

# HIMLEY VILLAGE

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

DECEMBER 2014

P3Eco

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# 01

## Introduction

01.1 The Vision

01.2 The Team



## 01.1 THE VISION

The environmental ambitions of Bicester eco-town promise to make it an outstanding model for the development of settlements old and new. The proposal for Himley Village described on these pages build on the Masterplan for the eco-town so as to bring about a distinctive and path breaking development that will entice people to make their lives and bring up their families here and attract visitors to come and see a realised vision of a sustainable and smart future.

The Masterplan faithfully follows the requirements of the Eco-town Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 in setting out a framework to guide key determinants. These include land use, green infrastructure, densities, employment, movement and governance together with ambitious targets for environmental, social and economic sustainability. Policies and targets are critical but ultimately it is the quality of life in the eco-town that holds the key of its success. That is what will attract people to come and live here and then help grow it to maturity as a flourishing community.

In developing the design strategies set out here the team has continually asked: what is different about an eco-town as a lived experience? We have been open to influences from diverse sources: local and historical pattern of building settlements as well as the latest international examples; academic research as well as practical experience; developers knowledge of the residential market as well as the principles and policies matured in the public sector. In addition to these external influences we have also let the site and the land guide the design.

If there is one thing that will characterise the experience of living at Himley Village above its other very worthwhile qualities, that

will be the close relationship between the natural and the built world. The land, with its hedgerows, its wildlife, its water and its fertile soil is abundant in life enhancing gifts provided the design of the village is open to them.

**The run of the hedgerows, the track of the water over the contours and the nature of the edges of the site have guided the organisation of the flow of people, vehicles, energy and waste and the positioning of the buildings and private and public space. Together these influences have led to the creation of a clear identity for the village as a whole and a strong sense of place in its neighbourhoods.**

## 01.2 THE TEAM

Client	P3Eco
Architects	Penoyre & Prasad
Landscape Architects	Farrer Huxley Associates
Planning Consultants	Turley
Transport	Alan Baxter Associates
Drainage	Alan Baxter Associates
Heritage and Archaeology	Alan Baxter Associates

Founded by Greg Penoyre and Sunand Prasad in 1988, **Penoyre & Prasad** is a RIBA chartered practice with over 25 years of experience across many sectors, including residential development, master-planning, education, health, workplace and cultural venues. Whatever the project, we bring to bear high ambition and fresh ideas focused on the people who use, operate and experience the buildings, places and neighbourhoods. The breadth of our work ensures cross-fertilisation of ideas across projects in different sectors.

We have a distinctive, collaborative design approach that harnesses the knowledge of clients and users and as well as of the design and construction teams. It has been proved in practice through 120 built schemes that have produced functional, beautiful and energy efficient places and buildings. Our work has received wide recognition with some 100 design awards as well as numerous publications and competition wins.

Through all its years of practice Penoyre & Prasad has engaged strongly with the sustainability of buildings, neighbourhoods and settlements. We have done this not only through design but also through advocacy, research and policy formulation at the highest levels. For example Sunand Prasad served on the Government's Eco-Town Challenge Panel in 2009 and later Chaired the Eco-Town Design Review Panel of the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment. Penoyre & Prasad was named Sustainable Practice of the Year in 2014 by the Architects Journal.

Our work is underpinned by the belief that design adds value and can directly reflect and support the future needs not only of our clients but of their customers and the public generally. We provide a holistic design service, to develop places and buildings that respond to their specific cultural, environmental and planning contexts.

**Alan Baxter** is a multidisciplinary design consultancy serving clients across the private and public sectors throughout the UK. Their work is highly regarded and is at the forefront of creative endeavour in the built environment and development industry.

They have extensive experience in almost every kind of engineering, having worked on a diverse range of projects on new and existing buildings, roads, bridges and flood protection works. Their emphasis on holistic thinking and creativity means that solutions are often highly innovative, whilst at the same time being highly reliable and eminently buildable.

