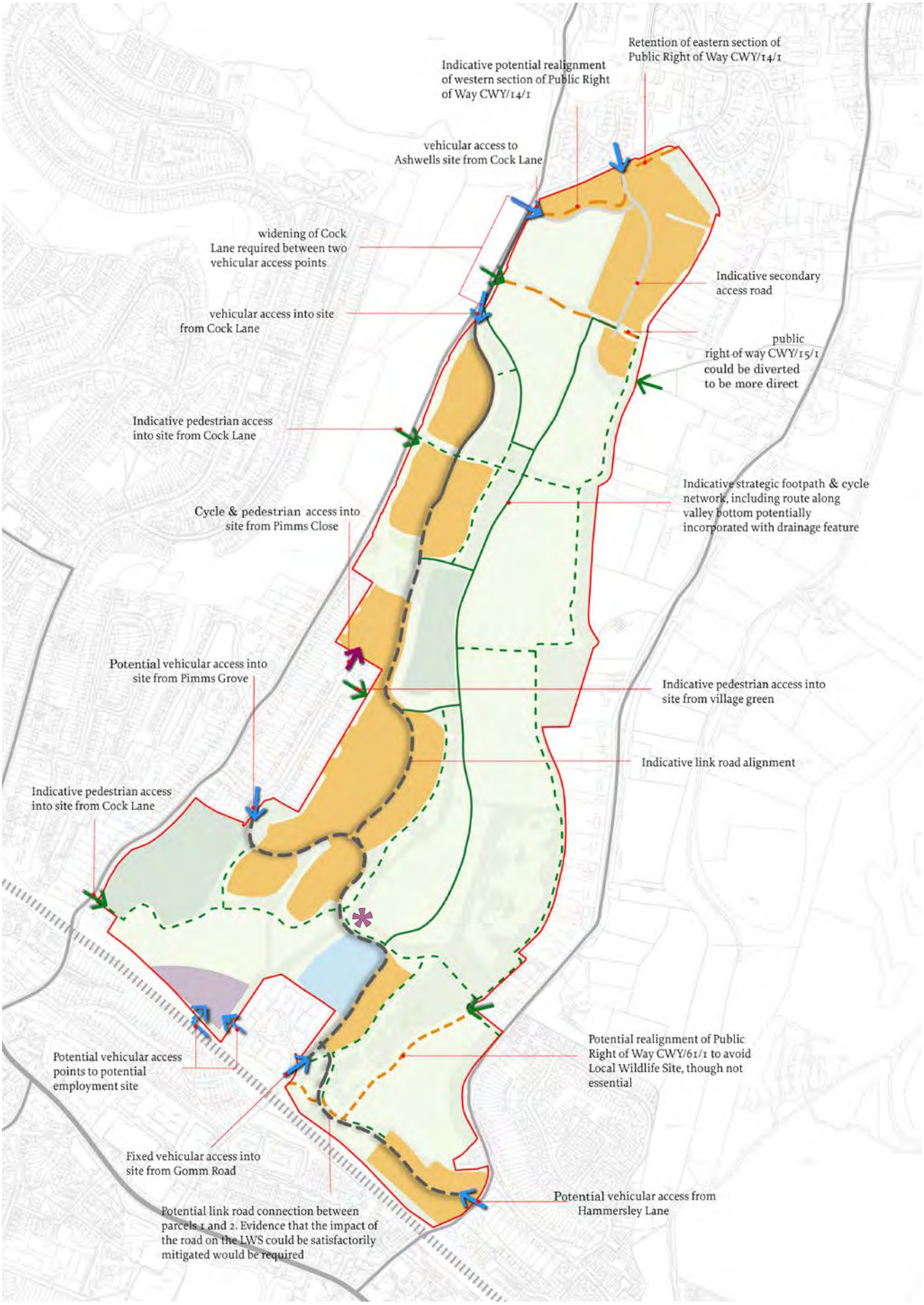


FIGURE 5.3 - ACCESS AND MOVEMENT PLAN

The spine road will join Cock Lane about 200m south of the edge of the current development at Tyler's Green. Cock Lane is a single track rural lane, with irregular passing places and limited forward visibility. For reasons of highway safety is it necessary to widen the section of Cock Lane for the short section from the point where the Spine Road will join it, northwards.

However, it is important that this highway improvement does not lead to a significant increase in traffic using Cock Lane and the new spine road, because of the detrimental impact that would have on the village of Tylers Green. The widened section of Cock Lane will therefore be fitted with traffic calming, to keep traffic speeds low, and limit the attractiveness of the spine road to new traffic from further afield, whilst achieving a safer road with planned passing places with good forward visibility. The aim is to ensure the spine road delivers traffic slowly, but steadily, through the site.

The introduction of the spine road means that it has removed the need to widen the majority of Cock Lane, thereby preserving its rural character. But it is important that the rural character of the lane is maintained in the section that is widened. This is also important because this stretch of the lane represents the 'gap' between urban High Wycombe and the rural village of Tylers Green. Emphasising the rural character in the detailed highway design is therefore essential.

In widening the lane a new hedge is required on the eastern side of the lane. The current hedge is slightly raised above the road along this stretch of the lane, as the land rises to the east. The new hedge should similarly on the top of the bank, with appropriate hedgerow margin planting on the bank to maximise the ecological benefits.

Walking and cycling should not be accommodated within the widened section of the lane, but instead be taken on the eastern side of the new hedge, extending the main cycle and walking route that passes down the valley, up to the new entrance to the Ashwells site that will be created at the top of Cock Lane.

To emphasise the rural nature and maximise the sense of the gap, the woodland planting required to the east of parcels 7 & 8 should be extended up, alongside the widened part of the lane, to the new Ashwells access – in effect allowing the Kings Wood to 'jump' the lane, and create, at canopy level, a continuous woodland belt from the Kingswood, down through the new planting to the two existing ancient woodlands of Gomm Wood and Pimms Grove.

It will also be important that the junction of the new access road into the Ashwells site with Cock Lane is carefully designed. The profile of the land may need to be modified to avoid the need for high retaining walls at the entrance, which would undermine the aim of maintaining a rural character.

5.1.3. LOWER ORDER STREETS

DFO 4. Provide safe, attractive, and legible residential streets, footpaths and cycle routes to meet the needs of both residents and visitors, and which links effectively with the new and existing movement network.

The design and alignment of lower order streets should be carefully considered to:

- Establish a permeable and legible network of streets with a clear route hierarchy, linking to the spine road and the surrounding network;
- Gradient of less than 1 in 10, whilst also minimising impact on topography;
- Define practical block dimensions which take into consideration the topography;
- Respond to national and local highways guidance and standards e.g. Manual for Streets, Buckinghamshire County Council Adopted Parking Guidance;
- Provide unallocated parking as a flexible public resource, in a way which also supports the function of the street and the quality of the place;
- Achieve a design speed of 20mph or less; and
- Provide safe and comfortable routes for cyclists and pedestrians.

5.1.4. STRATEGIC CYCLE ROUTES

As set out in DFO 4, development proposals should provide a safe, legible and connected network of strategic cycleways and footpaths. These should be informed by desire lines and topography, and designed to avoid ecologically sensitive areas of The Site, including the SSSI, LWS, the two Ancient Woodlands and newly created sensitive habitats. Flexibility may be required where it is not possible to provide cycle routes in accordance with above criteria.

Strategic cycle routes should be created within the site along:

- The spine road connecting Tylers Green/Ashwells and Gomm Road;
- The Hammersley Lane/Gomm Road link; and
- Along the recreational corridor following the bottom of the valley.

New or improved links will also be required off site to:

- Micklefield Road, with safe crossings of Herbert Road and Cock Lane; and
- The shared cycle/pedestrian route along Hammersley Lane.

FIGURE 5.4 -BUS ROUTES THROUGH THE SITE

5.1.5. FOOTPATHS/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Development proposals should retain the following existing Public Rights of Way (see Figure 5.3):

- CWY/61/1 in the south eastern corner of The Site connecting Gomm Road with Hammersley Lane, although this should be realigned to avoid the Local Wildlife Site;
- CWY/15/1 running along the boundary between the Ashwells and Gomm Valley sites. It may be appropriate to consider diversion of the footpath to make it more direct and appropriately surveilled; and
- CWY/14/1 running along the northwestern edge of the site between Cock Lane and Church Road. The section of this route to the west of Ashwells would be re-routed through the Ashwells site (see Figure 5.2 for an indicative alignment)

Development proposals should also provide a strategic footpath network through The Site in accordance with DFO4, linking the new development with the existing settlements, key areas of open space/recreation and the retained Public Rights of Way identified above.

The indicative network shown in Figure 5.3 incorporates the following key strategic routes:

- A north to south footpath/cycle route following the most favourable gradients along the valley bottom. This could potentially be integrated with a sustainable drainage feature (see Section 5.6) to create an attractive recreational corridor;
- A footpath along the eastern edge of development parcels 4, 5, 7 and 8 connecting the southern end of Cock Lane (adjacent to Pimms Grove wood) with Ashwells; and
- A footpath connecting the southern end of Hammersley Lane and parcel 1 with Ashwells and Public Right of Way CWY/14/1 at the northern end of The Site. This route would run to the west and north of the LWS then in the centre of the valley, linking with Public Right of Ways CWY/61/1 and CWY/15/1.

The three routes identified will need to be linked with existing and other new routes and streets, contributing to a good quality network, respecting biodiversity.

5.1.6. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

DFO 3. Provide a road network that facilitates the provision of a sustainable bus service within reasonable walking distance (approximately. 400 metres) of any development on The Site.

All roads intended to accommodate a bus service will need to accommodate the following design measures :

- Minimum carriageway width of 6.5m;
- Gradient of less than 1 in 10, whilst also minimising impact on topography;
- Junctions and on street parking designed to ensure that the bus is given priority;
- Active frontages to provide surveillance; and
- Road designed to encourage slow speeds, without the need for speed humps or other measures that cause particular discomfort to bus passengers.

Figure 5.3 shows three potential bus service options for consideration based on the indicative spine road alignment shown in the Development Framework (Figure 5.1):

- Option 1: bus access up and down the spine road, turning through streets in parcel 7 or 8
- Option 2: Connecting The Site access from Gomm Road with the Cock Lane access via development parcels 2 to 8; and
- Option 3: An additional connection between the access into The Site from Hammersley Lane and parcel 2. A case would need to be put forward that the impact on the LWS was justified and proposals will need to be accompanied by effective measures to minimise and mitigate impact on landscape and ecology

5.2. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL IMPACT

DFO 5. To respect the character of the valley and provide enhanced visual quality and recreational and ecological value by:

DFO 5a. Adopting a landscape led design approach to the site. This should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the hillside landform, whilst accommodating opportunities for development. Particular regard should be had to the landscape character and views of the area from the south. Where visual impacts are unavoidable these shall be mitigated in a way that respects the existing landscape character;

DFO 5b. Respecting and retaining key features (green shoulders and sinuous valley form) which are fundamental to the character of the valley;

DFO 5c. Avoiding the requirement for extensive manipulation of the topography; and

DFO 5d. Laying out the scheme in such a way to facilitate the provision of structural planting (large trees) throughout the development to mitigate the visual, environmental and ecological impacts of the development. Any mitigation planting should ensure that it reflects the important landscape characteristics of the area.

DFO 6. To maintain important public views out of, towards and within The Site, ensuring they remain free from development and publicly accessible.

A landscape-led approach to the site in response to characteristics set out in Section 3.5.4, development proposals should respect and retain the key features which are fundamental to the character of the valley including the sinuous valley form, varied topography (which ranges from plateau to steep valley sides), and the patchwork of open spaces, hedgerows, chalk scrubland, trees and woodlands, as illustrated in the Development Framework (Figure 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5)

In response to DFO 5 and 6 development proposals should:

- Retain the shoulders of the valley as open green space;
- Retain the more visible land located in the northwest corner of the Development Brief as public open space to ensure important views out towards High Wycombe can be appreciated from open space and paths;
- Retain the hedgerows and a corridor of open space running along the length of the valley. This will retain the character of the valley and provide an important strategic gap between the development at Gomm Valley and Ashwells sites as set out in DFO 16. It will also ensure connectivity of valuable habitats within and beyond The Site boundary as set out in DFO 8; and
- Conserve and enhance the existing network of calcareous grassland, fields, hedgerows, trees and woodlands.

In response to DFO 5 development proposals should use trees and structural planting in the following locations to filter views and mitigate the visual impact of development, particularly when viewed from the south and looking north from the valley bottom:

- Robust tree planting should be integrated within all development parcels in line with the Council's integrated approach to Green Infrastructure, e.g. along streets and within public open space and private gardens. This is particularly important within parcels 4 & 5 to soften the visual impact of development on views from across the valley;
- Development proposals will need to ensure the design of the spine road and layout of adjacent development allows street tree planting to be accommodated along the spine road;
- Tree planting indicated above should be of species that grow sufficiently large to have a meaningful impact on views, e.g. lime, field maple, Norway maple, whitebeam, Turkish hazel or similar; and
- When planting new tree belts and planting within development parcels, a mix of mature and semi-mature trees will be required to ensure there is both an immediate landscape effect, as well as providing for it to grow and change over time

The layout of development should allow trees to be planted appropriately to ensure their long term viability. The Tree and Design Action Group's (TDAG) 'Trees in Hard Landscapes' provides guidance in this regard.

