

MASTERPLAN PRINCIPLES

4.19 The illustrative design of the development is based on the following key principles:

- A clear and legible street network
- Massing and enclosure concentrated along the primary streets
- A highly permeable layout that allows pedestrians and cyclists to move freely between all parts of the site and wider area
- A series of connected focal spaces
- Vistas and marker buildings to aid orientation
- Key areas of public realm
- Attractive and safe public open space that is accessible to all users
- A new eastern edge to the town, which respects local character

4.20 The illustrative masterplan features a perimeter block structure comprising of small residential blocks with active frontages to the street, based around the central spine road. This will ensure an interconnected layout with a choice of routes for pedestrians and cyclists.



Site boundary



Illustrative masterplan

HOUSING MIX AND TENURE

4.21 The application proposes the construction of up to 500 homes at the site, with a range of unit types and tenures. The tables below show the illustrative mix for the market and affordable homes.

Table 2: Overall housing mix (illustrative site layout)

Unit type / No. beds	Number	% mix
1 bed house	61	15%
2 bed house	133	30%
3 bed house	207	40%
4 bed house	99	15%
Total	500	100%

Table 3: Market housing mix (illustrative site layout)

Unit type / No. beds	Number	% mix
1 bed house	17	5%
2 bed house	81	25%
3 bed house	146	45%
4 bed house	81	25%
Total	325	65% of total amount

Table 4: Affordable housing mix (illustrative site layout)

Unit type / No. beds	Number	% mix
1 bed house	44	25%
2 bed house	52	30%
3 bed house	61	35%
4 bed house	18	10%
Total	175	35% of total amount

4.22 All of the properties will be built in a traditional house form, at up to two storeys in height.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND PARKING PROVISION

4.23 The site has been designed to promote pedestrian and cycle movements over the car, which is reinforced through the layout and variety of pedestrian/cycle routes.

4.24 Every home in the development will have at least one allocated car parking space in the form of either an on-plot parking space, garage or courtyard. Provision will also be made for electric vehicle charging and cycle storage.

4.25 The indicative masterplan assumes that each dwelling will have at least one allocated car parking space, with additional spaces for larger units (3 and 4 bedroom homes) in addition to on-street provision for visitors. The exact number of car parking spaces will be set out at Reserved Matters stage following discussions with Oxfordshire County Council as Highway Authority.

4.26 The site will be designed to facilitate foot and cycle movements along desire lines through the development, linking to the external access points. Pedestrian and cycle links throughout the development will connect into Park View, the A44 Oxford Road and Bladon roundabout through a series of 3m hoggin footway/cycleway.

4.27 These measures are believed to offer a safe environment that will cater for vehicles but encourage increased levels of sustainable travel, particularly cycling and walking.

LANDSCAPE, TREES AND RECREATION SPACE

4.28 The landscape framework has been defined by a series of interlinking green spaces. These key spaces have been identified as:

- i. Parkland
- ii. Development edge and gateway
- iii. Community park
- iv. Greenways
- v. Greenlinks

4.29 These interlocking green spaces help set the development into its context and respond to the existing site constraints and areas of sensitivity.

4.30 A significant area of green infrastructure is proposed along the site's southern and western boundary. The Parkland (i) will create an identifiable and high-quality landscape setting to Blenheim Palace WHS and that will also create a clear sense of arrival to the historic town of Woodstock.

4.31 The design intent is to create an open informal parkland setting through a 'light touch' approach, using a simple layering effect of an expensive area of wildflower meadow, which merges into long grassland margins, to swaths of native scrub planting alongside the existing hedgerows on periphery of the parkland to the south and west, with large specimen trees scattered throughout the landscape.

4.32 The site's western hedgerow is to be reinforced with new infill planting of mixed native species. To the south of the parkland, the existing hedgerow is to be supplemented with new hedgerow tree planting in accordance with the mitigation measures set out as part of the Park View development.

4.33 A strong belt of small woodland groups along the southern development edge will filter and soften views of the development and provide a transitional zone between the parkland and development.

4.34 The Blenheim Villa scheduled ancient monument is a key heritage asset within the parkland. No physical remains are visible above ground, however there is an historic south-eastern aspect associated with the monument. This has been sensitively integrated into the development layout by providing an open, natural setting with only a few scattered individual trees throughout the eastern extents of the parkland. The heritage section within this statement sets out further enhancement opportunities.

4.35 A series of footpaths and cycleways will cross the parkland providing connections to Woodstock and the transport corridor of the A44.

4.36 In the north-west corner of the parkland, the proposals include an amenity and recreational resource in the form of a local park. It will comprise an area for an informal kick about space, seating, tree and shrub planting and a community orchard.

4.37 The linear green space known as the Development Edge and Gateway (ii) frames the housing and provides a sense of enclosure within

a wooded setting which is defined by the existing retained woodland belts. It creates an important green corridor which links people and wildlife to the wider landscape proposals.

4.38 It will be an informal naturalistic landscape with opportunities for localised natural, explorative and imaginative play. A series of footpaths will wind through the space helping to create an accessible open space network with the wider landscape proposals.

4.39 The existing woodland belts will largely be retained and enhanced, with the exception of the tree removals required to accommodate the new junction. The enhancements will support existing and new habitats, whilst improving its landscape structure. This will be achieved through infill tree planting and scalloped edges, with layers of native scrub planting and long grassland margins to promote ecological diversity. A new block of woodland planting will be provided adjacent to the new junction to mitigate the tree removals and to help to define a new setting for the gateway into the site.

4.40 The woodland belt provides a degree of separation between the site and the wider landscape setting, limiting visibility of the development from the wider landscape towards the WHS. The natural gap in the woodland belt along Shipton Lane will remain open, to retain an uninterrupted view across the proposed parkland towards the WHS.

