

LAND WEST OF BLOXHAM ROAD

Creating a new sustainable neighbourhood
for Banbury

Design and Access Statement

Land West of Bloxham Road



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1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany an outline planning application submitted by Mr M Horgan and Barwood Strategic Land II LLP (Barwood) for the development of up to 400 new homes, public open space and associated infrastructure on land west of Bloxham Road on Banbury's southern edge (see Figure 1.1).

As part of the process leading up to the planning application, an iterative process has been carried out to refine the design of the proposals through testing against technical and design criteria. This design and access statement accompanies the planning application and associated documents and seeks to describe the design process, including illustrative material.

1.1 Statement of purpose

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) accompanies the submission of an outline planning application for residential development. The planning application reserves all matters except access for future considerations.

The Design and Access Statement also sets out clearly the detailed methodology behind the final scheme, in particular demonstrating its commitment to high quality design, place making and access for all.

The requirement for the preparation and content of Design and Access Statements is set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended). CABE's 'Design and access statements – How to write, read and use them' has also been used to inform the DAS. The recent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the importance of good design and its relevance in determining planning applications. The design and layout for the site reflects on best practice guidance and the guidance contained within NPPF relating to layout, conserving natural and historic areas and supporting rural economies.

The proposals have been the subject of pre-application discussions with officers from Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The proposals have also been subject to local consultation, as set out in this document and in more detail in the accompanying Statement of Community Engagement.



1.2 Design approach

This document explains how the characteristics of the scheme have been informed by a methodical process as follows:

- **Assessment:** a consideration of the full context including physical, social and economic characteristics of the site and surroundings, as well as national and local planning policies;
- **Evaluation:** a demonstration of how information, from engagement with local residents and other consultees, has been evaluated to inform the development of the scheme; and
- **Design:** identifying and explaining the use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance of the scheme.

1.3 Background

Banbury, along with Bicester, is one of the two most sustainable settlements in Cherwell District. As such, the emerging Local Plan seeks to allocate most new development to Banbury and Bicester. Whilst this site is not currently allocated for development, at the opening of the Local Plan examination in early June 2014 the Inspector concluded after the first two days that the Council should seek to allocate more land for development. This is on the basis of a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in May 2014, which indicates a much higher need for housing than the Council had previously planned for. The Inspector confirmed in his letter of 9 June that the Council considers the increase in new housing to be achievable without significant changes to its current strategy, vision and objectives, i.e. the delivery of the majority of development in the two most sustainable settlements of Banbury and Bicester. This site was considered by the Council in 2008 when it considered 'reasonable alternatives for Growth' in the District. It concluded that the site (BAN5A) was capable of accommodating up to 400 homes. The assessment, evaluation and outline design of the proposals have also been informed by various technical assessments carried out by specialist consultants. This document should be read in conjunction with the:

- Planning Statement – Savills
- Statement of Community Involvement – Savills
- Transport Assessment – PBA
- Travel Plan – PBA
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy – PBA
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - EDP
- Arboricultural Assessment – EDP
- Ecological Assessment – EDP
- Archaeological Assessment – EDP



Figure 1.1 Site boundary

2. Assessment








2.1 Planning policy

The planning policy context has been detailed in the Planning Statement accompanying this application. In summary, Cherwell District Council only has sufficient land supply for 3.4 years. This is equivalent to a current shortfall of more than 2,844 homes below the required 5-year land supply.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Paragraph 49, specifies that in relation to decision taking where there is a lack of land supply that, 'housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of developable housing sites'. This application seeks to address the shortfall by providing new homes in a sustainable location adjacent to Banbury.

The strategy to assist in delivering housing for Cherwell on the edge of Banbury, in a sustainable location that has already been assessed by the Council as a 'reasonable alternative for growth' is wholly in accordance with the Council's own spatial strategy, which directs most new development towards Banbury and Bicester.



-  Banbury urban area
-  Banbury town centre
-  Road network
-  River Cherwell
-  Oxford canal
-  Banbury train station
-  Proposed site

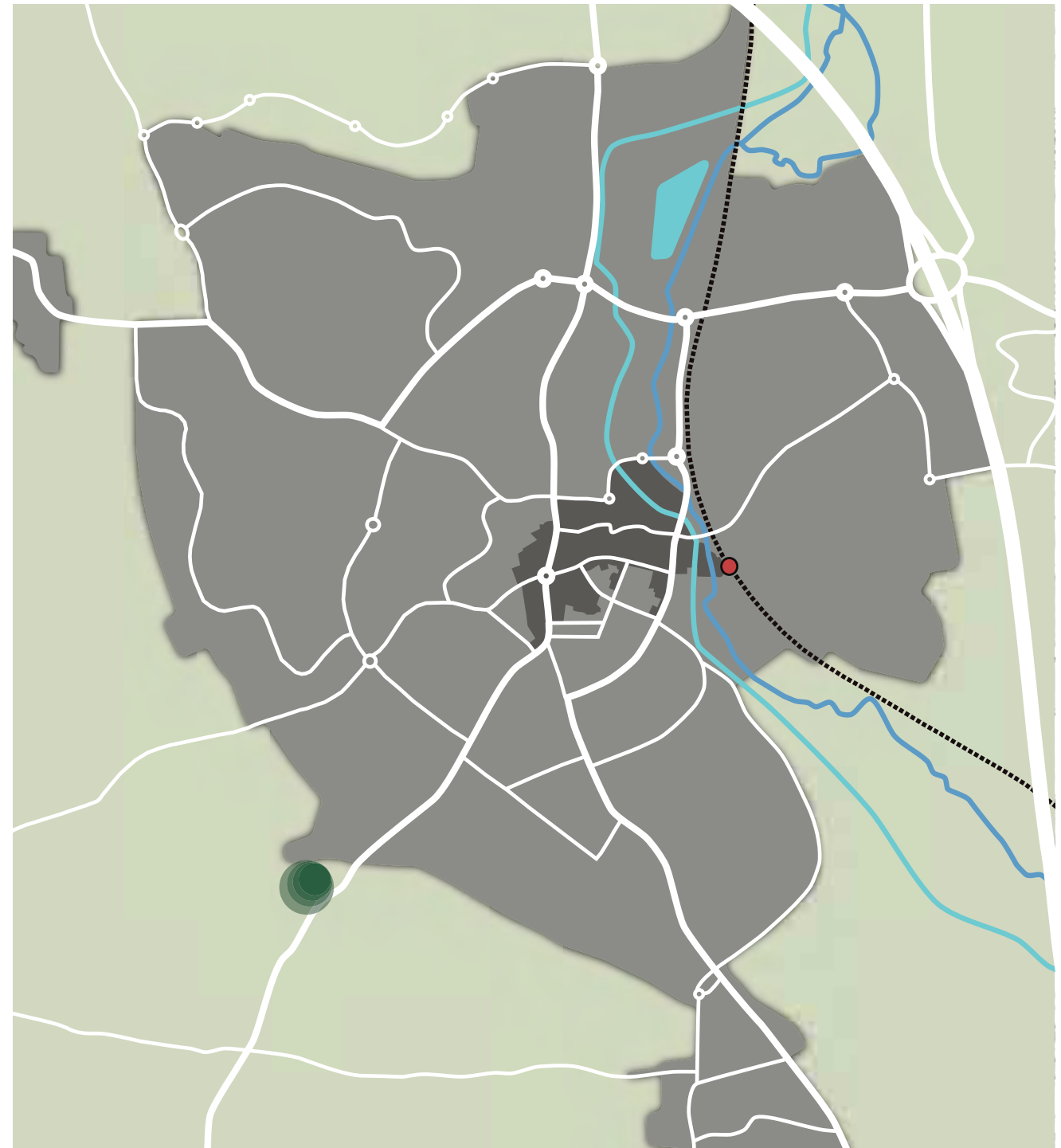


Figure 2.1 Strategic location



Figure 2.2 Historic growth of Banbury



2.2 Banbury - history and growth

Banbury grew as a market town in the Middle Ages with the focus of activity centred around Market Place.

The Oxford Canal opened in March 1778. In 1787 the canal was extended southwards, finally reaching Oxford and the Thames in January 1790. Railways arrived in Banbury in 1850, initially connecting the town to Oxford, although services were soon expanded as the town grew. The town became more compact at its core before beginning to grow outwards (Figure 2.2, panel 1).

By 1923 the town had expanded east to provide new employment uses around the canal and a new neighbourhood east of the railway line. Subsequent development up to 1955 (Figure 2.2 panel 3) delivered the initial stages of new neighbourhoods east, south and west of the town at Grimsbury, Neithrop and Easington. These areas continued to expand with post-war growth between 1955 and the 1980s (see Figure 2.2 panel 4). Banbury saw continued economic and population growth during the latter half of the twentieth century, in part due to the construction and later expansion of the M40 motorway linking up London and Birmingham. Banbury also experienced major retail redevelopment during this period with the construction of Castle Quay shopping centre in the 1990s, and infill development at Calthorpe (Figure 2.2 panel 5).

Today, the local economy is focused on manufacturing, distribution, service industries, local government and health. Main employers in the area are Kraft and the Horton General Hospital. Banbury is a significant commercial and retail centre for the surrounding rural area, and is the largest of Cherwell's two towns (the other being Bicester).

There has been little growth at the south / southwest of the town for the last 15-20 years (see Figure 2.2 panels 5-6). One of the more recent housing schemes in this period is Waller Drive, just to the north of the proposed

site. More recently, outline planning consent was granted in 2013 for up to 145 dwellings (ref: 12/00080/OUT) on land to the east of the site beyond Bloxham Road (see Figure 2.2 panel 6).

Figure 2.2 shows that the historic focus for growth at the southern half of the town has been to the west and southeast (along the Oxford Road). The growth pattern shows that areas to the south west currently provide the best proximity to the town centre, with access along Broughton Road or the Bloxham Road into the town.



Figure 2.3 Oxford Canal



Figure 2.4 Bloxham Road



Figure 2.5 Waller Drive

2.3 Local area assessment

Land uses

Located on the south-west edge of Banbury, the site is adjacent to Bloxham Road, with the Salt Way / National Cycle Route 5 running along its northern boundary and Waller Drive residential estate and Crouch Hill just beyond. To the south and west of the site the land opens up to farmland and countryside, with the listed Crouch Farm house to the south west and Crouch Cottages to the south east. The eastern edge of the site is bounded by the Bloxham Road, with a consented residential development for up to 145 dwellings (12/00080/OUT) located on the eastern side of the road.

The site comprises one large arable field and two smaller fields separated by hedges with a small number of hedgerow trees, and an east to west tree-lined track leading to Crouch Farm from Bloxham Road. Within the site there are two small copses along the southern boundary and along Bloxham Road, and a small pond to the south of the site.

Accessibility

Accessibility is concerned with the ability by which people can reach different locations and facilities by different travel modes. The location of the proposed development site provides good access to key services (food retail, health, employment and education) within a reasonable travel time by sustainable modes of transport. The site is 290m walk away from an hourly bus services that runs along Bloxham Road, as well as a regular bus services on Bryon Road just a 350m walk to the north along a dedicated footpath. Banbury town centre can be easily accessed by means of the passing public transport services as well as on foot and by cycling (Figure 2.6).

Connectivity and movement network

A transport assessment which accompanies this document was carried out by Peter Brett associates LLP (PBA) to assess the sustainability of the site and the likely traffic impact of the proposed development. The report confirms that the site is situated in a sustainable location with basic facilities within easy walking distance.