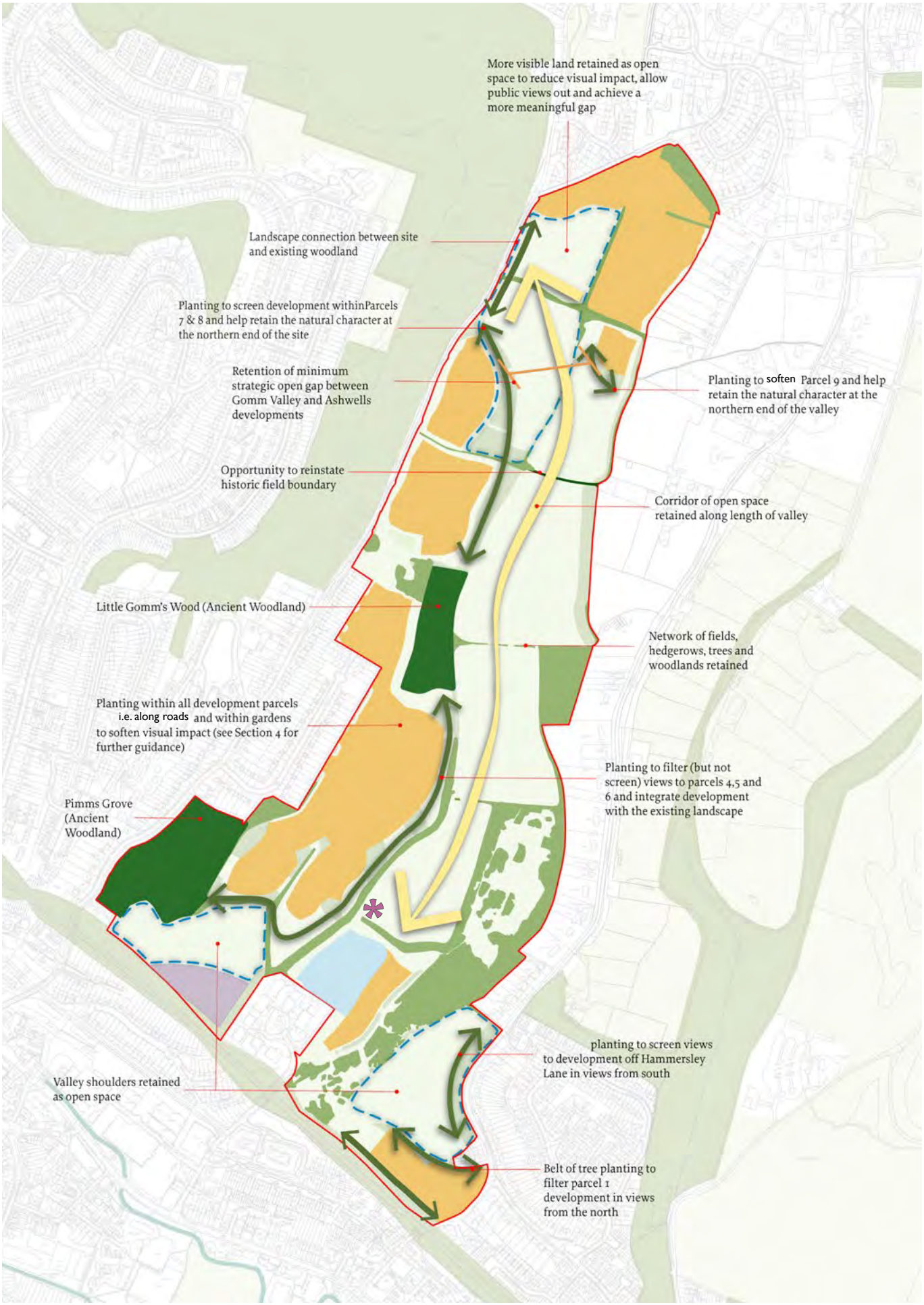


FIGURE 5.5 - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL IMPACT

5.3 STRATEGY FOR UNDEVELOPED AREA

5.3.1 UNDEVELOPED LAND

The development framework provides a total of 53.26ha of undeveloped land (or 73% of the site, excluding the potential employment within parcel 12). The proposals will need to set out a clear, deliverable and sustainable long-term strategy for it which: retains the character of the valley; provides enhanced recreational amenity; protects and enhances the site's biodiversity and ecological value; and improves connectivity within and beyond the site boundary as part of a comprehensive green infrastructure strategy.

Strategy

- The principal focus for the undeveloped area will be ecology followed by recreation and then farming. Recreation and farming will only be appropriate when they do not undermine the principle aim of ecology;

- In chalk grassland areas public access will be restricted, particularly if grazing occurs; and

- Gravel surfaces and unmade paths will be used for pedestrians and cyclists. The finish will be dependent on the expected frequency of use and location. Any path to be used by cycles will need a bonded or compacted gravel surface.

The following key features will need to be retained and protected: the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); the Local Wildlife Site (LWS); and the two Ancient Woodlands (Pimms Grove and Little Gomm's Wood) and maximise opportunities for habitat creation and connectivity as outlined in the Gomm Valley Biodiversity Opportunity Area description by conserving and enhancing ecological links between designated sites and valuable habitats within the site and beyond the site boundary.

Delivery
Any planning application on the site must provide a comprehensive strategy for all developed and undeveloped areas, which must include a phased delivery plan and full management costs for a minimum of 25 years. The undeveloped land must be secured in perpetuity through a mechanism such as Trust or similar, with the primary objective of promoting the ecological value of the land. It is the outcome that is important, rather than the mechanism. Suitable planning designations for the land will be considered, such as village green and Designated Green Space. The SSSI may be extended.

5.3.2 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

DFO 7. Conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest and green infrastructure within The Site and beyond its boundaries by providing appropriate buffers to designated sites and valuable habitats to limit adverse effects from development, and by enhancing the existing network of priority habitats to enhance the site's biodiversity and ecological value.

WDC's open space standards require the provision of 4.65ha of strategic open space across The Site. Given the significant landscape and topographical constraints, it is expected that a financial contribution will be made to support off-site delivery in accordance with Wycombe Reserve Sites Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 2016). Local play will be provided on site.

WDC's Green Infrastructure (GI) Toolkit should be used as part of any planning application within The Site to identify GI assets and define how they can be delivered and contribute to the wider GI network and to successfully integrate GI into the built development.

5.3.3 ECOLOGY

The Site is designated as Gomm Valley Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) and therefore is required to conserve/enhance ecological links between designated sites and priority habitats, and to create and enhance valuable habitats within the site linking to habitats beyond the site boundary.

DFO 8. Maximise opportunities for habitat creation and connectivity as outlined in the Gomm Valley Biological Opportunity Area (BOA) description with an emphasis on the creation, restoration and management of lowland chalk grassland, woodland, lowland meadows and hedgerows to create a resilient habitat network within the site that connects well with habitats beyond the site boundary.

DFO 9. Avoid the severance of areas and networks of ecological significance. Where a degree of severance is unavoidable minimise harm, mitigate and compensate.

DFO 10. Deliver net gains in biodiversity that reflect the site's exiting nature conservation interests and its designation as a BOA.

DFO 11. Retain undeveloped areas to deliver both ecological and recreational benefits alongside each other whilst at the time respecting the valley's landscape character by:

DFO 11a. Creating an enhanced network of undeveloped green space comprising chalk grassland, amenity grassland, hedgerows, trees and woodland characteristic of the valley;

DFO 11b. Securing public access to appropriate areas of the valley for play and recreation. Amenity areas should be created in close proximity to development and respect landscape and ecological sensitivities; and

DFO 11c. Providing a sustainable management framework, to be secured via legal agreement, for the delivery and ongoing maintenance of the undeveloped area including new and retained chalk grassland habitat.

DFO 19. The future of the undeveloped land will need to be secured in perpetuity through the creation of a trust or similar, designation as a Village Green or Country Park, or some other suitable legal or statutory mechanism, to secure the status and management of the undeveloped land in perpetuity.

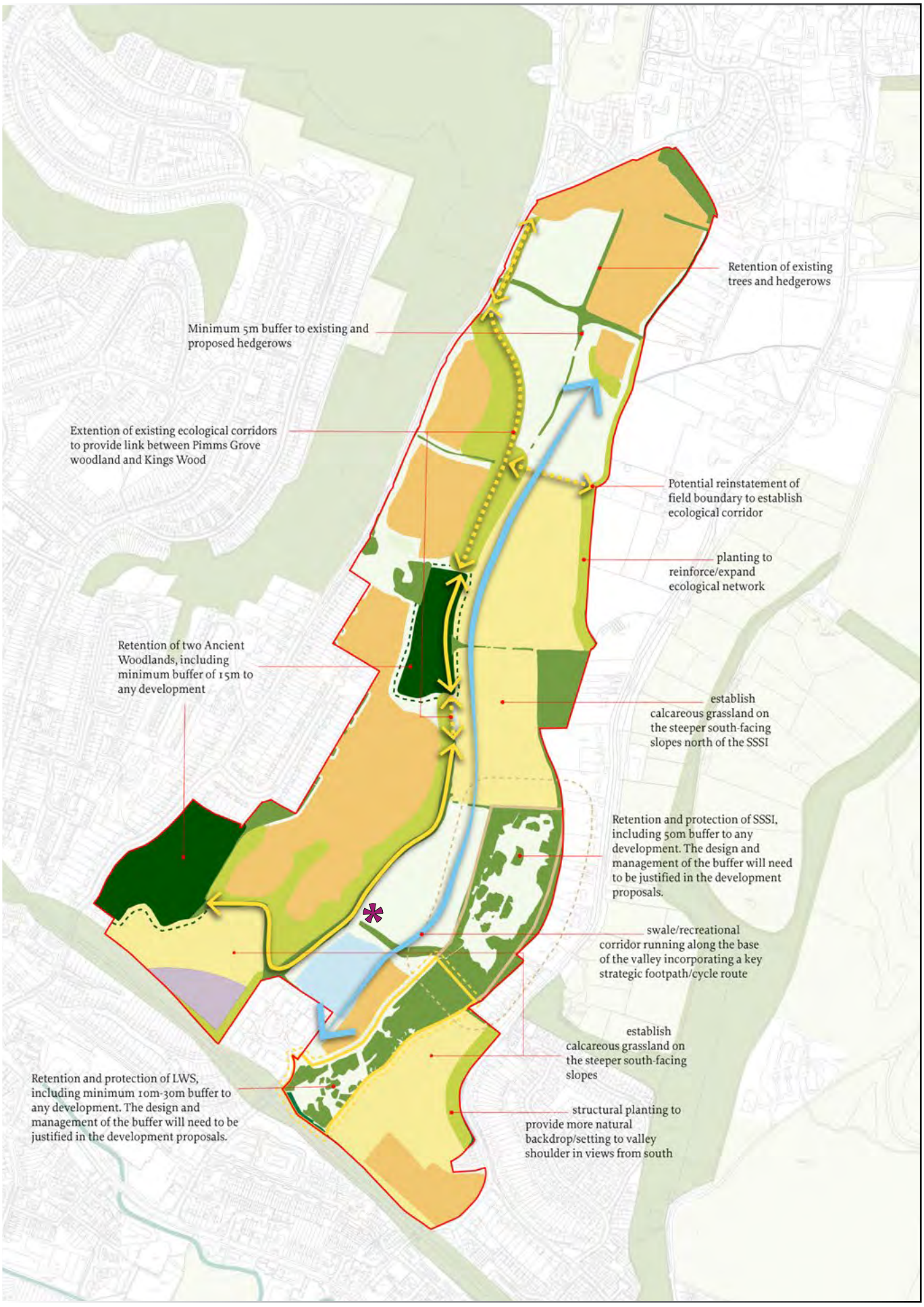


FIGURE 5.6 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECOLOGY

In order to meet the Framework Objectives set out in this brief and the Wycombe Reserve Site Draft Infrastructure and Delivery Plan, development proposals will need to achieve the following on the undeveloped parts of the site:

- Chalk grassland creation in line with BOA targets, i.e. creation of calcareous grasslands on the shallow soils of the steeper south-facing slopes of the valley and in particular north of the SSSI with the aim to extend these northwards to link with similar habitats within Gomm's Wood Local Nature Reserve. Areas of chalk grassland might also be required on the valley shoulders together with amenity grassland for recreation. Calcareous grassland needs to be grazed and is sensitive to disturbance by walkers and dogs;

- Provision of species rich amenity grasslands for informal use and public recreation. These should be located in proximity to residential areas and offer opportunities for informal enjoyment, e.g. play, views out; and

- The creation of nature conservation areas and species rich amenity grasslands will require appropriate long-term management through establishing a trust Through the creation of a trust, designation as a Village Green or Country Park, or some other suitable legal or statutory mechanism.

- Within The Site existing hedgerows and trees within them should be retained and a minimum 5m buffer should be provided between them and any development. Retained trees should be protected in line with BS5837:2012 and where trees are removed it should be demonstrated why this is essential and appropriate. Any loss will need to be mitigated.

It will also be necessary to extend existing ecological corridors through strategic planting in the following locations:

- Between Little Gomm's Wood and the existing mature hedgerow located to the east of parcel 5, creating a link to Pimms Grove (Ancient Woodland); and

- To the east of parcels 7 and 8, connecting Little Gomm's Wood with King's Wood. In combination with the measure above, this would provide an ecological corridor extending all the way from Pimms Grove (Ancient Woodland) to King's Wood.

Other ecological improvements required on the site include:

- Retention and strengthening of the SSSI, establishing minimum buffer of 50m to the SSSI unless it can be demonstrated that closer proximity of development will not adversely affect the interests of the SSSI.

- Retention, protection and enhancement of the Local Wildlife Site (LWS) by providing a buffer between the LWS and development. The dimensions, design and management for these buffers will need to be informed by ecological impact assessment to minimise impacts on the LWS. The buffer between the LWS and development parcel 2 should be managed to ensure that the LWS is protected and that people are steered away from it and towards open space designed to accommodate the public. Management of the LWS will need to include scrub removal and appropriate grassland management, including grazing;

- Provision of a minimum buffer of 15m between any development and the two Ancient Woodlands. To minimise impact on the woodlands there should be no public footpaths running through them;

- Retention and protection of existing habitats. Where the loss of a habitat is unavoidable, details should be provided of how the impact can be fully mitigated and compensated, resulting in a net gain in biodiversity; and

- Integration of biodiversity enhancing measures into the built environment, e.g. the form of appropriate soft landscape treatment, green roofs / walls and integral nesting opportunities for birds/bats.

It will be necessary to use WDC's Biodiversity Impact Assessment calculator to ensure there is a net gain in biodiversity as a result of development within The Site. Replacement mitigation habitat should be greater in size to that potentially lost.

In the event that a vehicular, pedestrian, and/or cycle link is created through the LWS linking Gomm Road with Hammersley Lane, it will be critically important that the link is designed to minimise the impact of the link on the LWS, and that the impact of the link is mitigated and compensated, resulting in an overall enhancement in biodiversity across the site.

It is considered that it is possible and appropriate to provide a community facility operated by the Chiltern Rangers (or a similar organisation) on the site relating to the landscape and ecology functions of the site. The most appropriate location would be north of the school site. This area is unsuitable for housing due to topography and landscape impact, but could accommodate a small building associated with management and maintenance of landscape and ecology assets on the site, or similar function.

5.4. LAYOUT/BUILT FORM

DFO 16. To establish an appropriate urban edge to High Wycombe and Tylers Green and avoid the coalescence of the two settlements. An undeveloped gap of approximately 200 metres or more at their closest point, informed by landscape impact ecological requirements and character issues, is to be retained.

To establish a strong sense of place and deliver a high quality living environment for existing and future residents, development proposals should respond to the characteristics and context of The Site.