Alan Baxter have over the last 20 years pioneered work on the design of places and streets, and understanding how people move around towns, cities and neighbourhoods. Their work goes beyond the subject areas traditionally covered by the highway, transportation and infrastructure engineer, into what can best be described as 'placemaking and movement engineering'. They are involved in all kinds of public realm, development and urban regeneration projects endeavouring to show how movement can be used proactively to influence ways of living and transport choices, serving a key role in creating sustainable, attractive communities.

The conservation team at Alan Baxter consists of architectural historians and archaeologists from a wide range of backgrounds. Together, they have immense experience of dealing with a broad spectrum of historic buildings and places, from modest houses to great cathedrals and even whole cities. Their philosophy, is not to look not just at a particular site in isolation but also at the wider context: how it relates to its surroundings, how it is used, and its historic and cultural significance.

**Farrer Huxley Associates** is a practice of landscape and Urban design experts established in 1995. The practice is unrivalled in its approach to consultancy, offering critical appraisals far beyond the scope of landscape. This wide-angle thinking will challenge and confound assumptions and ultimately unlock abstract and difficult challenges from funding to technical and design constraints. This award winning practice has a number of nationally recognised, exemplar schemes in urban public realm, housing and education.

Our core business function is creating great landscapes that form the very fabric of society. Our work is founded upon the belief that landscape makes an essential contribution to the generation of sociable and sustainable communities. Our aim is to re-ignite people's relationship with nature through high quality creative solutions. Farrer Huxley Associates is convinced that engaging communities with nature through intelligent and well balanced design is the single most sustainable contribution that can be made to our neighbourhoods today.

Our team members have many years of experience in residential landscape design, regeneration, education, masterplanning, open space and play schemes in London and in the UK. We will bring this individual experience to the design of the landscape in Bicester.

Founded in 1983, **Turley** is a planning consultancy of breadth and distinction and a leading practice in the field of planning for property and the built environment. Turley have over 30 years of experience in all aspects of planning representing a wealth of accumulated company knowledge and expertise underpinning a trusted service for their clients. Today Turley employs over 200 staff across 10 offices in the UK.

With planning at its core their integrated services provide the knowledge, experience, capability and approach to successfully handle all types of development project across all built environment sectors. The planning service has grown to include complementary skills in urban design, masterplanning, heritage, economics, sustainability and engagement.

Turley deliver sustainable, commercial projects that:

- embrace the past
- meet the needs of the present
- secure the future.



# 02

## Context

**02.1 Planning Context**

**02.2 Social and Economic Context**

**02.3 Physical Context**



# 02

## 2.1 Planning Context

### 02.1 Planning Context

## 02.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

### National Spatial Policy

At the highest level the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the principles that any development within Himley Village should have regard to. The Ministerial foreword to the NPPF explains that 'the purpose of planning is to achieve sustainable development'. Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves does not mean worse lives for future generations. Development means 'growth' including housing a rising population.

