

## Chapter 2

# Site description and the proposals

## 2 Site description and the proposals

### Introduction

- 2.1 This chapter includes a brief description of the application site and the development proposals. It also sets out the description of the wider area and proposals covered under the original 2006 outline consent, to which this outline application relates.

### The location of the site

- 2.2 The site is located to the south west of Bicester to the west of the A41 / Oxford Road. The application boundary is shown in figure 1.3.
- 2.3 The wider South West Bicester site (boundary shown in figure 1.2) is bordered by the A41 / Oxford Road to the east and Middleton Stoney Road to the north. The section of Middleton Stoney Road to the north of the site is classified as the A4095, this changes to the B4030 to the west of the junction with Howes Lane and the Chesterton road. To the south of the wider site, beyond open agricultural land, is the village of Chesterton.
- 2.4 The application site forms the central area of the South West Bicester development area, to the south of Pingle Book. To the west is the Whitelands Farm complex and retained agricultural land.

### The characteristics of the site

- 2.5 The 26.9 ha site, which was farmland (arable and pasture) in 2006, is no longer in agricultural use, as the site is being developed in line with the outline consent. Much of the site is now being managed as set aside (scarified once a year to control vegetation growth), until such time as it is built out as part of the 2006 consented outline scheme.
- 2.6 The site occupies an area of gently undulating topography that grades down from west to east.
- 2.7 Whitelands Farmhouse and associated agricultural buildings are located to the west, outside of the application site. These buildings will not be affected by the development proposals. They are the subject of a planning application submitted in December 2011 for redevelopment and change in use to residential dwellings (11/01840F).
- 2.8 The first section of the spine road from the new Middleton Stoney Road roundabout in the north is complete, as is the route from the perimeter road northwards towards the local centre, although the central linking section of this is currently only provided as a work access and does not yet have a metalled surface.
- 2.9 Just outside of the application boundary, the signalised access junction on the A41 has been constructed and work has commenced on the hotel to the north of this junction (figure 2.1). There is a site construction access from the A41 adjacent to a petrol filling station.
- 2.10 Two footpaths cross the site. One links the A4095 at Bignell House to the centre of Bicester and the other crosses the south eastern corner of the site.
- 2.11 A planting scheme has been implemented across the wider South West Bicester development area to complement the landscape of the wider area by using green links to connect adjacent green areas to the east and west. Where

possible existing hedges have been retained and enhanced. Much of the structural landscaping and landscaping for informal open spaces areas has now been planted.

### **The immediate surroundings**

- 2.12 Pingle Brooks runs along part of the northern site boundary, beyond which are balancing ponds and the completed residential units that form part of the consented South West Bicester scheme. North west of the site are a number of residential land parcels also being built out under the 2006 consented scheme.
- 2.13 The northern boundary of the South West Bicester scheme is formed by Middleton Stoney Road, beyond that are residential properties that comprise the southern edge of Bicester. This area is known as the Highfields Estate. Further to the north, within the residential area, there are a number of neighbourhood centres that provide local retail facilities for residents. Parts of the northern section of the site fall within 400 m of these centres.
- 2.14 Bicester town centre is located to the north east of the site, approximately 1 km away. Immediately north east of the site, there is a petrol station, a restaurant and a public house and, beyond the A41, a Tesco superstore. Further to the east is the Bicester Village Outlet Shopping Area.
- 2.15 To the west of the South West Bicester site there is agricultural land and the A4095. Further to the west is Bignell Park, which is a private estate mainly comprising open woodland and parkland. Agricultural land lies to the south and south west of the site and further to the south west is the Bignell Park Hotel.
- 2.16 To the south of the application site are several residential and educational land parcels along with sports facilities and open space associated with the wider South West Bicester scheme. Further south is Gagle Brook, which flows north west to south east and the village of Chesterton.

### **Future of the site in the absence of the application proposals**

- 2.17 In the absence of the proposals put forward under this outline application, the mixed-use scheme will be built out as per the original consent, with detailed designs and development proposals being carried out in accordance with reserved matters approvals and the approved design code.
- 2.18 Following confirmation from CDC and OCC that a second primary school was not required, the land identified as 'potential land for a primary school' was released for up to 46 additional dwellings, which achieved outline consent in 2011.