One of the most important aspects of character and context is the role the site currently plays in providing an undeveloped buffer between the built-up areas of High Wycombe and Tylers Green. Although the site is now to be developed, it is crucially important that a sense of separation between these two settled areas is maintained by means of:

- Retention of an undeveloped gap of at least approximately 200 metres between areas C and D as indicated on figure 5.6
- A continuous belt of tree and understory planting to the east of area C to visually screen and contain the development;
- Ensuring the layout of area D and the design of the buildings within it minimise the degree to which the development is evident within views;
- Visually permeable planting along the southern edge of parcel 9 ; and
- Retention of the more visible land located in the northwest corner of the Development Brief as public open space. Any built or natural features within this area should not obstruct access or views west towards High Wycombe or south down the valley

DFO 17. To establish a strong sense of place and distinctive attractive and functional living environment through a sensitive design response to the local context including topography, landscape, habitats and ecology, and the environment

Figure 5.7 identifies four character areas which cover the residential development parcels identified in the Development Framework (Figures 5.1 & 5.2) and share similar key attributes such as topography, prominence in views, relationship with surrounding built form, access points and so on. These areas are set out below, and the remainder of this chapter will deal with them in detail to ensure the relationship between new and existing built form is coherent.

a. This area is at a relatively low level adjacent the rail line and business park but quickly rises to the highly visible eastern shoulder. It is adjacent to some of the most ecologically sensitive areas on the site, closest to the London Road and associated relatively dense development associated with it. This area will be challenging to access;

b. This area contains arguably the most visible development parcel on The Site, on the steeply sloping valley side adjoining the backs of existing properties on Pimms Grove. This area will be particularly challenging to develop and significant measures to minimise and mitigate impact on views will need to be achieved in the design;

c. The topography in this area is steeply sloping in the southeast corner, but rises and levels to some degree towards the west. This area is somewhat screened in views from the south by Little Gomm's Wood. Sensitive treatment of the edges of this area will be important to minimise the impact on views and the gap between High Wycombe and Tylers Green; and

d. This area contains some of the least challenging topography on the site however it will be important to ensure there is scope for robust tree planting within the area and at the edges to ensure the roofscape is screened and softened.

This section provides guidance for each of these character areas in terms of layout, densities, dwelling typologies, parking, heights and appearance. A plan for each of the development parcels is also provided, setting out the key considerations the development proposals should take into account. Development proposals will also be expected to respond to principles within the emerging Residential Design Guide.

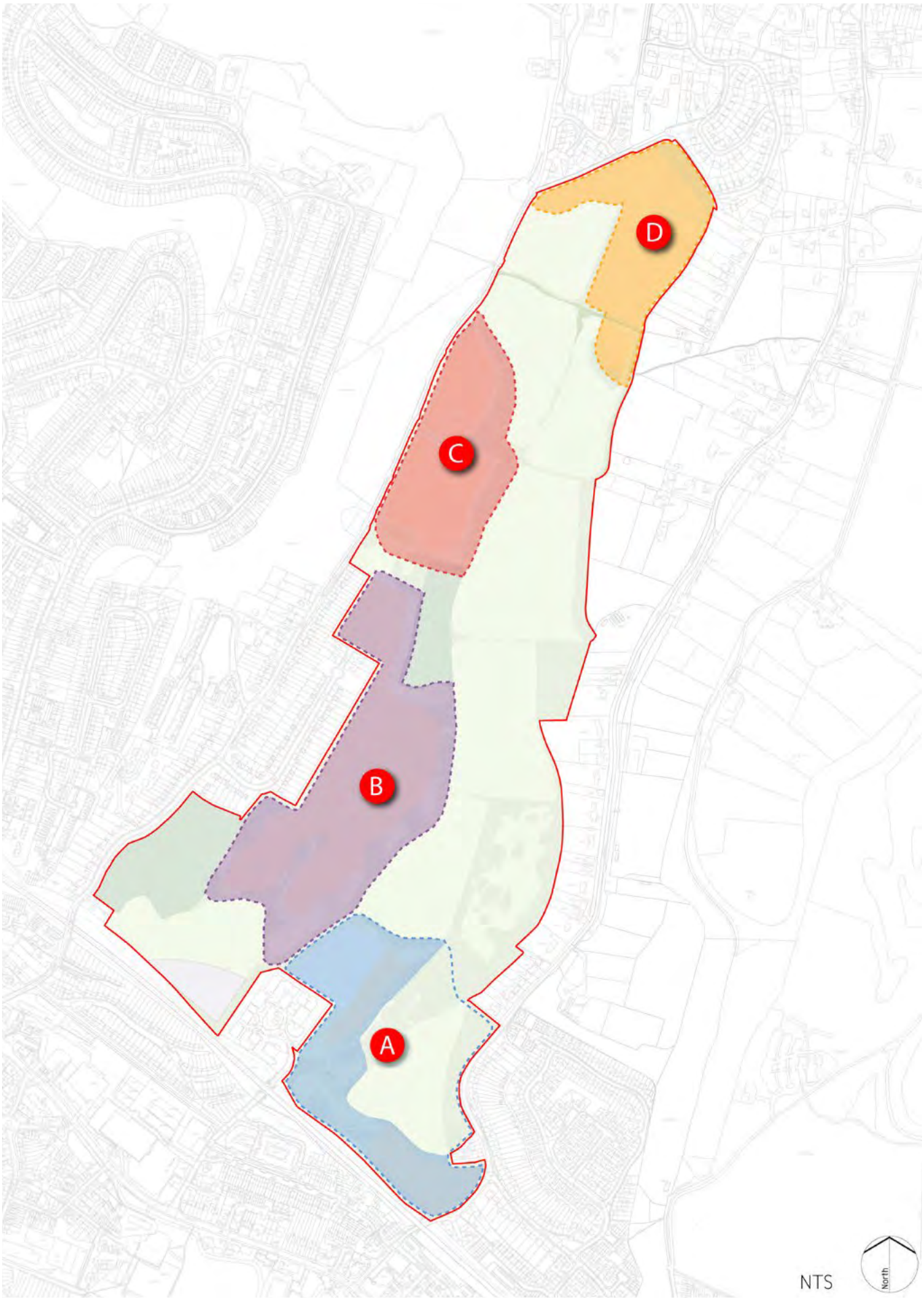


FIGURE 5.7 - CHARACTER AREAS

5.4.1. RELATIONSHIP WITH TOPOGRAPHY

DFO 17. To establish a strong sense of place and distinctive, attractive and functional living environment through a sensitive design response to the local context including topography, landscape, habitats, ecology, and the environment by:

DFO 17a. Designing the layout including access, public and private spaces and parking to minimise requirements for earth moving and retaining walls;

DFO 17b. Utilising layout and architecture designed to work with and sit into the existing topography and carefully arranged massing and roof forms to ensure the overall building height is as low as possible;

DFO 17c. Taking an imaginative approach to amenity space provision such as terraces, roof gardens and balconies to reduce pressure on garden space, allowing it to more easily accommodate structural landscape planting;

All of the development parcels exhibit level changes, some quite significant in character areas A and B, and to a lesser degree in areas C and D. This section sets out the general principles in terms of the relationship between built development and topography that will need to be considered by any development proposal on The Site.

Variation in built form

Much of the development which has taken place on the valley sides in Wycombe in the past 50 years has repeated use of standardised housing types and arrangements which have not been designed to respond to sloping topography or impact on views, and little scope for structural planting to mitigate. This has sometimes resulted in views dominated by rows of monotonous development, particularly where terraced dwellings have been used.

To avoid perpetuating this unsatisfactory response development proposals should carefully consider the block dimensions, and building arrangement, typologies and detailed design to minimise and mitigate impact on townscape and views as shown in Figures 5.8 to 5.11. Detailed proposals will need to be supported by cross sections, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment work, and streetscene visualisations.

Placement of dwellings on slope

As shown in Figure 5.8, to ensure that buildings are integrated with the topography of the valley as far as possible. They should be set within the slope and floors should step across the slope rather than simply stacked on top of one another. This is sometimes known as split-level. Terraces or large blocks of flats with a single floorplate should be avoided along steeply sloping streets; buildings with smaller footprints can more readily respond to changing levels utilising gaps between the buildings.

The ground floors of the buildings should make use of the level changes and be designed to accommodate living spaces, utilities or parking, depending on the specific circumstances, e.g. whether it is located on the upper or lower side of the street and the need to provide active frontages (see dwelling typology Figures 5.12-5.16).

Buildings should be designed to avoid the creation of tall sheer faces which could potentially dominate views from lower down the slope. This can be achieved by recessing or offsetting upper floors from lower ones, to avoid the creation vertical elevations in the same plane greater than two stories in height, as shown in Figure 5.8. Such an approach also reduces the risk of overlooking and allows the creation of roof gardens and balconies on upper floors providing amenity space and minimising pressure on gardens.

It is considered that this approach may be more successfully achieved through a contemporary rather than traditional architectural idiom.

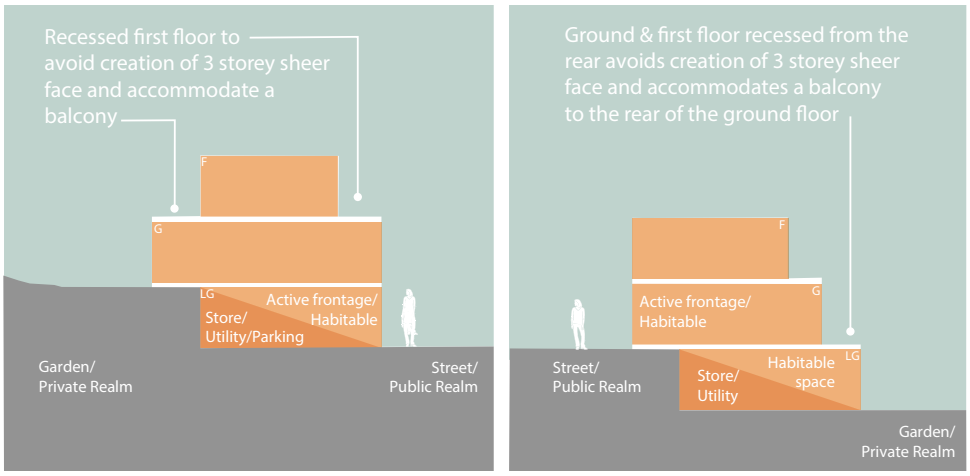


FIGURE 5.8 - PLACEMENT OF DWELLINGS ON SLOPE

Design of perimeter blocks

Perimeter blocks are generally the most effective way to deliver legible and well surveyed public spaces and secure and tranquil private spaces and therefore encouraged in principle. However perimeter blocks can be more difficult to deliver successfully on very steeply sloping topography. Departure from perimeter block forms will be considered on sloping sites where principles of clear definition of public and private space, and good natural surveillance of publicly accessible spaces are still achieved.

Back-to-back relationships

As illustrated in Figure 5.9, where development proposals result in new back-to-back relationships, they will need to demonstrate that the following have been considered:

- Potential overlooking issues created by differences in building height are avoided through:
- Appropriate back-to-back distances. The minimum is 25 metres on a flat site however sloping sites, and particularly when new dwellings are on higher ground than existing dwellings, require greater distances. Innovative design solutions may deliver privacy in other ways which may justify reduced distances;
- Dimensions, location, orientation and treatment (e.g. frosted glass) of fenestration; and
- Ensuring the designs which include living spaces on upper floors also include measures to control aspect and overlooking, for example by recessing upper storeys.

The layout and design of development proposals should minimise the need for retaining structures and where possible deal with level changes within the buildings rather than through additional retaining structures within the remaining public or private spaces

Where retaining walls, banks and revetments are used, these should be visually attractive and must not compromise the viability of amenity spaces e.g. through overshadowing or a unacceptable reduction in usable area.