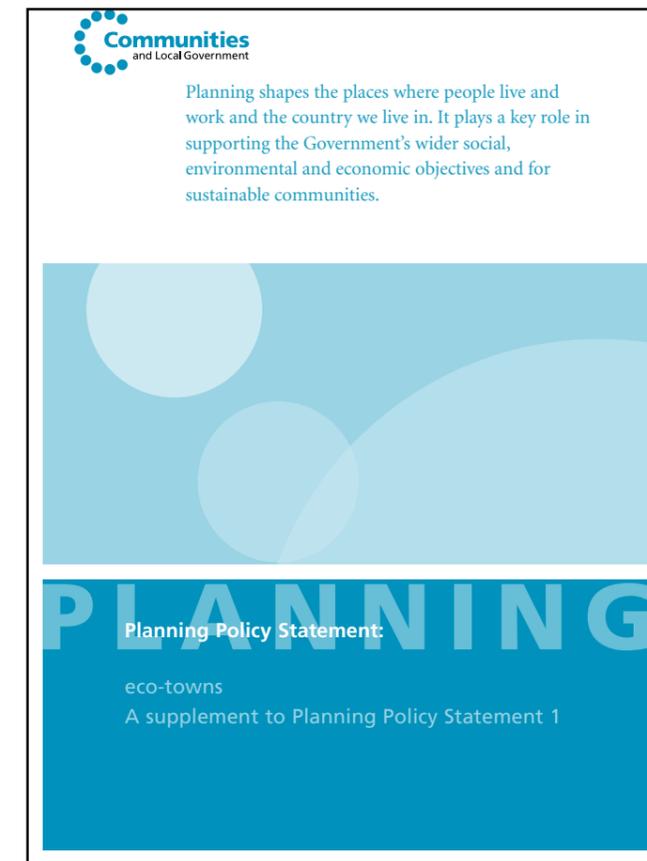
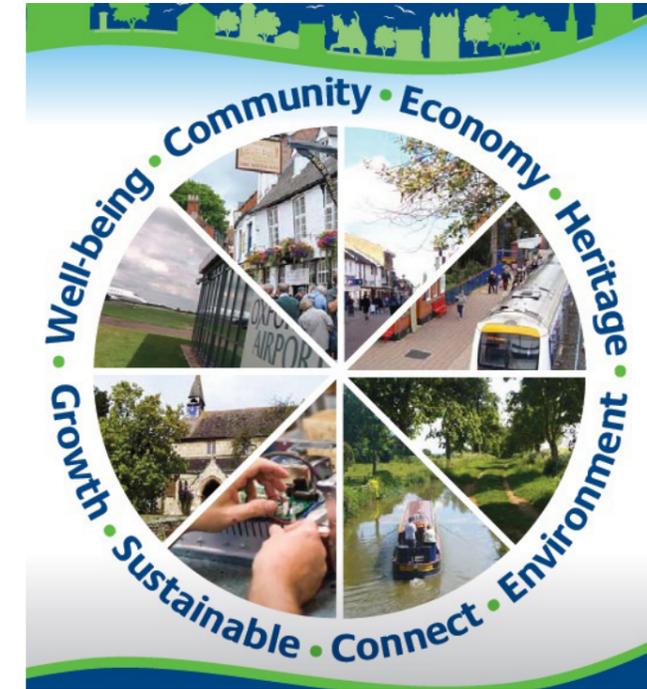
The planning system is expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development of which the NPPF states there are three dimensional roles: economic, social and environmental. These roles are mutually dependent and should not be undertaken in isolation. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities.

In addition to the NPPF, the proposals for Himley Village have been developed having full regard to the supplement to PPS 1 which remains extant at the time of submission. The PPS1 Supplement sets out the minimum standards intended to ensure that eco-towns are exemplars of good practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living. The design of eco-towns should take full account of the impact on local eco-systems, mitigating negative impacts as far as possible and maximising opportunities to enhance their local environments.

### Local Spatial Policy

The Cherwell Local Plan was adopted in 1996 and was only intended to extend to 2001. The Council is in the advanced stages of producing a new Local Plan which is due to undergo further examination in December 2014. Emerging Policy Bicester 1 sets out the development standards for the NW Bicester eco-town, including provision of approximately 6,000 new homes.

The Council is also in the process of producing an SPD for North West Bicester which will be adopted alongside the new Local Plan. This document is intended to expand on Policy Bicester 1 and set out the standards to be achieved by development on the eco-town site. The draft SPD has regard to the PPS1 Supplement and the latest proposals contained within the NW Bicester Masterplan document (2014). More detail on specific policies relevant to the proposals is contained with the Planning Statement.