### **The 2006 consented scheme**

- 2.19 Full details of the consented scheme are provided in technical appendix B, which includes the proposals chapter of the 2006 ES. The land uses consented under the 2006 outline are shown in figure 3.1 within technical appendix B. In summary, the 2006 proposals comprise:
- Up to 1,585 residential dwellings
  - Employment land to be located in the north east of the site, with up to a further 1000 m<sup>2</sup> within the local centre
  - Outdoor playing space including formal outdoor sports, sports pavilion and changing facilities, children's play areas and informal open space

- A primary school and land for a second primary school
- Land for a secondary school
- A local centre including a community centre, residential development and with the possibility of provision of a children's day nursery, pub and office space
- 1 ha reserved for a hotel
- A safeguarded site for a health village, which could include a nursing home and a community hospital, GP surgery and complementary uses, which will revert to employment uses if not taken up
- A perimeter road and junction improvements
- Provision of a site for park and ride (site outside application boundary; land transferred to OCC)

2.20 Technical appendix B of the 2006 consented scheme.

2.21 The following section of this chapter sets out those elements of the 2006 consent proposals that have been:

- Amended through subsequent consents
- Refined through the approved design code

### ***Amendments as a result of subsequent consents - primary school provision***

2.22 The 2006 consented scheme made provision for two primary schools. A primary school of up to 2.47 hectares near to the local centre and have capacity for 420 pupils in a dual class entry system. Land for a possible second primary school (approximately 1.31 ha) was identified in the west of the development.

2.23 In 2007 CDC and OCC confirmed that the second primary school was not required. The land previously shown as 'potential land for a primary school' (the reserved school site) was therefore released for up to 46 residential units. This discrete development was brought forward through application 10/01052/OUT which was consented in July 2011.

2.24 Neither the school near to the local centre nor the site subject to 10/01052/OUT form part of this application. However, these areas have been considered where appropriate in the topic specific chapters.

### ***Refinements through the approved design code***

2.25 In the 2006 outline consent, the mixed-use local centre (community, retail, residential and office space) was shown to be on two sides of the central primary public space. The arrangement of the local centre was reviewed and refined within the approved design code, such that the southern block has become purely residential, with the mixed-use elements concentrated in the northern part.

2.26 The building heights and building densities were also refined through the approved design code as a greater level of detail of the scheme was established. Both building heights and dwelling density remain within the maximum parameters set out in the 2006 ES.

### ***The proposals***

2.27 Figure 2.1 shows the land uses proposed within this new application, which is in the main residential in nature. An area in the centre of the site will be the local centre (a mixture of retail, community, employment and residential uses),

adjacent to an area of public space. These land uses are in line with the 2006 ES parameter plans (as refined by the approved design code). The main spine road and the 'green way' links do not form part of this application as they are currently being developed out under the existing outline consent.

- 2.28 The application site already has consent for up to 878 dwellings, i.e. 1,585 from the 2006 consented scheme minus the land parcels that have already been granted reserved matters and are therefore outside of this new application boundary. This new outline application will effectively increase the total number permitted within the site boundary by up to 100 units, to 978. This will take the total number of dwellings across the wider South West Bicester scheme up to 1,731 (i.e. 1,585 through the 2006 consent, 46 consented in 2011 and up to 100 additional units for which this new application seeks consent). The additional 100 units are proposed within the areas that have not yet been subject to reserved matters or sold for development (within the application boundary shown on figure 1.3).
- 2.29 The application site will therefore deliver up to 978 residential dwellings. The development proposed under this new outline application will include a variety of house types and tenures, which will help to ensure that a mixed community is delivered. These will include apartments as well as two, three, four and five bed-houses, with building heights that will vary between two, three or four storeys across the development. The maximum building heights are shown in figure 2.2. Figure 3.2 in technical appendix B shows the maximum building heights within the 2006-consented scheme. The building heights for the new application are within these parameters.
- 2.30 Figure 2.3 shows the residential densities of the new proposal, which is within the density parameters of the consented outline scheme as shown in figure 3.2a of technical appendix B. Densities vary throughout the development, with higher density (e.g. 40 – 45 dwellings per hectare) applied where appropriate, such as adjacent to the local centre and along the primary street (bus routes). This will maximise potential for walking and cycling into town and the local centre, thereby reducing car use, and allow for areas of lower densities (e.g. 30 - 35 dwellings per hectare) to be located in the outlying areas, particularly the countryside edge.
- 2.31 Flexible building types will be provided where appropriate to allow the neighbourhood to change and adapt to social and economic pressures over time.
- 2.32 Thirty percent of the total new housing at Kingsmere will be affordable, in line with the consented proposals. The size of the units and the range of tenure will be agreed with the two nominated housing associations and CDC.