4.41 The Community Park (iii) will be a vibrant and intensively used space focused around the community. It will contain an area of allotments, combined Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play and Local Equipped Area of Play, community garden

and a community orchard. It will be a space focused around growing, social interaction and community events. This area will include new tree and shrub planting, seating and a series of footpaths.

4.42 The Greenways (iv) will create a strong landscape structure through the development area (approximately 15m wide) providing important spaces for both people and wildlife. The greenways alignment has been derived by the key movement routes across the site from the western and southern points of interest, towards the community park and linking to the primary road infrastructure and development edges.

4.43 A key focal green space is proposed within the greenway adjacent to the primary street. The space will be overlooked by the development and will contain a Local Equipped Area of Play. Opportunities for long grassland meadows, pockets of wildflower meadows, tree and shrub planting will enhance the local biodiversity and the greenways role as a wildlife corridor. Natural play and small attenuation features will also weave through these greenways.

4.44 Whilst the final design and alignment will be established at the reserved matters application stage, the green links (v) will create an additional layer of incidental open spaces connecting the larger green corridors with the surrounding open spaces. They will principally be movement corridors but could further support biodiversity and enhance the character and appearance across the development.

4.45 These will be smaller, intimate, human scale spaces providing low key routes, seating, shrub and tree planting to support wildlife and long and short grass margins.

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

4.46 Blenheim Estate Homes' approach to sustainability ensures that all their developments are designed to be energy efficient communities, which enhance and restore biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

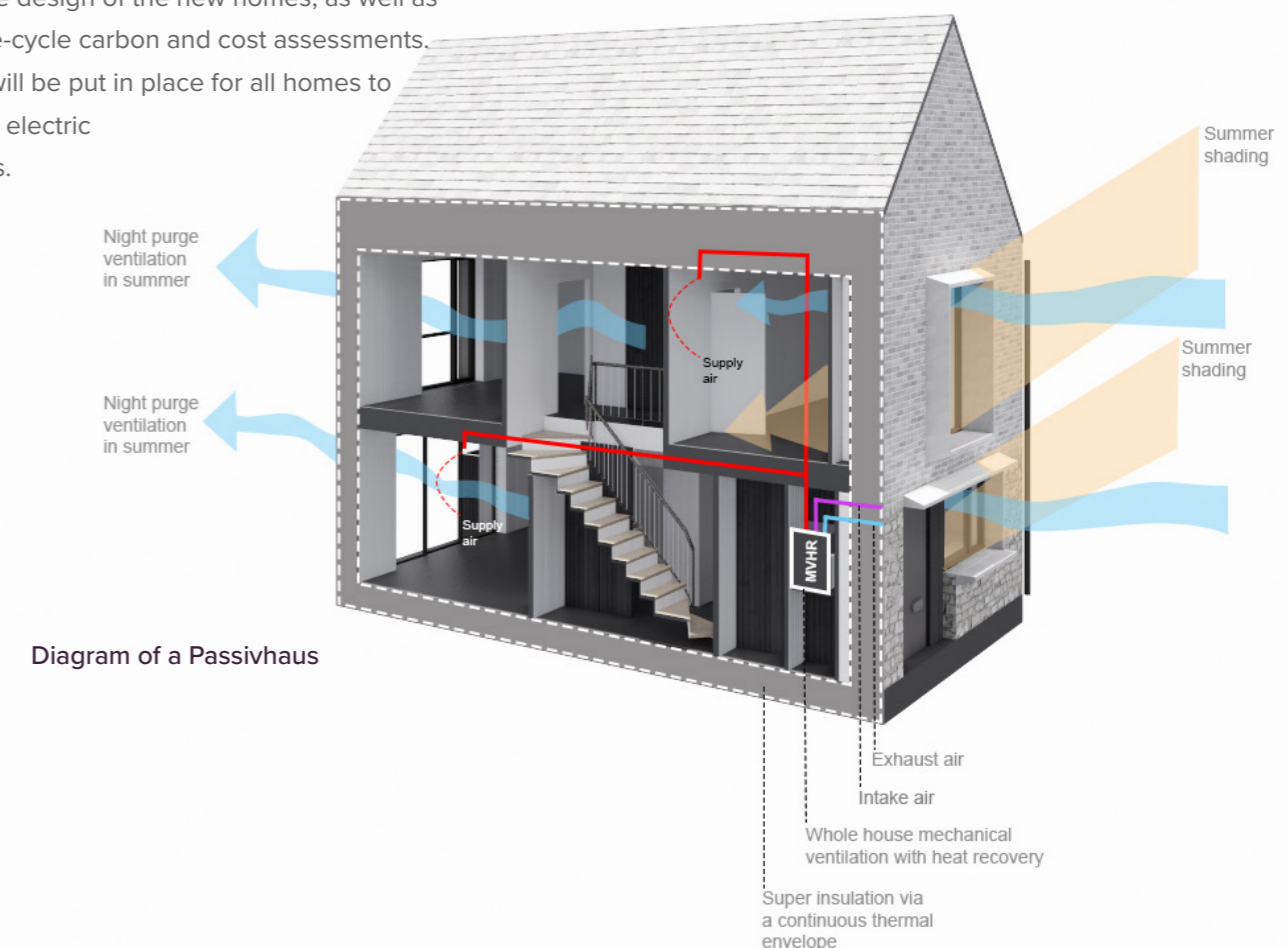
4.47 The proposals include various methods to improve the existing habitats on site. This is to include thinning and coppicing selected trees, scalloped shapes edging around woodland edges and long grassland margins.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY

4.48 The development will achieve net zero carbon emissions through reduced energy use and carbon emissions by making use of Passivhaus principles in the design of the new homes, as well as considering life-cycle carbon and cost assessments. Infrastructure will be put in place for all homes to have access to electric charging points.