# 02

## 2.2 Social and Economic Context

## 02.2 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### Social and Economic Context

Bicester is a market town which has grown rapidly in the last 50 years and further significant growth is planned. The historic central residential area of the town (Bicester Town ward) is now surrounded by new housing developments which have largely been built within the last 20 years. Bicester Town ward faces some levels of social deprivation and extensive out-commuting from newer housing developments has created issues in terms of achieving social cohesion and supporting the services, facilities and infrastructure that Bicester requires to keep pace with its rapid growth. There is a recognised social and economic need to improve Bicester's self-sufficiency and its image as a place to live and work.

Bicester's economy has principally been focused on the defence activities at MoD Bicester, on storage and distribution, on food processing and on engineering, particularly in the motorsports sector. However, as highlighted above, the town also faces significant out-commuting to Oxford, London and elsewhere in the region. It is intended that the provision of new employment land, including that delivered within NW Bicester, will help to address this.

Bicester town is located to the south-east of the Site and provides a wide range of shops and services. In addition, Bicester Village shopping outlet located to the south of the town, is an internationally significant shopping centre and tourist attraction. The Site itself will deliver a range of local services which will support the creation of sustainable and healthy communities as well as provide new job opportunities for local people.

# 02

## 2.3 Physical Context

- 2.3.1** Historical Context
- 2.3.2** Strategic Connections
- 2.3.3** Local Connections
- 2.3.4** Open Spaces
- 2.3.5** Land Use
- 2.3.6** Local Facilities
- 2.3.7** Topography
- 2.3.8** Landscape and Ecology
- 2.3.9** Views
- 2.3.10** Movement and Access
- 2.3.11** Noise
- 2.3.12** Heritage and Archaeology

## 02.3 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 2.3.1 Historical Context

Bicester has a long history dating back to Saxon times. Settlement was established by the West Saxons at the confluence of two ancient routes - a north-south Roman road linking Dorchester and Towcester and an east - west route to the south of Bicester linking St. Albans and Cirencester.

The settlement was referred in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Bercestra, listing the two manors of Bicester and Wretchwick, established on banks either side of the River Bure.

In the 13th Century a market and fair was established with two settlements, Market End and King's End on east and west banks of the Bure.

In the following years Bicester developed slowly becoming a small rural centre, focused around supporting the agricultural economy.

In 1850 the Bletchley to Oxford railway line was completed to the south west of Bicester with a new rail station located on the London Road followed in the early 20th Century by the Banbury line to the north of the town.

From the WW1 onwards military links were established with development by the RAF of Bicester airfield. The Bicester Ordnance Depot was established during the Second World War.

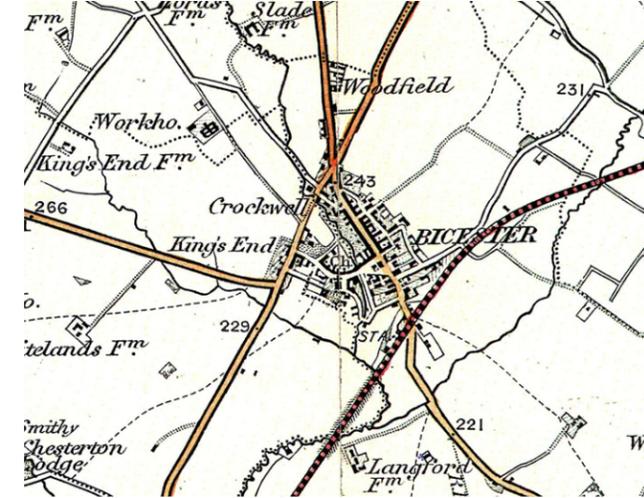
Major infrastructure development such as the M40 transformed the still largely agriculture-based economy and heralded the large-scale expansion of Bicester.