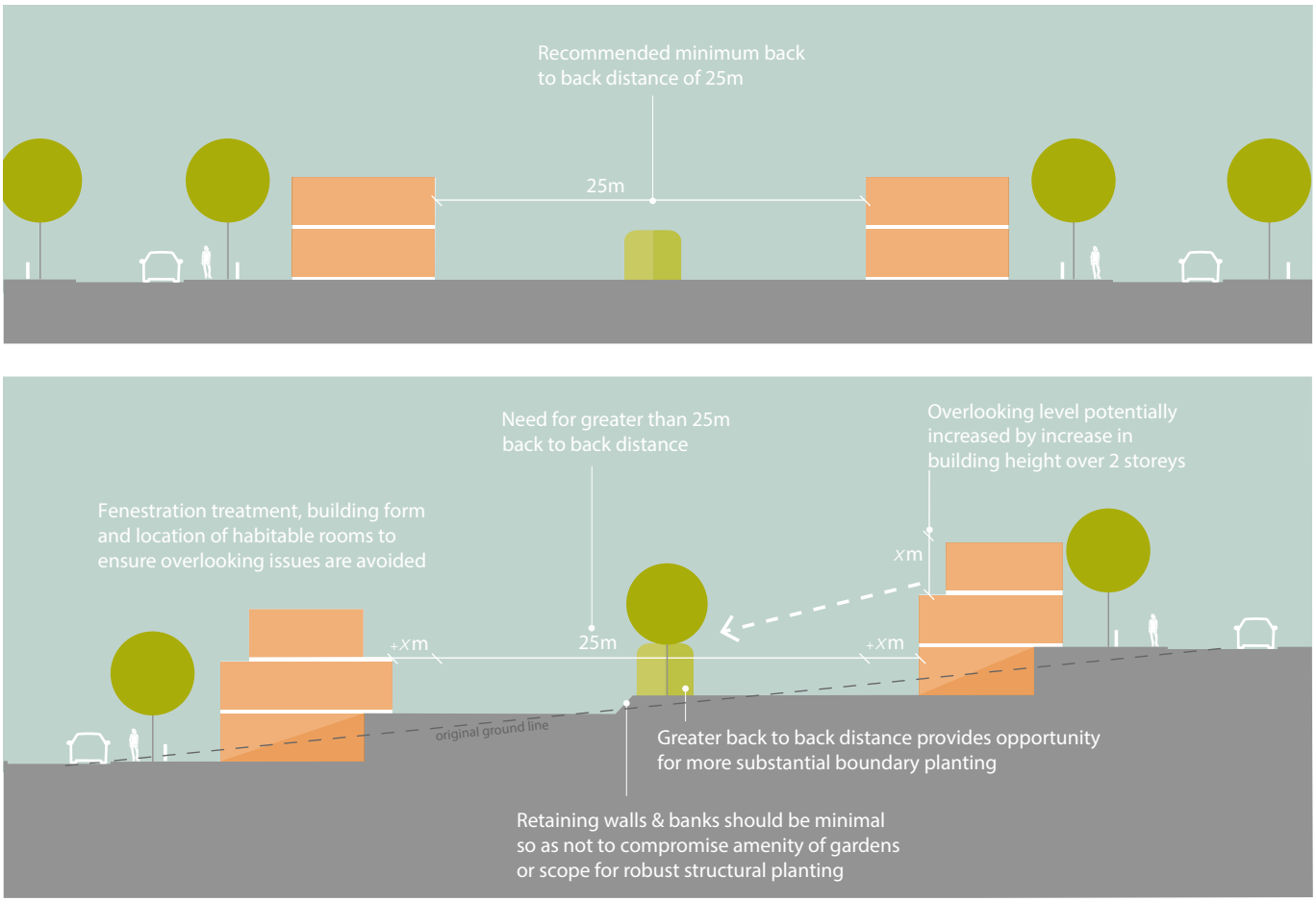


FIGURE 5.9 - SECTION THROUGH PERIMETER BLOCKS

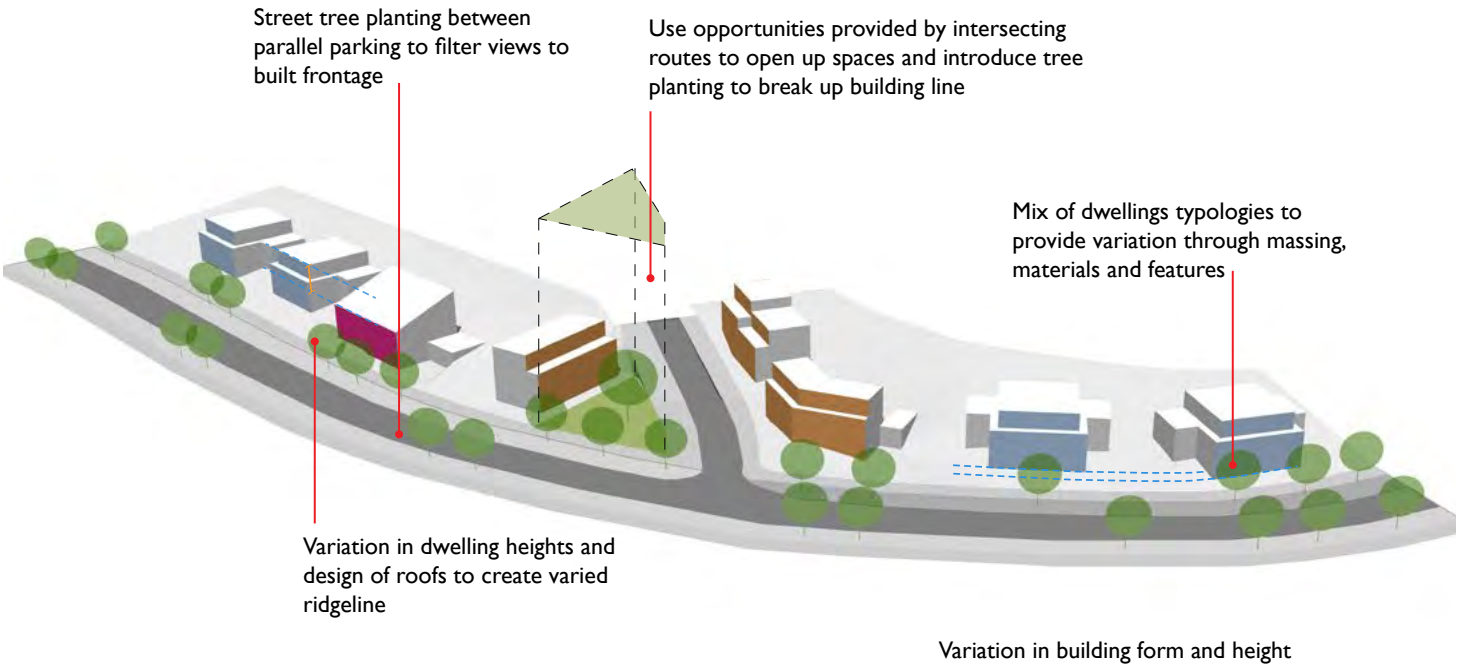


FIGURE 5.10 - VARIATION TO STREET FRONTAGE ON SLOPE

Building heights and street enclosure

Proposals should provide an appropriate level of enclosure, balancing building heights across streets, Enclosure should be strong along the spine road through a combination of smaller front and side set-backs and robust street tree planting, whilst also working with and reflecting the underlying topography, as shown in figure 5.10. Front and side set-backs may be increased on side streets and more steeply sloping streets,

As shown in Figure 5.11, split level dwellings can be utilised to provide a frontage of two storeys from street level.

Materials

DFO 17d. Utilising materials in natural and/or local colours and matt finishes to reduce the prominence of the development within views.

Good quality local red-orange brick, traditionally laid flint and plain clay tiles or slate are material generally found in the local Chilterns vernacular.

The site is not however strongly linked with the surrounding built context, which at any rate is more contemporary and suburban in nature. It is therefore considered that a range of good quality materials may be appropriate, particularly those which may assist in minimising the impact of the development on views or the environment

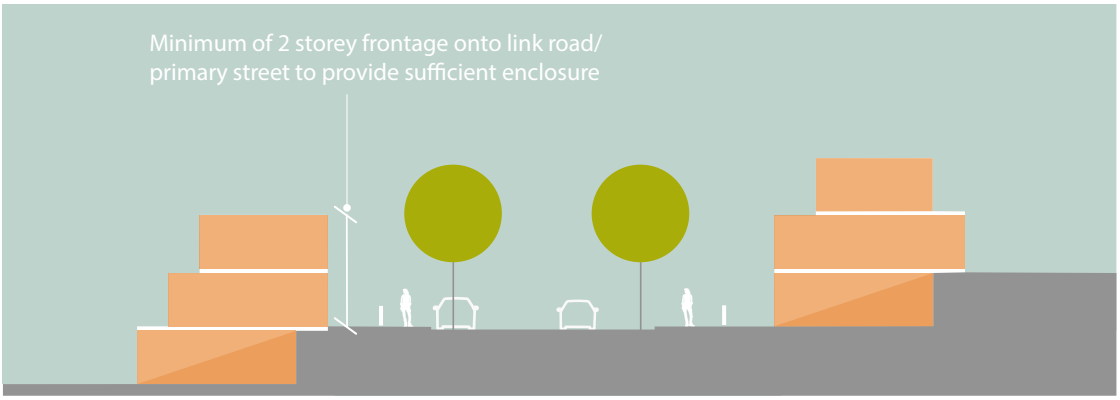


FIGURE 5.11 - FRONTAGE ONTO LINK ROAD/PRIMARY STREET

Sustainability

DFO 17e. Designing the buildings to a high standard and constructing them responsibly to respond to climate change through low carbon technologies and sustainable construction practices.

The design and construction of development on the site should seek to incorporate sustainable technologies wherever possible to utilise materials or resources more efficiently and minimise the impact of the development on the environment.

It is considered that a more contemporary architectural approach may remove constraints on the use and effectiveness of such technologies, by, for example, allowing Solar PV to be used on flat roofs behind parapets, minimising impact on views which may otherwise be unacceptable.

Dwellings typologies and parking

Given the relatively steep topography of much of The Site, development proposals will need to consider incorporation of split level dwelling typologies.

Figures 5.12 and 5.13 show split level apartment block typologies running parallel and perpendicular to a 1 in 7 slope (typical of the gradients in character areas A and B).

Parking provision should be through a mix of on-street and, providing that good surveillance of parking areas and public spaces is achieved, undercroft parking. Small private parking courts should only be used sparingly to supplement other provision, and should contain robust tree and shrub planting.

Figure 5.14 shows a typology which works better on relatively level streets, whilst figures 5.15 -5.16 show a range of split level house typologies which work well with a typical gradient of 1 in 7. A range of parking options would be compatible with these typologies, including: on-street (parallel or perpendicular); undercroft and on-plot.

Parking for all character areas will need to meet the standards set out in the Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance, September 2015 and the Wycombe District Council's Residential Design Guidance.