4.49 The design intent of the development is to create a new high-quality neighbourhood delivering low energy, comfortable homes. The development will adopt the stringent Passivhaus standard, which provides significant reductions in energy demand and use. This project seeks to be exemplar by:

- Lowering the life cycle embodied carbon of the proposed buildings through efficient construction and material use
- Being inclusive and accessible to all and providing high-quality design that places environmental sustainability at the forefront of its primary objectives



- Avoiding the use of fossil fuel on site by using high efficiency air source heat pumps to provide domestic hot water and heating
- Including passive measures to reduce energy demand by designing to Passivhaus standards
- Improving the wildlife and ecology of the site

AIR QUALITY ASSESSMENT

4.50 The application is supported by an air quality assessment (AQA), which has been prepared by WSP environmental consultants.

4.51 The report presents the findings of the assessment, which addresses the potential air quality impacts during both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. For both phases the type, source and significance of potential impacts were identified, and the measures that should be employed to minimise these are proposed.

4.52 The results show that the proposed development, both alone and in-combination with other committed developments identified in the surrounding area, would cause a small increase in pollutants. However, total pollutant concentrations are predicted to meet the respective UK Air Quality Strategy objectives at all human receptors with the proposed development in operation.

4.53 Accordingly, air quality impacts of the proposed development scheme are considered to be acceptable, and mitigation is not required.

SURFACE AND FOUL WATER DRAINAGE

4.54 A foul and surface water drainage strategy have been prepared and are set out in detail in the submitted Flood risk and foul drainage strategy report prepared by Infastruct CS Ltd. The proposed surface water drainage strategy incorporates a range of SuDS techniques including permeable paving, detention basins, dry swales and cellular soakaways, along with additional measures to maintain water quality and prevent pollution of the local water environment.

4.55 Foul water will be conveyed by a gravity pipe network towards a pumping station located along the eastern boundary, north of the entrance. From there, water will be pumped into the existing foul water sewer running westwards along Shipton Road, 1Km to the northwest. This will be subject to a Section 106 consent from Local Water Authority, Thames Water.

ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE

4.56 A Noise Assessment has been prepared by RSK Acoustics, the report outlines the results of a noise survey undertaken at the development site in order to quantify the existing noise climate, along with a noise intrusion assessment for the dwellings within the proposed development.

4.57 The assessment concluded that any impacts from potential road traffic increases are found to be of no change or otherwise just 'negligible'.

4.58 The report demonstrated that, in principle, noise to receptors across the proposed development and to existing receptors can be controlled to acceptable levels and that future noise impacts to roads will be negligible. Further assessment may be required at a later stage once a detailed site layout has been developed.

EXTERNAL LIGHTING

4.59 A lighting assessment has been undertaken to support the application. The report, produced by Equation lighting, considers the site to fall within an E2 Environmental Zone due to its rural setting.

4.60 The report concludes that due to the characteristics of the site, a well-designed lighting strategy is necessary and appropriate for the site.

4.61 In addition, the report has assessed the appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that any light pollution from the development is minimised. A hierarchy of brightnesses is proposed for Land East of Park View, with the more active areas of the site which have greater traffic flow and pedestrian use illuminated to relatively higher levels than areas which are quieter, such as the residential streets.

SERVICING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.62 Vehicle routes and turning spaces for larger vehicles will be incorporated into the detailed layout to ensure the development can be appropriately accessed and served by refuse and other delivery vehicles.

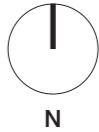
4.63 The development will incorporate appropriate provision for both refuse and recyclable waste. Bin storage areas will be set back from the immediate street frontage to avoid unnecessary visual clutter.


SUMMARY

4.64 In summary, the proposals will provide the following:

- Provision of up to 500 high-quality new homes which will include a good range of house types, sizes and tenures to deliver market and affordable housing for families, young people and the elderly
- A landscape-led design with significant areas of green infrastructure (including 33ha of green space) to provide attractive open space, a sensitive green edge to the village, along with retained and new natural habitat
- The development will achieve net zero carbon through the use of renewable energy, sustainable design/drainage and sustainable construction methods
- A new equipped children's play space and community allotment
- A new vehicular junction from the A4095 to access the site
- A biodiversity habitat net gain of 34% over the current baseline
- A commitment to the appropriate provision of and contributions towards supporting infrastructure

4.65 Further details of the outline proposals are provided in the submitted design and access statement.



Site boundary 



05 Planning considerations

5.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides a summary of the relevant planning policy context, including CDC's adopted development plan, as well as other material considerations including supplementary planning documents and guidance, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It then goes on to assess the proposals against the relevant planning policies.

STATUTORY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

5.2 In accordance with the provisions of Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a determination made under the planning acts must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3 For the purposes of this application, the development plan comprises the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1), adopted in 2015 and the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, adopted in 2020. Saved policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 remain part of the statutory Development Plan to which regard must be given in the determination of planning applications. The saved policies are those that were originally saved on 27 September 2007 and which have not been replaced by policies within the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1). Appendix 7 of that Plan lists those policies that have been replaced.

5.4 A review of the Local Plan is currently being progressed to update some of the current local plan policies and to address the needs of Cherwell up to 2040. Whilst the preparation of the local plan review continues, the adopted Local Plan is the principal planning policy document for the assessment of planning applications.

5.5 The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan was adopted in September 2017, and sets out planning policies for mineral working and waste management for Oxfordshire.

5.6 The site is located within the designated neighbourhood plan area of Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp. To date however, no neighbourhood plan has been prepared.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

a) Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs and Guidance)

5.7 Relevant to this planning application are the Cherwell Residential Guide SPD (July 2018) and the Developer Contributions SPD (February 2018).

b) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.8 The NPPF was updated in July 2021, and sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and how these are expected to be applied.

