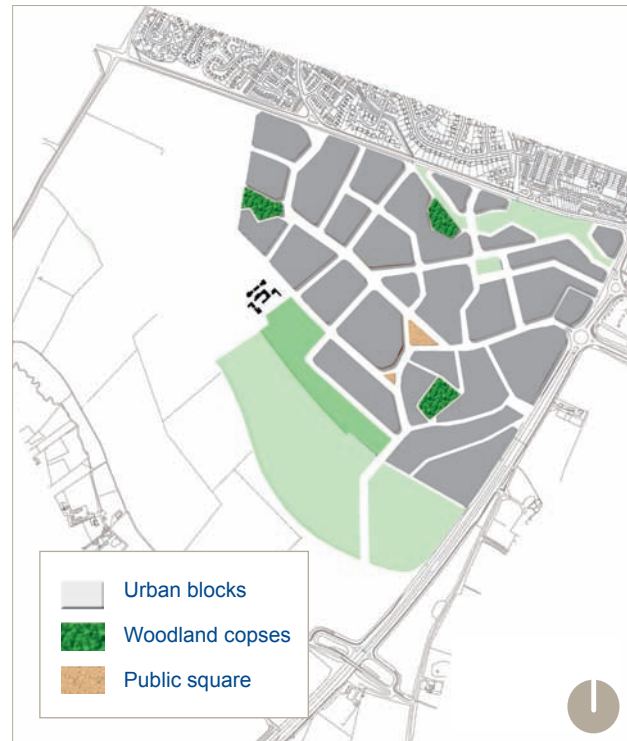




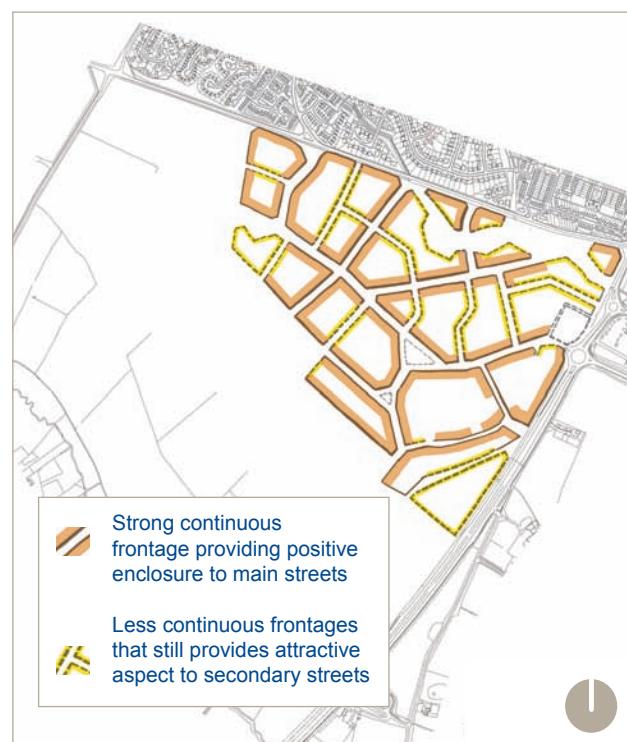
**Urban grain (blocks and frontages)**

5.4.8 The development blocks establish a well-connected place that is convenient to move through. Blocks have been designed to be of a size that can accommodate a suitable scale of development, together with the necessary public and private open space and car parking, but are not so large as to become an obstacle to movement (ie requiring residents and visitors to take circuitous routes in order to move around). This diagram shows a high-level block structure. A more detailed level is shown in the sketch master plan.

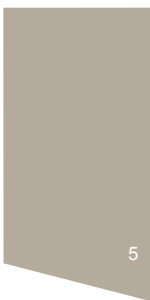
5.4.9 The proposed block structure allows different edges to be given greater or lesser importance in the overall development. Edges that are immediately adjacent to the spine streets and public spaces will have a more continuous and even building line, creating a stronger sense of enclosure. They will also have a greater height than surrounding buildings, even if this is only a subtle difference, to allow for an attractive wide street, which can accommodate tree planting. Residential streets can have a more discontinuous frontage, with detached and semi-detached properties and sides of properties fronting the street on occasion.



**Figure 5.10 Block structure**



**Figure 5.11 Development edges**





### Views and landmarks

To aid with legibility, the master plan has been designed to create a series of landmark spaces and buildings throughout the public realm. These landmarks are celebrated by structuring the layout to allow views and vistas from within the development and surrounding areas. Importantly, existing landmarks, most noticeable the churches at Bicester and Chesterton and Whitelands Farm, have remain important prominent features in views. The gateways into the development have also been carefully designed to create a strong sense of arrival and a clear transition from rural to urban. Figure 5.12 below illustrates the key gateways, landmarks and views.



View towards Whitelands Farm



Figure 5.12 Views and landmarks



## 5.5 Landscape structure

5.5.1 The landscape strategy for the new quarter has evolved from detailed landscape analysis of the site and its context, and through information gathered as part of extensive consultation with the local authority, local groups and stakeholders.