- Application boundary
- Residential
- Local centre (retail / community / employment / residential)
- Primary public space
- Development blocks outside application boundary

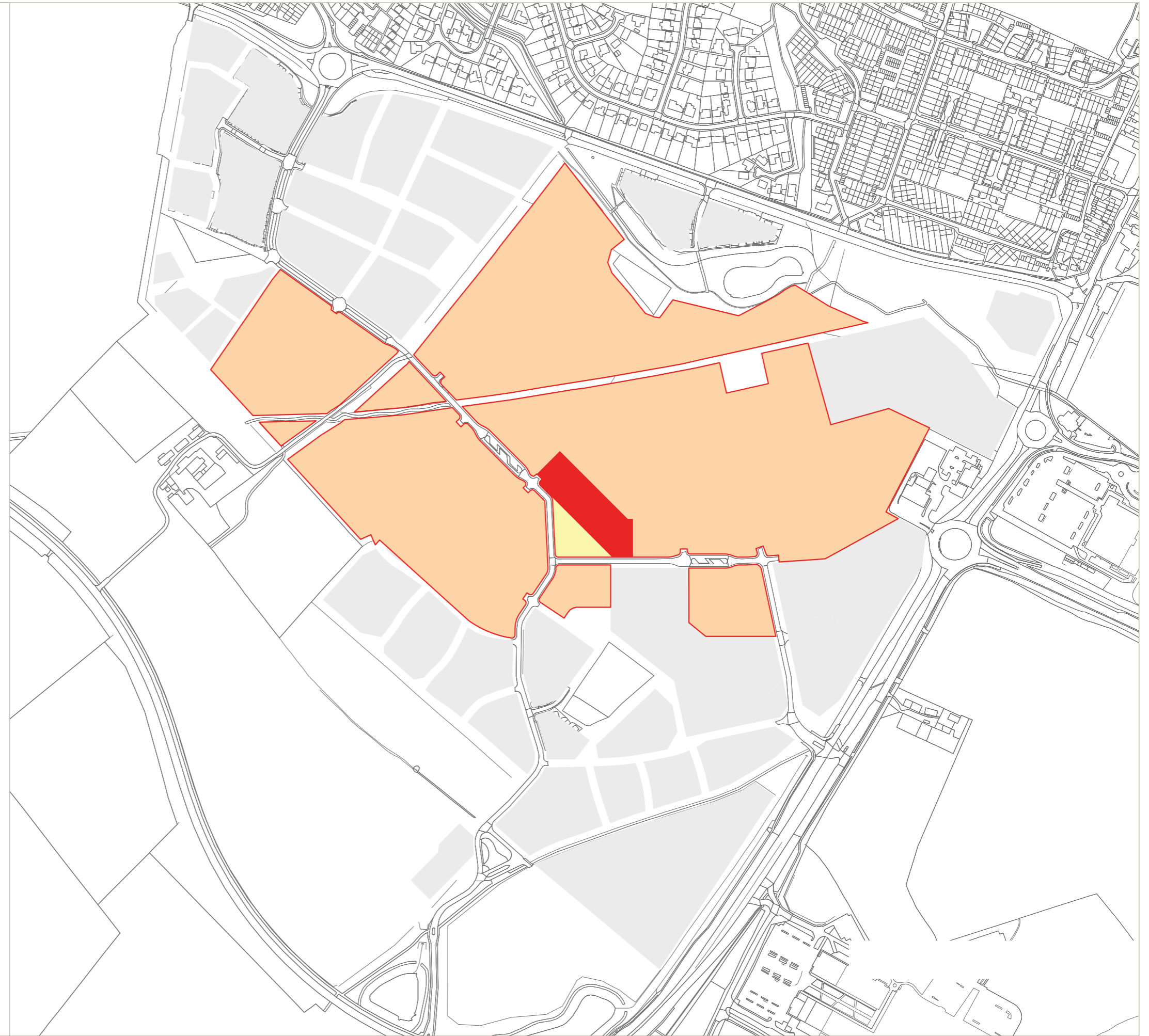


Figure 2.1 Land use plan

0 100m



- Application boundary
- up to 2.5 storeys - maximum height 9m
- up to 3.5 storeys - maximum height 11.5m
- up to 4 storeys - maximum height 14.5m
- Development blocks outside application boundary

