

1.10: Opportunities and Constraints

Context Inspection

The site lies near a series of private allotments to the north-east and therefore a retainer of existing hedgerows will be maintained to provide privacy and act as a natural boundary. There is scope for this to be enhanced.

The views of the site from the nearby properties should be considered in order to protect their amenity and to promote a healthy low bearing impact on their skyline view.

Proposed access will require some removal of the existing hedging that flanks the road but this can be offset with new native planting elsewhere on the site and along the boundaries.

The site is in proximity to the Chesterton conservation area and there is a proposal to extend it to the north.

The existing trees and hedgerows to the south-west provide ample opportunity to cloak views into the site and are not so overbearing to reduce views out. Whereas the existing trees to the south-east reduce both view in and out and should be maintained for privacy and setting. Also any properties should be set back an appropriate distance to not have a significant impact in existing dwellings.

The largely deciduous hedging and trees around the site will provide seasonal buffer with the adjacent boundaries, allotments and houses beyond. It will also provide a natural backdrop. An appropriately located POS can be used to further enhance the site.

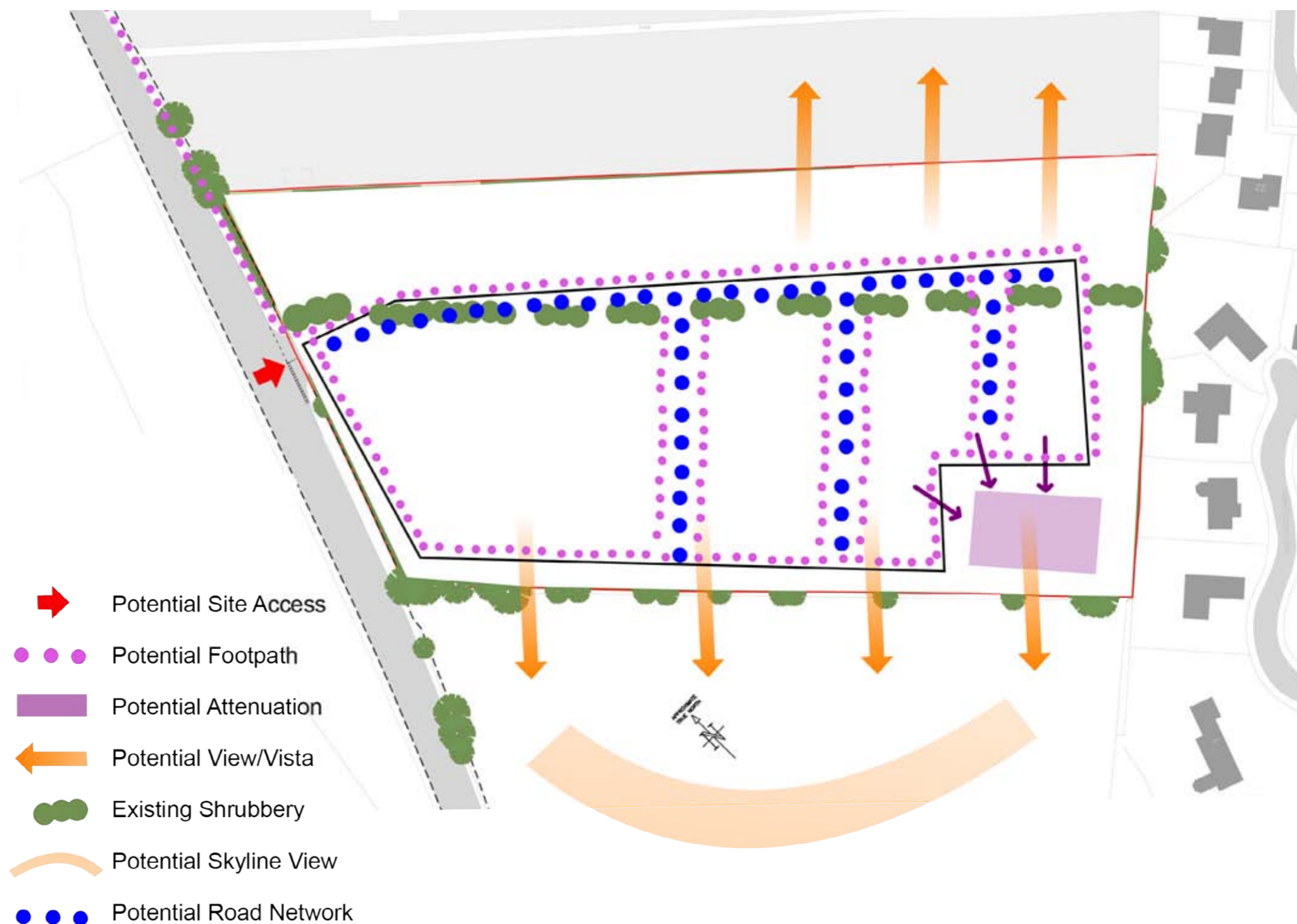


Potential Opportunities - Infrastructure & Services

The rationale for the site concept has been developed through a number of stages which responds to various opportunities and constraints. The following pages illustrate how a design could evolve on the site.

The site is enclosed by well established hedgerows and tree planting, which should be retained as much as possible. Access point potential is from the west of the site and the potential road network can be orientated as a grid. The footpath network would be alongside the roads as this would give an optimum access to the settlement and transport network.

There are a series of potential views/vistas that could be created overlooking the countryside and forming a skyline view from a frontage of potential development. Sustainable Drainage as well as considering storm run off could also be used to enhance the appearance and ecological character of the site.