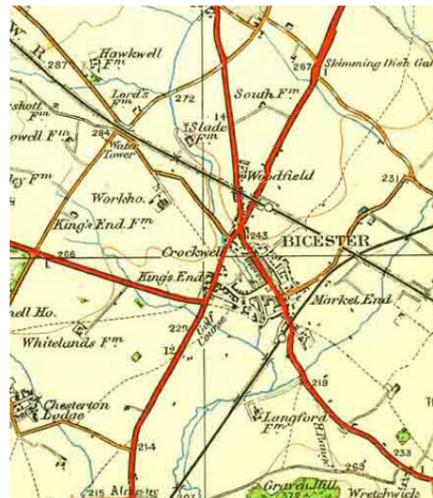
Bicester 1824  
Two settlements either side of the River Bure



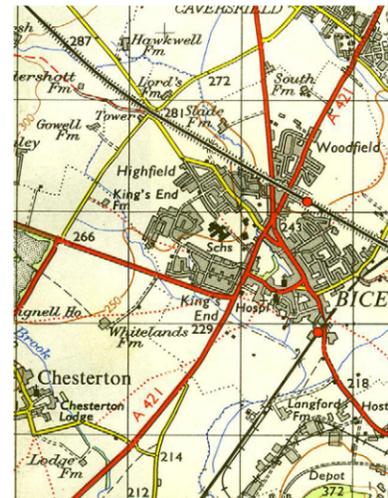
Bicester 1833  
Market End to the east and King's End to the west.



Bicester 1900  
New Bletchley to Oxford rail line opened to the south.



Bicester 1914  
Banbury GWR line opened to the north



Bicester 1965  
Rapid expansion to the east and west



Bicester 1999  
The old town is almost surrounded by new development along with the completion of a new ring road.