5.9 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.10 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10). In determining planning applications paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that the presumption means:

“... approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay;”

5.11 The three dimensions of sustainable development (paragraph 8) are the economic, social and environmental roles –

5.12 An economic objective- to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

5.13 A social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

5.14 An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

c) National Design Guide

5.15 The National Design Guide forms part of the government's suite of practice guidance and application of national policy, providing a focus on its priorities for well-designed places. The guide identifies 10 characteristics of well-designed places which include context, identity, built form, movement, nature and public spaces.

d) Emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050

5.16 As part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal agreement with the Government, the six Oxfordshire authorities have committed to producing a joint statutory spatial plan, known as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The plan will relate to a broad range of social, environmental and economic issues, and will provide a framework for districts for future planning policies. A Regulation 18 consultation was undertaken in Summer 2021 and is expected to be followed by a Regulation 19 consultation in Spring 2022, examination in Winter 2022, and adoption in Spring/Summer 2023.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.17 This section of the statement considers the key planning considerations of the development and whether the proposals meet local and national planning policy and guidance.

Principle of Development

5.18 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, either approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or, if the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless either or the following criteria are applicable:

- (i) The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- (ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

5.19 Footnote 8 confirms that local policies which are most important for determining the application are considered out-of-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

5.20 Footnote 7 lists the type of 'protected area or assets of particular importance' where criteria (i) above applies. These include habitat sites (for example SPAs/SACs/SPAs or Ramsar Sites); SSSIs; Green Belt; Local Green Space; AONB; National Park or Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets; and areas at risk of flooding.

5.21 The only designation applicable to the site under footnote 7 is the Scheduled Ancient Monument located in the south west corner of the site. As outlined in further detail in the heritage section of this statement, the assessment confirms that the proposed development will result in no adverse impact that would disengage the presumption on the basis that it has been triggered. This is reflected in Local Plan Policy PSD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), which states that 'when considering development proposals the council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.'

5.22 The current housing need for Cherwell (and Oxford) is derived from the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and its consideration through the Local Plan processes. For Cherwell this is a figure of 1,142 homes per annum which became the annual Local Plan housing requirement for the district – a total of 22,840 homes (2011-2031). The Partial Review of the Local Plan includes a separate requirement for 4,400 homes (2021-2031) to assist with Oxford's unmet needs.



5.23 Cherwell District Council's latest HLS position is provided in its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), last updated December 2021. This provides monitoring and statistical data for the period 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 and, for the Housing Land Supply (HLS). The latest AMR shows a delivery trajectory for those housing supply sites included in the five-year HLS, and calculates the extent of the cumulative supply against the 5-year requirement, taking into account the accumulated shortfall and adding a 5% buffer. The AMR claims a HLS of 3.8 years for the period 2021-2026 and 3.5 years HLS for the period 2022-2027 (commencing 1 April 2022).

5.24 Notwithstanding the inability for Cherwell to demonstrate a 5-year HLS, a review undertaken of the council's housing delivery assumptions indicates that there is insufficient evidence to support the inclusion of at least 2,710 of these. The resulting HLS of 2,400 dwellings falls significantly short of the 7,715 dwelling requirement, by 5,314 dwellings. This represents a HLS of 3.2 years, a further worsening on the 3.5 year HLS assumed by the council.

5.25 Accordingly, it is clear that Cherwell cannot demonstrate conformity with NPPF paragraph 73, and specifically the requirement for local planning authorities to 'identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement.' Equally, NPPF paragraph 60 highlights that in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, 'it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.'

5.26 The spatial strategy underpinning the Cherwell Local Plan is clear in directing growth

'towards larger and more sustainable villages' and to 'boost significantly the supply of housing and meet the objectively assessed need for Cherwell identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014.'

5.27 The site directly adjoins the new Park View development, and the village of Woodstock to the west. Due to Woodstock's location within the neighbouring local authority area of West Oxfordshire, consideration has been made to the assessment of Woodstock as a settlement within the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (adopted September 2018). Table 4B identifies Woodstock as a 'Rural Service Centre'. Accordingly, under Policy OS2, 'Woodstock is suitable for a reasonable scale of development, whilst protecting its important historic character and the setting of Blenheim Palace, in order to delivery affordable housing, enhance local services and reinforce its role as a service centre.' Whilst this does not form part of the development plan for the purposes of this application, it is notable Woodstock's position within the settlement hierarchy, and similarly that Woodstock is assessed as being of an appropriate scale to support development in order to deliver on its housing needs.

5.28 Cherwell Local Plan (2011-2031): Partial Review-Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (Proposed Submission Plan July 2017) outlines that 'Woodstock is one of West Oxfordshire's most sustainable settlements, a rural service centre just outside the Oxford Green Belt.' In addition, the following is noted with regard to the principle of development in this location, and specifically at Land East of Woodstock:

- The A44 is featured in the Local Transport Plan's Oxford Transport Strategy in the

interest of accommodating 'rapid transit' connections to Oxford and developing a new Park and Ride strategy. Land at the Woodstock/Bladon/airport junction on the A44 is identified in the Oxford Transport Strategy as a location for a new Park and Ride facility.

- The area adjoins land to the north-west that has recently been approved by West Oxfordshire District Council for up to 300 homes including local retail, office and community facilities and public open space. The development of that site would extend Woodstock up to the Cherwell boundary.
- Consider that there is further potential for development in this location outside but next to the Oxford Green Belt. The reasons for this are:

- 1) The relationship of Woodstock to the A44 corridor;
- 2) The sustainability of Woodstock in terms of it being well-served, small town and the potential for integration with West Oxfordshire's extended built-up area;
- 3) The proposals in the Oxford Transport Strategy and the A44/A4260 Corridor Study for sustainable transport improvements and traffic management measures along the corridor facilitating improved access to Oxford and providing the opportunity for a modal shift in the proportion of people accessing the city by means other than the private car;

- 4) The provision of a Park and Ride facility for Oxford next to Woodstock and improvements to the cycleway to Oxford alongside the A44;
- 5) The immediate access to the A44 corridor from the south-eastern edge of Woodstock;
- 6) The compatibility of the location with CDC's vision and objectives;
- 7) The need to ensure that sustainable options for accommodating the required growth for Oxford within Cherwell outside the green belt are utilised to minimise any need to provide development within the green belt.