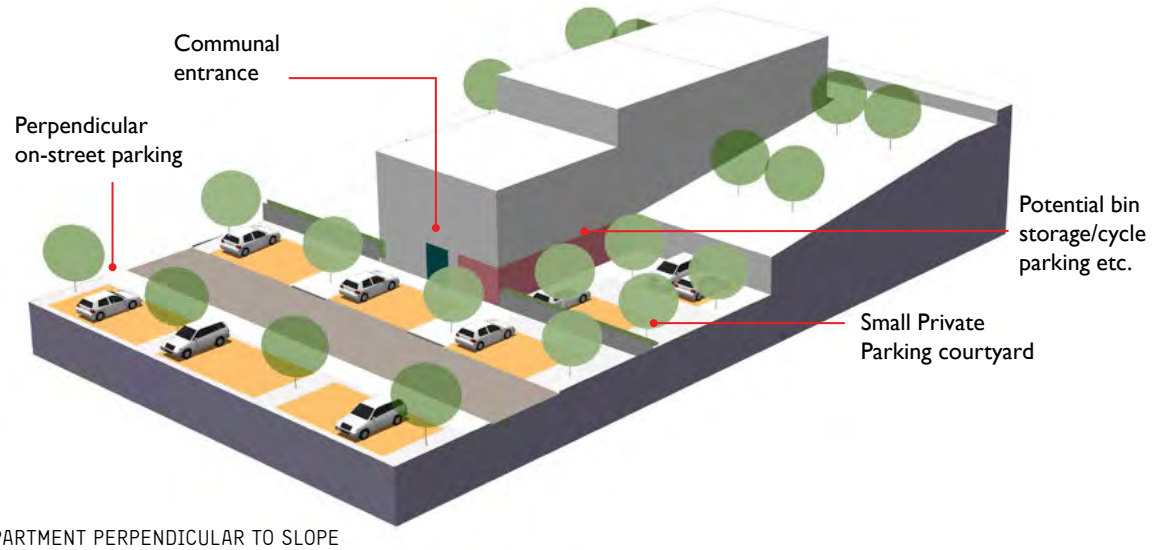


FIGURE 5.12 - APARTMENT PERPENDICULAR TO SLOPE

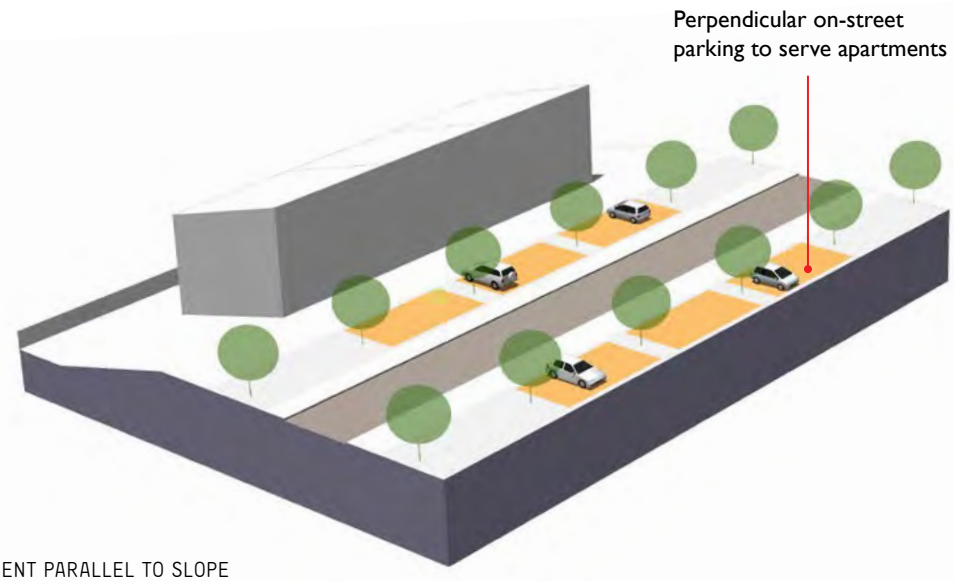


FIGURE 5.13 - APARTMENT PARALLEL TO SLOPE

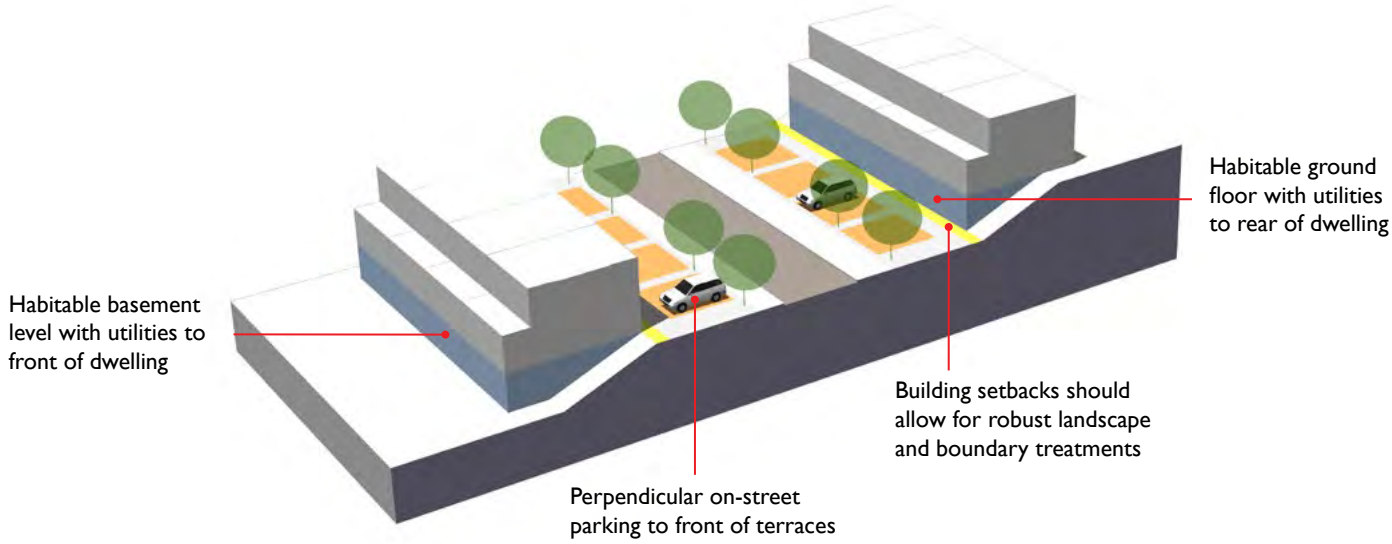


FIGURE 5.14 - SPLIT LEVEL TERRACE WITH FRONT PARKING

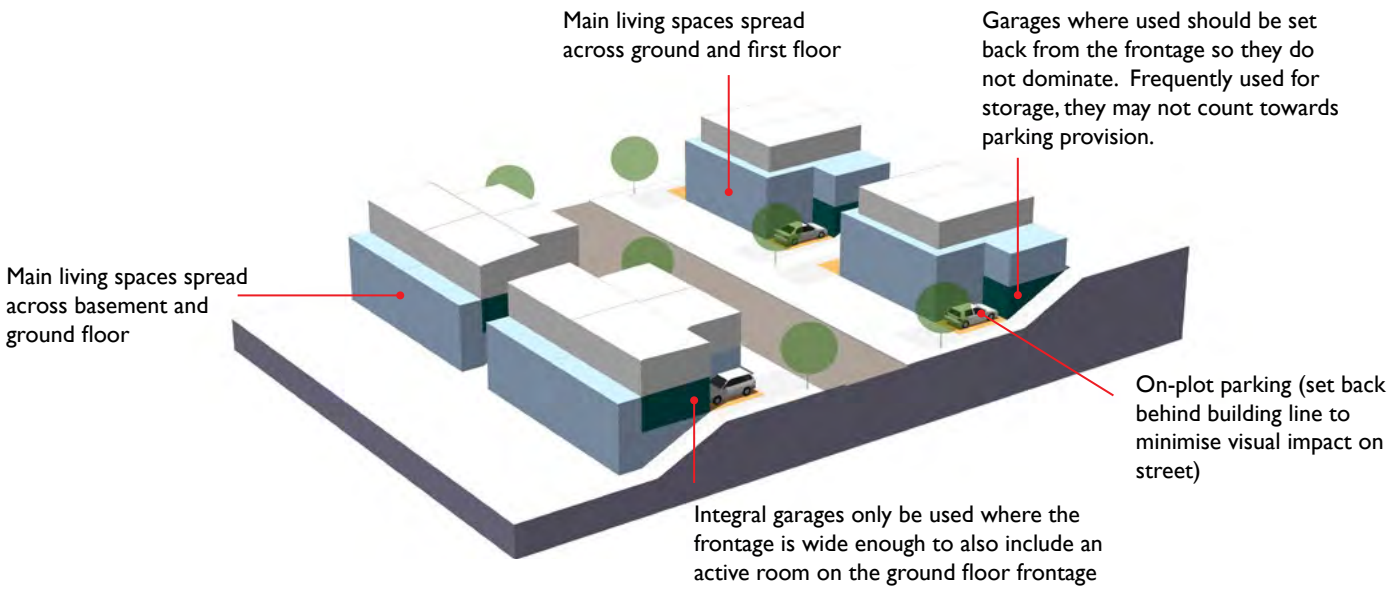


FIGURE 5.15 - SPLIT LEVEL SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE WITH ON-PLOT PARKING/INTEGRAL GARAGE

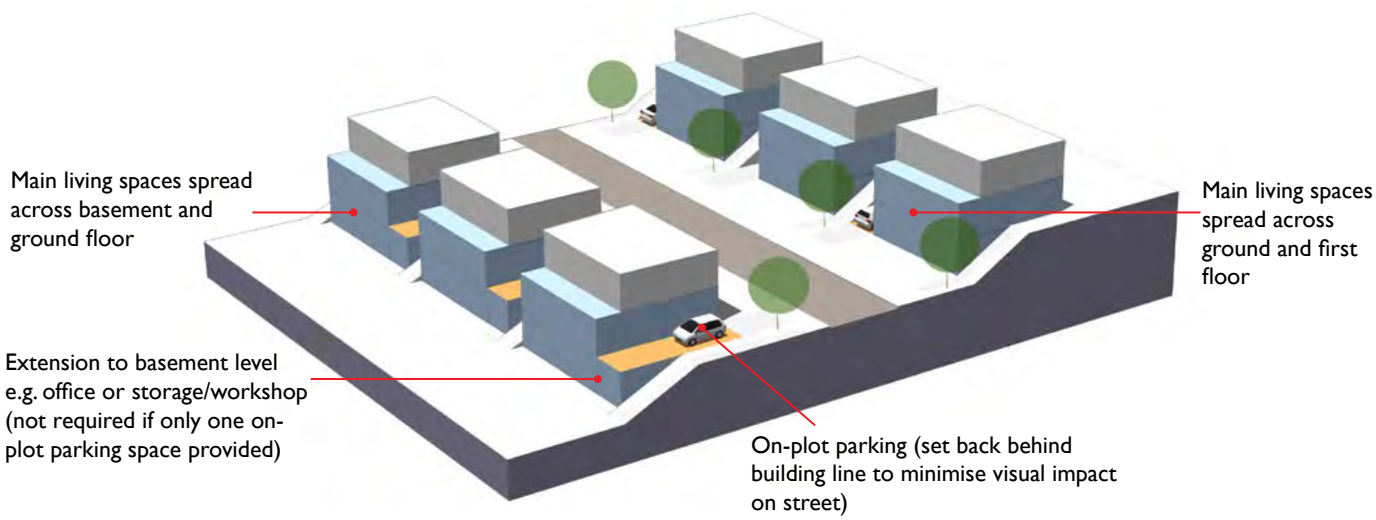


FIGURE 5.16 - SPLIT LEVEL DETACHED HOUSE WITH GARAGE

5.4.2. CHARACTER AREA A

FIGURE 5.17 - CHARACTER AREA A LOCATION PLAN

Access

In order to access The Site, the northern part of Gomm Road will need to be remodelled and it is likely that some existing on-street parking will need to be restricted. Any parking on Gomm Road which is lost as a consequence of developing the site will be re provided either on or off the site in a safe and convenient manner. This is in addition to the parking needs of the development.

In order to minimise the need for earthworks and heavily engineered features, and to enable better relationships between buildings and the street, the road alignment should work along rather than across the contours.

Access to the development area may be from Gomm Road, or from Hammersley Lane, or from both.

Layout

This is one of the steeper areas of The Site identified for development, with typical gradients of around 1 in 7.

The dimensions of parcels 1 and 2 will not allow the formation of 'complete' perimeter blocks so the layout will need to be carefully designed to ensure that it still provides:

- Front doors and active frontages onto the spine road and other streets ;
- Clear boundaries designed to support appropriate levels of access i.e. prevent inappropriate access into sensitive areas such as the Local Wildlife site or resident-only parking and amenity spaces; and
- Good natural surveillance of the open space/ landscape area around the other parcel edges through generous balconies and fenestration.

Landscape

To help screen development within this character area in key strategic views from south of The Site, it will be important to integrate significant planting within the development parcels in addition to the strategic structural planting identified in Section 5.2. This should include:

- A single row of large specimen trees along the Hammersley Lane edge of area A;
- Along the northern edge of parcel 1 to filter/soften views south from the valley shoulder;
- A tree belt along the southern edge of parcel 1 (this will also help screen the railway line from new dwellings);
- Tree planting along the spine road; and
- Tree planting within the spaces between apartment blocks and within dwelling gardens.

Densities

Character area A is located at the southern end of The Site, close to the higher density areas of High Wycombe and existing services/bus routes located along London Road. 3D modelling has shown that development parcels 1, 2 and 3 are relatively well screened by the valley landform when seen from key strategic views south of the Development Brief site (depending on heights, as discussed below). Parcel 1 is also screened by vegetation along the rail line.

Appropriate densities for the development parcels in this character area are therefore considered likely to be in the range of 40-60 dwellings per hectare subject to detailed design. Where the proposals for development are at the upper end of this range, they will need to clearly set out how they will retain a high quality of public realm and level of amenity for residents.

Dwelling typologies and parking

Given the steeper topography of this character area, the tight parcel dimensions and the rationale for higher densities, apartments will be appropriate for the residential parcels.

Design of the apartment blocks should consider a mix of the approaches shown in Figures 5.12 and 5.13 (perpendicular and parallel to contours) as other opportunities for variation in layout will be limited

by the parcel dimensions. This approach may also be helpful in terms of minimising visual impact.
Parking provision should be made in accordance with Buckinghamshire County Council Parking standards for zone A. Given the steep topography in this area of The Site and the need to minimise earthworks, at least 50% of the total parking spaces should be unallocated, thereby allowing fewer spaces to serve the development successfully.

Heights

The impact of development on views from the south should be given particular consideration due to the importance of minimising impact on views of the open valley shoulders, as discussed in Section 5.2.

Dwellings should provide a frontage no less than two storeys from street level to ensure an appropriate level definition/enclosure to the primary street (see Figure 5.11).

In general building heights in character area A should not exceed 3 storeys. However, 4 storey dwellings may be appropriate on the lower ground within parcel 1 (see Figure 5.18). This would need to be supported by Landscape and visual impact assessment work and streetscene visualisations.

A contemporary approach for the apartment blocks is encouraged to enable different roof forms to be explored to reduce building height and impact on views.
Appearance

This character area is the gateway to the site from the A40 via the spine road, a role which is strengthened by the dramatic railway arch which clearly demarcates the entrance to the site, and the striking undulating topography which is hidden from view by the arch, then unfolds immediately beyond. Development proposals should take advantage of these features and reinforce them with imaginative lighting and imaginative, well designed architecture to create a strong sense of place.

The appearance of development within character area A should respond to its location in High Wycombe, which is close to the higher density, more recent development off London Road.

Contemporary architectural construction methods and forms should be considered in this location, especially for apartments, and the opportunity taken to provide features such as green roofs, roof terraces and balconies in response to the steep topography and views across the valley.

With the possible exception of the school and one or two key gateway buildings, a neutral coloured palette of materials will be particularly important here to minimise impact on views.




FIGURE 5.18 - CHARACTER AREA A PRECEDENT PHOTOS

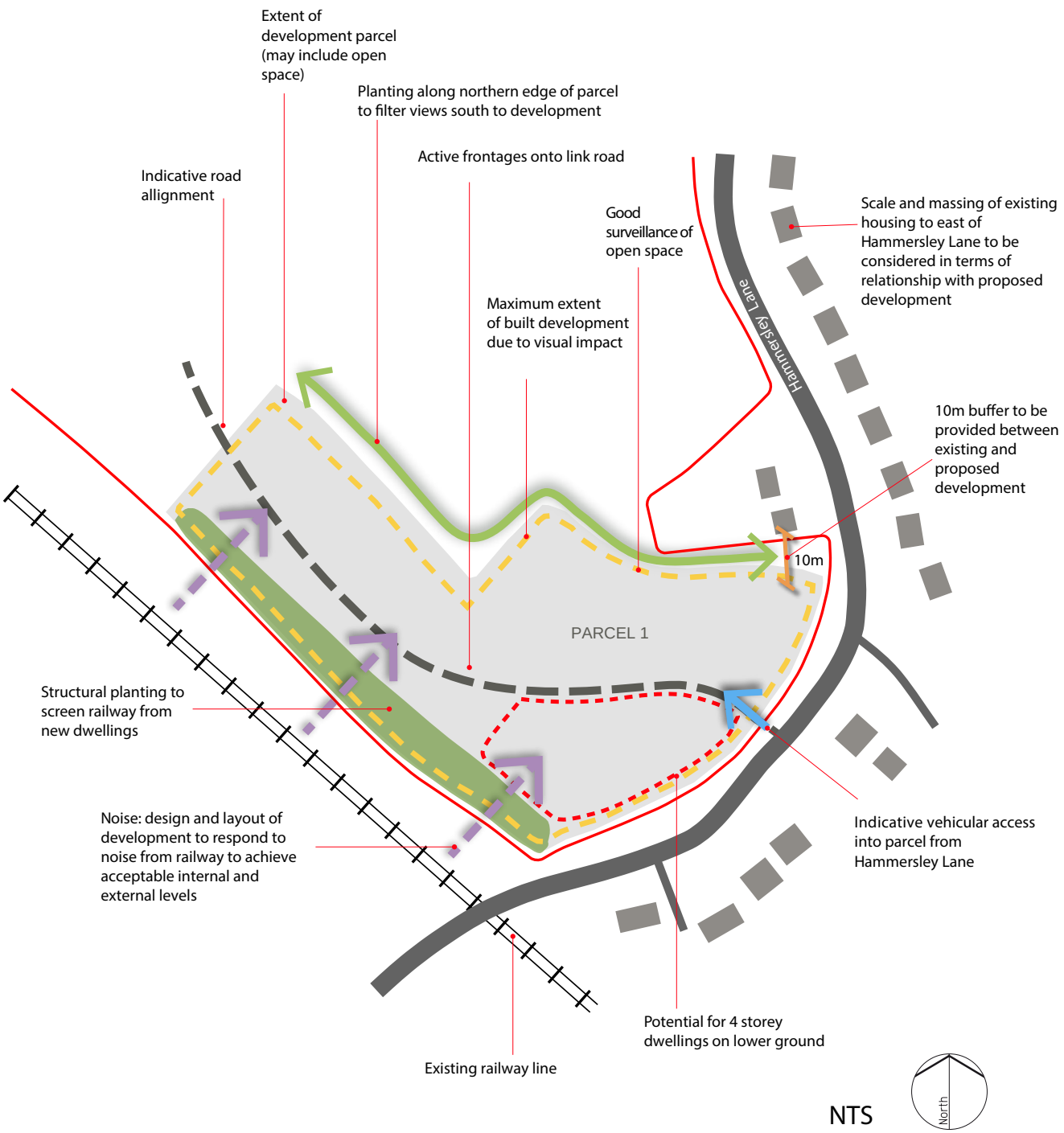


FIGURE 5.19 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCEL 1

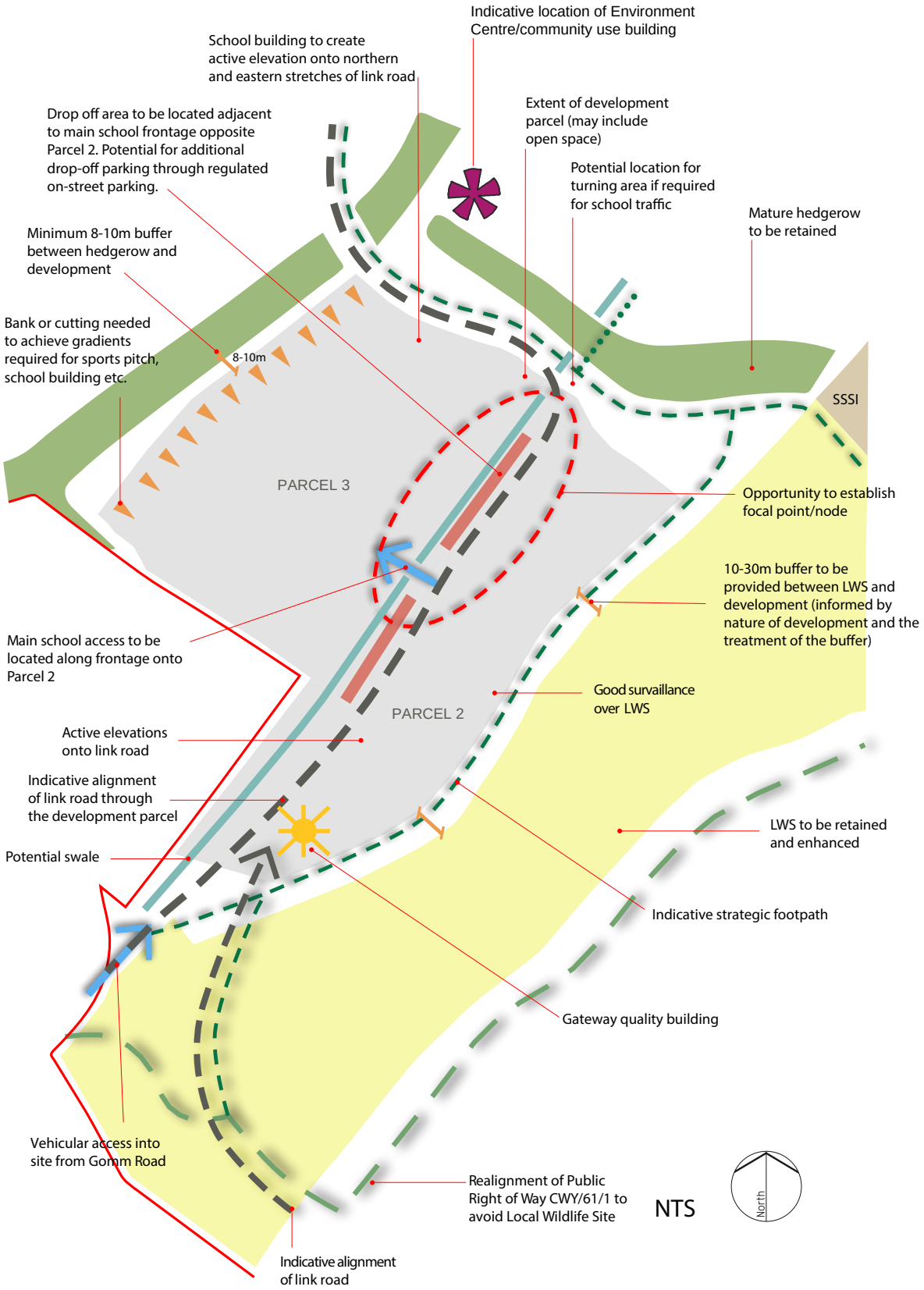


FIGURE 5.20 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCELS 2 AND 3

5.4.3. CHARACTER AREA B

FIGURE 5.21 - CHARACTER AREA B LOCATION PLAN

Layout
This character area contains some of the steeper areas of The Site identified for development, with typical gradients of around 1 in 7

In order to minimise the need for earthworks and heavily engineered features, and to enable better relationships between buildings and the street, the road alignment should work along rather than across the contours.