Wider Connections

The site is approximately 2.5km south west of Banbury town centre, with the villages of Broughton, Bloxham and Bodicote between 2km to 3km away from the site. The road network in and surrounding Banbury provides good connections to the local and strategic road network, with a direct link to J11 of the M40 via the A422, and Bloxham Road (A361) providing a connections to Chipping Norton and Oxford via the A44. The M40 provides connections to Leamington Spa, and the West Midlands to the north. To the south, the M40 provides connection to Heathrow and Gatwick airports via the M25.

The site provides excellent cycle connection to the wider area via the NCN Route 5 (Salt Way), which is located along the northern boundary of the site. NCN Route 5 provides an extensive route between Reading and Holyhead. Banbury train station located approximately 2.5km from the site, and provides a regular connections to Leamington Spa, Birmingham and Manchester to the north and Oxford, Bicester and London to the south.

Education

The site sits close to a number of local schools. The nearest primary school is Queensway Primary School on Brantwood Rise, 800m to the north of the site. The nearest secondary school is Banbury School, which sits 500m to the north east of the development site, and is directly accessible by foot or bike via the Salt Way public right of way. Next door to this school, to the east, there is also Blessed George Napier Catholic School. Advice from the Oxfordshire County Council, indicates that provision can be made at local schools to accommodate any additional requirements arising from the development.

Other Facilities

Banbury's Horton General Hospital is located in the local area, around 1.4km to the northeast of the site. Fosco Private Hospital and Hightown Surgery are also situated off Hightown Road, offering nearby health care services for the proposed development site. The site is located in good reach of a number of local open spaces. Browning Road Park and play area lies around 370m north of the site and Easington Allotments can be found just over 800m away behind Springfield Avenue. Slightly further from













the proposed development site there is also Easington Park (just north of the allotments). Horton View Sports Ground offers recreational facilities just over 1km from the site with tennis, cricket, bowls and football facilities available to hire.

The site is also well placed to take advantage of open countryside to the south of the town, with cycleways, bridleways and footpaths providing a choice of recreational routes.

Banbury town centre lies just over 1.6km from the site and can be easily reached travelling along Bloxham Road. The town centre offers a number of local community and civic services as well as leisure facilities and a wide choice of high street shopping. Closer to the proposed development site, there is a small parade of local shops on Mewburn Road (including a medium sized Co-Op store, which is within about 15 minutes walk from the site. Shops are also located on Horton View which includes a Post Office. There is a large supermarket (Sainsburys) off Oxford Road, which is 1.5km from the site. The public right of way and National Cycle Route 5 running along Salt Way and then up to Oxford Road provides good pedestrian/ cycle access to the store, which can also easily be reached by car or public transport.

As demonstrated above, a significant number of local services and facilities are available within 2 kilometres of the proposed development site, and are therefore easily accessible by walking and cycling. Future residents will not be reliant on the private car to access these everyday services and facilities.



-  Development site
-  Urban area
-  Consented residential development
-  Banbury town centre
-  Railway
-  Oxford Canal and River Cherwell
-  Schools
-  Health services
-  Supermarket/ local shops
-  Leisure
-  High frequency bus route
-  Hourly bus route

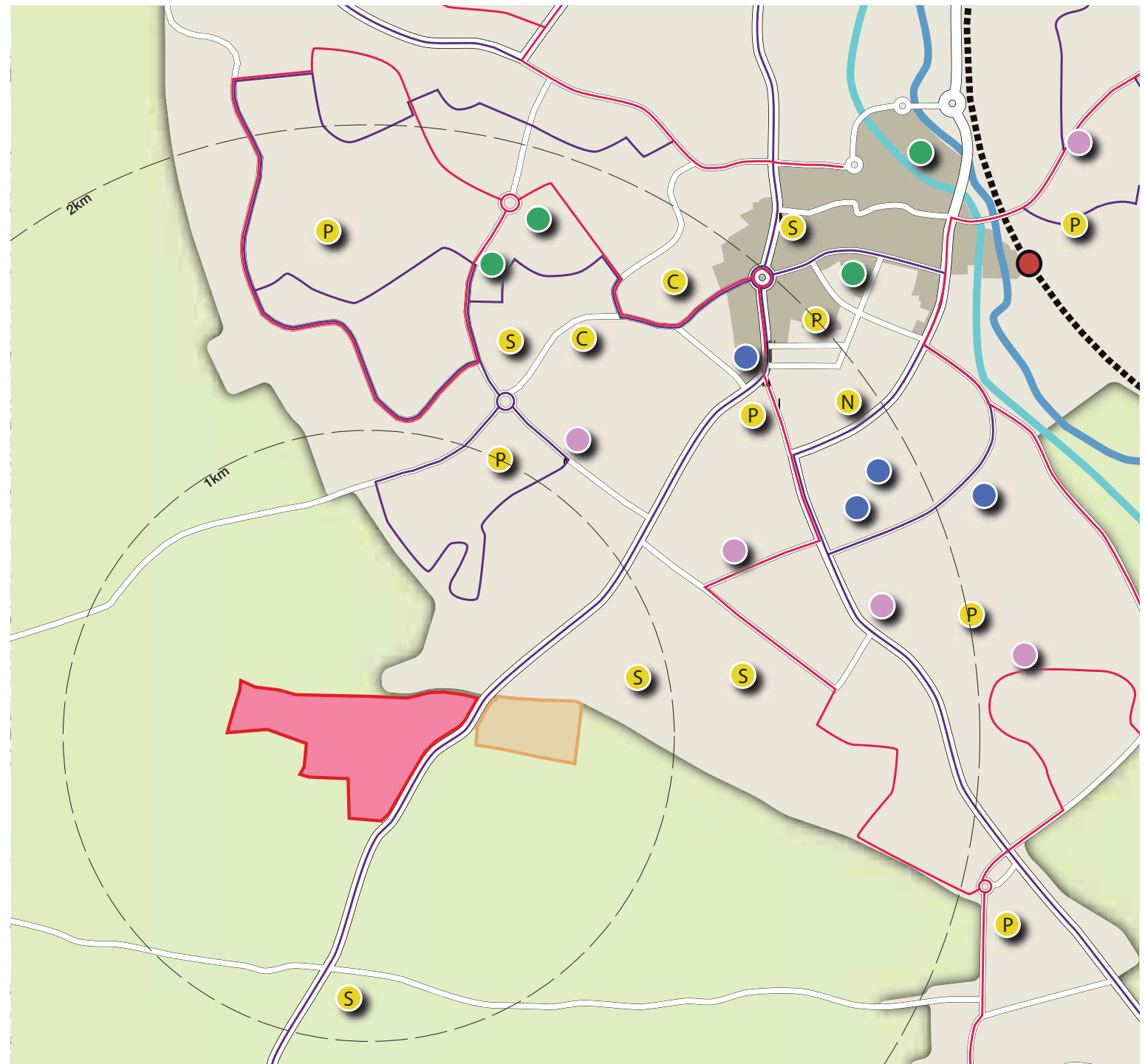


Figure 2.6 Site location and surrounding uses

2.4 Salt Way

Salt Way forms part of National Cycle Route 5 which runs along the northern edge of the development site. The heritage report that accompanies the planning application provides details of the historic role that this route could have played. However, similar to much of the historic network of routes across the country that now form the basis for our modern highway and byway system, Salt Way is now a cycleway and pedestrian link in the local area.

The character of Salt Way varies considerably in different geographic locations and as it passes through Banbury. At Bodicote, the route has been completely terminated. To the west of the site (photo 1) the route remains relatively enclosed with vegetation and trees either side. The proposals would respect this enclosure with development set back from the cycle route / byway. The proposals also provide an opportunity to improve the point at which the route crosses Bloxham Road (photo 3).

Further to the east of the site (photo 4), views from Salt Way to the south will change slightly as consented development is built out to the south of the track. To the east of the new development site, glimpsed views can be seen from Salt Way through to buildings associated with Banbury School (photo 5). Continuing east past the school, the route opens up to the north and south (photo 6). At this location, existing development is in much closer proximity to the cycle route providing some overlooking, and estate roads link in to the path, which has a bonded pea-grit surface at this point.

This analysis shows that there is no coherent overall character to Salt Way. The development proposed to the south of Salt Way would reflect development to the north in this location, with a similar setback from the byway and retention of associated trees and hedges.

The importance of Salt Way, and its use as a sustainable link was examined at great length at the appeal that was held regarding land east of Bloxham Road. The Secretary of State concluded that *'although Salt Way has some importance as a heritage asset both in its own rights and as part of its setting, the actual physical effect of the proposed development would be limited'*.



Figure 2.7 Photographs of Salt Way



Figure 2.8 Photograph locations along Salt Way

2.5 Character areas

An analysis of the surrounding areas has been undertaken to assist in the design of a distinctive high quality development that recognises the character of the surrounding residential development in Banbury.

The analysis will be used to help ensure that the development forms an appropriate and rich addition to Banbury as well as responding appropriately to its residential neighbourhoods and the character of nearby settlement areas.

Aspects of built form that can inform or contribute to local distinctiveness include distinct housing types, boundary treatments, roof slopes, window types and gardens as well as materials. The structure and form of developments at the scale of the street and block is also important. The key locally distinctive features that are highlighted from the analysis carried out will be applied to the proposals to ensure that the development integrates into character of Banbury and North Oxfordshire.

Waller Drive

density: 16 dwellings per hectare

One of the most recent developments in the local area is Waller Drive. Large detached dwellings are arranged in a series of cul-de-sacs, set back behind open front gardens. Parking is provided in garages and on driveways. Kerbs are low and there is variation in carriageway materials. Private access roads position a number of dwellings facing Salt Way, but mature trees and hedges substantially filter any views.



Lansdown Close

density: 15 dwellings per hectare

Closest to the site is the cul-de-sac development of Lansdown Close consisting of large, red brick, detached houses. Parking is provided in garages, integral garages and on front driveways. Landscaping and areas of shared space help soften the impact of vehicles. A number of rear gardens back onto pathways / cycleways where plot boundaries are distinguished with fences and incomplete hedge line.

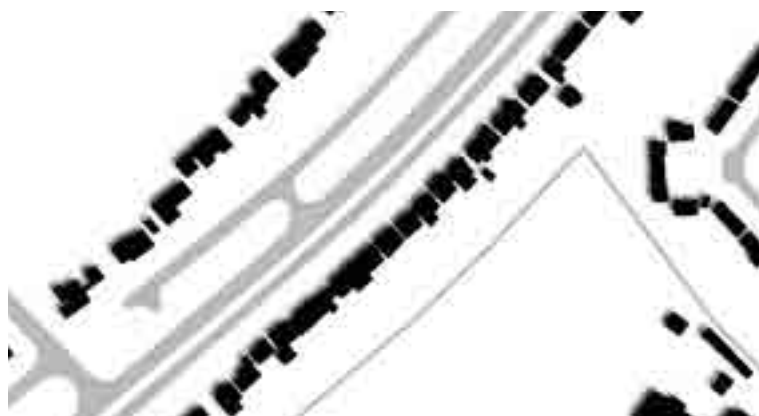




Bloxham Road

density: 4 / 17 dwellings per hectare north / south of Bloxham Road

Bloxham Road, running north from the site, is a broad tree-lined avenue into Banbury. Very large, detached houses line the western edge, whilst the eastern side is characterised by semi-detached houses with a common building line. Both edges are set back behind secondary access roads so that properties do not directly front or access the A361.