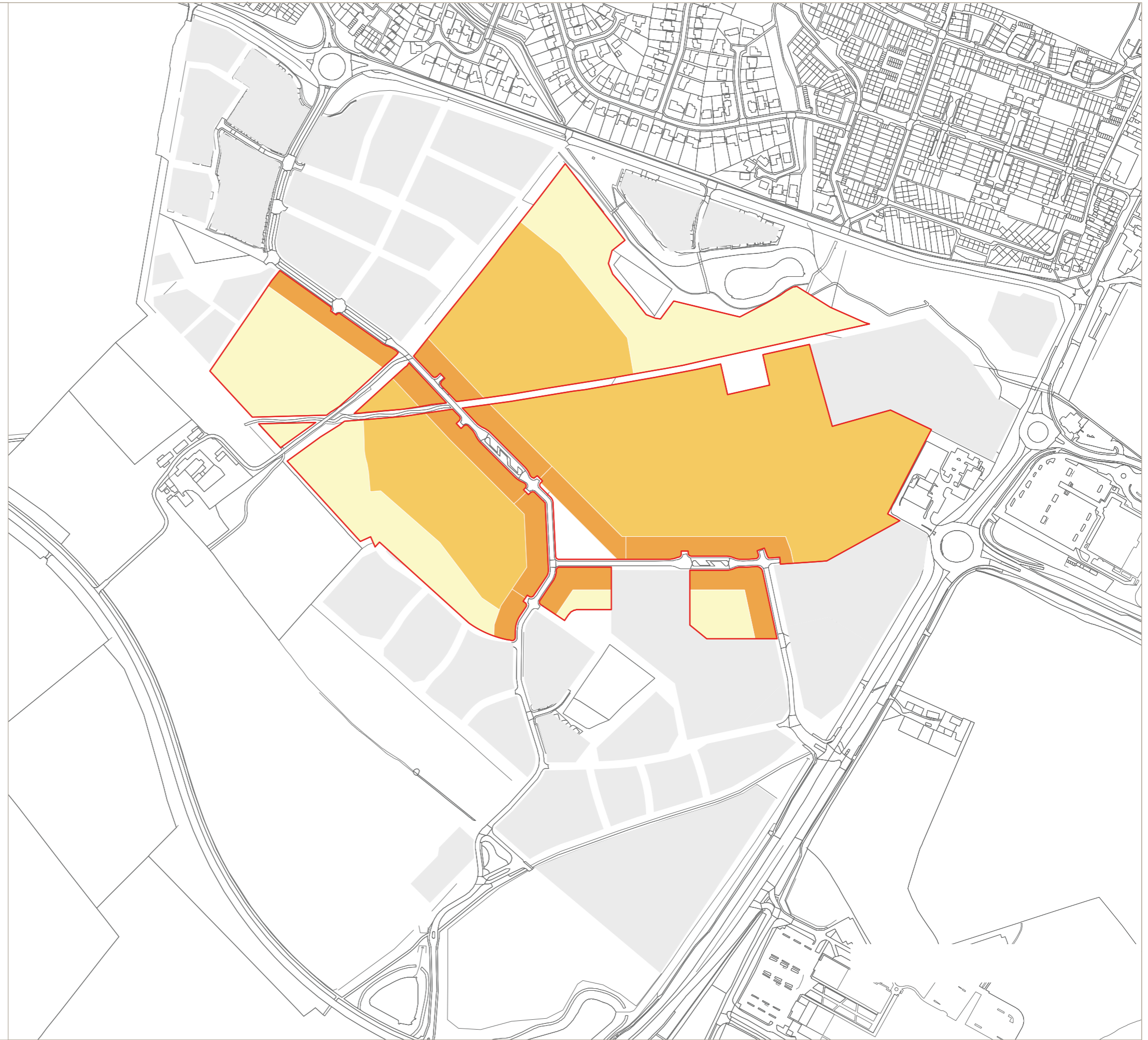


Figure 2.2 Building heights

0 100m



- Application boundary
- Residential density 30 -35 dph
- Residential density 35 - 40 dph
- Residential density 40 - 45 dph
- Development blocks outside application boundary