5.5.2 While the site is relatively flat when viewed from the edges or the centre, there are subtle changes in level that the master plan has responded to. The site falls gently from north west to south east, with a more significant drop towards the Gagle Brook valley near Chesterton. There is a 'shoulder of land' between the Gagle Brook and the area of proposed development. There are three plateau areas and a gentle valley that runs from the A41 Oxford Road towards the Whitelands Farm buildings. This valley plays a major part in providing the farm complex with an attractive setting and the master plan has strived to preserve this important feature.

5.5.3 The proposed landscape structure works with the existing features to create a framework that will effectively accommodate the development within a wider landscape setting. The landscape structure is also an integral part of the other elements of the master plan, such as the block structure, the access and movement patterns and character areas. Key streets will be tree-lined to emphasise their importance, the copses will be retained and embedded within the block structure and the development edges will positively address the wider landscape. Additional structural landscape works will help assimilate the perimeter road into the landscape.

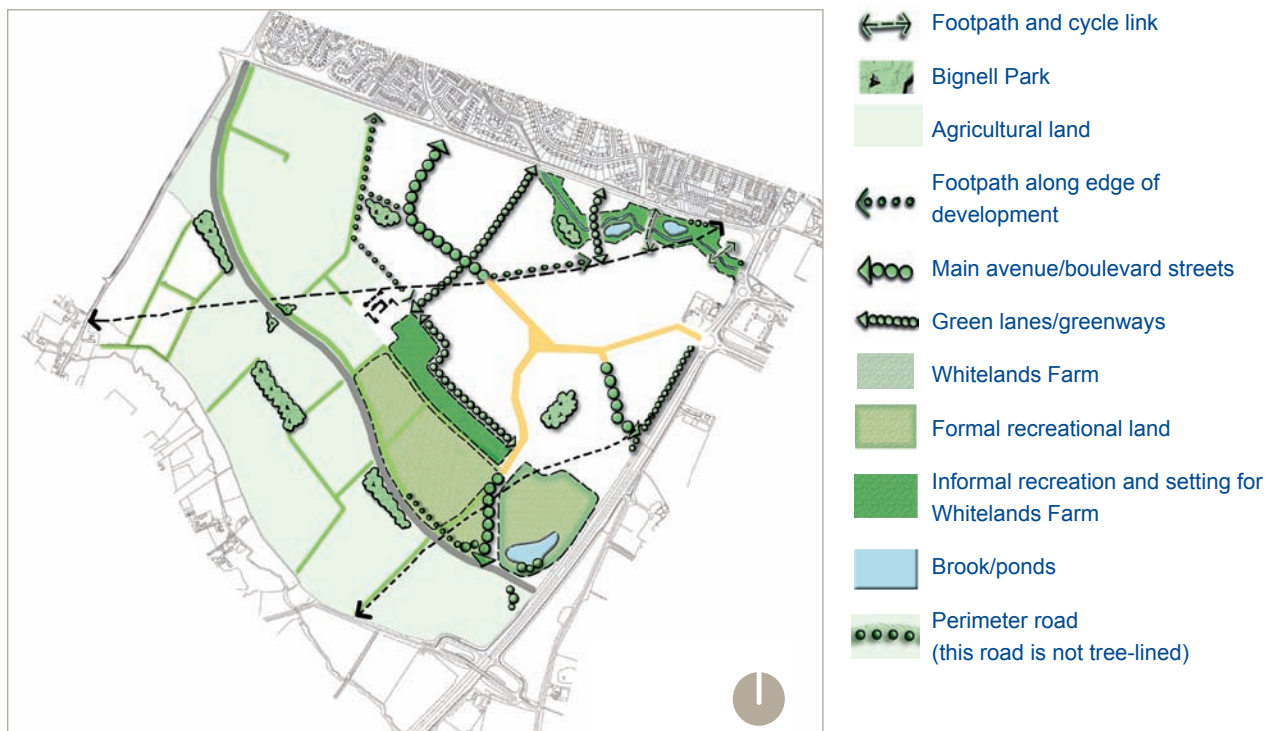


Figure 5.13 **Landscape structure**



5.5.4 The key objectives of the landscape strategy are to:

- Ensure that the new south-west quarter for Bicester is successfully integrated into the landscape, being both sensitive, and responsive to, the landscape character and its setting
- Provide strategic new areas of formal and informal open space that is successfully connected with Bicester to ensure that both the existing and new community benefit from this major new recreation resource
- Protect the setting of Chesterton and Whitelands Farm
- Protect existing landscape and ecological interest on the site, and where possible, achieve significant enhancement
- Provide a network of green spaces, including linear spaces such as footpaths and tree-lined avenues
- Ensure that a landscape and management framework is established that will deliver a major recreation asset for future generations



Figure 5.14 **Landscape structure**





5.5.5 The development of the site affords the potential to extend and enhance the existing strategic open space network of Bicester. This has been an important consideration in determining the structure of landscape proposals for this site. The open space strategy incorporates Pingle Brook, extends the strategic network of spaces into the site, then continues southwards along the greenway to the informal and formal open space and secondary school at the south of the site.

5.5.6 The new formal recreational area comprises 16 hectares. This will be jointly used by the secondary school. Recreational uses that require lighting will be located along the eastern edge, next to the A41. In addition to the formal recreation, the two large fields immediately east of the farmhouse will be turned into a large public park including informal open space and children's play areas. As at the villages of Kirtlington and Bletchington, this recreational open space will provide a significant green area between the development and agricultural land.