Springfield Avenue

density: 24 dwellings per hectare

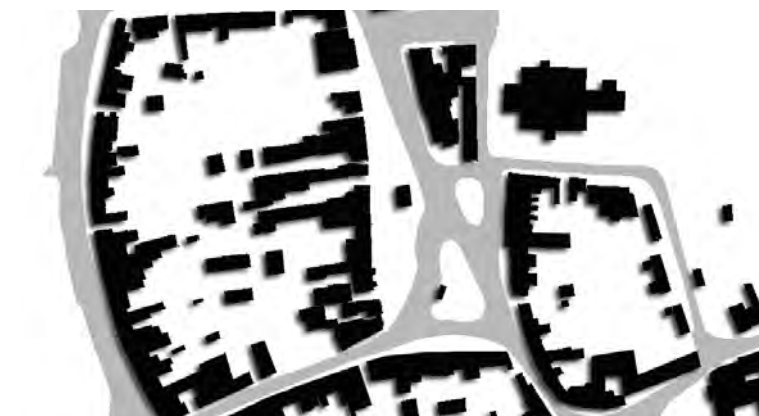
Springfield Avenue north of Banbury School is a further tree-lined avenue with a verge and footpath either side, and rows of terraces and semi-detached houses creating a strong building line. Parking is provided in front driveways and on-street.



Deddington, High Street and Hudson Street

density: xx dwellings per hectare

Deddington a village is around 7.5km to the southeast of the site, and includes a rich variety of architectural detailing, materials, building style and roofline. High and Hudson Streets are fronted predominantly by two and half and three storey dwellings, with the village green defined by three storey units and a strong built edge. The village mostly consisting of ironstone terraced cottages with some brick and rendered frontages, sitting close to the street edge with little or no front gardens. Parking is mostly provided informally on-street, or in a small number of rear courtyards.



2.6 Site analysis

Site character

The development site covers 18.3ha of arable farmland towards the south of Banbury and is relatively featureless and free from constraints. A row of overhead lines runs across the western part of the site but these are low voltage and can be moved or buried underground during construction. The land gently slopes away to the southeastern corner of the site.

National cycle route 5 runs along the northern edge of the site, and beyond this is residential land use (to the eastern part of the site) and open space (to the western part of the site). Existing properties in Waller Drive back onto Salt Way, with plot boundaries defined by fences. A number of informal breaks in the hedge allow access to Salt Way. To the northwest of the site, open space with public footpaths extend up towards Crouch Hill.

Agricultural farmland extends to the south and west of the site.

Access and movement

The site is adjacent to Bloxham Road which provide strategic route from which the site can access wider services and facilities available in Banbury.

Local vehicle movement

The A361 Bloxham Road forms the eastern boundary to the site and it is from here that vehicle access to the site can be provided, with potential for additional pedestrian / cycle links to Salt Way. Bloxham Road provides a direct link into Banbury town centre.

The number 488 and 489 services run along this road and there are bus stops around 200m away from the centre of the site (just north of the site on Bloxham Road, see Figure 2.9, opposite). Traffic studies set out in detail in the Transport Assessment accompanying this application show that the with appropriate highways works at the Springfield Avenue and Queensway junctions, together with travel planning measures, impacts on traffic levels will be acceptable.

Pedestrian / cycle movement

National cycle route 5 is a key pedestrian link and cycleway in the local

area. The site is therefore well placed to take advantage of this route, as well as other nearby footpaths, public rights of way and cycleways which are connected to this local network and provide a choice of access links and recreational routes.

Transport assessment

The southwest of Banbury is one of the most accessible and well located options for future housing needs in Banbury. The transport report accompanying the application highlights the key benefits of the proposed development site's location, which is closer to the town centre and other local amenities than alternative edge of town options.

New development on land west of Bloxham Road is well positioned to encourage a shift towards sustainable modes of travel due to:

- the proximity and accessibility of local services and facilities including nearby schools, local shops, a supermarket and hospital all within walking distance;
- ease of access to Banbury town centre via the A361 Bloxham Road which provides a direct link for all modes of travel and runs along the western edge of the site;
- regular bus services and conveniently positioned bus stops along Bloxham Road where the number 488/489 bus can reach the town centre in 10 minutes; and
- National cycle route 5 running along the northern edge of the site linking Bloxham Road with Broughton Road to the west and Bloxham Road to Bodicote in the east.

Landscape and visual appraisal

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was carried out by EDP in April 2014 in order to identify the significance, in landscape terms, of any new development. The report shows that the site is relatively well contained and visually unobtrusive, and development would not have any significant visual impact.

Key findings from the assessment were:

- the site is screened from Bloxham Road by adjacent hedgerow trees, which limits the impacts of development;
- hedge lines along the southern and western boundaries

contribute further to the visual containment of the site;

- national cycle route 5 experiences strong urban and rural characteristics as it passes through the local area, with no definable, consistent feature of the route. Views into the site from this route are filtered due to existing vegetation; and
- 1km to the south of the site, a sharp change in topography and a permanent road (Wykham Lane) prevents long distance views of the site.

Ecology

An Ecological Appraisal was carried out early in the design process in order to inform the development proposals. The site is predominantly comprised of intensively cultivated arable fields of negligible intrinsic value. A number of more valuable habitats are located on the field boundaries, namely woodland, mature trees and species-rich hedgerows, and habitats with potential for enhancement such as species-poor semi-improved grassland and a neglected field pond.

Detailed ecological investigations in respect of hedgerows, great crested newts, bats, birds, reptiles and dormice were conducted during 2013. The work carried out highlighted that no great crested newts were recorded on-site, but there was limited bat, dormouse and reptile activity along the northern boundary along Salt Way. The Salt Way, classified as a Proposed Local Wildlife Site (p-LWS) is the only pertinent designated feature within close proximity to the site. The studies carried out highlight that no significant ecological effects are anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

It is important that development proposals retain these significant hedgerows, trees and pond and incorporate additional planting of native tree /plant species appropriate to the local area. This will help strengthen green corridors across the site and out to the wider countryside, allow wildlife to move through the area and improve nature conservation and habitat creation. The development proposals offer a significant opportunity to enhance the currently limited ecology related to the site.



- Development site
- Urban area
- Consented residential development
- Countryside/ farmland
- Open space
- Schools
- Hospital
- Supermarket
- Local shops
- Number 488/489 bus route
- Bus stops
- Footpaths
- Sustrans cycleway - national route 5
- Existing trees and hedges
- Overhead lines

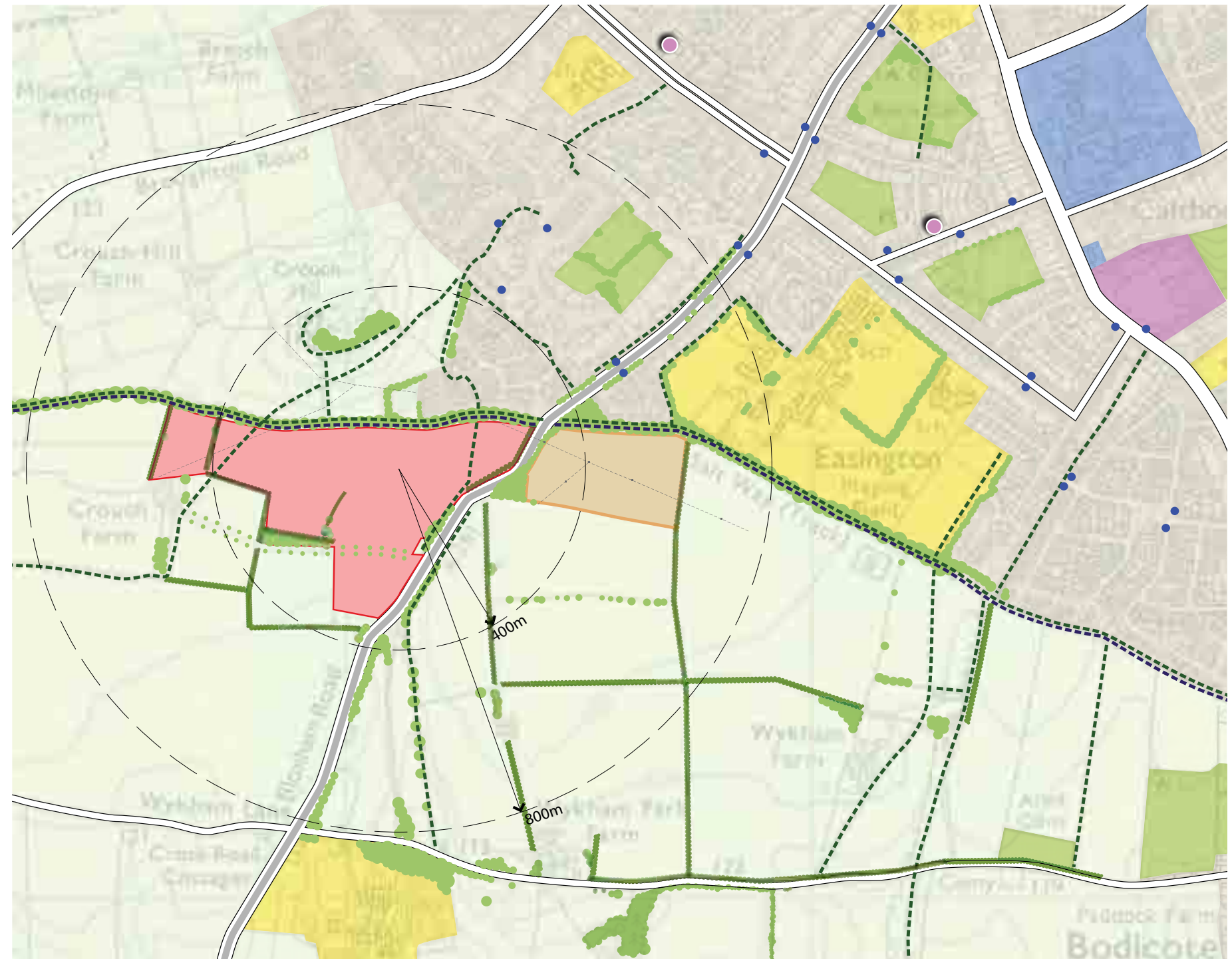


Figure 2.9 Site analysis

Archaeology

In accordance with national and local planning policy and guidance, the site has been subject to a phased programme of archaeological investigation in consultation with Cherwell District Council's specialist historic environment advisor (Oxfordshire County Council). Details of these assessments are set out in the report accompanying the planning application.

The archeological assessment brings together evidence from a review of previously identified heritage information, a site walkover and a geophysical survey, in order to define the significance of any heritage assets within the application site.

The application site does not contain any designated heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens. The Grade II listed Crouch farmhouse is located circa 75 metres west-south west of the site boundary. The report concludes that the listed farmhouse will remain physically unaffected by the completion of the proposed development, with limited impact on its setting in the wider landscape. Nevertheless, the illustrative masterplan identifies the area to the north and east of the listed farm house as informal open space and proposes additional planting that would protect and enhance the setting of the listed Crouch farmhouse.

The geophysical work identified a potential iron age enclosure and ditched trackway adjacent to the north-west corner of the site. This area is proposed to remain free from development in the illustrative masterplan, and these features will therefore be preserved in situ.