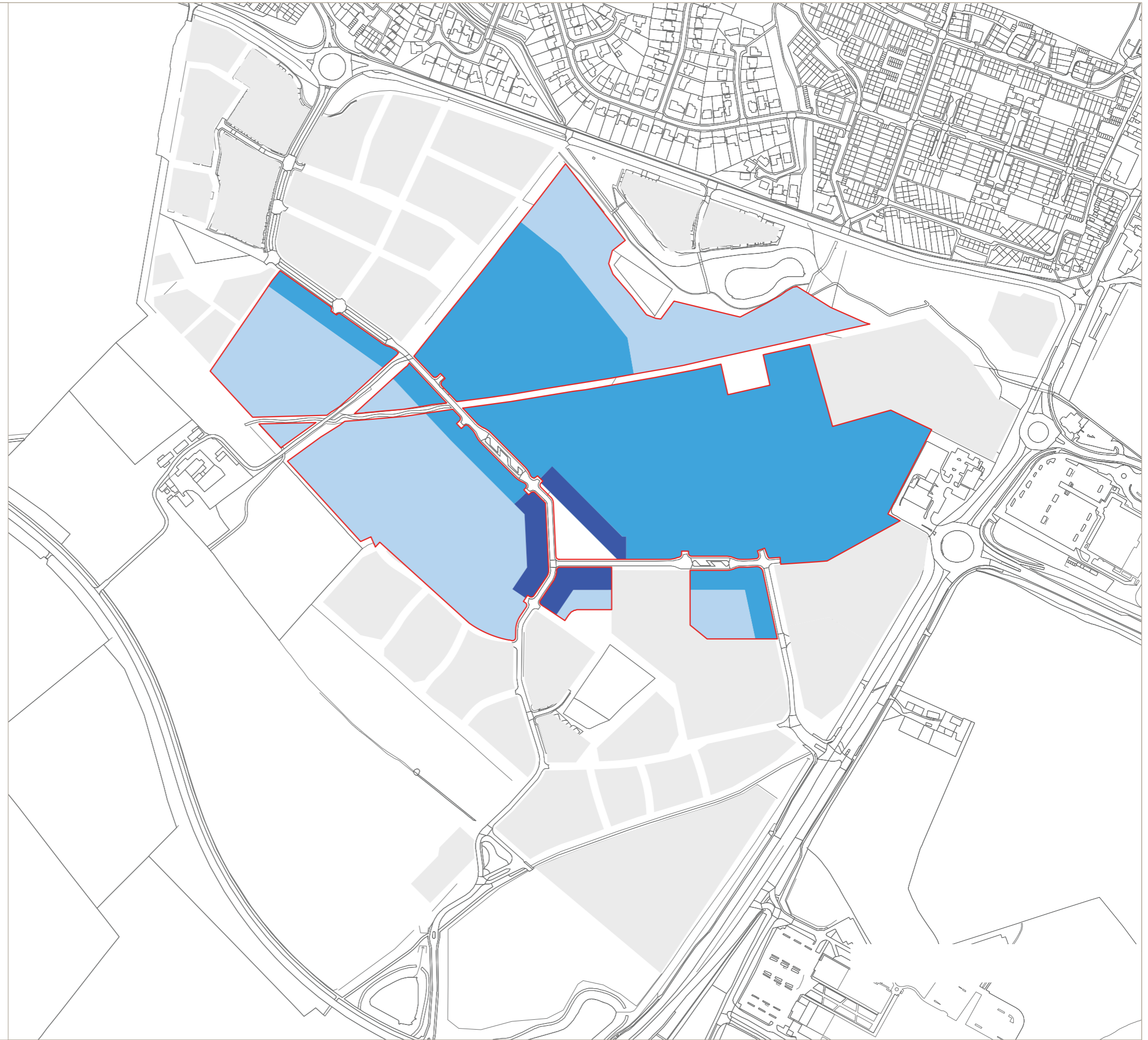


Figure 2.3 Building density

0 100m