5.5.7 The two existing public rights of way have been incorporated within the development structure and additional footpaths and cycleways are proposed to provide a comprehensive network through the development and the open space.

5.5.8 The three copses and majority of the hedgerows are retained. The existing landscape network has been the basis for the new planting. Importantly, the primary objective of mitigation planting has been not to screen the development, but rather to establish an enhanced landscape structure that allows framed views of the development edge.



**Figure 5.15 Pingle Brook (before and after)**





### 5.6 Access and movement

- 5.6.1 The site is well-positioned for pedestrian accessibility to Bicester's centrally located facilities. It is also close to the large Tesco superstore and multiple retailers at Bicester Village Retail Park. Safe and easy pedestrian access from the new quarter to both facilities will be achieved through new pedestrian-friendly crossings on the A41.
- 5.6.2 For the remainder of the site, pedestrian access is a core design principle, reflected for instance in the retention and incorporation of the existing footpaths across the site. These are incorporated into the layout without the need for realignment.
- 5.6.3 The development is served by three main access points, two from the A41 and one from Middleton Stoney Road. The larger of the two on the A41 will join with an outer perimeter road that will help connections in the south-western quadrant of the town. A new secondary access off Middleton Stoney Road will serve the dwellings north of Pingle Brook. A further access from Middleton Stoney Road will serve the nursing home element of the health village, as it will generate lower traffic levels.

- 5.6.4 The existing track to Whitelands Farm will be closed to vehicular traffic but will provide pedestrian and cycle access to the site.
- 5.6.5 The access and movement proposals seek to reduce the amount of through traffic using Middleton Stoney Road and Queens Avenue through the town centre. This will assist in encouraging walking and cycling between the new and existing communities. A hierarchy of streets will be designed to accommodate different types of vehicular movement. Streets will be designed for slow traffic speeds.
- 5.6.6 As well as providing quick and direct links to the M40 and Oxford, the A41 creates problems of noise and severance. Noise from the road must be addressed, and this is done through a combination of a landscape works that are integral to the whole development and the use of boundary buildings that can protect the rest of the new quarter from traffic noise. The commercial part of the new quarter has been designed with this in mind.

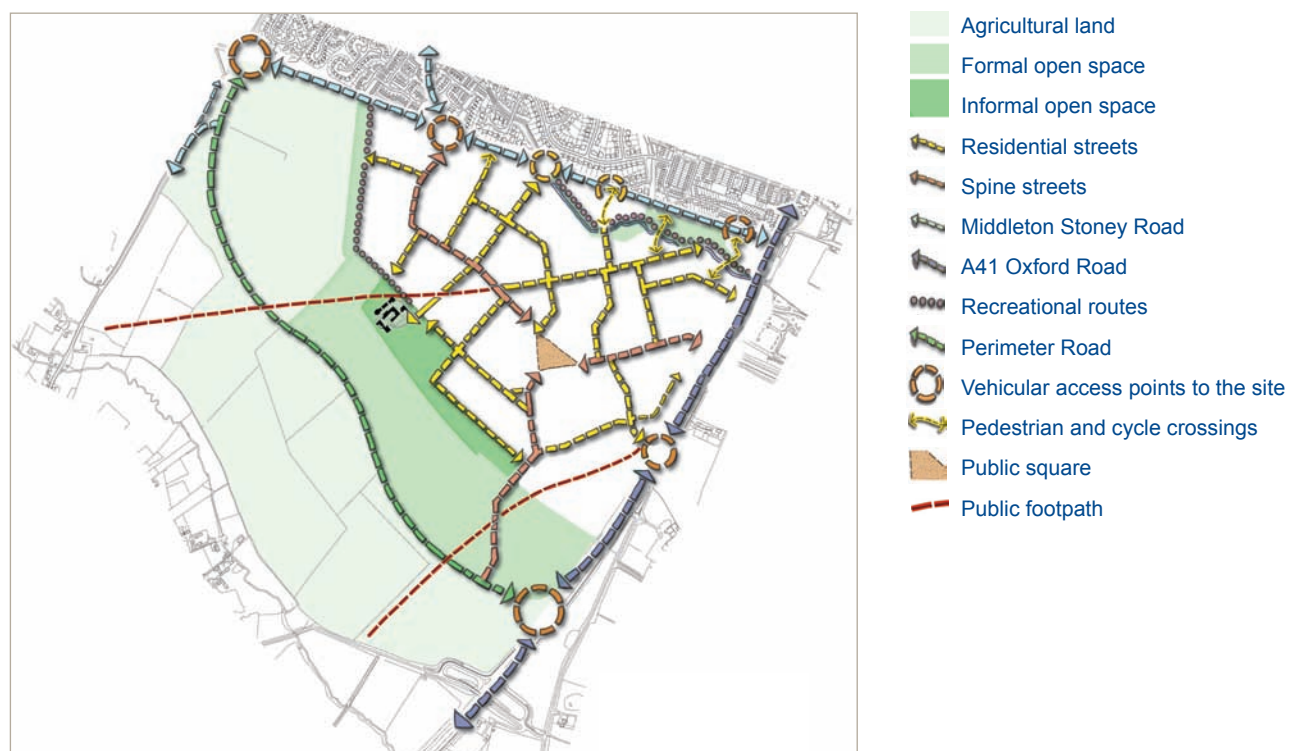
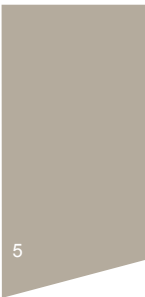