In addition to achieving an active frontage onto the spine road, the layout of development in this character area should ensure that a positive relationship is established with other surrounding spaces, including:

- Clear boundaries designed to support appropriate levels of access i.e. prevent inappropriate access into sensitive areas such as ancient woodlands and ecological corridors;
- Appropriate interaction with and natural surveillance of the open space/landscape areas around the other parcel edges; and
- Providing direct links to key spaces and strategic footpaths and cycle routes.

The existing residential development on Cock Lane, Pimms Grove and Pimms Close predominantly backs onto Character Area B. To meet DFO 14, maintain the amenity and privacy of the existing gardens, and ensure the creation of clearly defined public and private realms, proposed development should either back or side onto this development (see Figure 5.22). Any application including this parcel of land will need to be accompanied by detailed sections illustrating the nature of the relationship which will be created between existing and new dwellings, and demonstrating how the proposals respond to the guidance contained in this brief.

The spine road and any lower order adopted streets should follow slope contours as much as possible to minimise the earthworks required, integrate development with the valley landform and achieve gradients of 1 in 10 or less.

Landscape

Due to the visibility of parcels 4 and 5 in views from the opposite side of the valley and the strong relationship between character area B and the valley landscape, it will be critically important to provide sufficient scope in the layout of built development to accommodate robust planting. This will help to both integrate development with the landscape and soften its visual impact. The planting should include tree planting of medium to large growing trees such as whitebeam, lime or similar along the spine road and

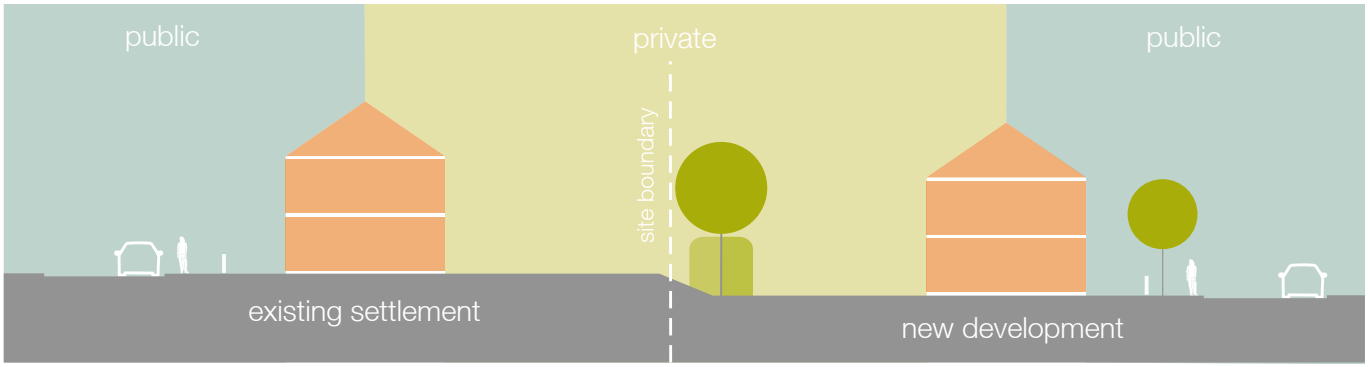


FIGURE 5.22 - BACK TO BACK DWELLINGS

within plots and public open spaces.
Planting should also be included along the southern edge of parcel 4 and eastern edge of parcel 5, linking the two ancient woodlands.
Densities

Character area B is located immediately adjacent to the relatively low density (approximately 20 dwellings per hectare) residential development off Pimms Grove and Cock Lane, which will form the backdrop to views of new development from the eastern side of the valley. It is further from the higher density development and cluster of amenities and services along London Road than character area A.

Area B is also highly visible in views from the opposite side of the valley so scope will need to be provided within the layout to integrate landscape features throughout the parcels in order to help soften the visual impact. It will not be sufficient to concentrate landscape planting only on the edges.

Appropriate densities for the development parcels in this character area are therefore considered to be around 25 dwellings per hectare, subject to detailed design.

Dwelling typologies and parking

The proposals for this character area should consider a mix of dwelling types, including predominantly semi-detached/detached houses, or flats within similarly-scaled buildings. Given the topography however and the importance of this site in views, it will likely be necessary to include a significant proportion of split-level building types.

Dwellings around the southern and eastern periphery of the development parcels should have a more spacious layout to enable a more appropriate transition to the valley landscape.

At the western edge that adjoins the back of Pimms Grove the layout should incorporate building types designed to minimise impact on existing properties by allowing views through gaps between buildings. The scale and roof form should also be carefully considered to minimise impact on the skyline.

Parking provision should be made in accordance with Buckinghamshire County Council Parking standards for zone A. Given the steep topography in this area of The Site and the need to minimise earthworks, at least 50% of the total parking spaces should be unallocated, thereby allowing fewer spaces to serve the development successfully.

On-street parking provided on roads which are intended to accommodate buses should be carefully designed to avoid affecting the efficiency of the bus service.




FIGURE 5.23 - CHARACTER AREA B PRECEDENT PHOTOS

DFO 14. To limit the potential impact of the proposed development on the neighbouring communities e.g. in terms of traffic generation and privacy.

Heights

Development proposals for this character area will need to give careful consideration to the impact on views from the opposite side of the valley, the lower parts of the slope and key views from the south.

Given this sensitivity and the scale of the existing development off Cock Lane, Pimms Grove and Pimms Close, dwellings should generally not exceed 2 storeys from street level; two storeys from street level will ensure appropriate definition/enclosure to the street (see Figure 5.10).

Where buildings are more than two storeys overall i.e. two stories at street level, with 'lower ground floors' built into the slope below street level, the visual impact of the buildings when viewed from across the valley should be minimised through well-considered massing of the building, including recessing the upper storeys, and landscaping

As far as possible, new buildings backing onto Pimms Grove should be spaces so that they are 'staggered' or offset compared to the existing dwellings, to allow views between the new buildings from the existing dwellings. Applications will need to be accompanied with sections clearly illustrating the relationship between the existing and new dwellings.

Appearance

The appearance of built development within character area B should respond to its contemporary urban context, the steep topography (which is likely to require split level housing typologies) and the strong relationship with the valley landscape.

Contemporary architectural construction methods and forms should be considered and the opportunity taken to provide features such roof terraces and balconies. These will allow good quality amenity space to be provided to residents whilst reducing pressure on gardens. This will enable structural tree planting to be provided in garden areas to minimise and mitigate impact of the development on views.

A neutral coloured palette of materials will be particularly important here to minimise impact on views.

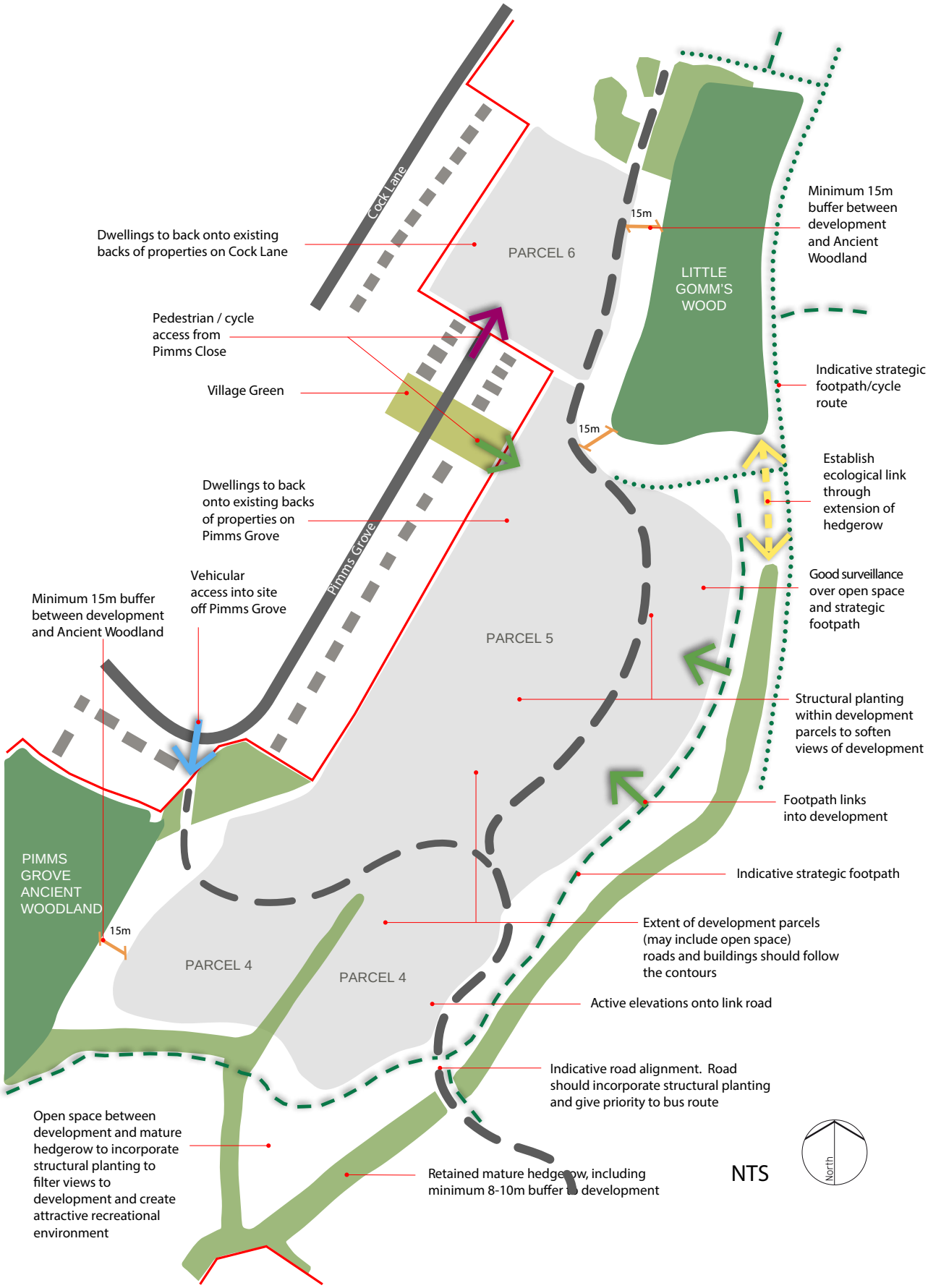


FIGURE 5.24 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCELS 4, 5 AND 6

5.4.4. CHARACTER AREA C

FIGURE 5.25 - CHARACTER AREA C LOCATION

Layout

As shown in Figure 3.6, the slope gradients within character area C are generally less than those within character areas A and B. However, the layout of development will still need to respond closely to the contours (particularly in the southeast corner) to minimise the earthworks required and ensure that adopted roads achieve a gradient of 1 in 10 or less.

In addition to establishing an active frontage onto the spine road, development proposals should provide:

- A strategic gap between High Wycombe and Tylers Green;
- Clear boundaries designed to support appropriate levels of access i.e. prevent inappropriate access into sensitive areas such as ancient woodlands and ecological corridors;
- Appropriate interaction with and natural surveillance of the open space/landscape areas around the other parcel edges; and
- Direct links to key spaces and strategic footpaths and cycle routes.

Landscape

As set out in Section 5.2, the development parcels within character area C will be largely screened from key strategic views by the structural landscape planting introduced along the eastern edges of parcels 7 and 8 providing a continuous belt of trees and understorey planting to screen development and provide an ecological link to other habitats beyond the site.

There will also need to be tree planting within streets and any public open spaces to help soften the roofscape and through retention and strengthening of existing planting and hedgerows around the parcel peripheries.

Densities

Development proposals for character area C could accommodate densities of approximately 25 dwellings per hectare subject to detailed design, with density falling to the northern and eastern edges to minimise impact on views and the strategic gap, and better reflect the settlement edge location.

Dwelling typologies and parking

Given the topography of character area C, there will be less need for split level dwellings, with the exception of the southeast corner of the area where the gradients are steepest. This area is also more capable of accommodating more traditional buildings with pitched roofs.

To establish an appropriate transition to the open spaces around the edge of the character area, dwellings at the periphery of the development parcels should achieve looser, less formal layouts through larger plots and variation in setbacks and orientation.

Parking provision within character area C should be based on Buckinghamshire County Council Parking standards for zone A.

The county standards require that where over 50% of parking spaces required to be provided are allocated, an additional 20% provision is made and that this additional provision must be unallocated and available for anyone to use; such provision is best made on-street.

Heights

Given the peripheral location of character area C and the importance of screening development to maintain the sense of an open valley in views from the south, building heights should be restricted to a maximum of 2.5 storeys from street level or up to 3 storeys for split level typologies. It may be necessary for buildings to be lower on the northern and eastern edges to help reinforce the gap between High Wycombe and Tylers Green but this should be tested with sections and informed by landscape and visual impact assessment work.

As set out in Section 5.4.1, the visual impact of buildings on sloping ground should be minimised by arranging the buildings along the contours, setting them into the slope, and recessing the upper storeys.

Appearance

The appearance of built development within character area C should respond to its edge of town setting and relatively flat topography.

More traditional pitched-roof building forms and materials (see Section 3.3.1) along with soft boundary treatments can be considered to reflect this character.

The treatment of the public realm should also reflect this approach, e.g. through the provision of shared surface lanes and the use of wooden bollards around open spaces.

Buildings within this character area will be somewhat less visible in views due to topography and edge planting. The use of a neutral colour palette of materials will therefore be less important. Material selection should nevertheless be informed by the High Wycombe context.