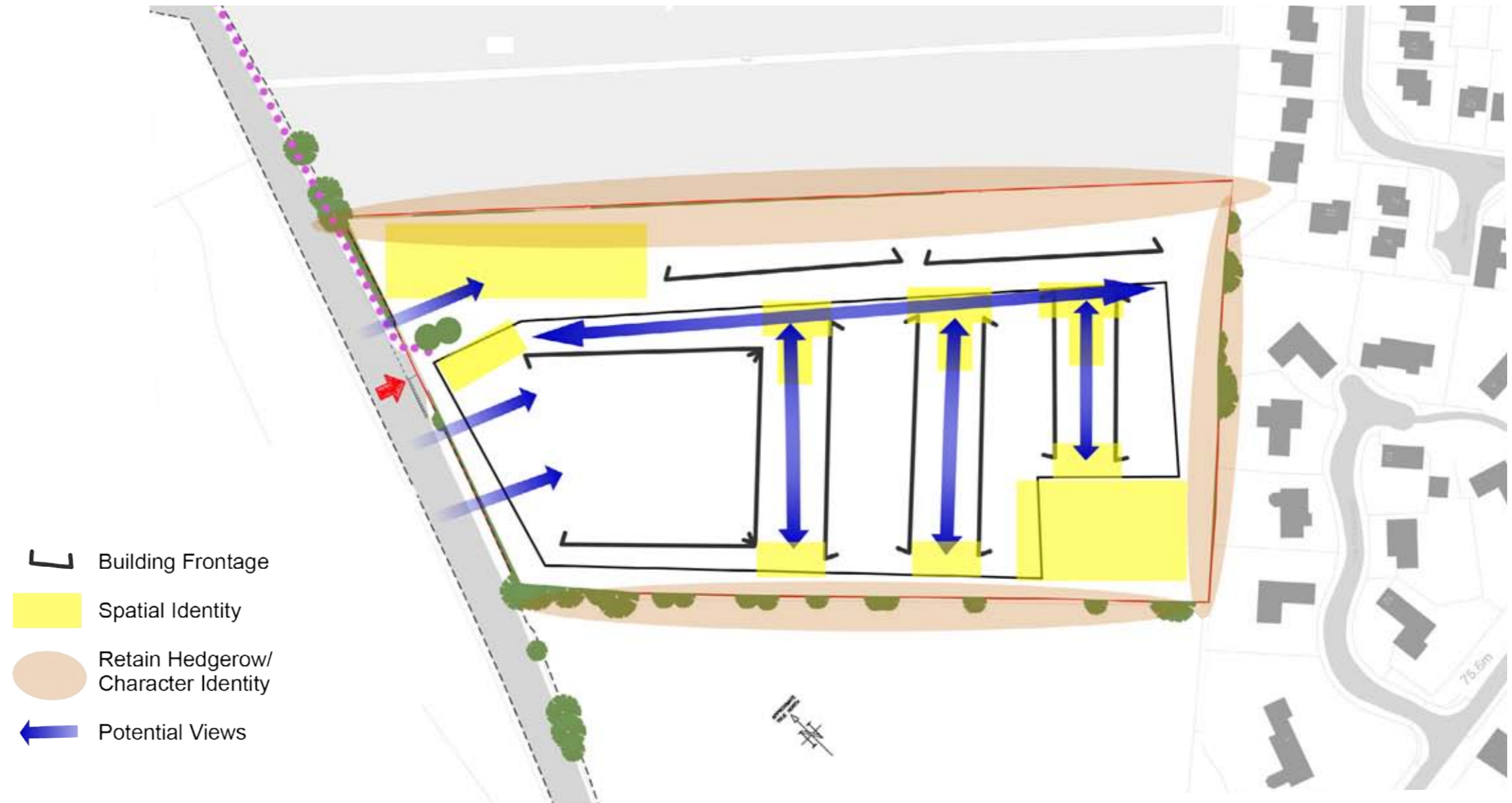
Potential Opportunities - Urban Form

The structure of the development has a linear north-south orientation, the access will be provided from the west and this can frame potential views. The views to the south-west can also accommodate views out of the development. There is also potential for street frontage along the North-western boundary, this frontage can have a reduced hedgerow or improved landscaping.

The series of junctions or divisions of adjoining movement space can create a spatial identity with a series of landmark features, open spaces or community amenities to aid legibility and creation of a built environment character.

The urban form will take precedent from characteristics of the village, such as the irregular set backs in the building line and the creation of spaces and views. The building lines should be orientated to promote vistas or key landscape features.

The illustration to the right demonstrates how opportunities can be achieved in design. Making one of the constraints to positively influence development design.



Potential Opportunities - Landscape

The landscape strategy should retain a majority of the existing wildlife corridors. The boundary wildlife corridors should be maintained where best possible. A series of trees in colonnade would align with the primary access road and serve to increase biodiversity and act as a key feature within the site.

The southern green space could be used to accommodate an attenuation basin as it the lowest point of topography on the site. This could also increase wetland habitat and improve the ecological diversity of local wildlife.

The site topography has a low level slope to the south which can help in the formulation of a rainwater / services strategy. The root protection area is highlighted to protect the tree root from damage as well as providing a suitable buffer for the built development line when in proximity to the boundary.

The illustration to the right indicates how green space could be appropriately located used to address constraints and create opportunities. For example the Green Space to the NE could aid ecology, create a buffer with the adjacent allotments, provide an attractive leafy character to the site whilst also potentially containing attenuation needs and play space.



Potential Constraints - Heritage Assets

As the site is within proximity to heritage assets consideration should be given to a possibility of discovering archaeological remains on site, most notably Roman as the site is close to the Roman town of Alchester. An archaeological study should be undertaken to ascertain the archaeological value of the site, it is arguable that the generations of arable activity may have degraded any surviving archaeological remains, although not discounted.