Figure 5.16 Access and movement strategy



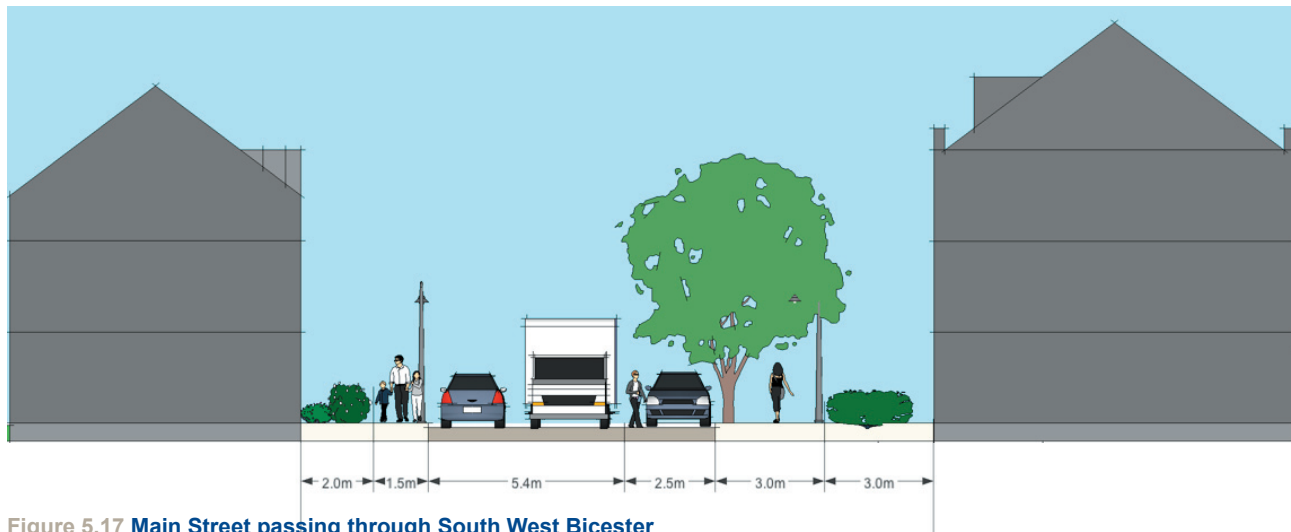


**Public transport, footpaths and cycleways**

- 5.6.7 The development will link into the existing networks and create new routes of its own. Positive links for buses, bicycles and pedestrians will be promoted throughout the development, concentrated along the main spines, offering access to the railway station, local and town centres and to the A41.
- 5.6.8 The development will retain the existing public footpaths that cross the site. This will be done in a positive way, with development designed to overlook the route as much as possible. The development will also open up new 'green routes' that link open spaces, watercourses and woodland areas. These will provide attractive leisure routes through the areas and will complement the street network.

**Chesterton rat-running**

- 5.6.9 The proposals take into account the residents of Chesterton. It is known that commuters drive through Chesterton as part of a rat-run and the application proposals seek to limit this in the future. The new roundabout at the junction of the A4095, Middleton Stoney Road and Howes Lane will not link directly to the A4095, but will send traffic down the new perimeter road. As the perimeter road will provide a quicker and more direct route to the A41, this will help reduce rat-running through the village.



**Figure 5.17 Main Street passing through South West Bicester**



**Figure 5.18 New green route**





**Perimeter road**

5.6.10 As part of the proposed development, a western perimeter road is proposed linking the A41 with the A4095. The perimeter road will be a 50mph single carriageway with no lighting except at junctions. The development of 1,585 dwellings does not, in itself, justify the provision of this road. However, the county council has insisted on its provision with this planning application.

5.6.11 The main purpose of the road is to remove through-traffic from the town centre and re-route it around the west of the town. It will also provide access to the strategic employment area east of the A41 and to the secondary school for traffic from outside Bicester. The alignment and design of the perimeter road has been carefully selected so that it:

- Avoids long straight sections of road that encourage overtaking
- Closely follows the topography of the site to help assimilate it with the landform
- Takes account of sensitive views in and around Chesterton and Whitelands Farm
- Aligns with existing hedgerows, copses and trees to fit within the landscape
- Minimises potential noise and light pollution.