5.29 This assessment was subsequently reflected in the site's inclusion within the plan under draft allocation PR10. Whilst it is recognised that this allocation was not progressed, this was specifically due to concerns over the site's ability to meet Oxford's unmet need (under point 7). Notwithstanding, the council's assessment under points 1 to 6 remain applicable to the proposals brought forward under this application. This reaffirms that the principle of residential development in this location has been appraised and previously judged to be appropriate.

5.30 The site's location directly adjacent to the Woodstock extension within West Oxfordshire, its proximity to the A44 and anticipated Park and Ride facility, and being the first developable area outside of the Oxford Green Belt, all support development on the site. As well as aligning with Cherwell's spatial strategy, it reaffirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.31 Equally, the proposals are considered to accord with NPPF paragraph 73 where it outlines that ‘the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.’

5.32 Strategically, sustainable development, such as that proposed in this location, is essential in fulfilling the district’s economic growth within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. The National Infrastructure Committee notably highlighted the following:

5.33 *‘The success of this arc matters, not just to those who live and work in it, but to communities across the county. Local leaders must commit to work collectively, with Government, and in the national interest to realise its economic potential. Without this commitment, the arc will be left behind, damaging the UK’s global competitiveness.’* (Partnering for Prosperity, NIC, 2017, page 3).

5.34 In summary, the principle of a residential development on the site is considered acceptable under the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The site is located adjacent to Woodstock which both West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils have identified as a highly sustainable settlement within the settlement hierarchy, and a location which can support further growth. The council’s own assessment of the site for allocation PR10 within the draft Partial Review Plan supported the principle of development on the site, noting the site’s proximity to the A44, the proposed park and ride facility and to the Woodstock extension on the boundary with West Oxfordshire.



Whilst site allocation PR10 was not progressed to the adopted Partial Review Plan, this was specifically in the context of meeting Oxford's needs, and does not change the council's assessment regarding the site being a favourable opportunity for development. Furthermore, on the basis that the council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, then it is also judged that paragraph 11d) of the NPPF is triggered, applying the titled balance and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Design

5.35 In developing the proposed design approach for this outline application, careful consideration has been had to Policy ESD 15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment). This states that 'successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context.' Equally, the policy outlines the following design expectations:

'New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.'

5.36 On a similar basis, the proposals have been guided by NPPF paragraph 130 which highlights the need for development to be 'sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.'

5.37 The proposed masterplan has been developed based on the principles established in Cherwell's Residential Design Guide Supplementary

Planning Guidance (July 2018). In particular, the block and street structure is based on a connected and permeable layout with an interconnected network of public green spaces. The SPG's focus on the need for masterplans to make it easy and attractive to walk, cycle and use the public transport network represents one of the key tenets of the proposed design approach at Land East of Park View. Equally, the proposed masterplan reflects the aspiration of the SPG for the establishment of a well-connected network of streets to create a permeable settlement which represents one of the core design principles of the opportunity at Land East of Park View.

5.38 As set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, the primary urban design principles underpinning the masterplan comprise the following:

- A clear and legible street network;
- Massing and enclosure concentrated along the primary street and to a slightly lesser degree the secondary street;
- A clear hierarchy of streets;
- A highly permeable layout which allows pedestrians and cyclists to move freely between all parts of the site and the wider area;
- Key areas of public realm strongly linked both physically and visually;
- Strategic urban forms that mark the arrival from the eastern and western boundaries;
- Vistas that culminate at marker buildings to aid orientation;
- Attractive and safe public open space accessible to all users;

- A new neighbourhood to the town, respecting the local character.

5.39 In accordance with policy requirements, a detailed analysis has been undertaken of the character areas within Woodstock and the adjacent Park View development. This has included a review of prevailing building materials, vernacular, form, massing and density, which in turn has directly informed the proposed design approach at Land East of Park View. The site's context and setting have also been a key element of the masterplan development, with a number of design cues reflected in the proposals. These include the following:

- The set back of the development area from the site boundary to provide a buffer to the green belt to the east and the Parkland BAP Ancient Woodland to the south-west;
- Retention of views towards the WHS and protecting them from any visual harm;
- Safeguarding the Scheduled Ancient Monument with no proposed development in close proximity. Equally, the other areas of archaeological interest will be protected under green landscaping;
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections, both into, and through the site, reflecting the historic route (Heh Street), and National Cycle Route 5;
- Creation of a green buffer to the west of the site to separate the proposed settlement from the settlement of Woodstock;
- Settlement pattern based on that of Woodstock and the Park View development through its use of perimeter blocks;

- The masterplan to feature up to 2.5 storey homes across the development area, with 3 storey focused around the central square, commensurate to massing found in Woodstock.

5.40 In summary, the proposed design approach is one based on careful consideration of the urban form within nearby Woodstock and the Park View development, and also directly related to the site's context and setting. This includes the provision of buffers and set backs to the proposed developable area to protect and retain the importance of WHS views, the setting of the scheduled ancient monument as well as of the nearby green belt and ancient woodland. The focus of the masterplan is on creating a permeable layout based on a network of green spaces, with enhanced pedestrian and cycle linkages, resulting in a high quality sustainable addition to Woodstock, which accords with both local and national policy.

Housing

5.41 According to Policy BSC3 (Affordable Housing), the proposed development at Land East of Park View would be expected to provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site. Of the on-site affordable housing provision, 70% would be expected to be as affordable/social rented dwellings, with the remaining 30% as intermediate affordable homes.