## 02.3 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 2.3.2 Strategic Connections



## 02.3 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 2.3.2 Local Connections

Bicester is currently largely circled by a ring road formed in part of Howes Lane and Lords Lane to the north west. Whilst these roads can be dated back to the 1830's, it is only relatively recently that they formed the edge of the settlement.

From the west there are three main roads connecting to Bicester:

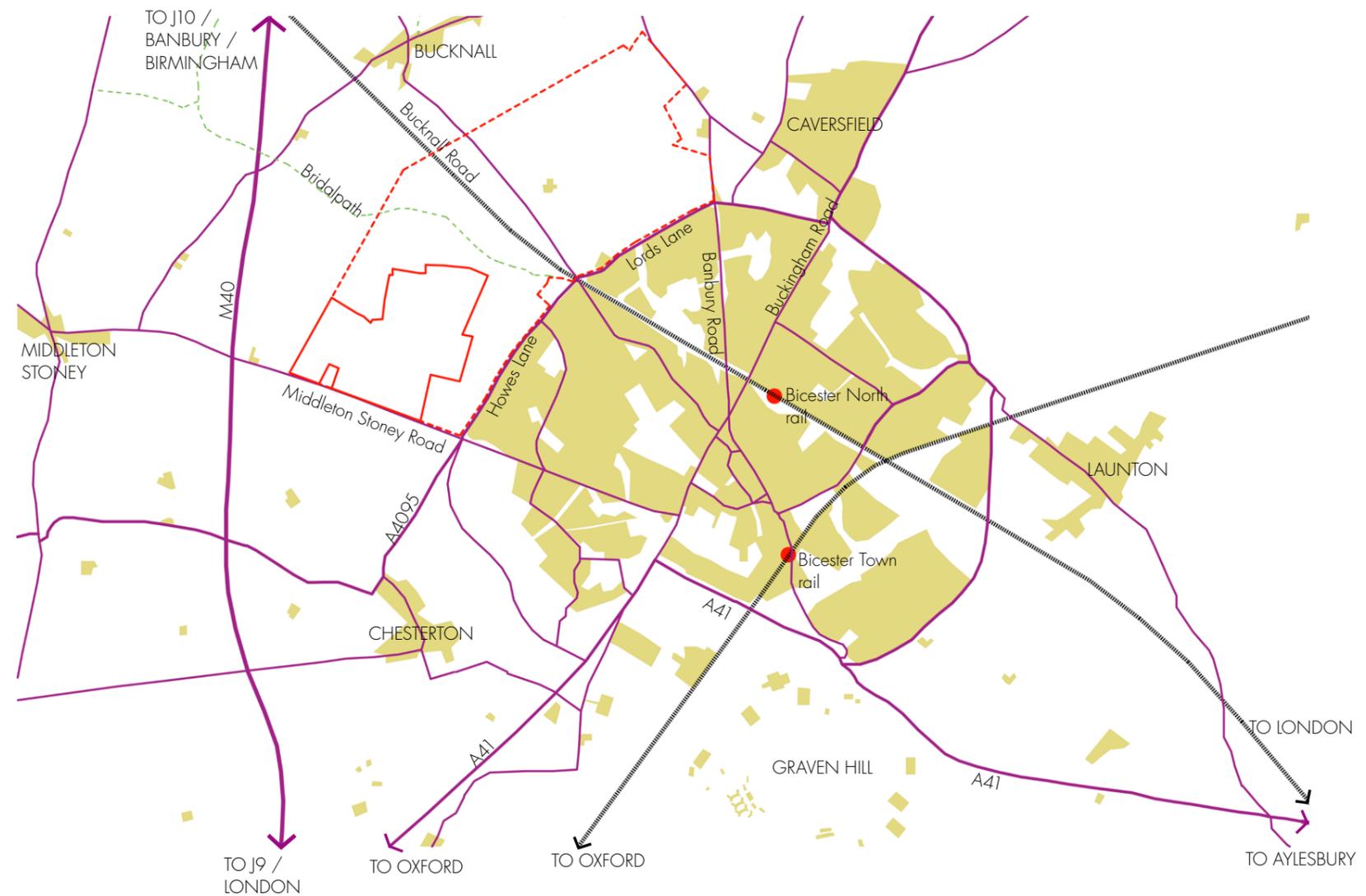
Bucknall Road to the north leads towards the village of Bucknall and to Junction 10 of the M40.