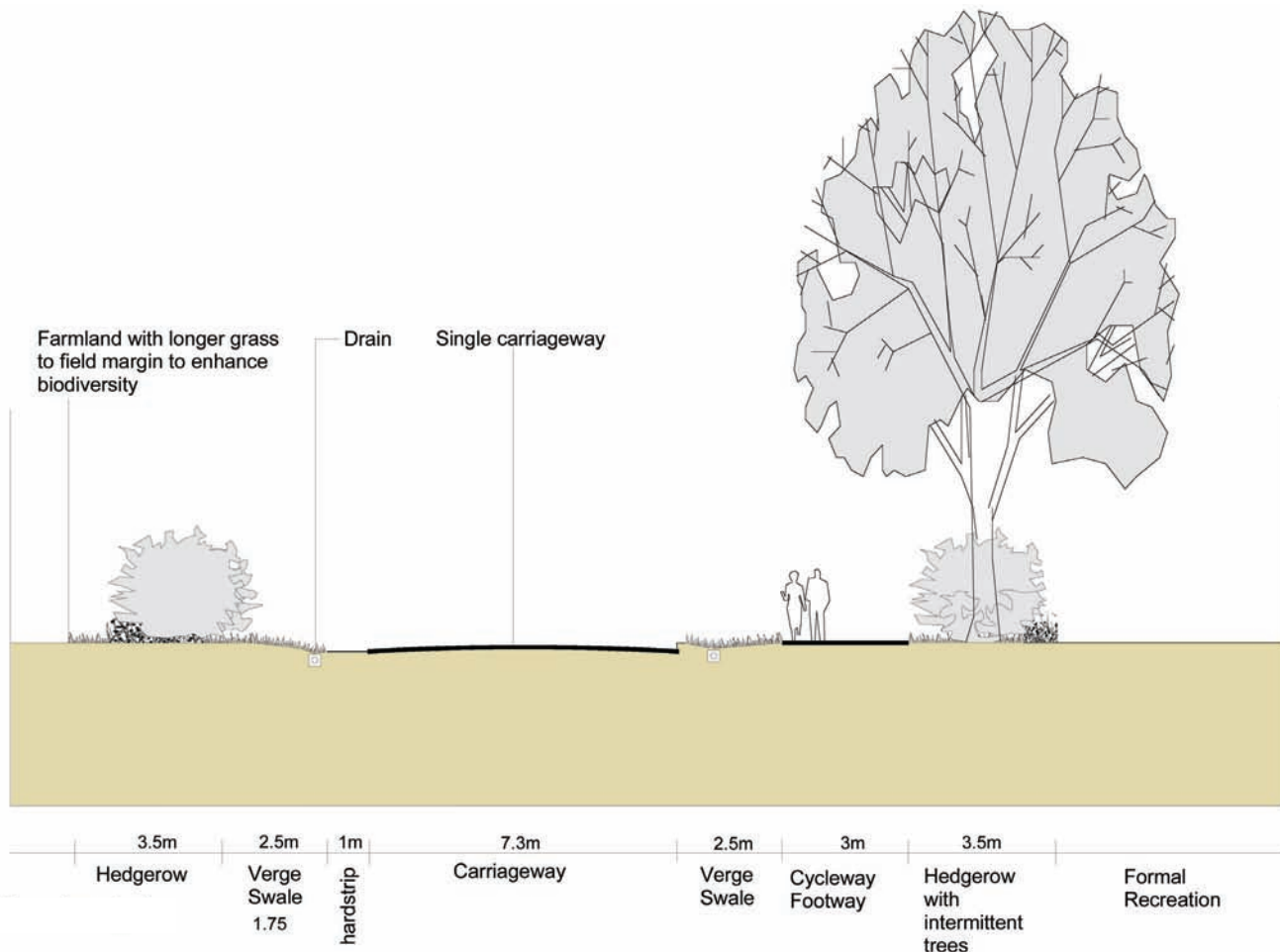


Figure 5.19 Typical cross section of the perimeter road







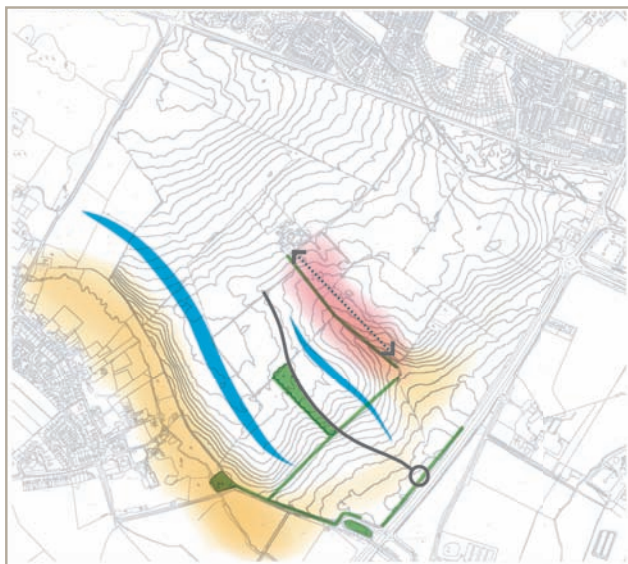
**North west section**

- push road away from areas which can be viewed from the properties along Middleton Stoney Road
- avoid crossing the open plateau
- align road to follow existing vegetation



**Central section**

- push road away from Chesterton and over the ridge
- respects the setting of Whitelands Farm
- align the road to follow the topography
- align road in centre of main field to retain useable fields on either side



**South eastern section**

- push road away from central valley to avoid degrading the intimate landscape
- align road between the two ridges and next to the existing hedgerow to reduce its visibility from the north and south



**Overall proposed alignment**

- the alignment of the road closely follows the profile of Gagle Brook and the general topography of the site

**Figure 5.20 Rationale for perimeter road**





5.6.12 The alignment of the road was established through detailed landscape analysis of the site and its context. A series of diagrams explain the landscape and visual factors that were considered and the rationale for its alignment.