5.42 The provision of affordable housing is a key priority for Blenheim Estate Homes, and the proposals therefore include a policy compliant level of affordable provision, with an anticipated tenure split based on that outlined within Policy BSC3. In total therefore, the proposals will result in the creation of 175 affordable homes, which will make a vitally important contribution to the local affordable

housing need in and around Woodstock. As noted in the Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy (2019-2024), ‘new build housing has been concentrated in the main towns of Banbury and Bicester and there is a need to increase delivery of affordable housing in rural areas of the district.’ It is further noted that this level of contribution also exceeds the expectation contained in paragraph 65 of the NPPF which states that ‘planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership.’

5.43 Policy BS4 (Housing Mix) outlines that ‘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.’ This also includes a requirement for sites of over 400 dwellings to provide a minimum 45 self-contained extra care dwellings.

5.44 The Local Plan provides a suggested housing mix based on the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014). This is set out as follows:

Market Housing	%	Affordable Housing	%
1 bed:	5%	1 bed:	25-30%
2 bed:	25%	2 bed:	30-35%
3 bed:	45%	3 bed:	30-35%
4 bed:	25%	4 bed:	5-10%

5.46 The proposed housing mix for the development has therefore been based on the council’s suggested mix, with a particular emphasis on larger family homes, reflecting the local context and anticipated need. The proposals will also include the required number of self-contained extra care dwellings in line with Policy BS4, with



further details to be provided at reserved matters stage. Accommodating the district's elderly population within the proposals also accords with NPPF paragraph 60 which outlines the need to accommodate specialist housing needs. Blenheim Estate Homes is similarly committed to providing high quality housing which is both accessible and adaptable to future needs.

5.47 The proposed development at Land East of Park View will make a significant contribution to the housing need within Cherwell, and specifically the local need in and around Woodstock. This includes the provision of a balanced housing mix, and policy compliant level of affordable housing provision, both of which include a significant proportion of much needed family homes. The proposals are therefore considered policy compliant.

Heritage

5.48 The proposals have been developed in close consultation with the requirements of Policy ESD 15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment). This states that 'new development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.' Furthermore, it outlines that 'where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.'

5.49 Similarly, consideration has also been made to saved Policy C25 (Development affecting the site or setting of a scheduled ancient monument). This outlines that 'it must be acknowledged that the character and setting of an archaeological site or monument which may include historic landscapes, parks and gardens may be damaged or even destroyed by certain forms of development.'

5.50 The proposed design approach has directly responded to the identified heritage assets both on and adjacent to the site. This comprises the Blenheim Villa Scheduled Ancient Monument and associated field system, which lies to the south west of the site. The villa site is considered to be at risk because of the effects of continued agricultural cultivation. There are notably no above ground discernible features of the former domestic dwelling with the entire designated scheduled area manifested below the existing arable farmland. The site also lies close to Blenheim Park WHS and Grade I registered park and garden. Furthermore, the conservation areas at Bladon and Woodstock are located circa 600m and 800m away from the site respectively, with each containing numerous listed buildings.

5.51 The proposed developable area has been pulled back from areas of archaeological interest, and in particular, the scheduled ancient monument, to ensure there will be no adverse impact. The development parameters reflect the accepted location, density and appropriate offset from the villa as stipulated by Historic England in 2019. Furthermore, these areas of the site have been designed to comprise landscaping which will both safeguard and better reveal the significance of these areas of archeological interest on the site, which is considered a significant heritage benefit.

5.52 With regard to the Blenheim WHS on the southern side of the A44, as well as the nearby conservation areas, the proposed masterplan has included a large area of public open space to retain the setting of these heritage assets. Historic England's advice in relation to the WHS, was that given the relationship of the site as part of the agricultural setting, and the absence of significant direct intervisibility, appropriate visual screening could be provided by the existing hedgerows and

additional planting, to ensure that the development would not harm the outstanding universal value of the WHS. The wide area of open space proposed, the careful landscape planting and localised screening will preserve the character of the site as part of the setting of the WHS, and the long, green approach to the estate and the historic centre of Woodstock. As outlined further within the accompanying Design & Access Statement, the proposed developable area has also been directly informed by the key heritage views in the vicinity of the site.

5.53 Overall, careful consideration of the setting of heritage assets, both on and adjacent to the site, underpins the proposed design approach, in accordance with Policies ESD 15 and C25. The proposed masterplan respects and conserves the setting of the scheduled ancient monument, adjacent WHS and conservation areas. Equally, the proposals will result in notable heritage benefits enhancing the setting of the areas of archaeological interest on the site, which are at risk presently. This sympathetic approach to the relationship of the proposed scheme to the heritage assets is considered to accord with NPPF paragraph 199 which emphasises that '**great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.**' It is further highlighted that proceeds from the development will go towards the conservation, maintenance and restoration of the Blenheim Palace WHS via the Blenheim Heritage Foundation, whose sole purpose is to repair and maintain the WHS. This is considered a significant heritage benefit resulting from the proposals. It is therefore demonstrated that the low level of '**less than substantial harm**' as a result of the proposals is outweighed by the heritage and other public benefits.

Landscape

5.54 The prevailing landscape context and character has been a key element in developing the landscape proposals for the site. It is noted that the site lies within a number of identified landscape character areas, comprising the following:

- National character area 108 (Upper Thames Clay Vales)
- Cherwell Floodplain landscape character area
- CW/52 Woodstock landscape character area (which forms part of the broader Estate Farmlands landscape character area).

5.55 Landscape characteristics defining these character areas include a rolling landform, predominance of arable farmland and prominent hedgerows. Furthermore, the site itself has several notable landscape features which include the following:

- Semi-natural broadleaved woodland belt along the site's northern and eastern boundaries;
- The south and western boundaries are characterised by a mixed species hedgerow and associated hedgerow trees.