The development of the site would result in the retention and preservation of the most important historic landscape resources within or adjoining the application site. These include the ridge and furrow earthworks and field boundaries to the south and east, as well as the east-west course of Salt Way in the far north, where the former will be retained as undeveloped open space in the proposed illustrative layout and the flanking trees and vegetation of the Salt Way will be maintained through the setting back the built edge in the proposed layout (together with additional planting where appropriate).

Flooding and drainage

A Flood Risk Assessment was carried out by PBA in 2014 in order to identify the flood risk to any new development. The report shows that the site is not within a designated flood plain and is not at risk from groundwater flooding. The development of this site though would give rise to an increase in the impermeable area of the site and a corresponding increase in the rate and volume of surface water run-off.

The SUDS strategy for 'surface' water drainage would be based on a of multi-purpose attenuation pond used to store water, draining to the large areas of open space at the southeast of the site. To incorporate this into the proposed development, surface water storage is included as part of public open space. Such a design is consistent with best practice advised by the Environment Agency. It also meets with advice from ecological consultants who suggest that SUDS be considered part of the landscape structure of the site to help benefit nature conservation and diversify habitats.

Conclusion

The issues examined above lead to a series of site considerations, shown in Figure 2.12 on page 18 as constraints and opportunities. Overall, the site is relatively unconstrained, but provides a number of opportunities for good linkages to Salt Way, countryside, Banbury town centre and the facilities provided in adjacent areas. Good opportunities also exist to enhance the currently limited wildlife habitats related to the site.



1



2



3



4



5

1: Arable field

4: Boundary woodland

2: Drainage ditch

5: Crouch Hill

3: Public right of way

Figure 2.10 Site analysis photographs

2.8 Opportunities and constraints

The technical studies and analysis work carried out have allowed a detailed assessment of the site to be made, including the potential opportunities and constraints that inform the design of the proposal (see Figure 2.12). These are set out below.

Opportunities

- provision of new homes including a proportion of affordable homes and housing built to the lifetime homes standard;
- good proximity to nearby schools, shops, healthcare and leisure facilities;
- direct access to Banbury town centre from Bloxham Road, which also provides a bus route;
- connections to two access points off Bloxham Road create a primary vehicular loop through the site, and establish a clear character for the development;
- provision of valuable open space in the form of a central green,

play areas, woodland copse, a large country park and informal wildlife area, drainage pond and sports pitches;

- protection and enhancement of the setting of the listed Crouch Farm with new buffer planting around the farm boundary, and location of open space along the northern boundary;
- respectful integration of valuable on-site hedgerows, trees and water features into the design of the development;
- creation of new green corridors across the site to connect on-site features to the wider green network, and enhance biodiversity;
- good visual containment and opportunities to enhance boundary planting;
- improvement of existing footpaths across the site with new planting and natural surveillance provided by respectfully designed layout; and
- links into existing pedestrian and cycle routes, including National Cycle Route 5.

Constraints

- need to consider impacts on existing housing to the north in the design of the proposals;
- good quality trees to be retained wherever possible, particularly adjacent to Salt Way, with additional structural planting established at site boundaries;
- ecologically significant hedgerows need to be retained and enhanced;
- provide on-site solutions to store surface water run off produced by the development;
- setting of the Salt Way needs to be respected and enhanced through the design of the layout of the development;
- setting of the listed Crouch Farm needs to be protected and enhanced, with visual connections to Crouch Hill retained;
- ensure that the proposals are designed to respect views to and from Crouch Hill; and
- archaeological feature of ridge and furrow needed to be preserved and protected from development.



Figure 2.12 View south along existing public right of way


















-  Site boundary
-  Urban area
-  Urban frontage
-  Existing pond
-  Existing trees
-  Existing hedgerows
-  Existing footpaths
-  Possible pedestrian access
-  Vehicle access
-  Vehicle access to approved development (12/00080/OUT)
-  Approved development (12/00080/OUT)
-  Crouch Hill
-  Gradient
-  Archaeological feature (ridge and furrow)
-  Listed farm house on Crouch farm



Figure 2.12 Opportunities and constraints

3. Evaluation

A number of evaluation exercises were carried out leading up to the preparation of this planning application, including meetings with officers at Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, and a public exhibition event.

This section explains the evaluation process, from the preparation of initial concept sketches (see Figure 3.1), through consultation with officers to the public exhibition event, responses and amendments to the scheme.

3.1 Pre-application consultation

This site was first promoted in 2008 as part of a much wider site as a sustainable location for development. It was reviewed in the 2008 document 'Options for Growth', prepared to inform the Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Map 2 of the Options for Growth document identified the site as BAN5A (see Figure 3.2 opposite), land west of Bloxham Road, recognising that the land was one of the 'reasonable options for major development in Banbury'.

Table 4 on p26 of Cherwell District Council's 'Options for Growth' identified the potential for about 400 homes (albeit an indicative capacity) and states:

Potential on a relatively small area of land west of Bloxham Road and south of Salt Way. Elsewhere, around Crouch Hill and land to the north, the landscape is too sensitive. Land between Bloxham Road and Crouch Farm offers potential for integration with the built-up area and accessibility to the town centre without unacceptable harm to landscape. Treatment of Salt Way needs careful consideration.

Following the publication of the Oxfordshire SHMA in March 2014, which set out an increase in the requirement for homes in Cherwell District, the site was reviewed in conjunction with the constraints information gathered over the last year, to determine how development could be brought forwards on this site. Following a masterplan workshop with technical consultants, the development concept shown in Figure 3.1 was proposed.

This development concept was subsequently transformed through more detailed work relating to highways access, street hierarchy and consideration of landscape, into a development framework (Figure 3.2).



This framework was presented to Cherwell District Council as part of a formal pre-application process in early May, with pre-application meetings on 6 May and 14 May 2014.

Initial feedback from District and County Council officers and statutory consultees was received from the Council as part of the pre-application process, and has been addressed in the development of the outline masterplan. Key issues raised were: -














- the principle of the two key access points is acceptable subject

to Road Safety Audits;

- a number of rights of way need to be considered, and included in the development proposals where necessary;
- development should be a sufficient distance from the wooded copse to the south of the site to avoid significant shading of properties;
- existing trees, and in particular trees under Tree Protection Orders should be retained throughout the site;
- consideration should be given to the existing hedgerow structure which should be integrated into the proposals

wherever possible;

- the relationship of development with Crouch Cottages should be carefully considered;
- careful consideration should be given to the setting of Salt Way;
- the setting of the farmhouse and ridge and furrow land should be considered;
- topography and the relationship of the site to Crouch Hill and the edge of Banbury needs to be considered.

 Existing urban area	 Footpaths	 Natural open space	 Proposed public open space	 Existing and proposed planting
 Proposed residential area	 Green corridors	 Protect setting to listed building at Crouch Farm	 Proposed urban area	 Proposed vehicle access points
 Proposed vehicle access points/ primary loop	 Public open space	 Listed building		

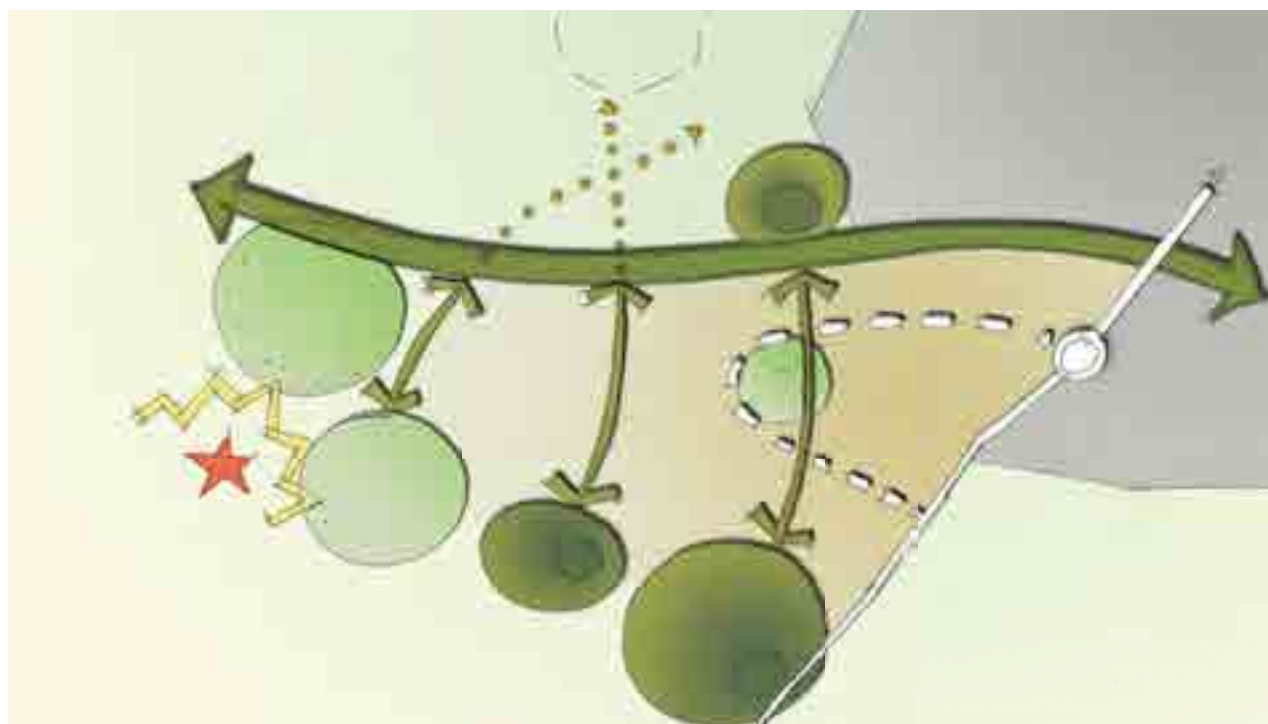


Figure 3.1 Illustrative concept



Figure 3.2 Illustrative framework

3.2 Consultation

Full details of public consultation can be found in the separate Statement of Community Involvement submitted with the planning application. However, the main points are outlined here.

A public exhibition was held at Queensway School, located to the north of the site on Thursday 5th June 2014. The event was preceded by an advertisement in the local press (Banbury Guardian) and a leaflet drop to around 160 houses in the local area near to the proposed development site including Waller Drive, Lansdown Close and Bloxham Road (see Figure 3.3).

The exhibition included a series of large display boards (Figure 3.2) showing details of the site and the key issues identified through initial studies and sketches. The boards also explained how these issues were proposed to be addressed and showed an illustrative layout for the site.

Members of the technical design team were available to respond to queries throughout the exhibition and visitors were encouraged to fill in and return questionnaires.

The exhibition had a turnout of around 80 attendees which included local residents and people who work in the local area. 29 feedback questionnaires were received. Common themes for questions and discussions at the event, and key issues identified from the questionnaire responses included:

- wrong location for development with employment to the north;
- traffic congestion on Bloxham Road;
- Salt Way is the natural boundary to Banbury;
- capacity of local schools and local infrastructure; and
- drainage of the site.

The issues raised by local residents have been carefully considered and are addressed below and in accompanying reports.