5.6.13 Tree planting along the road is limited so as not to accentuate the road within the landscape. Instead, the existing hedgerow network has been enhanced with new copse and tree planting, which combine to provide a strong landscape structure either side of the perimeter road. For the most part, the road will be at grade or in cutting.

5.6.14 The network of streets, roads and footpaths has been designed so that the new quarter is a place that is easy to move around. The predominant movement patterns are from north-west to south-east (movement from the west of Bicester towards the A41 Oxford Road) and from south-west to north-east (movement from within the development towards the town centre). The street patterns allow for ease of movement in these directions and provide safe residential environments. The two public footpaths that currently cross the site have been incorporated without need for diversions.





### 5.7 Appearance

This section explains how the development may look and feel. The illustrations are indicative, their main purpose being to help explain the design principles set out earlier and to show how some of the key public spaces and building may appear.

Land reserved for a second primary school, should it be required. Both primary school sites are adjacent to the retained woodland copses. This co-location provides the schools with an immediate environmental learning resource, provides shelter and shade to the school environment and does not overly confine or restrict the woodland area.

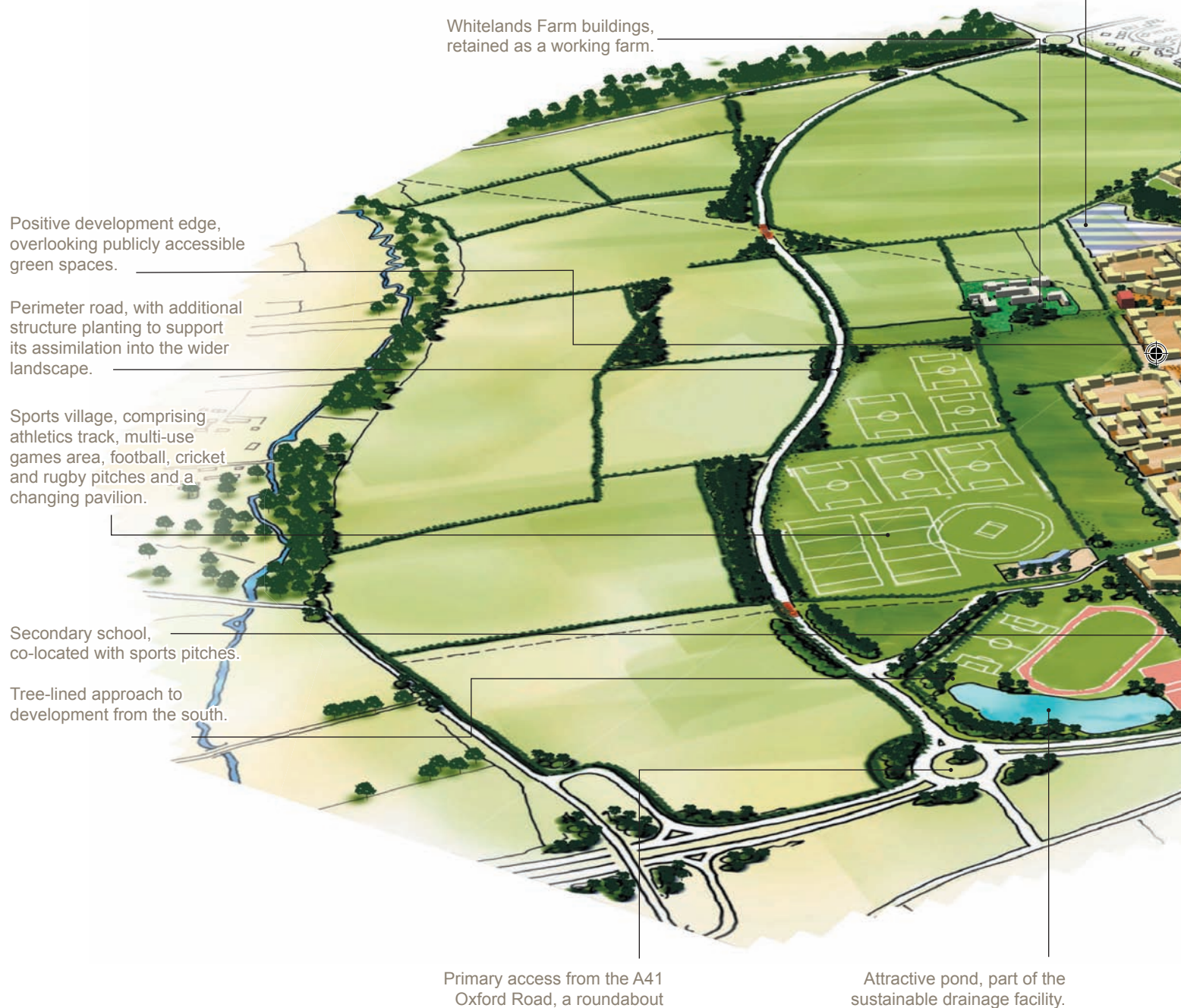
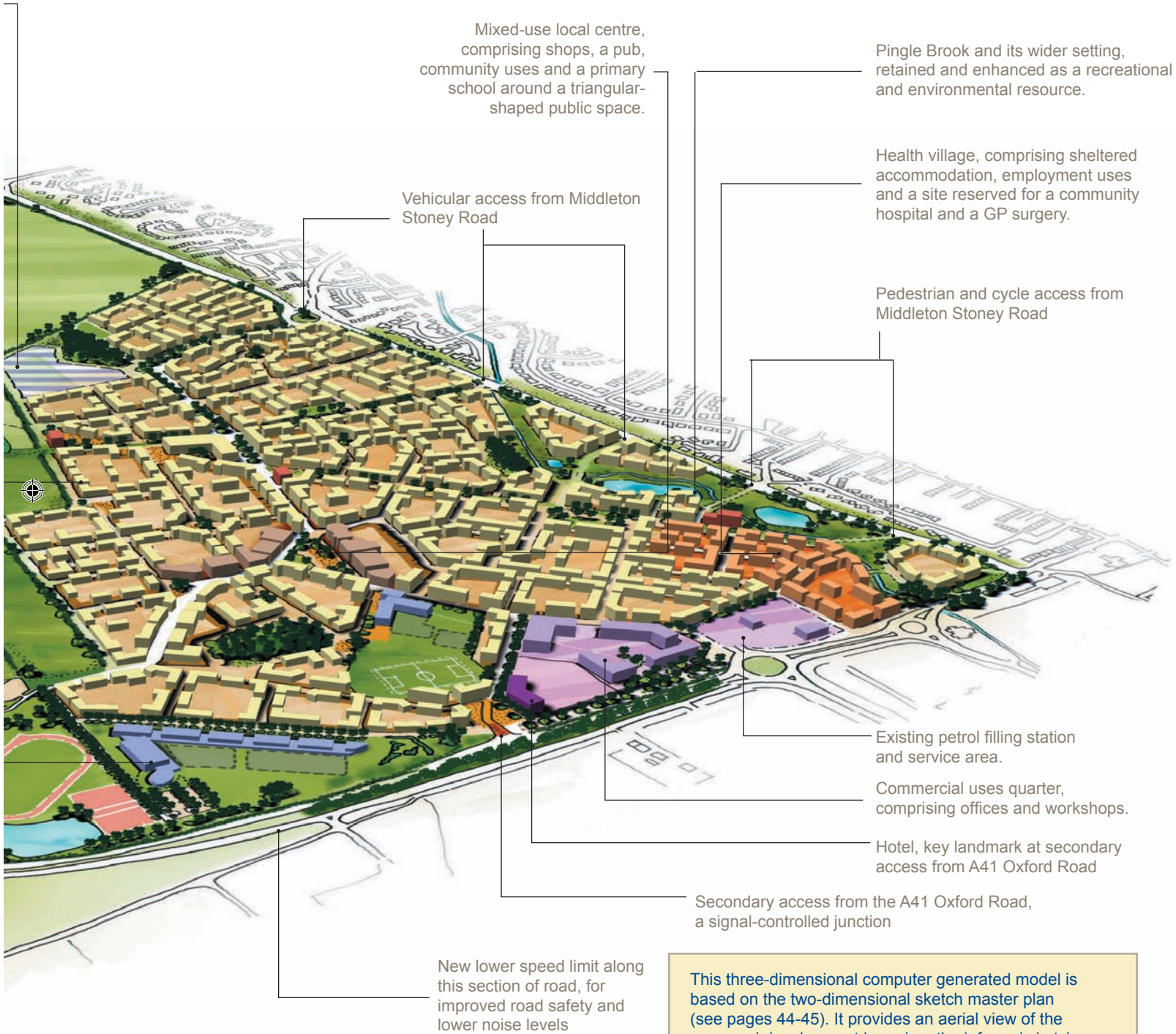