5.56 The proposed landscape approach has accordingly placed particular emphasis on the retention of existing landscape features. The northern and eastern woodland belt will provide a key landscape feature and will be maintained, slightly separating the masterplan from the wider context. Equally, the site's existing vegetation is recognised as an important asset which will be largely retained and enhanced through the landscape framework.

5.57 According to Policy BSC10 (Open space, outdoor sport and recreational provision), ‘the Council will encourage partnership working to ensure that sufficient quantity and quality of, and convenient access to open space, sport and recreation provision is secured.’ **Furthermore, Policy BSC11 (Local standards of provision, outdoor recreation) outlines that ‘development proposals will be required to contribute to the provision of open space, sport and recreation’ and that ‘provision should usually be made on site in accordance with the minimum standards of provision set out in ‘Local Standards of Provision – Outdoor Recreation.’**

5.58 The proposed masterplan incorporates large areas of public open space and opportunities for recreation aligning with the policy requirement. There is an identified opportunity to incorporate play space and allotments in the north-eastern part of the site. The north-western part of the site is equally suitable for informal recreation space, and there is significant green space located in the south-western part of the site. All these spaces will be connected through a network of green corridors to ensure they are both accessible and conveniently located for pedestrian and cycle connections.

5.59 In summary, the landscape approach is predicated on a careful consideration of the principal landscape features, both on the site, and within the wider area. Existing vegetation, including areas of woodland and hedgerows, will be largely retained, and enhanced through the proposals. In accordance with the requirements of Policies BSC10 and BSC11, the masterplan includes large areas of publicly accessible open space and opportunities for playspace and community allotments. These areas are integrated within the proposed layout through the inclusion of a network of green corridors.

Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

5.60 Sustainable construction and energy efficient design measures represent a cornerstone of the approach to new development for Blenheim Estate Homes. Policy ESD1 (Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change) outlines the need for the **‘incorporation of suitable adaptation measures in new development to ensure that development is more resilient to climate change impacts.’** Equally, Policy ESD2 (Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions) highlights the requirement to **‘reducing energy use, in particular by the use of sustainable design and construction measures.’** In addition, Policy ESD5 (Renewable Energy) states that the **‘Council supports renewable and low carbon energy provision.’**

5.61 In relation to sustainable construction, consideration has been also made to Policy ESD3 (Sustainable Construction) which states that **‘all new residential development will be expected to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions in line with Government Policy.’**

5.62 In accordance with the stated policy expectations, the proposals incorporate the following energy and sustainability principles:

- Net zero carbon;
- All homes built to the Passivhaus design standard;
- All homes fitted with air source heat pumps;
- The incorporation of on-site renewable energy in the form of photovoltaics on every home;

- All homes designed to use less than 105 litres of water per person/per day.

5.63 The project will also commit to the principle that reductions in energy demand and consumption should be prioritised over all other measures. This will be achieved by applying the Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green energy hierarchy, as developed by the Greater London Authority.

5.64 As outlined in the accompanying Sustainability Statement, Blenheim Estate Homes is committed to achieving an exemplar development in terms of sustainability. The proposals will far exceed the policy requirements of the Local Plan and Building Regulations with a focus on energy reduction, sustainable design and reduced carbon emissions. This approach offers a significant planning benefit of the scheme.

Ecology and Arboriculture

5.65 Policy ESD10 (Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment) outlines a series of measures to support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment. This includes seeking a net gain in biodiversity, encouraging the protection of trees, and an expectation to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity.

5.66 As outlined further in the accompanying Design & Access Statement, the site’s vegetation is recognised as an important asset which forms a key component of the landscape and character of the site. Consequently, it will be retained and enhanced as much as possible within the proposed masterplan. Notably, this includes the retention of the northern and eastern woodland belts on the site.

5.67 The proposals exceed local and national requirements for biodiversity net gain and include enhancements for biodiversity, both floral and

fauna, in the form of hedgerow, woodland, scrub and grassland creation, habitat pile creation, as well as the continued monitoring and management of these habitats. In addition, the proposals include the potential for bat, bird and dormouse boxes for specific species enhancement. Furthermore, as set out in the accompanying ecological assessment prepared by BSG, construction and post-construction effects have been appraised, and appropriate mitigation measures for the effects have been proposed to ensure the protection of retained habitats and compliance with the relevant protected species legislation.

Transport

5.68 Consideration has been made to Policy SLE4 (Improved Transport and Connections) which outlines that the **‘Council will support the implementation of the proposals in the Movement Strategies and the Local Transport Plan to deliver key connections, to support modal shift and to support sustainable locations for employment and housing growth.’**

5.69 The site is highly accessible, to both Woodstock town, and Oxford City, and is therefore considered well placed to support sustainable employment and housing growth and encourage modal shift. There are existing bus connections to Woodstock, and the potential for greatly enhanced pedestrian and cycle linkages to the Park View development on the site’s western elevation, which has existing connectivity to Woodstock town. Similarly, the site is located just 8 miles from Oxford city centre on the A44 corridor, and is served by regular public transport routes. The strategic S3 premium bus route connects the site from Chipping Norton to Oxford, via Woodstock, Oxford Airport, Begbroke and Yarnton.

5.70 In addition, Policy SLE4 highlights that ‘all development where reasonable to do so, should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.’ The proposed masterplan incorporates a network of pedestrian and cycle paths which interconnect different areas of the site with nearby points of interest. In particular, these include connections to the western access into Park View, the southern access to Oxford Road (and the National Cycle Route), and the south-eastern area near Bladon Roundabout (with potential links to the proposed Park and Ride to the east of the site). Within the site, this network has also similarly been designed to align with the principle movement corridors through the site.