FIGURE 5.26 - CHARACTER AREA C PRECEDENT PHOTOS

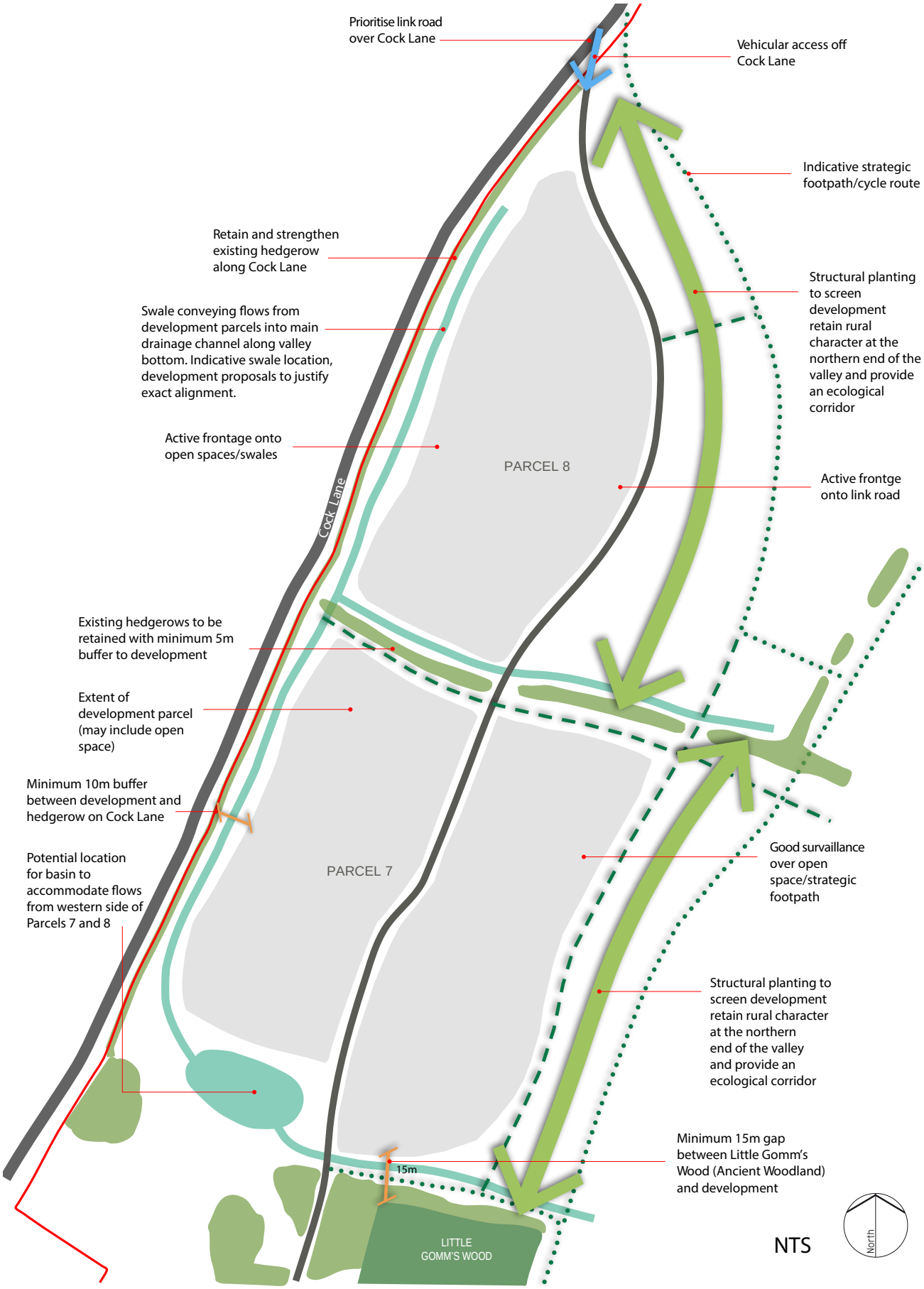


FIGURE 5.27 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCELS 7 AND 8

5.4.5. CHARACTER AREA D

FIGURE 5.28 - CHARACTER AREA D LOCATION

Layout

DFO 14. To limit the potential impact of the proposed development on the neighbouring communities e.g. in terms of traffic generation and privacy.

Character area D occupies a plateau at the northern end of The Site and is relatively flat but slopes gently to the west allowing more open views westwards and southwards to High Wycombe and the Wye Valley. Parcel 11 however slopes more steeply. As such, any development in this area should be sensitively designed to minimise impact on views from these areas and respond to the sloping topography (see Figure 5.7).

The most visible area of open land to the southwest of the character area should be used for the provision of public open space to both contribute to the strategic gap between High Wycombe and Tylers Green, and retain important views out.

Potential uses for this space could include informal recreation, a community orchard and/or allotments, but these should all be located and designed to retain routes through and views from this area.

Development within area D should divert the Public Right of Way CWY/14/1 through the public open space to provide a high quality walking environment with enhanced views and greater opportunities for natural surveillance. It may also provide the opportunity to extend some of the existing gardens in Ashwells into the Ashwells site to improve the relationships between these properties and the new development.

It may also be appropriate and beneficial to consider diversion of the Public Right of Way CWY/15/1 to remove the kink, making it more direct and well surveilled within the public realm.

Cock Lane and Ashwells are used for parking to accommodate school drop-off and pick-up. Development proposals which would lead to loss of this parking facility should seek to re-provide safe and convenient school parking elsewhere.

Elsewhere through this area the layout should provide:

- Well-defined development areas with clear boundaries and good surveillance of public routes and spaces;
- Direct links to key spaces and strategic footpaths and cycle routes.

The site, on the edge of Penn and Tylers Green, will need to establish as positive relationship with the existing developed area, and will need to establish an appropriate new edge to the settlement. This can be achieved through:

- Ensuring the new development links to the existing road and footpath network;
- Where the new development joins existing residential areas, using house types and plot sizes which are similar to those existing;
- Establishing a new edge by insuring dwellings face onto and overlook the undeveloped public spaces on the rest of the site;
- Communal recreation spaces and public green spaces providing a focal point within the development, addressed by active frontages of adjacent dwellings;
- Variation in terms of plot sizes, dwelling typologies and architectural idiom, with the larger plots providing space for robust structural planting;
- Designing minor access roads to appear more informal, using gravel or aggregate shared surface streets to serve dwellings which overlook public open spaces; and
- Ensuring that plot boundaries at these edges particularly are defined by native hedges and timber fencing.

The existing chalk pit within area D should be retained to form a focal feature and should be large enough to be functional. This could connect directly with the larger open space immediately to the west. Dwellings should be orientated to provide active frontages and good surveillance onto this space.

On the eastern side of character area D an access route with active frontage overlooking the rear boundaries of the existing dwellings on Sandpits Lane. This will allow the existing residents of Sandpits Lane to gain access to the rear of their gardens whilst minimising risks from exposed rear boundaries.

Landscape

The long-term aspiration for this area is for the roofscape to be softened by robust tree planting which breaks up the ridges at the skyline. It will therefore be important to provide additional planting within the developed areas. This will largely be accomplished through tree planting within streets, public open spaces and some larger gardens, and through retention and strengthening of existing planting and hedgerows around the parcel peripheries. Visually permeable planting will be required along the southern edge of parcel 9 to soften the impact of the dwellings in views.

Densities

Character area D is located adjacent to existing development on the southern edges of Tylers Green. Whilst predominantly consisting of detached family homes, the dwellings in adjacent Ashwells, Wheeler Avenue and Carter Walk areas are a relatively modest two-storey scale, similar in design, ranging from 14 to 18 dwellings per hectare.

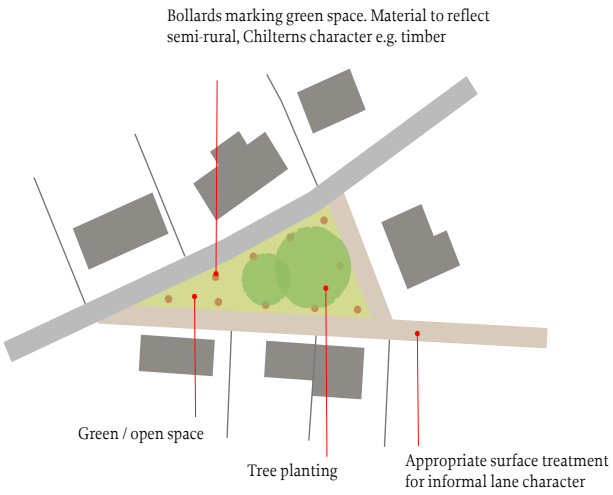


FIGURE 5.30 - OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

Within the centre of Tylers Green the block and plot sizes, and scale and style of the buildings is much more varied. Average densities however are very similar to those indicated above, with a handful of larger plots providing scope for robust landscape that the smaller plots cannot accommodate.

Objectives for development within area D suggest that this variation of plot size and dwelling typologies and scale will be important to enable the delivery of robust structural planting whilst also delivering much needed housing at densities around 25 dwellings per hectare in response to the character of the local area, with density falling to the southern edge of parcels 9

FIGURE 5.29 - CHARACTER AREA D PRECEDENT PHOTOS

and 11 which are not currently enclosed by existing mature vegetation, to minimise impact on views and the strategic gap, and better reflect the settlement edge location. Density will be particularly important for parcel 11; gardens will need to be deep enough to ensure the new dwellings are further away and do not have an overbearing impact on existing dwellings.

Dwelling typologies and parking

Given the varied nature of Tylers Green, it will be appropriate for this area to consist of a mix of house types including flats, and detached and semi-detached houses. At the northern edges of the development area adjoining Ashwells and Wheeler Avenue the layout should incorporate houses compatible to the surrounding character and which allow views through gaps between them. The scale and particularly the roof form should also be carefully considered to ensure, particularly when combined with topography, they do not have an overbearing impact on existing properties.

Within the development area generally it will be important to consider building design and roof form to ensure the development does not result in continuous straight ridges at the skyline. Any such impacts should also be mitigated through robust tree planting

The relatively level topography of character area D means there is less need for split level dwellings with the exception of the area furthest west at the entrance from Cock Lane. Subject to impact on the skyline, this area is more capable of accommodating traditional gabled buildings.

Parking provision within character area D should be based on Buckinghamshire County Council Parking standards for zone B and will be best accommodated through a mix of on-plot and on-street. Due to the extra demand for parking generated by the nearby school, parking provision will be expected to meet or exceed that set out by the County guidance.

The county standards require that where over 50% of parking spaces required to be provided are allocated, an additional 20% provision is made and that this additional provision must be unallocated and available for anyone to use; such provision is best made on-street.

Heights

Given that the adjacent existing properties on the southern edge of Tylers Green are two storeys in height, and to minimise the appearance of the properties from the wider long distance views from the west, building heights should be restricted to a maximum of 2.5 storeys, the exception being where the new houses sit on higher ground than adjacent houses, whereby the houses should be no greater than 2 stories and should be designed to keep roofs low, to minimise overbearing impact on adjacent properties.

The impact of deeper building footprints on the height of the ridgelines should also be given careful consideration to avoid excessive heights or overbearing impact on existing dwellings.

Parcel 9

Dwellings on parcel 9 should be designed to maximise the value of the striking views, both of the dwellings by virtue of exceptional design, and from the dwellings in terms of design, fenestration, and landscape treatment. It is expected that each one of these dwellings will be individually distinctive and architecturally striking.

Tree planting will be important in this area to soften what might otherwise appear harsh in this sensitive landscape, but care will be needed to ensure it softens rather than hides, and that it sill allows appropriate views in and out.

Parcel 11

The relationship between parcel 11 and the existing properties in Ashwells and Greenridge is particularly sensitive as the existing properties in this location are sited on lower ground than the Development Brief site, which makes them particular sensitive to issues of overlooking and the overbearing impact of new development.

To appropriately manage this relationship back to back window distances should achieve a minimum of 35 metres and gardens should be of sufficient size to facilitate the establishment of structural planting to soften the impact of new development on these dwellings and their most usable external amenity space. Where no windows are present a minimum distance of 20 metres from the rear of the properties in Ashwells/ Greenridge to first floor level of any new development should be observed to prevent any unacceptable overbearing impact.

In the event that the gardens of these properties are extended structural planting could be incorporated within this space thereby giving existing occupiers control over the future screening effect of the vegetation.

Any application including this parcel of land will need to be accompanied by detailed sections illustrating the nature of the relationship which will be created between existing and new dwellings, and demonstrating how the proposals respond to the guidance contained in this brief.

Appearance

The appearance of built development within character area D should respond to its semi-rural setting and the proximity of the settlements of Tylers Green and Penn. Variation in building forms and materials (see Section 3.3.1) along with softer boundary treatments should be considered to help distinguish it from the Wycombe urban/suburban area.

The treatment of the public realm and play areas should also reflect this approach, for example through the use of shared surface lanes and the use of timber for bollards, fencing and play equipment.

A more contemporary architectural response may be more appropriate at the entrance to the site from Cock Lane where adjacent dwellings are more contemporary and steeper topography may require split level typologies.

Aside from parcels 9 and 11, buildings within this character area will be somewhat less visible in views due to topography and edge planting. The use of a neutral colour palette of materials will therefore be less important. Material selection should nevertheless be informed by the High Wycombe context. If flint is used it should be in accordance with the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide and Flint Technical Note.

Lighting

Tylers Green is an area with no street lighting as it is more rural in nature. This lack of lighting is also beneficial in sustainability terms. Therefore any development in parcels 9, 10 and 11 should respect this characteristic and should not incorporate street lighting.

FIGURE 5.31 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCELS 9, 10 AND 11

5.5. EMPLOYMENT

Proposals should consider the provision of employment within the 1.1ha area of land shown as parcel 12 in the development framework (Figure 5.1). This parcel has been identified as potentially suitable for employment due to its location adjacent to Peregrine Business Park and its proximity to London Road. The parcel extent has been determined by the need to retain the more visible land on the valley shoulder as open space. The development of the site will be dependent on securing vehicular access from either the business park or the Network Rail land to the south of the site (see Figure 5.32 for further guidance on layout).