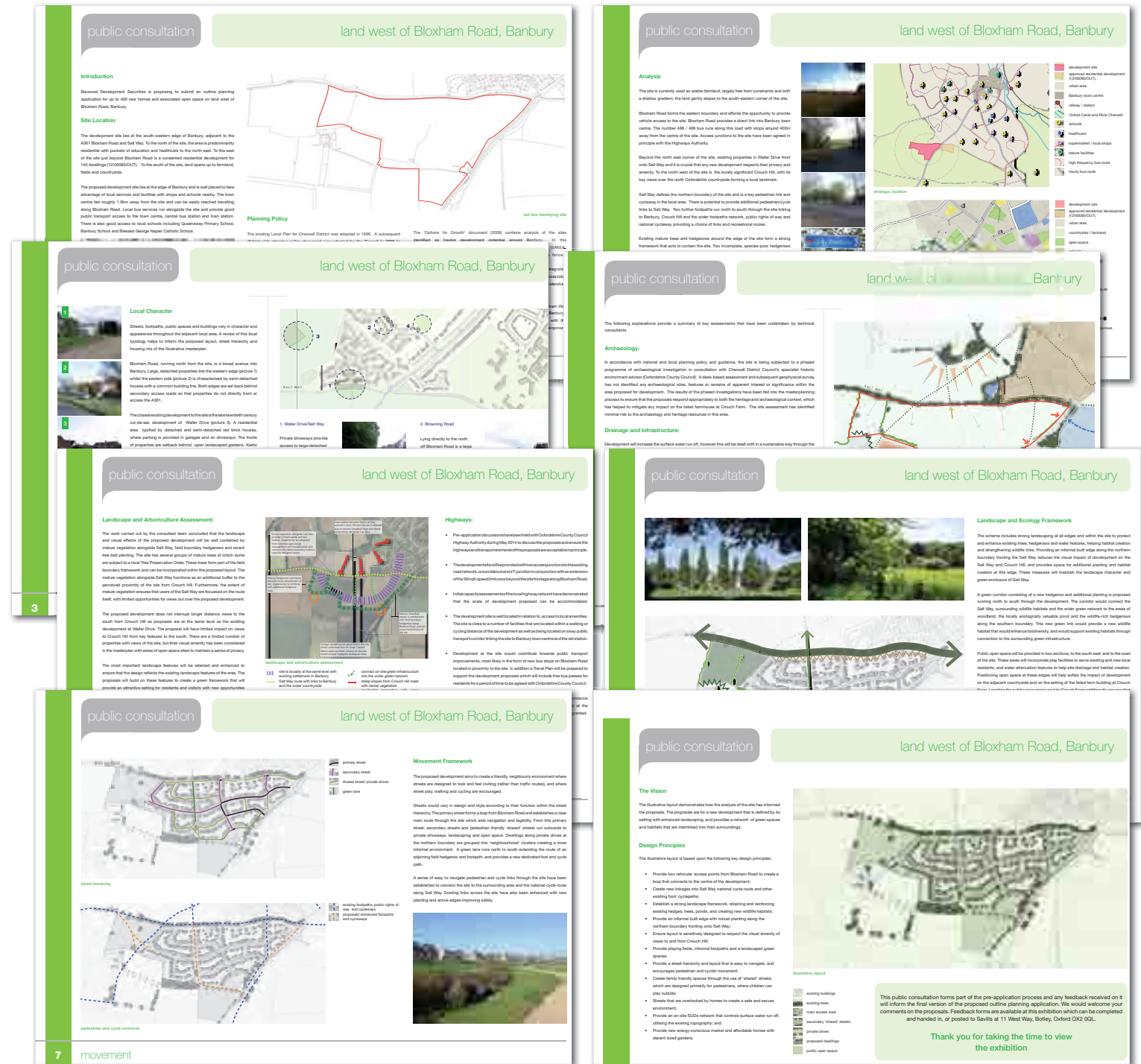


Figure 3.3 Public consultation boards



3.3 Design response

Following the consultation event and pre-application advice, the issues raised were considered by the design team. Further information was also received from technical consultants. In response to this, the layout was amended and a final illustrative masterplan prepared. The key matters were addressed through the following design amendments:

Location of development

There are no undeveloped areas in Banbury outside of the floodplain that are better related to the town centre, as set out in this Design and Access Statement.

Highways, access and traffic

The Highways Authority (Oxfordshire County Council) accepts the strategy in principle for access to the highway. The layout has been designed to allow easy access for pedestrians to existing bus stops, and financial contributions will be made as part of the application towards public transport improvements and for mitigation works. A full Transport Assessment and draft Travel Plan accompanies this application.

Salt Way

Development has already been permitted to the south of Salt Way. Oxford canal in the centre of Banbury, and the former Mineral Railway Line (now a green corridor) to the north of the town are good examples of routes that would also have been considered 'boundaries' before they were integrated into Banbury. They now provide valuable connections. Most new planned developments actively include routes like Salt Way through proposed development areas. Such routes provide important ecological habitats and wildlife routes, and also safe and sustainable ways of accessing wider development areas. Green corridors incorporated into new proposals range in typology from formal to informal, and from 10m in width to some 100m or more.

The approach adopted is to set development away from Salt Way by 15-20m, using cul-de-sac built in to perimeter development blocks to break up development, so that a softer edge is created adjacent to the route, allowing additional planting to be incorporated and reducing the impact of built development on Salt Way. The Inspector who considered the

proposals for development east of Bloxham Road (also south of Salt Way) accepted this approach.

Rights of way

Full consideration has been given to the network of public rights of way and footpath routes in the area. Existing rights of way have been incorporated into the proposals, and new footpaths will be created that form a useful extension to the current network, providing good permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, improving access to the countryside and circular walks. This approach was discussed and agreed with a number of residents at the public consultation event.

Capacity of schools and local infrastructure

Local infrastructure is a very important consideration. The applicant is in discussions with the District and County Council in relation to section 106 payments that will be made so that any impacts on infrastructure such as schools can be mitigated.

Sustainable urban drainage systems

The applicant has considered the drainage of the site in some detail, and has submitted a full flood risk assessment and surface water drainage strategy in conjunction with the outline application. Sustainable drainage systems such as swales and ditches (including existing features) will be used to drain the site to its lowest point in the southeast, adjacent to Bloxham Road. Sufficient area has been allowed in this location so that in heavy rainfall events water will be retained in a large pond before discharging off-site. The rates of surface water discharge from the site will be no greater than existing rates.

Landscape and ecological features

Existing trees, hedgerows and other features have been fully considered in the development of the final masterplan. The proposals seek to retain all existing good quality trees, and retain and enhance existing hedgerows. These features have been incorporated into the conceptual development of the masterplan as set out in the next section of this document. The proposals offer substantial opportunities to improve landscape and ecological habitats through new planting and large areas of open space that will be subject to detailed planting proposals.

Setting of the farmhouse and ridge and furrow

The setting of the farmhouse is most important from the south of the site, where development is not proposed. To the west, open fields / agricultural land associated with the farm is retained. To the east, the ridge and furrow field directly adjacent to the house, which is currently grazing land for cattle, is proposed to be retained in its current use. To the north, intervisibility between the fields adjacent to the farm building and the farm complex itself is limited due to substantial boundary planting. This field is, nevertheless, proposed to be retained as open space, retaining the open setting to the north of the farm complex. Detailed landscape proposals in this area could be used to frame views of the listed farm building over the field boundary hedges.

Crouch Cottages

The setting and amenity of Crouch Cottage has been carefully considered in the development of the proposals. In order that development impacts are significantly minimised, landscaped open space is proposed adjacent to these dwellings. This would include (at the detailed design stage) planting that protects the rear garden boundaries from easy access, to ensure that the privacy and security of these gardens remains unaffected.

Topography

The natural slope of the site has informed the drainage proposals, and therefore the disposition of open space, with a natural green amenity area to the southeast of the site forming an area where water is retained in storm events in addition to an area of publicly accessible natural open space.

4. Design

4.1 Design criteria

Following the analysis work and evaluation of initial concepts and proposals, the key design criteria proposed are:

- Locate open space to the west to protect and enhance the setting of the listed Crouch Farm; and to the southeast for use as surface water storage and sports pitches;
- Retain existing trees wherever possible, together with enhancement of existing hedgerows and pond;
- Create strong green corridors linking existing on-site habitats to the Salt Way and wider green network;
- Provide additional tree planting along both existing footpaths to break up the visual impact from views from Crouch Hill;
- Create a central green that is defined by a strong built form to act as the focal point of the development, and reflect the character of North Oxfordshire village greens;
- Establish an informal edge along Salt Way to retain existing trees, enhance wildlife habitats and preserve the character of this route;
- Create access points to Salt Way to maximise opportunities for trips on foot and by bicycle to the surrounding areas;
- Create a primary vehicular loop road that links the two main access points to Bloxham Road, and provides access to all parts of the development;
- Create a clear street hierarchy with character areas related to the street hierarchy, that enable easy navigation through the site;
- Use perimeter development blocks to create a clear distinction between public and private spaces, maximising windows and activity in the public realm, providing natural surveillance;
- Locate higher densities near to the main vehicular loop; and
- Develop a SUDS strategy based on natural overland drainage using temporary storage areas for infrequent very heavy storms.



-  Existing urban area
-  Crouch Farm
-  Proposed public open space
-  Central green
-  Existing and proposed planting
-  Proposed green corridor
-  Proposed vehicle access points
-  Proposed footpath
-  Proposed urban area



Figure 4.1 Illustrative layout

4.2 Use and amount

The illustrative masterplan makes provision for 400 new residential properties together with associated car parking and open space. The homes would be a mix of sizes and types, and include provision for 30% affordable housing, in accordance with locally identified need.

Indicative land use budget

Description	Area (ha)
Residential	12.3
Public open space (including play areas)	5.2
Infrastructure including access road	0.8
Total site area	18.3

Indicative schedule of accommodation

A mix of housing types and tenures will be accommodated within the site. The scheme will include 30% affordable housing with a tenure mix of social rented and intermediate housing in accordance with locally identified need, to be agreed with the council.

Open space

The illustrative housing mix shown in the masterplan would provide a requirement for 4.8 ha open space in accordance with the Council's guidance (BSC 11, Draft Submission Cherwell Local Plan 2006 -2031).

Description	Area (ha)
General green space	2.6
Play space	0.7
Outdoor sports	1.1
Allotments	0.4
Total open space requirement	4.8

The number of dwellings is such that open space should include local areas for play (LAPs), local equipped areas for play (LEAPs) and a neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAP). The detailed provision of these play areas is reserved for future consideration. Nevertheless, the proposed layout could accommodate together the required play equipment in either the western or southern public open space, which are within 400m of the whole site in accordance with accessibility standards.

Car parking

Parking is provided in accordance with the latest guidance from Oxfordshire County Council, adopted by Cherwell District Council for development control purposes. Parking requirements reflect the amount of space required for different types of parking (garages, allocated parking spaces or shared parking).

The illustrative masterplan provides for the required number of parking spaces by policy in a variety of different arrangements including garages, car ports, driveways and on-street parking.

4.3 Layout

A traditional approach to the layout is anticipated, providing ample parking for all homes, and gardens which are of a suitable size. The proposed development aims to create a pedestrian friendly, neighbourly environment where streets are designed to look and feel inviting (rather than traffic routes), and where street play, walking and cycling is encouraged.

Density

The density of surrounding development tends to be low, ranging from 15-28 dwellings per hectare (dph). The proposed average density of 33dph across the site represents a more efficient use of land in this highly sustainable location. Densities will generally become higher around the primary street, locating the largest number of people in closest proximity to the existing and future bus stops / route along Bloxham Road, and to existing foot / cycle paths connecting to Banbury. Variation in densities will also be related to the street hierarchy and associated character of the streets, with lower densities associated with the Crouch and Salt Way lanes, which from the rural boundaries to the site.