Further south Middleton Stoney Road forms the southern edge of the Application Site.

The A41, connects to Junction 9 of the M40 and to Oxford to the south, and to Aylesbury to the east.

Bicester is served by two rail stations. Bicester North on the Chiltern Main Line connects to London Marylebone. Bicester Town until recently provided a rail link to Oxford. The station is currently closed until an improved link to Oxford is constructed, which will also connect Oxford to London via High Wycombe. This is due to reopen in the Summer 2015.

A further East-West rail link is scheduled for 2019 which will connect Oxford and Bicester with Bedford and Milton Keynes.



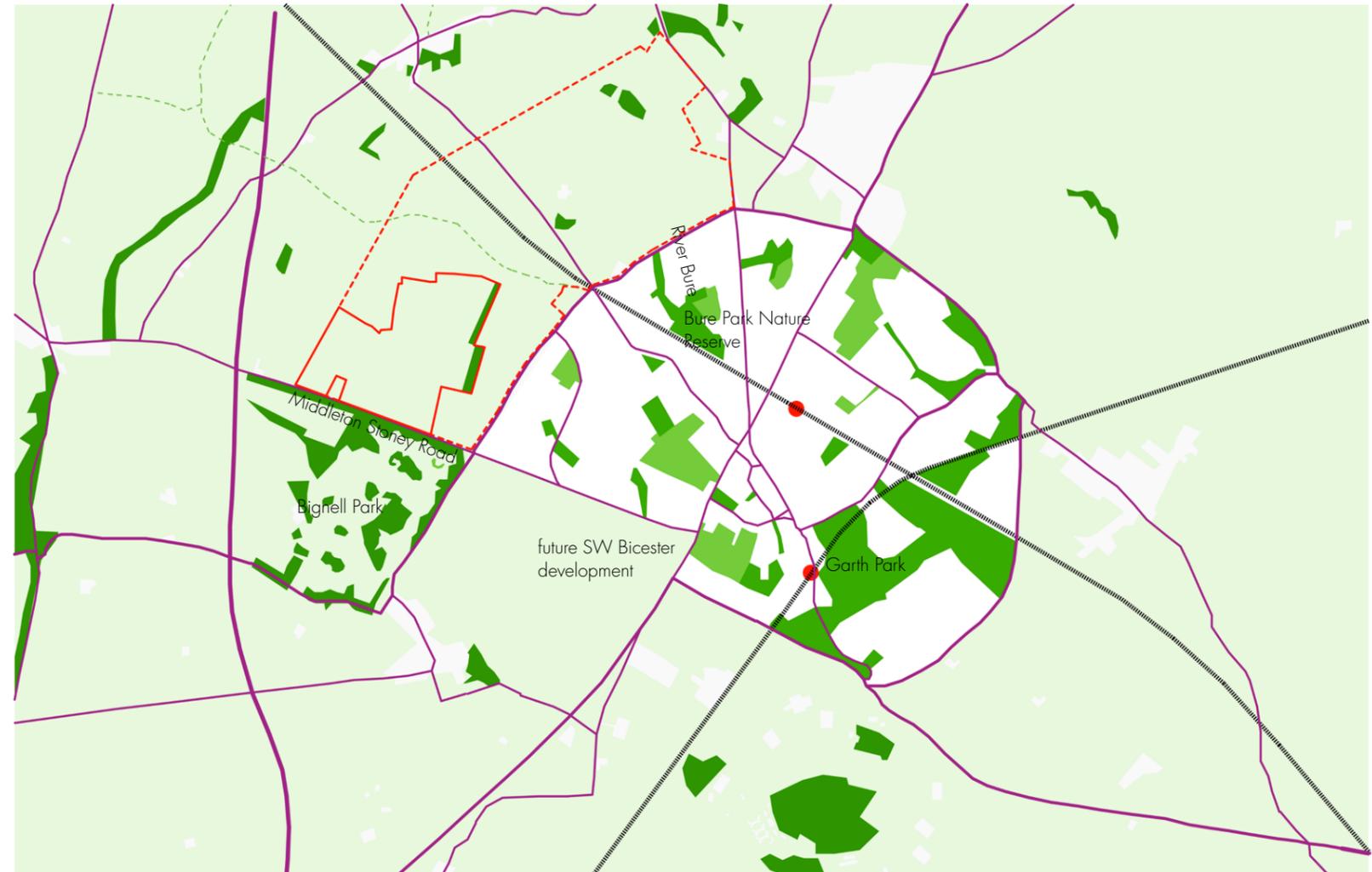
## 02.3 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 2.3.3 Open Space

The open space surrounding Bicester is characterised by rolling agricultural fields interspersed with dense pockets of woodland.

Bicester itself has a number of parks and recreation spaces often sited along rivers courses. Most notable of which is the Bure Park Nature reserve to the north-west of the town centre.

The Application Site is predominantly open arable land. The east boundary is bounded two strips of woodland planting. To the south there is an area of mature dense woodland fronting onto Middleton Stoney Road, which forms part of the Bignell Park estate.



- Agriculture
- Sports pitches / School Grounds
- Woodland
- Parkland / informal recreation