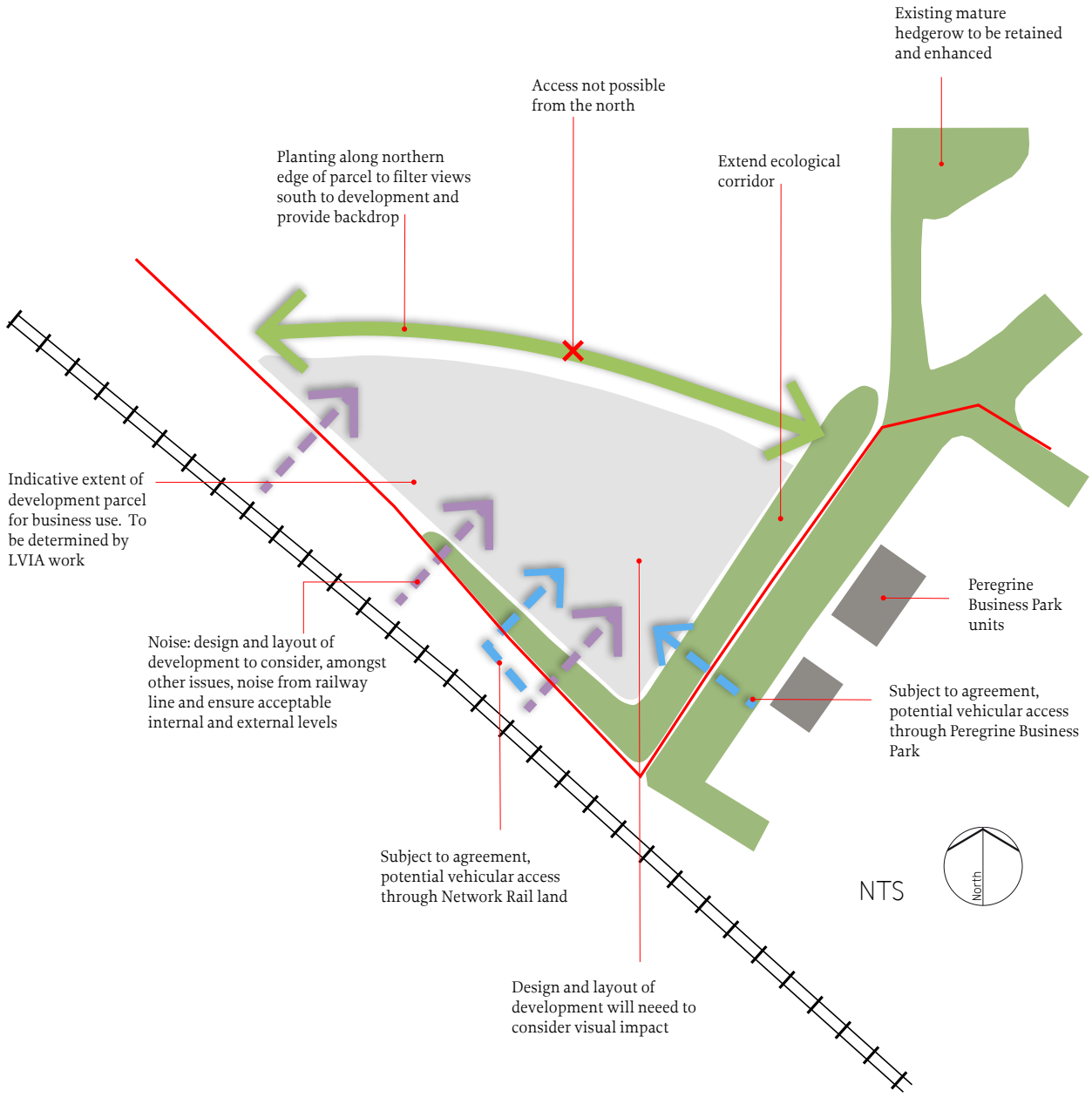


FIGURE 5.32 - KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARCEL 12

5.6. UTILITIES

5.6.1. WATER

The existing 12" trunk main identified in Section 3.12 runs through development framework parcels 3, 5, 6, 7 and 10. It is recognised that it will not be possible to accommodate this trunk main and the required 3m wide service strip either side of the pipe, in some, and possibly all, of the development parcels without compromising the layout to an unacceptable level. Where this is the case, proposals should set out how a rerouted trunk main can be accommodated.

5.6.2. ELECTRICITY

In order to accommodate the development of the parcels set out in the development framework, the existing 11kv overhead electricity cables identified in Section 3.12 will need to be under-grounded where they cross parcels 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10.

5.6.3. GAS

The development parcels have been located to accommodate the intermediate pressure gas main identified in Section 3.12 (including the required 3m easement either side).

5.6.4. TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Two telecommunications masts are located in the north of The Site. One of these is located within parcel 10 and will need to be incorporated appropriately into any development or relocated.

5.7. FLOOD RISK, DRAINAGE AND GROUND CONDITIONS

Development proposals will need to set out a drainage strategy to demonstrate that the development of the site does not present any drainage or flood risk issues. Figure 5.31 shows an indicative arrangement in which swales are used to convey flows from the development parcels on the valley sides into a drainage channel running along the bottom of the valley. Dry basins are provided at strategic locations to provide storage in the case of extreme events and reduce flows at the base of the valley. Development proposals for parcels 2 and 3 (areas identified on groundwater emergence maps as being potential susceptible to shallow groundwater or groundwater flooding) should also include measures for intercepting and managing high groundwater levels in extreme events.

The pumping substation and transformer in the northwest of The Site will also need to be considered for any development proposals in parcel 11.

5.8. ARCHAEOLOGY/HERITAGE

As set out in Section 3.8, there are a number of find records dating to a range of periods within the site. As part of the proposals it is therefore expected that a geophysical survey be carried out and, depending on its findings, trial trenching. Subsequent further investigations and watching briefs may be required. The extent of this is to be agreed with WDC at the application stage.

5.9. NOISE AND AIR QUALITY

5.9.1. NOISE

Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the development meets the following criterion quoted by the World Health Organisation (WHO):

- A maximum daytime internal sound value of 35dB(A);
- A maximum night time internal sound value of 30dB(A); and
- A maximum night time bedroom level of 45dBL_{Amax}.

Particular consideration should be given to the layout and design of buildings within parcels 1 and 2 near the railway line, where mitigation including, acoustic glazing and mechanical ventilation may be required to meet the required criterion.

5.9.2. AIR QUALITY

The proposals will need to demonstrate that they have considered the potential sources of air pollution identified in Section 3.12 and meet the required air quality standards for development.

5.10. CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Development is required to deliver a minimum 15% reduction in carbon emissions on-site through the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. The following measures should be considered to achieve this:

- EITHER - A modular on-site combined heat and power plant;
- OR connection to a wider combined heat and power network in the wider area to serve the development;
- Solar thermal/photovoltaic panels for individual dwellings;
- Passive design techniques to improve capacity of buildings and landscape for heat storage and cooling in hot weather;
- Green roofs;
- Water efficiency to reduce waste rather than restrict use e.g. automatic leak detection; water efficient WC's;

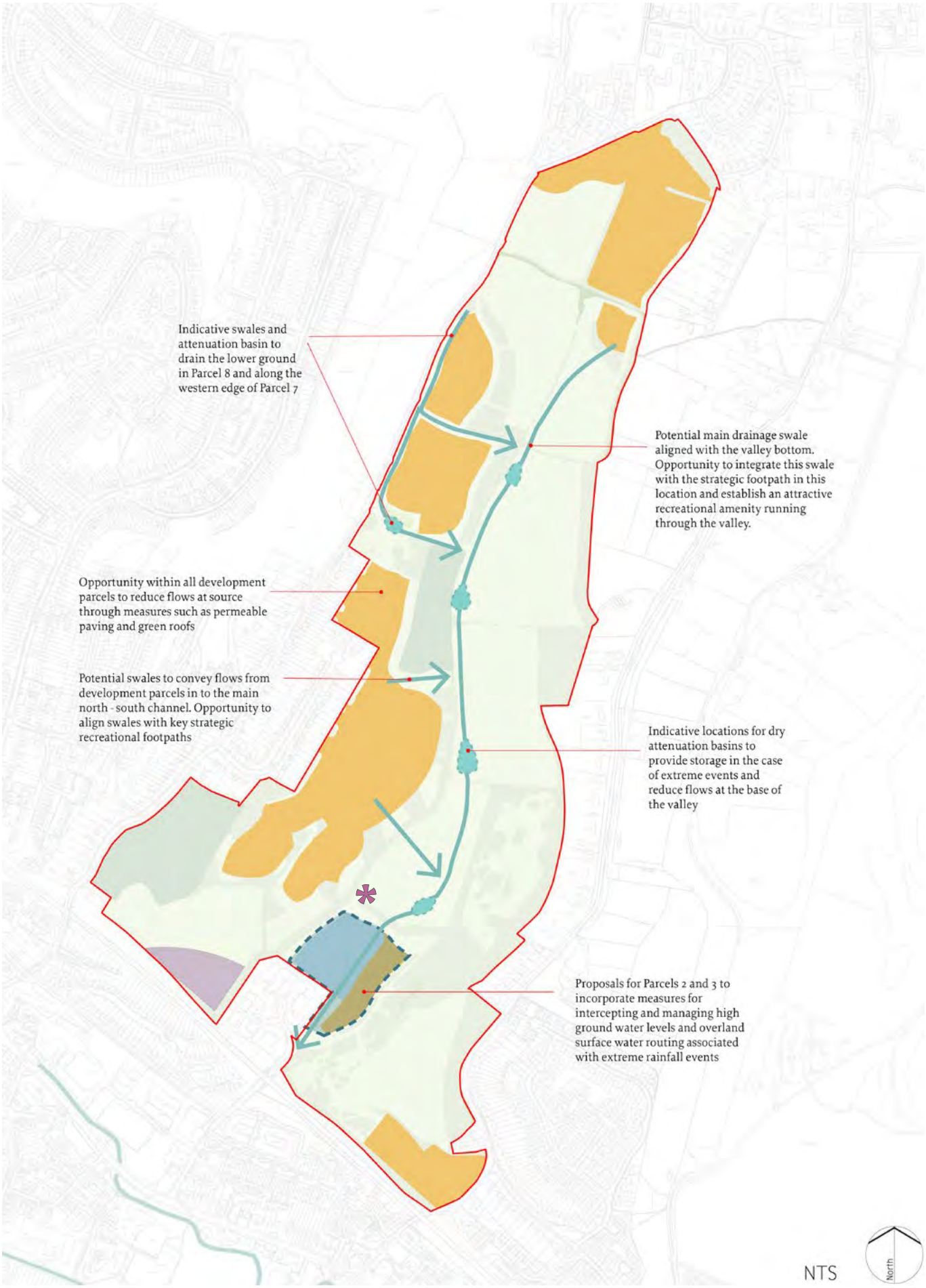


FIGURE 5.33 - DRAINAGE STRATEGY DIAGRAM

- Flow restrictors and aerators on showers and taps; waterless urinals;
- Grey water recycling;
- Rainwater harvesting;
- Electric vehicle charging points;
- Construction materials listed in the BRE Green Guide (these also often have health benefits) and which have low embodied energy;
- Sustainable urban drainage;
- Design of buildings to minimise waste e.g. building re-use; pre- fabricated components; internal and external waste storage which is large enough to accommodate recycling bins;
- Recycling of building and road/surface materials on site; and
- Short term use of existing buildings until needed for development.

For more details please refer to WDC's Living Within our Limits SPD and Delivery and Site Allocations (June 2012) policy.

5.11. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY

DFO 18. To deliver a balanced development, comprising housing, employment and associated infrastructure (as appropriate) in suitable locations, in conjunction with the other reserve sites identified within Wycombe District Core Strategy & Emerging Local Plan , to help accommodate the District's housing and employment needs to 2031 and contribute to the five year housing supply.

5.11.1. RESIDENTIAL

Amount and distribution

The amount and distribution of residential development shown in the Development Framework (Figure 5.1) has been carefully considered to balance the key objectives set out in Section 4 of this Development Brief against the baseline conditions identified in Section 3.

In total, the Development Framework provides 18.4ha hectares of residential development. The densities for these residential areas will vary across The Site depending on a range of factors, including: the relationship with existing settlements and services; topography; and landscape character. Guidance densities for the different character areas of The Site are provided in Section 5 and sit within an overall range of 25-60 dwellings per hectare.

Dwelling size, type and tenure

In line with Core Strategy Policy CS13 development proposals for The Site will need to provide for a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure that meets the identified housing needs of the community. Section 5.4 provides more detailed guidance on the dwelling provision that will be appropriate within the different character areas of The Site.

In accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS13 affordable housing provision should make up at least 40% of the total bed spaces within the development. In the interests of achieving mixed communities affordable housing of all tenures should be distributed throughout the Development Brief site, and houses must be tenure-blind.

5.11.2. PRIMARY SCHOOL

DFO 15. To incorporate the findings of the Wycombe Reserve Sites Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 16) with particular regard to school and formal open space provision.

Requirement

The Wycombe Reserve Sites Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies a requirement for an additional two forms of entry of primary school places to meet the demand created by the four High Wycombe reserve sites. To help meet this requirement, a one form entry primary school and 26 place preschool meeting the needs of both the Gomm Valley/Ashwells and Terriers Farm developments will be required on The Site.

Size and location

The Development Framework shows the size and location of the primary school site. The site should be a minimum of 1ha in size and, where practical, will need to meet the Buckinghamshire County Council school site specifications set out in Appendix 2 of the Wycombe Reserve Sites Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Due to the topography of The Site and the requirement for a sports pitch and large building footprints, this is likely to require significant earthworks.

The proposed primary school site is located immediately north of Peregrine Business Park, where it will be directly served by the new spine road.

Buckinghamshire County Council identified one alternative site for the school on land immediately north of Pimms Close (parcel 6). However, a school site appraisal exercise was carried out and found that, while both sites are equally suitable in terms of addressing topography and other constraints, the site to the north of Peregrine Business Park is significantly more accessible. The more regular/compact shape of the site will also allow the school building to be located in a position where it has a more positive relationship with its immediate context (see Figure 5.20 for further guidance on layout).

5.11.3. OPEN SPACE PROVISION

Formal outdoor sport

Due to the landscape and topographical constraints of The Site, the proposals are not expected to provide areas of land for formal outdoor sport. These are to be provided as part of a hub at the Terriers Farm reserve site, where a 3G STP will be provided to meet the identified need.

Children's play facilities

There are relatively few play facilities located in the local area so the proposals will need to provide various facilities in areas easily accessible by residents of the development areas and surrounding neighbourhoods.

On the Ashwells site a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) should be provided together with informal open space that offers opportunities for views across the valley. Towards the centre of The Site a NEAP and teenager facilities should be constructed for use by residents of the development in the middle and at the lower end of the valley. The NEAP should contain equipment suitable for ages ranging from young children up those in their early teens. A small Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) is required at the lower end of the valley for use by residents of parcels 1, 2 and 4. Locals Areas for Play (LAPs) should also be provided throughout the site in appropriate locations.
In line with the objectives set out in Section 4, children's play areas should be located to:

- Protect the nature conservation interest within the site;
- Ensure easy access via safe, legible and connected pedestrian and cycle routes; and
- Allow existing and future residents to benefit.

In order to meet the remaining outdoor sports requirements and ensure there is a wide range of facilities provided by the reserve sites, there is a requirement that the Gomm Valley and Ashwells site provides a bowls green and tennis courts. However, given the nature of the site, and the need to maximise housing delivery on land suitable for housing, these facilities could be provided off-site through appropriate contributions.