Character areas

Distinctive character areas have been designed into the proposed layout to assist in navigation and providing local identity, and relate to the proposed street hierarchy, key landscape features and public space. The proposed character areas identified in Figure 4.3 are described below.

Primary street

Description: this primary tree-lined avenue runs from two access points on Bloxham Road providing a loop into the centre of the development. This would draw from the character of the formal High Streets of the north Oxfordshire villages of Deddington and Adderbury, with a strong built line and a sense of enclosure defining this key route.

Character / plot typology: strong building lines with terraces, a tight plot grain and few gaps in the frontage, formal footpaths and verge with on street and on plot parking, regular tree planting. Building heights of 2.5 and 3 storeys enclosing the space, with architectural significant buildings located at key nodes and apartments located at the entrance points to the site (see Figure 4.2).

Boundary treatment: formal boundaries of low brick walls or brick and railings.

Parking: some on-street parking, with majority of parking on-plot in shared/ allocated spaces in front of dwellings, integrated with landscaping and trees.

Oak avenue

Description: a secondary street leads from the primary avenue to the west of the site, with a vista to the open space framed by two new Oak trees that will act as a key defining feature of the character area. Oak avenue would draw from the character of Springfield Avenue, the tree-lined street to the north of the site, with 5-6m front gardens and footpaths both sides of the carriageway.

Character / plot typology: strong regular building lines consisting semi-detached dwellings with adjoining garages, and few gaps in the frontage, formal footpaths, on and off-street parking, and informal street tree planting. Possible 2.5 storey dwellings at key nodes

Boundary treatment: low brick walls and hedgerows defining plot boundaries

Parking: mainly on-plot to the side of dwellings on driveways and garages/ car ports, with some on-street parking.



Central green

Description: a neighbourhood green providing the central focal point to the development located on the edge of the primary street loop. The central green reflects the character of Deddington and Adderbury village greens, with a strong sense of enclosure, tree lined public space, and development directly fronting onto the space.

Character / plot typology: strong building lines with terraces and semi-detached, a tight plot grain and few gaps in the frontage, formal footpaths with on street and on plot parking, and formal tree planting. Building heights of 2.5 and 3 storeys defining the green, with architectural significant buildings framing the space to reinforce the focal point to the development.

Boundary treatment: dwellings fronting directly onto the public realm, railings, and informal landscaped areas.

Parking: majority on-street parking, with some on-plot parking and rear parking mews.

Green lane

Description: a wide green corridor primarily designed for movement of pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife. Strong linear planting consisting of hedgerows, glass land/ wildflowers. These streets would be designed to encourage interaction between neighbours, for informal play, and for walkers / cyclists.

Character / plot typology: shared surfaces / private drives with a footpath / cycleway based around strong linear planting. More widely spaced plots, with larger rear gardens and planting in the front gardens. Possibility for play equipment.

Boundary treatment: informal front gardens with hedges, planting or informal fences defining boundaries.

Car parking: predominantly garages and driveways on plot, with potential for parking to the rear / side of plots.

Crouch lanes

Description: narrow informal shared streets and private drives with varied building line softening the development edge as it blends into the open countryside. Potential for narrow shared streets with smaller front gardens within the development area, with larger gardens at the development edge.

-  Two storey dwellings
-  Two and half to three storey dwellings
-  Key buildings



Figure 4.2 Building heights and key buildings







-  Primary street
-  Oak avenue
-  Central green
-  Green lane
-  Crouch lanes
-  Salt Way lanes



Figure 4.3 Character areas

Land West of Bloxham Road

Character / plot typology: larger loose-knit dwellings consisting of semi-detached and detached dwellings along the more rural southern edge to the development. The dwellings would be grouped into 'neighbourhood' clusters where appropriate with informal tree planting, and low level street lighting. Dwellings would be predominantly 2-storey.

Boundary treatment: informal front gardens with hedges, planting or informal fences defining boundaries.

Car parking: predominantly garages and driveways on plot.

Salt Way lanes

Description: informal shared streets and private drives / cul-de-sacs providing secluded development that breaks up building frontages adjacent to Salt Way, whilst providing some overlooking. Neighbourhood 'clusters' of dwellings, interspersed with planting and wildlife habitats.

Character / plot typology: Opportunities for tree planting in low-density development pattern, with larger front and rear gardens.

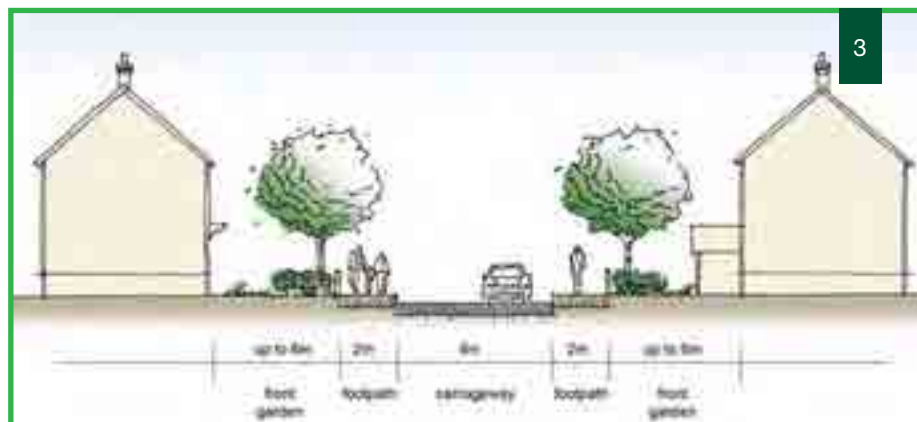
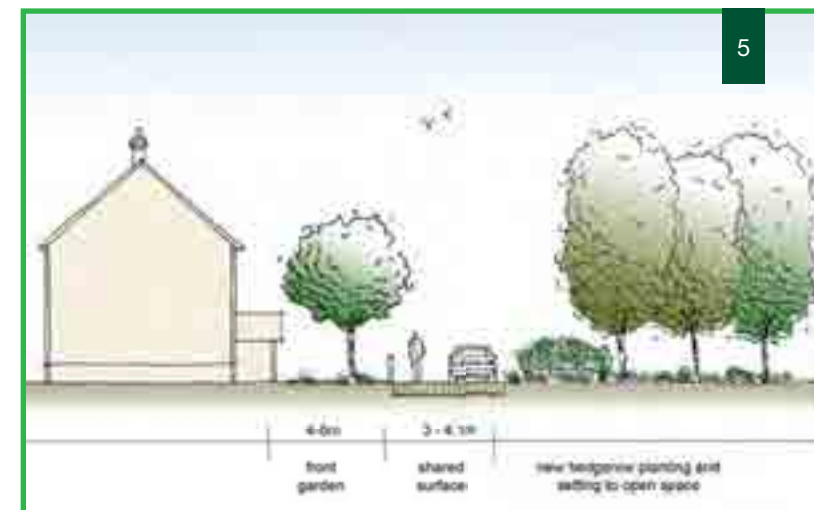
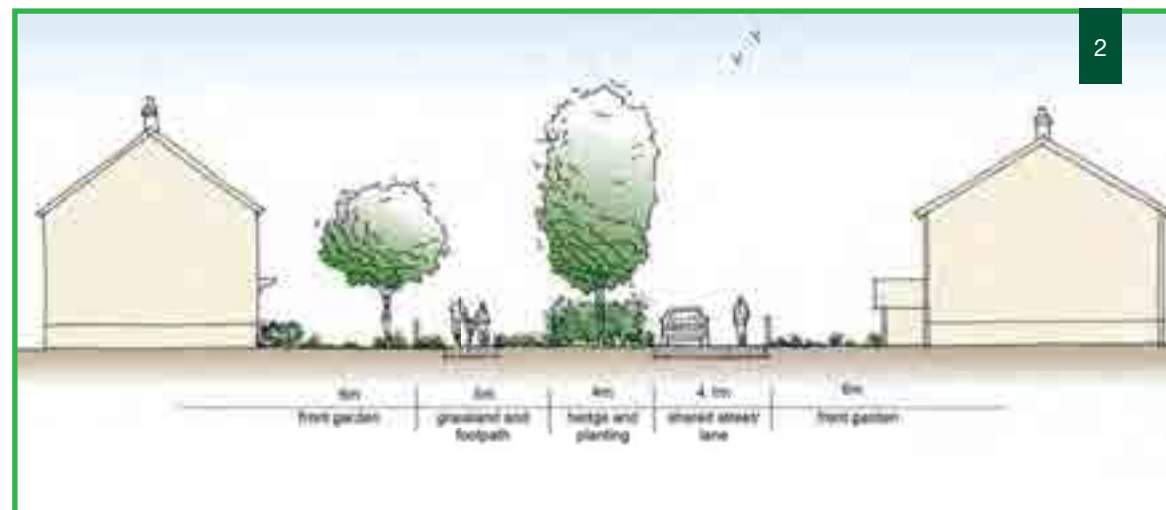
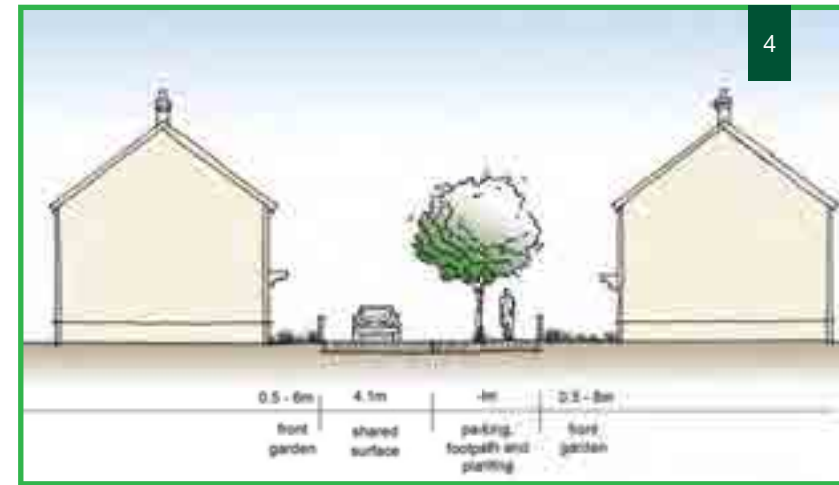
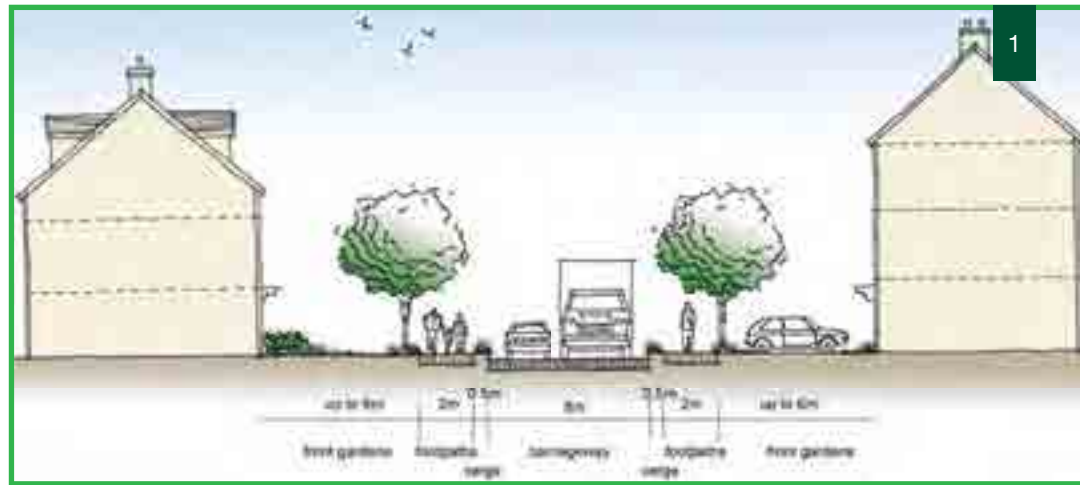
Boundary treatment: informal front gardens with hedges, planting or informal fences defining boundaries.