Figure 5.21 Three-dimensional model of the sketch master plan





This three-dimensional computer generated model is based on the two-dimensional sketch master plan (see pages 44-45). It provides an aerial view of the proposed development based on the informal sketch. While the model is only based on sketch details, the heights shown are a reasonable approximation and accord with the EIA work. Please note there is no roof plan on this image and all buildings are shown 'flat-topped' while the actual development will primarily consist of buildings with pitched roofs.





### Character areas

5.7.1 The development area is of sufficient size to develop different character areas. These seven suggested areas can develop particular characteristics, in response to each specific part of the site, the land uses proposed and the adjacent land uses. For example, the 'Pingle valley' will have a serene character, drawing on its predominantly residential uses, the larger expanses of green space and the adjacent wetlands. The 'village heart' will be quite different, with a vibrant character, resulting from its more continuous building fronts and greater sense of enclosure together with a liveliness from the mix of uses and activities.



Figure 5.22 Character areas





### Local centre

Food store, with landmark feature on north-western corner and active ground floor uses (e.g. coffee shop, flower boutique etc.) An opportunity for a modern or contemporary design.

Shared car parking for the local centre, including service and delivery access to food store.

Community Hall, with attractive front door and entrance feature onto the square. A secure green space to the rear for outdoor functions.

Limited/controlled car parking (e.g. disabled drivers, short-stay) in the square, beneath tree canopy.

Offices, shops and residential uses with on-street short stay parking.

Secure parking for mixed-use development.

Garden space associated with a pub or restaurant function fronting the square.

The main spine street leading to the local centre from the south.