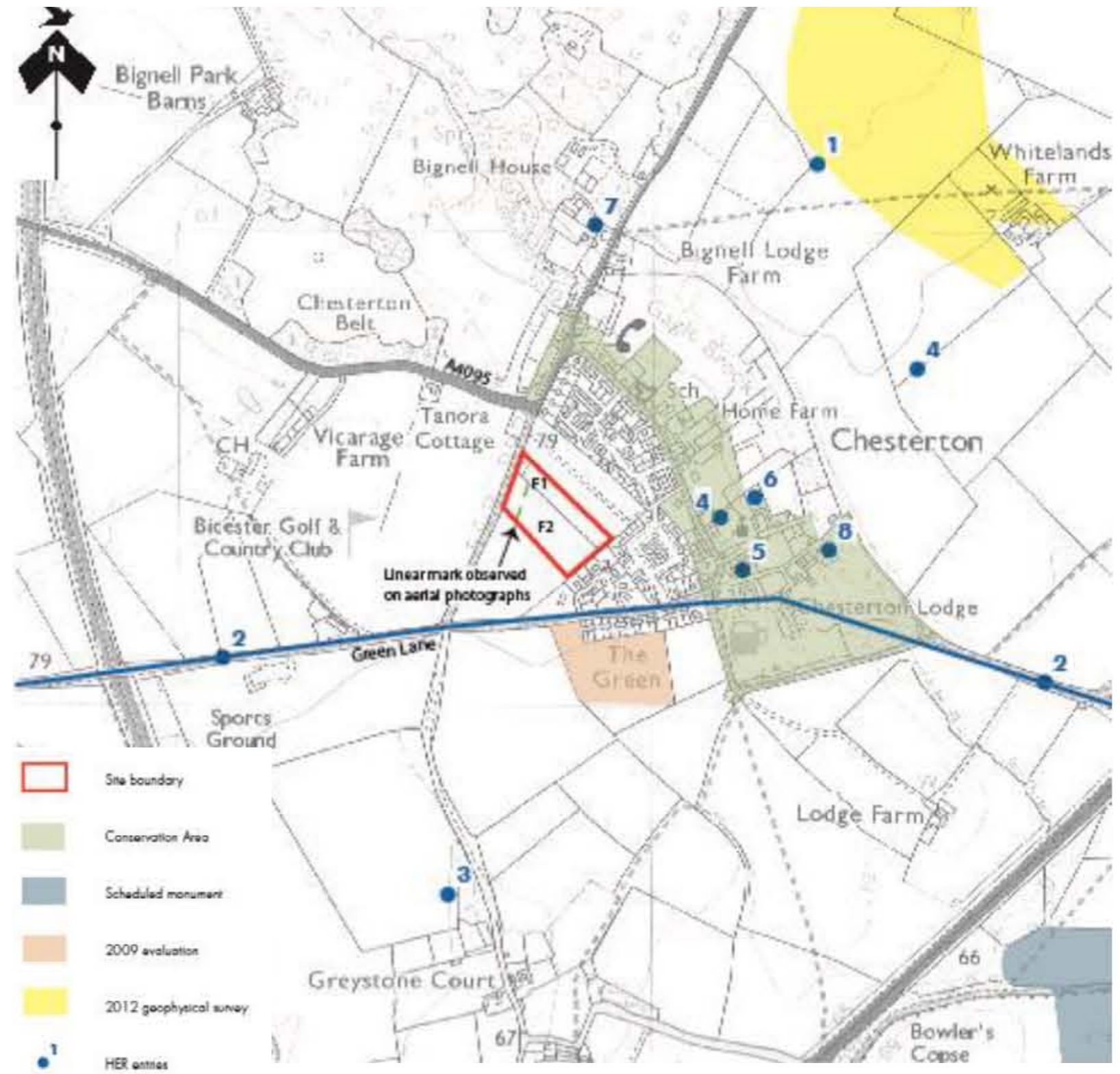
Because of the potential for the site to contain buried archaeology of Roman date a geophysical survey has been carried out.

The reports conclusion is as follows:

The detailed magneto meter survey located a positive rectilinear anomaly that appears to relate to an enclosure feature that is present within both survey areas. A Further linear ditch, with an apparent deliberate 5.5m gap, is located to the west of the enclosure. Several other linear and discrete anomalies have been located within the site, but these are generally very weak and indistinct and although they may relate to cut, ditch-like and pit-like features, their origin is uncertain.

Widespread magnetic debris with the north eastern part of the site is likely to have originated from its use as allotment gardens. The south western part of the site contains evidence of medieval cultivation in the form of ridge and furrow.

- HER 1 - Bronze Age Barrows
- HER 2 - Line of Akeman Street
- HER 3 - Roman Coin findspot of 25 coins
- HER 4 - Earthwork remains of 13th century building
- HER 5 - 12th and 13th Century Ditch
- HER 6 - Medieval Ditch
- HER 7 - Deserted Medieval Village
- HER 8 - Post Medieval Manor Farm Mill



Extract from Archaeological Assessment CSa/2325/03

1.11: Urban Impact

As shown from the positive figure plans regarding building height, usage and density there is a need for more smaller building footprints to infill the urban sprawl toward the Site.

The typology best suited to this infill would be residential development. To reduce the impact upon the allotments and to prevent turning it into a tight enclosure it would be advisable to have a medium density with a mixture of housing types in size and scale.

A mixture of density is present in the local area. As such it is arguable to have a medium density site to relate to both urban design principles and to mediate the language.