Car parking: predominantly garages on plot.



Figure 4.4 Street hierarchy





- 1: Primary street
- 2: Green lane
- 3: Secondary street
- 4: Shared streets/ lanes
- 5: Rural edge

Figure 4.5 Illustrative street sections



Appearance

The appearance of this development is a reserved matter, i.e. subject to detailed submissions at a later stage.

The proposals have been designed with a clear street hierarchy and strong character areas in order to assist in creating a development easy to navigate. Architectural detailing and the selection of building materials should be used to help sit the new development comfortably with the character of the surrounding area. For example the materials palette can draw from two distinctive building materials, with North Oxfordshire Ironstone being the traditional building material of the nearby villages of Deddington and Adderbury, and local red and Staffordshire blue brick of Victorian Banbury.

These materials and other locally distinctive material and architectural features (such as distinctive lintels, window features, gables etc) could be utilised with additional attention given to key buildings to aid navigation (see Figure 4.6).

Scale and massing

The general character of the new residential area will be largely 2 storey detached and semi-detached dwellings in keeping with the character of the surrounding areas. The primary streets and the central green could include 2.5 and 3 storey buildings to define the primary street and the central green, and strengthen the character of these key public spaces. Additionally some 2.5 storey buildings could be used to create visual interest and highlight key buildings and focal points; alternatively key buildings could be defined through architectural detailing and materials. Predominantly terraced housing will front onto the primary street in order to provide definition to the entrance, strengthen the sense of arrival upon entering the site and aid legibility.

Dimensions of proposed dwellings are as follows:

- Building width** minimum 5.1m to maximum 12.0m
- Building depth** minimum 5.1m to maximum 14.0m
- Height to eaves** minimum 2.7m to maximum 7.5m

Figure 4.6 Local materials and details

Designing out crime

Dwellings would be arranged in traditional 'perimeter block' style whereby fronts of properties overlook streets and public spaces, and back gardens / rear parking are kept private within the block in order to maximise safety and security. This approach is consistent with the principles established in Secured by Design because it maximises 'active frontages' on the street, providing natural surveillance.

Cycle parking

Provision will need to be made at the detailed stage for cycle parking, generally within the curtilage of dwellings. The provision of 'shared streets', a green street and private drives, which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists will ensure that the street environment is best suited to provision of cycle parking in the residential areas.

Bin storage

Bin storage is an important consideration, as it can easily impact adversely on the street environment. At the detailed stage of design, provision will need to be made for bin storage either at the front of properties, where appearance will be important; or to the rear of properties, where access must be carefully considered.

4.4 Landscape

Open space

Public open space will be provided mainly to the south and west of the site, incorporating play facilities and sports pitches to serve existing and new local residents, and water attenuation features to that will provide site drainage and assist in creating new wildlife habitats. Positioning open space at these edges helps soften the impact of development on the adjacent countryside, and protect the setting of the listed Crouch farmhouse and the visual connection to Crouch Hill.

The scheme includes strong landscaping at all edges which will protect and enhance existing trees and hedgerows, help habitat creation and strengthen wildlife links. Setting development back from Salt Way and an informal built edge provides space for additional planting, and maintains the landscape character and green enclosure of the route, whilst still allowing shared cycle / footpaths to link in at key points to the national cycle route.

The Submission Cherwell Local Plan indicates that a site of this size and capacity should make provision for local areas of play (LAPs), local equipped areas for play (LEAPs) and a neighbourhood equipped area of play (NEAP). The policy requires that LAPs and LEAPs are within 400m for younger children's play areas and NEAPs are accessible within 1,200m. These areas could be provided in a number of locations throughout the scheme, potentially with a central village green, and one or two larger locations (as shown in the illustrative layout), to the west and south allowing children of different ages to play together (in accordance with the Cherwell Green Space Strategy and supported by the principles for designing play outlined in the CABE guidance of October 2008).

Green corridors

The masterplan proposes three green corridors through the site, linking landscape features at the periphery of the site together and forming substantial new opportunities for wildlife corridors. A central green corridor is proposed along the desire line linking the existing footpath to the north of the site with the open space proposed in the southern part of the site. This route also links the northern boundary and Salt Way wildlife corridor

with the existing stand of trees and pond at the south of the site. This corridor is proposed as a wide green route with significant vegetation and tree planting throughout its length, with only low-key vehicular access, and therefore offering a considerable opportunity for habitat creation and enhancement.

An additional new green corridor will be formed to the east of the central corridor. This corridor will link the surface water pond and associated habitats in the space adjacent to Waller Drive at the north of the site with the existing trees and proposed open space and new landscape adjacent to Crouch Cottages and Bloxham Road. In this way, a further wildlife corridor is created linking the Salt Way wildlife corridor to the wildlife corridor formed along the western edge of Bloxham Road.

A further green corridor is proposed to the west of the central corridor along the line of the existing footpath. This route will soften the edge of the development and the boundary with the country park / woodland pasture.

Salt Way

The proposed development to the south of Salt Way will retain the character of the route through the area. This has been achieved through the sensitive design of the illustrative layout to ensure the development will have no physical effect on Salt Way. To protect and enhance the setting of Salt Way, the proposed layout will establish an informal development edge and wide buffer, which will retain existing trees, enhance wildlife habitats and preserve the character of this route. This approach is identical to the approach adopted on the land to the east of Bloxham Road, also adjacent to Salt Way, which now has planning consent.

Crouch farm setting

The setting of the Grade II listed Crouch farmhouse has been considered within the Archaeology and Heritage Assessment. This has established that the focus of the farmhouse is concentrated to the south, where a thin and rectangular parcel of land includes a front lawn, whilst immediately to the north and east are large 20th century agricultural sheds which serve to disconnect the farmhouse from the wider landscape in those directions.

Areas of retained permanent pasture / grazing land are located to

the east and north of the wider farm complex, and so the retention of these open areas, acting in conjunction with the screening effect of the modern agricultural sheds and the proposed buffer planting and existing hedgerows, would provide an appropriate degree of spatial, visual and aesthetic separation between the farm and the proposed development further east towards Bloxham Road.

Surface water drainage

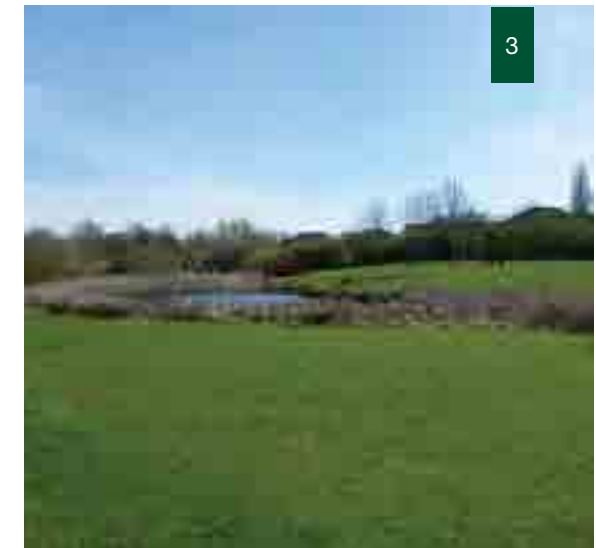
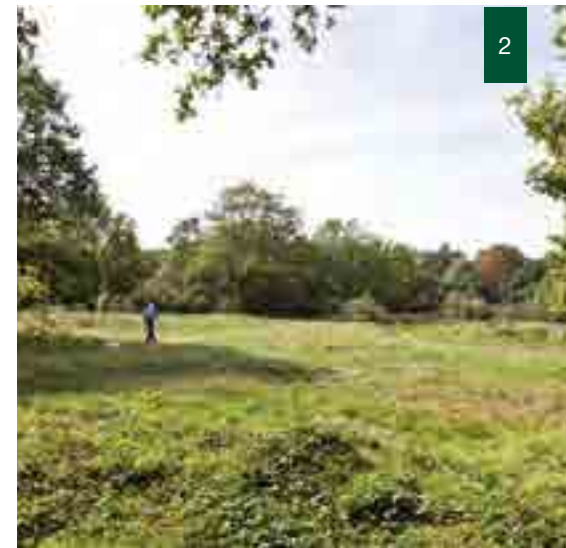
The site drains naturally to the southeast corner of the site. It is therefore proposed that there will be a network of sewers, swales and open ditches (including existing features) within the development, falling generally to the southeast of the site, from where it will discharge into natural multi-purpose attenuation ponds, which will remain dry throughout most of the year. To incorporate this into the proposed development, surface water storage is included as part of public open space. The sewers and storm water storage areas will be subject to detailed layout and drainage submissions. A storage volume equivalent to the maximum possible requirement for a 1 in 100 (plus 30% allowance for climate change) storm event has been used to inform the illustrative layout.



-  Salt Way
-  Proposed green corridors
-  Wider green connections
-  Existing and enhanced hedgerows
-  Existing and proposed trees
-  Existing and proposed ponds
-  Proposed public green space
-  Buffer planting around listed Crouch Farm
-  Informal set back and habitat creation to Salt Way



Figure 4.7 Landscape and ecology strategy



- 1: Enhanced footpath
- 2: Woodland buffer
- 3: Retention ponds
- 4: Central green
- 5: Formal open space

Figure 4.8 Possible landscape and strategies



4.5 Sustainability

The creation of a sustainable development has been a fundamental part of the design process. The balance of environmental and social sustainability are key elements of the development vision as set out below.

The concept for the proposals is to integrate new housing in a strong landscape and ecological framework, that has been developed from existing site features. Environmental sustainability, including the retention and enhancement of habitats and landscape features of importance has therefore been central to the masterplan, including the creation of new environments that add to the biodiversity of the area.

In relation to energy and the desire to deliver a low carbon development, the most important factor in a major new housing scheme such as this is to achieve low energy buildings and a low energy layout. In relation to low energy buildings, the development will comprise efficient buildings throughout; well insulated and energy efficient, encouraging energy monitoring systems so that future users are constantly aware and able to control energy use. The majority of the development blocks are south facing and therefore ideal for maximising passive solar gain. A high proportion of the houses will have at least one south facing main elevation, facilitating passive solar gain and the accommodation of photovoltaics and solar water heating.

The proposals have been designed to minimise car travel and maximise walking, cycling and public transport use and thereby reduce energy demand from transport.

Social inclusion, cohesion and a strong community focus are key elements of the vision and the design concept. The scheme incorporates open, recreational space and a central green to act as the community focal point. Good access will be available to education facilities such as Banbury School along Salt Way. Affordable housing would be integrated in all phases.

4.6 Delivery and Phasing

The land west of Bloxham Road is immediately deliverable for development. Access can be provided via two points on the Bloxham Road. The site is not constrained by any features that would prevent development of the site. The development of the site could be phased in a variety of options, with development starting at either access point from Bloxham Road, with potential sales outlets from more than one location, improving housing delivery rates.