## 02.3 PHYSICAL CONTEXT

### 2.3.5 Land Use

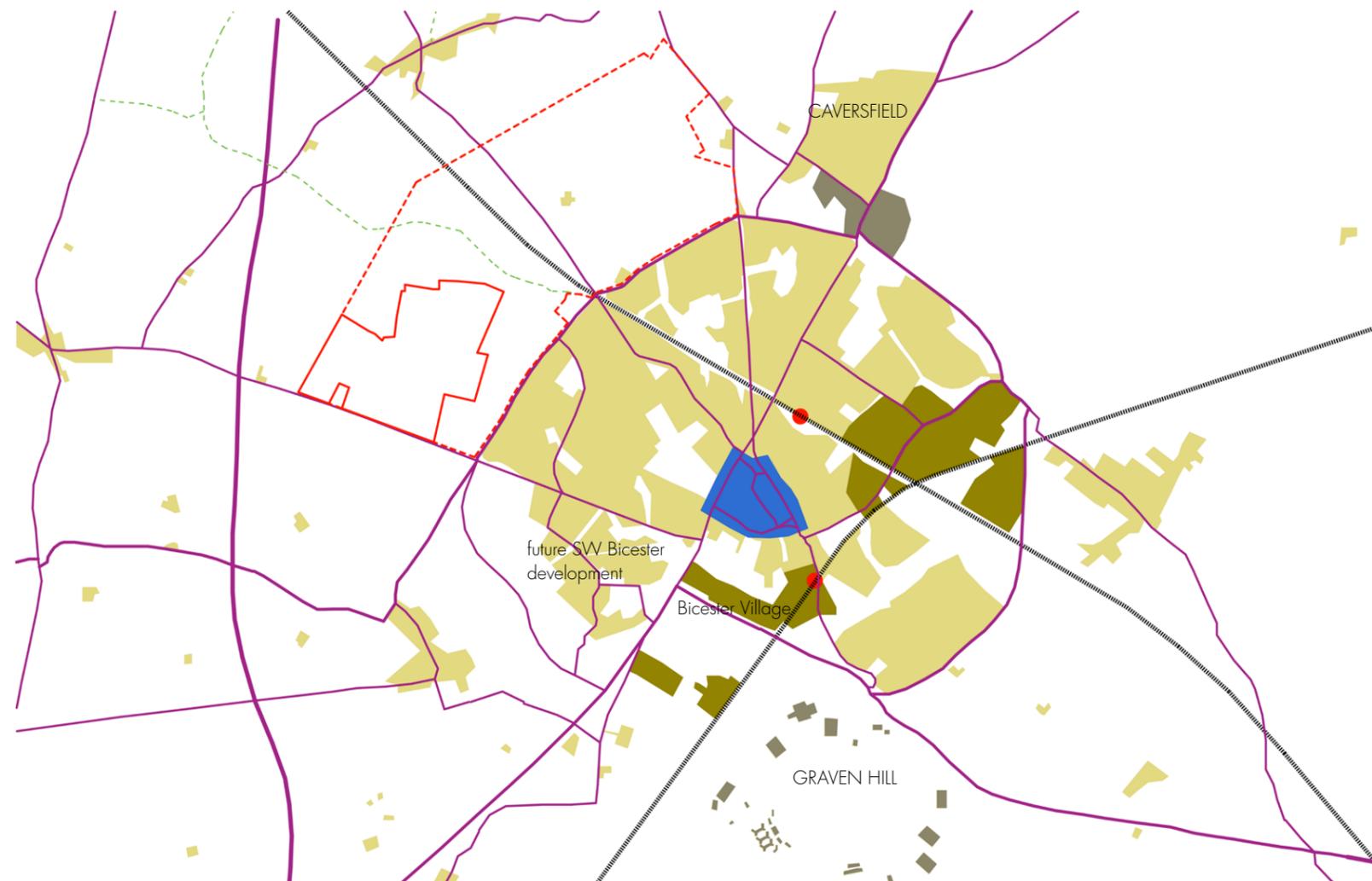
Settlement in Bicester has been largely contained within a ring road. Further expansion is underway to the south west.

Beyond the historic town centre the land use is predominantly residential with small pockets of local facilities.

Industrial uses and large scale commercial uses are largely confined to the east.

To the south of the town centre lies Bicester Village, a high-end outlet shopping centre.

The MOD has historic links with the area and currently occupy two sites - to the north near Caversfield where there is an airfield, and to the south at Graven Hill which has been used as a Ordnance Depot. There are plans for a residential led redevelopment of Graven Hill .



- Settlement
- Industrial / Commercial
- MOD land
- Town Centre