The impact on the Golf Course would be minimal due to the heavy vegetation barrier to the west of the site. Also as the Golf Course space does not comprise of a residential built identity there is minimal relationship to cite precedent from.

The impact on the road infrastructure would be minor and make positive contributions to pedestrian / vehicle access and potentially encourage vehicles to slow along the straight road adjacent to the Site.

1.12: Social Impact

The local area is primarily used as a place of residence for varying ages in the local community from infants through to the elderly. The site is situated close to the allotments and main road and as such will have a tie to the inner communal sociologies and identities.

A residential development would enhance this identity provided the development takes precedence from the local architecture and urban design. A mixture or even an addition can be proposed provided it is a reflection of the site and in-line with best design principles.

The social link between the proposed development and the rest of the village could be added to by the inclusion of an access route for pedestrians. This could promote social relations as it joins identities together as well as increase permeability in the urban area.

An aspect that appears lacking in the immediate local area is the option for open space for recreation. The inclusion of such a space into the development could help improve social development and provide an amenity for the village.

1.13: Effects on Development

The two aspects of urban and social impact allow for a development to consider the way in which it will absorb and reflect the language of its surrounding environment so as to compliment and reinforce the existing community.

From the aspects described it is clear that a residential development would enhance this locality and result in a positive social and urban improvement to the village.

This could allow for occupiers to consider the space more positively and bring further footfall to the development, adding to the general social cohesion of Chesterton.

The planting boundaries should ideally be maintained and kept where possible in an attempt to upkeep and promote biodiversity so as to aid the ecology of the area.

An attractive green space amenity for recreation could act as a focal point of the master plan for the houses and routes within the site and potentially the rest of the village.

1.14: Planning Policies

The development follows Government Policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the Planning Statement accompanying the application.

In addition to the National and Local Planning Policies the following relevant guidance has also been considered in the development of the Illustrative Master Plan and will be considered further at the detailed design stage:

- By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System (DETR, CABE 2000)

- By Design: Better Places to Live (DTLR, CABE 2001)
- Code for Sustainable Homes (CLG December 2006)
- Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide (ODPM 2005)
- Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM 2004)
- Secure By Design Principles (ACPO June 2004)
- Manual for Street 2 – Wider Application of the Principles (CLG September 2010)
- Urban Design Compendium 1 (English Partnerships 2000)
- Urban Design Compendium 2: Delivering Quality Places (English Partnerships 2007)

Regional Planning Policy

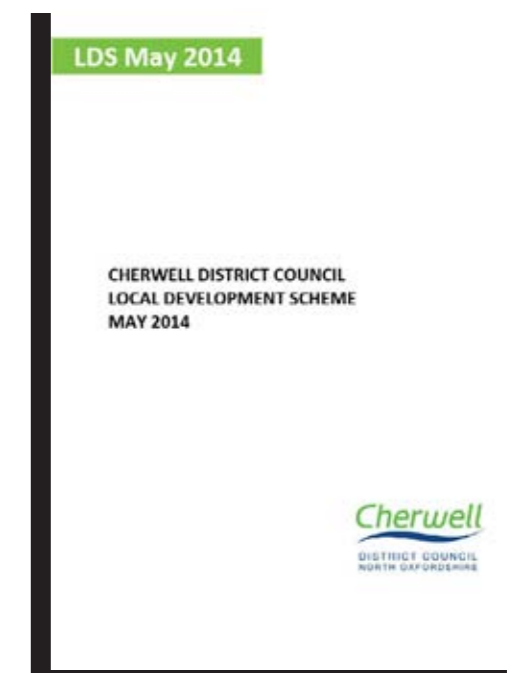
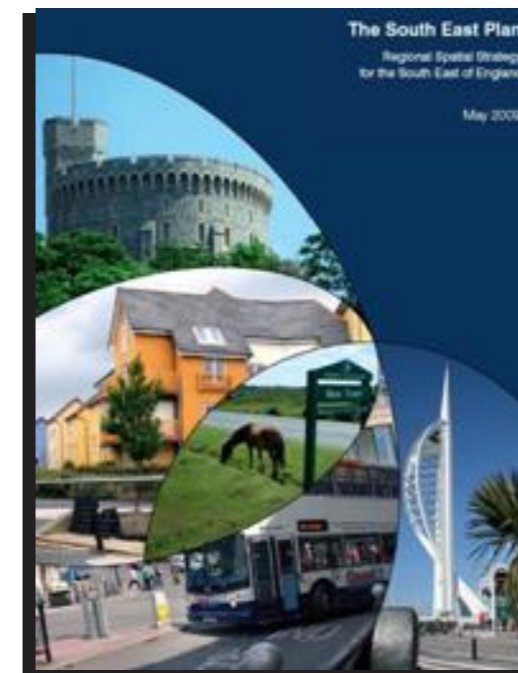
The policies in the South East Plan relevant to the proposed development include the following:

- Policy CC1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy CC3 – Resource Use
- Policy CC4 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy CC5 – Supporting an Aging Population
- Policy CC6 – Sustainable Communities and Character of the Environment
- Policy CC8 – Green Infrastructure
- Policy H4 – Type and Size of New Housing
- Policy H5 – Housing Design and Density
- Policy T1 – Manage an Invest
- Policy T2 – Mobility Management
- Policy T4 – Parking
- Policy C4 – Landscape and Countryside Management
- Policy C6 – Countryside Access and Rights of Way Management

Cherwell Local Policy

The following Non Statutory Local Plan policies are limited weight to the proposed development:

- H3 – Making Efficient Use of Land
- H4 – Types of Housing
- H7 – Affordable Housing
- TR1 – Transport and Development
- TR3 – Transport Assessments and Travel Plan
- TR4 – Mitigation Measures
- TR5 – Road Safety
- TR9 – Cycle Parking
- TR11 – Parking
- TR19 – Roads in Residential Areas
- R8 – Public Outdoor Recreation Play Space
- R9 – Amenity Areas
- D1 – Urban Design Objectives
- D2 – Planning Application Design Statements
- D3 – Local Distinctiveness
- D4 – Quality of Architecture
- D5 – Design of Public Realm
- D9 – Energy Efficient Design



Cherwell Local Policy II

Policy C30

New housing development should be compatible with the appearance, character, layout and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity.

Policy BSC3 Affordable Mix

Relates to affordable housing that include three or more dwellings will be expected to provide at least 30% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

Policy BSC 4 Housing Mix

New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The mix of housing will be negotiated having regard to the Council's most up-to-date evidence on housing need and available evidence from developers on local market conditions.

Policy ESD 6 Sustainable Flood Risk Management

The Council will manage and reduce flood risk in the district through using a sequential approach to development, locating vulnerable developments in the areas at lower risk of flooding. Development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and the benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding.

Policy ESD 7 Sustainable Drainage Systems

All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems for the management of surface water run-off.

Policy ESD16

Relates to the character of the built and historic environment, and states that new development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.

Recommendations

Applying the 30% housing density sought under policy BSC3 to the site at Green Lane (2.8ha) would result in 84 dwellings on the site. The 30% housing target is considerably higher than the housing density immediately adjacent to the site.

This ranges from approximately 8.3 dpa at the Woodlands to the south, to 16 dph at Chestnut Close, Fortescue Drive and Ash Grove, and to 20. dph at Orchard Rise and Banks Furlong to the north east.

Applying these densities to the site results in a range of dwellings from 23 dwellings at 8.3 dph to 59 at 21.0 dph. A midpoint would be 41 at 14.6 dph.

Cherwell District Policy - Landscape Assessment

The Cherwell District published a Landscape Assessment wherein the site is zoned in the Otmoor Lowlands which is associated with the River Ray and flat, wet, low lying landscape meadows and pastures. This zone stretches northwards to include Bicester's urban fringes, and to the southern edge of the Oxford Heights.

The site area is not of high landscape value although the Otmoor lowlands includes areas of ecological interest and enhancing wildlife habitat is preferable to the strategy. It is also near parklands and not near an ancient semi-natural woodland or site of special scientific interest. Although the Otmoor lowlands

Cherwell Local Plan - Landscape Strategy

The following policies from the Landscape Strategy within the local plan are relevant to the site.

EN36 - The council will seek opportunities to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

EN37 - In exercising its development control functions the council will welcome opportunities for countryside management projects where (i) all important trees, woodland and hedgerows are retained (ii) The ecological value of the site will be enhanced; and (iii) New tree and hedgerow planting using species native to the area and of local provenance is encouraged and subsequently managed.