5.71 The residential parking requirements are set out in Oxfordshire’s ‘Parking Standards for New Residential Development.’ The proposals have been designed to accord with these standards, with an anticipated mix of frontage access car parking and garages for the houses. It is envisaged that the larger plots will have garages and adequate parking provision for visitors on plot. It is further highlighted that any potential shortfall in unallocated parking provision can be safely accommodated on-street. Precise parking numbers will be confirmed at reserved matters stage in consultation with OCC.

Flood Risk and Drainage

5.72 Policy ESD6 (Sustainable Flood Risk and Management) outlines that ‘the Council will manage and reduce flood risk in the District by using a sequential approach to development; locating vulnerable developments in areas at lower risk of flooding.’ A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy has been prepared by Infrastruct CS Ltd, and accompanies this application. This confirms that

the site is located within flood risk zone 1 according to the Environment Agency’s flood risk map, and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding and appropriate for a development of this nature.

5.73 The drainage strategy confirms that the proposed sustainable drainage techniques for the development will be able to accommodate the peak rainfall event for a 1 in 100 year storm event with an additional allowance for climate change. This accords with the requirements of Policy ESD7 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) that ‘all development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off.’

Air, Noise and Light Pollution

5.74 Policy ESD10 (Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment) states that ‘Air Quality assessments will also be required for development proposals that would be likely to have a significantly adverse impact on biodiversity by generating an increase in air pollution.’ Equally, under Policy ESD15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment), ‘well designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the microclimate, and air pollution and provide attractive places that improve people’s health and sense of vitality.’ An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by WSP. This confirms that the site is considered suitable for the proposed end use, and that future site users/occupants are not anticipated to be exposed to poor air quality. In addition, total pollutant concentrations are predicted to meet the respective UK Air Quality Strategy objectives. Overall, the results of the Air Quality Assessment demonstrate that the development proposal complies with national and local policy for air quality.

5.75 With relation to the Oxford Meadows SAC, this has been assessed by both WSP and BSG in their respective assessments. Accordingly, it has been concluded that ‘the proposed development in combination with other projects and plans is unlikely to prevent or significantly restrict the ability to deliver the conservation objectives for the site and, as such, the proposed development is considered unlikely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC.’ This therefore accords with Policy ESD9 (Protection of the Oxford Meadows SAC).

5.76 An Acoustic Assessment has been undertaken by RSK Acoustics. This demonstrates that noise to receptors across the proposed development to existing receptors can be controlled to acceptable levels, and that future noise impacts to roads will be negligible.

5.77 Policy ESD15 (The Character of the Built and Historic Environment) outlines the need to ‘limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.’ Accordingly, a Lighting Assessment has been completed by GIA Equation and is included with the planning application. This confirms that the baseline condition of the site has been assessed as ‘Dark’ and the brightness of the proposed development post construction as ‘Low District Brightness.’ Consequently, the magnitude of the change resulting from the proposed development is judged to be ‘Minor’ and the potential lighting impact ‘Slight.’

5.78 In summary, it has been demonstrated through the supporting technical assessments that the proposed development will not result in an adverse air, noise or light pollution effect, and it accords with the national and local standards.



06 Conclusions

6.1 Land East of Park View represents a highly sustainable and immediately available opportunity to deliver much needed family homes which are easily accessible to both Woodstock and Oxford City. The principle of development on the site, and its approach to both design and heritage were agreed through its draft allocation as part of the Partial Review Plan. Whilst it is accepted that the draft allocation for the site was not included within the final adopted plan, it is highlighted that this principally resulted from the Planning Inspector's concerns over the distance of the site from Oxford City and the site's ability to meet its unmet need. This is notable given the Partial Review Plan was specifically brought forward in order to meet Oxford City's unmet need.

6.2 With regard to the housing need of Cherwell district itself, it is apparent from the latest 5-year HLS that the district cannot meet its housing need based on existing deliverability assumptions. Due to the council being unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, then it is also judged that paragraph 11d) of the NPPF is triggered in applying the titled balance and the presumption in favour of sustainable development also applies.

6.3 Land East of Park View will make an important contribution to meeting Cherwell's pressing housing need, both for affordable and family homes. As noted in the Cherwell District Council Housing Strategy (2019-2024), home ownership is out of reach for households on low and average incomes, and there is a need to increase delivery of affordable housing delivery outside of Banbury and Bicester.

6.4 Land East of Park View will provide a natural addition to Woodstock, which will sensitively integrate within the surrounding natural landscape and the neighbouring Park View development. The

landscape-led design approach is one predicated on high standards of sustainability, taking opportunities to enhance biodiversity on the site, as well as protecting and enhancing the setting of heritage assets. This includes a commitment to achieving Passivhaus standard for all new homes, achieving a net zero carbon development, and a biodiversity habitat net gain of 34%. The masterplan is based on a network of green spaces (33ha in total), linked via green corridors with a particular emphasis on pedestrian and cycle linkages, supporting a modal shift towards sustainable transport.

6.5 The ES and technical assessments demonstrate that there are no technical or environmental constraints that will prevent the development taking place. The inevitable harm associated with the loss of a greenfield site is moderated by the demonstratable position that:

- The area proposed for development is not of high landscape or biodiversity value and is not of the highest agricultural land value.
- The development will not lead to severe impacts in terms of transportation.
- There are no technical constraints to the development of the site, the proposals address issues such as infrastructure requirements, surface water attenuation and utilities.
- The social, economic and net environmental benefits to be delivered by the development are significant.
- The adverse impacts of the development, as proposed and with mitigation, do not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

6.6 In accordance with planning law and policy guidance, the planning application should be approved without delay.

6.7 In summary, the proposed development has been carefully designed to deliver Blenheim Estate Homes's objective to create a beautiful place where people will want to live, both now and in the future. This is achieved with significant areas of public green open space, a permeable layout of pedestrian and cycle linkages through a network of green corridors, and dedicated community outdoor spaces. All the while, this will be delivered with the highest practicable levels of sustainability, biodiversity net gain and landscape and heritage enhancements.