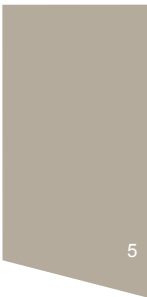
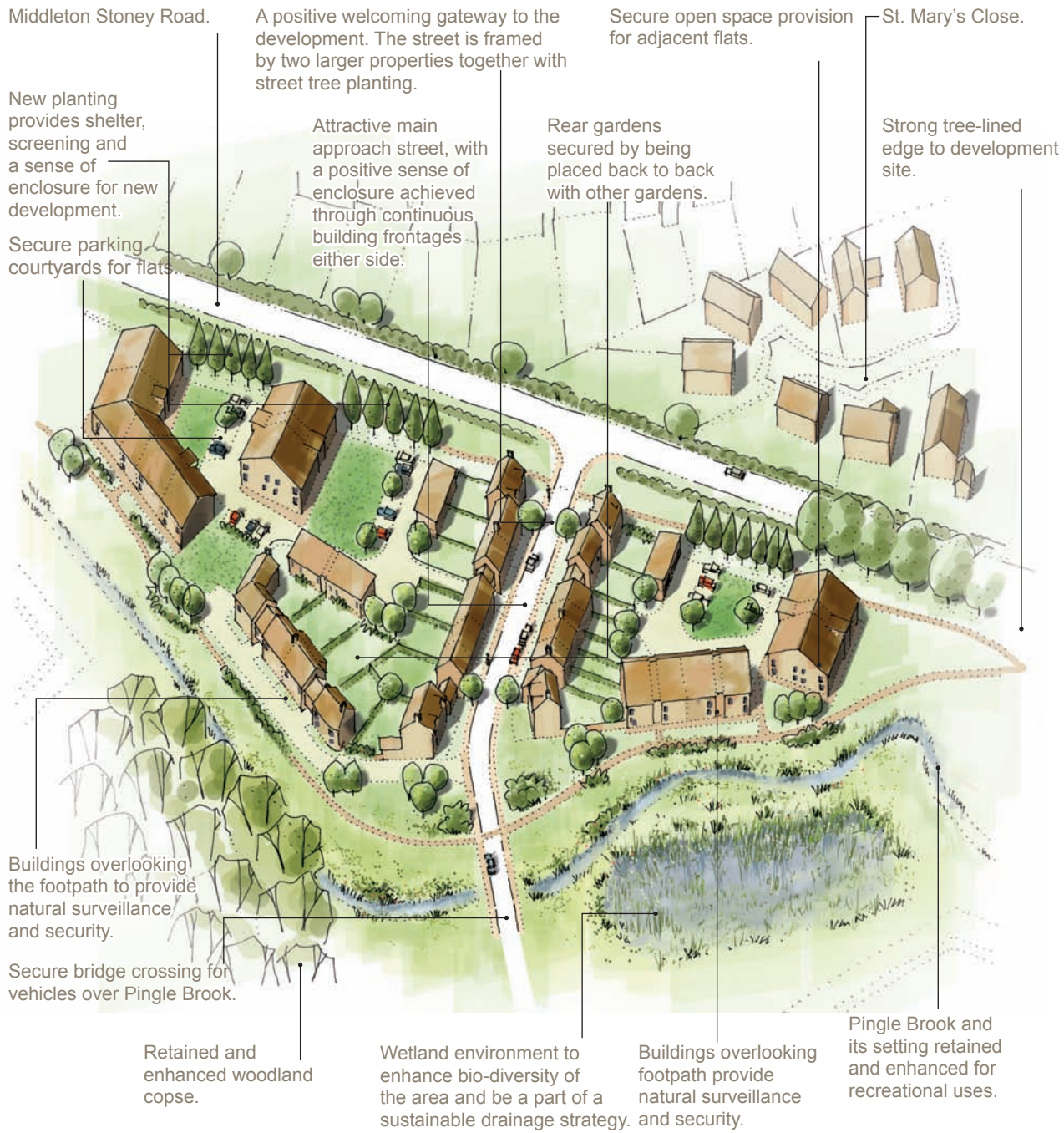
Civic square, primarily hard paved but with significant tree planting.



Location plan

Figure 5.23 Sketch illustration of the mixed-use local centre





Location plan



A variety of house types



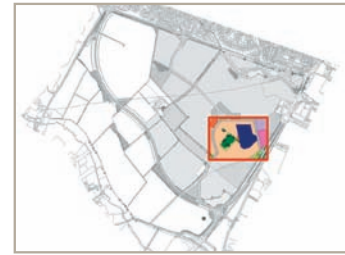
Design details

**Figure 5.24 Sketch illustration of the Pingle Brook area**





- Primary School area (2.47Ha)
- Barrow easement area (50m)
- Primary School building
- Vehicular access
- Protected green open space
- Protected trees
- LEAP
- Square



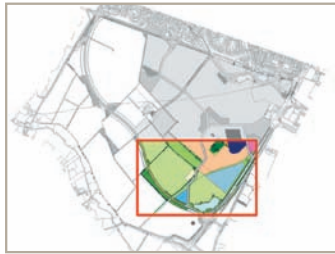
Location plan



Figure 5.25 Illustrative proving layout of primary school and surrounding area







Location plan



Figure 5.26 Illustrative proving layout of secondary school