5. Access

5.1 Access

Vehicle access into the site will be provided via a protected right turn junction and a new roundabout off Bloxham Road (see Figure 5.1), which connects to a consented residential development of 145 dwellings east of Bloxham Road (12/00080/OUT). Secondary pedestrian / cycle access points will also be provided at the northern, western and eastern site boundaries linking to National Cycle Route 5 and to Bloxham Road, as set out in the Transport Assessment.

The new junction and roundabout provides an opportunity to slow traffic that is currently travelling faster than the 30mph speed limit as it enters Banbury. This reduction speed will have the effect turning Bloxham Road into a more pedestrian friendly street rather than a car dominated road, which have effect of making it safer for pedestrians to cross Bloxham Road, and easier for existing residents of Waller Drive and Lansdown Close to pull out onto Bloxham Road .

There are bus stops around 500m away from the centre of the development site. The number 488 / 499 bus runs along Bloxham Road and provides good access to Banbury town centre (see Figure 5.2).

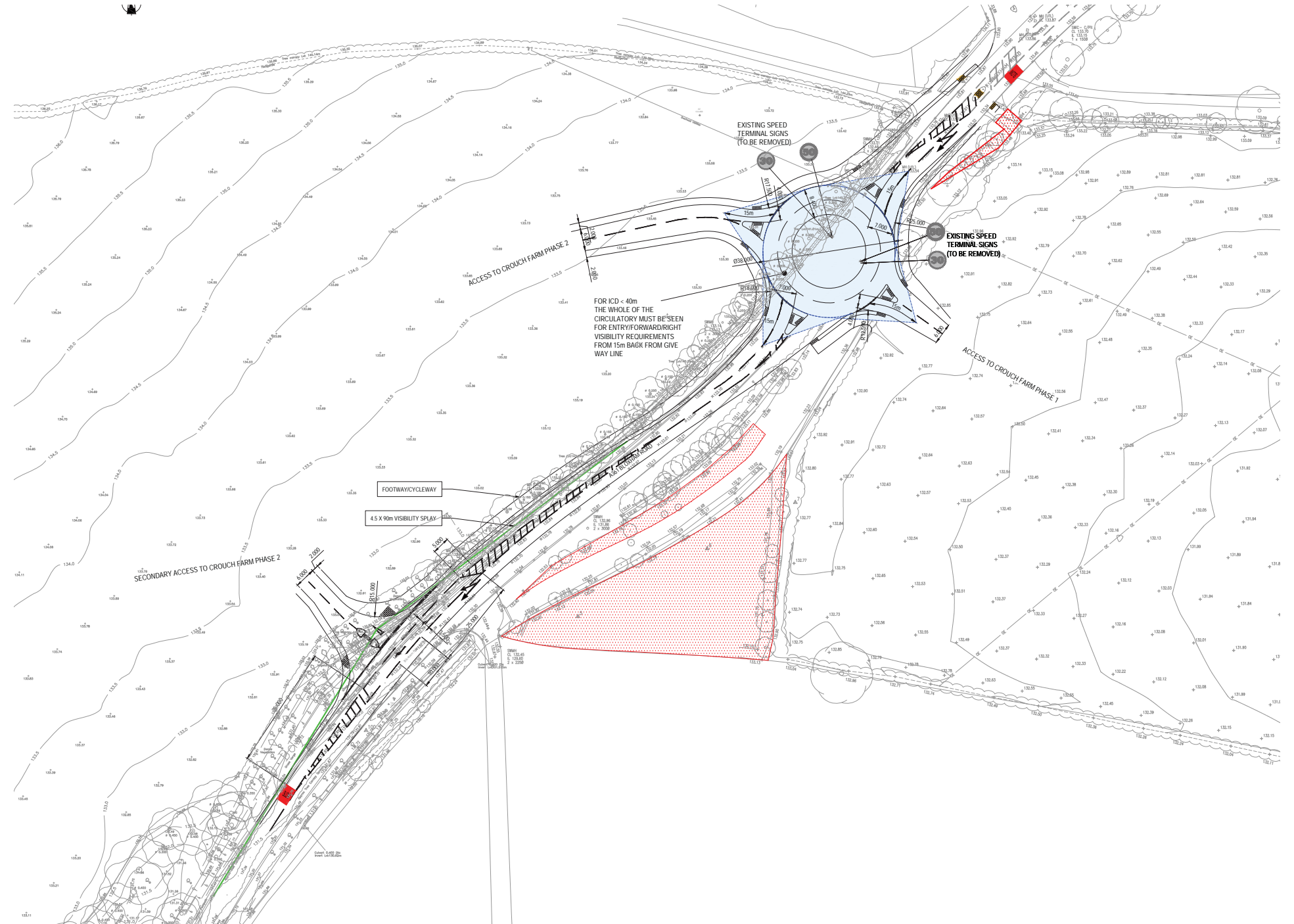


Figure 5.1 Highways access

5.2 Moving around the site

The network of streets within the development is an important aspect of the layout and design. An illustrative hierarchy addressing movement, access and parking for different types of streets across the proposed scheme has been developed. A clear hierarchy that provides distinct characteristics to different streets (together with other memorable features) helps residents to navigate.

Pedestrian movement

The illustrative masterplan shows how the site could be developed to be easily navigable on foot, where pedestrians are given priority over vehicles.

Pedestrian links through the site are maximised, and the site can be opened up to existing footpaths and rights of way on-site and in the surrounding area. National Cycle Route 5 runs along the northern edge of the site. The illustrative masterplan takes advantage of this key existing feature by providing new and enhanced existing links to Salt Way. This helps connect the development to the town's local services and facilities, including close by Banbury School, as well as to the wider map of destinations along the cycle route. A well connected, local network of footpaths also allows existing residents to benefit from new open space and play areas provided within the proposed development.

Vehicle movement

Regardless of the availability of transport and movement options, many new residents will own and use a private motor vehicle. This has been considered in the application in relation to:

- the provision of well designed car parking which meets council standards for number of spaces;
- safe vehicle access points to the existing highway network;
- good inter-visibility between vehicles and pedestrians; and
- ensuring that throughout the development, pedestrians are given a higher priority than vehicles.

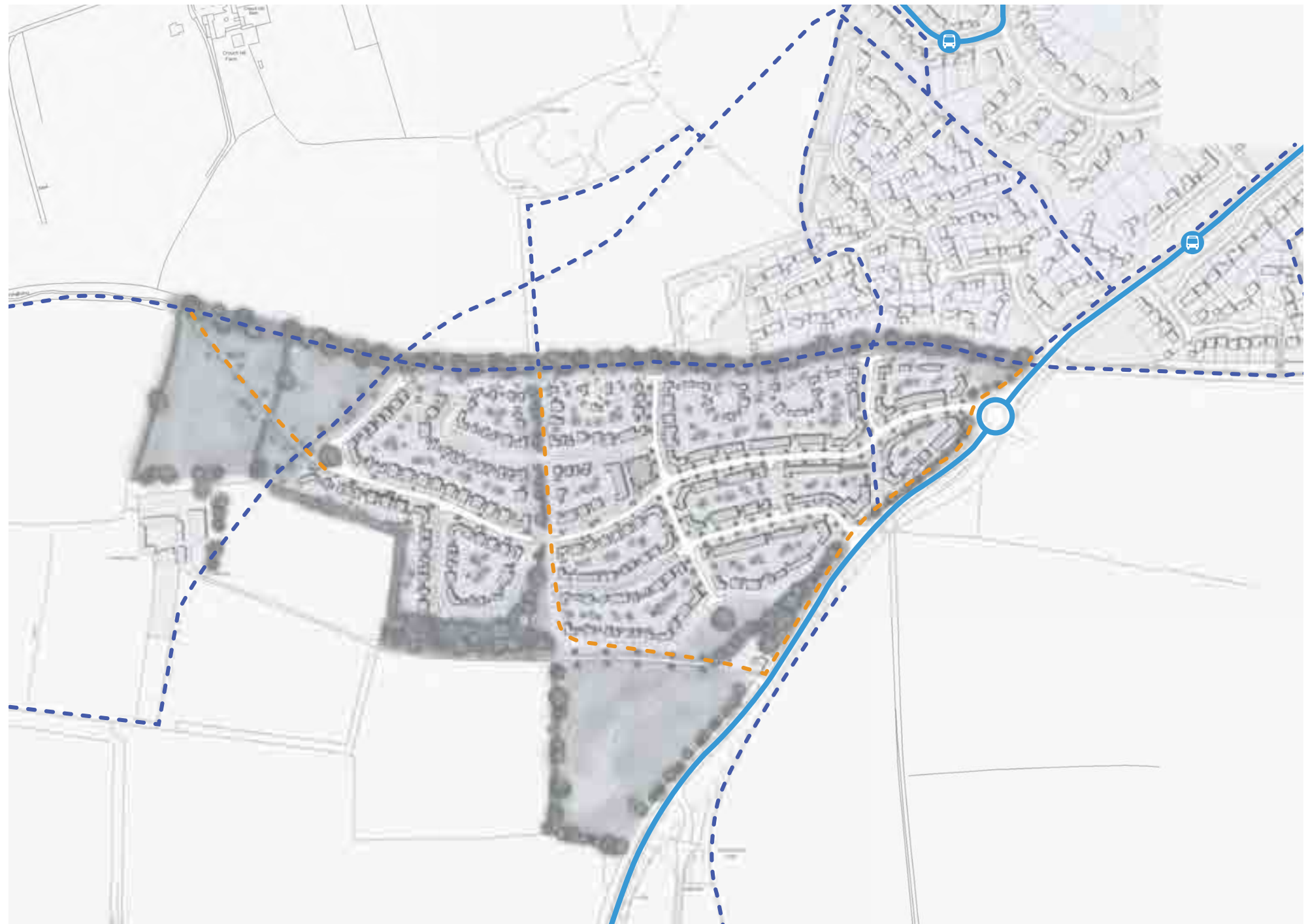


Figure 5.2 Sustainable transport connections

6. Conclusion

The illustrative masterplan has been prepared through a logical sequence of analysis, consultation, evaluation, and design as set out in this document.

The development of the site is supported by planning policy, and has been prepared in liaison with technical officers from the District and County Council. The site west of Bloxham Road offers a number of economic, social and environmental opportunities to improve the town through the development of new housing and associated open spaces, with the enhancement of the existing green network and provision of infrastructure.

The development of the site will: -

- provide desperately needed housing in the area, increasing the choice of homes and providing low cost ownership options in addition to high quality detached family housing;
- be integrated with Banbury, connecting the development to existing neighbourhoods and to the National Cycle Route 5 on Salt Way with footpaths and cycle routes to encourage walking and cycling, particularly to key facilities such as local shops and Banbury school;
- enhance the landscape by preserving the important aspects of the existing landscape such as valuable hedgerows and trees, and providing a variety of new open spaces that will benefit existing and future residents;
- make a welcoming place by creating streets that overlook public spaces where people can meet, play and socialise;
- provide transport choices where it is possible to walk and cycle for local trips, but where vehicles are properly accommodated in the proposals;
- will protect views to and from Crouch Hill through the use of buffer tree planting to break up views of the development;
- reinforce existing landscape features to create a buffer between new development and the listed Crouch Farm, and create a new green corridor connecting on-site habitats to the wider green network;
- protect the setting of Salt Way by creating an informal built edge that is set back from the Salt Way, and provides additional planting; and
- provides on-site water attenuation that will improve the current drainage situation.



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