

Heritage & Archaeology

Heritage has been a key consideration in the formation of the proposed development.

Designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site include the Grade II* Listed Church of St Laurence, and the Grade II Listed Home Farmhouse, as well as the non-designated Caversfield House.

The Grade II* Listed Church of St Laurence includes material as early as that dating to the 10th century, although the church was restored and partially rebuilt in 1874. The church has a largely secluded setting within a graveyard which itself has a strong relationship with the grounds of Caversfield House. The view of the church is protected by mature vegetation that surrounds it, therefore it is not visible from the Site.



Grade II* Listed Church of St Laurence

Caversfield House, which is a non-designated heritage asset, is reduced in footprint form that present historically but appears to have extant 19th-century elements. It has associated outbuildings and is set within extensive private grounds. Part of the wider landholding, which includes the Site, once had some degree of aesthetic treatment, with some tree planting and being crossed by a driveway, which was flanked by a lodge where it leads from Fringford Road. This driveway now leads to a modern farm complex within the Site.



The Lodge on Fringford Road

Home Farmhouse was once the principal residence of the farm owned by the holders of Caversfield House. This is a 17th-century stone built structure, which faces south onto an extensive farm complex.

The proposed development has been designed to respect the heritage significance of these assets, through the inclusion of the line of the driveway traced by a cycle and pedestrian route (and emergency access), allowing the lodge to be understood in context of the route.

Furthermore, the placement of built form respects the settings of the church, Caversfield House and Home Farmhouse through pulling back built form from the areas closest to the assets, and providing ecological mitigation and natural open space in the north-western areas of the site.

Utilities

A Utilities assessment has been undertaken to provide a review of the existing utility infrastructure and to consider potential connection points, whilst taking into account future utility company infrastructure plans and scenarios in the vicinity of the Site for wider long-term opportunities and constraints.

Foul

Thames Water have confirmed the existing foul sewer network does have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed foul water discharge.

Clean Water

Thames Water have confirmed there is capacity to serve the first 50 properties of the development. A network capacity investigation would be necessary for the remainder of the development to determine additional reinforcement or enhancement requirements.

Gas

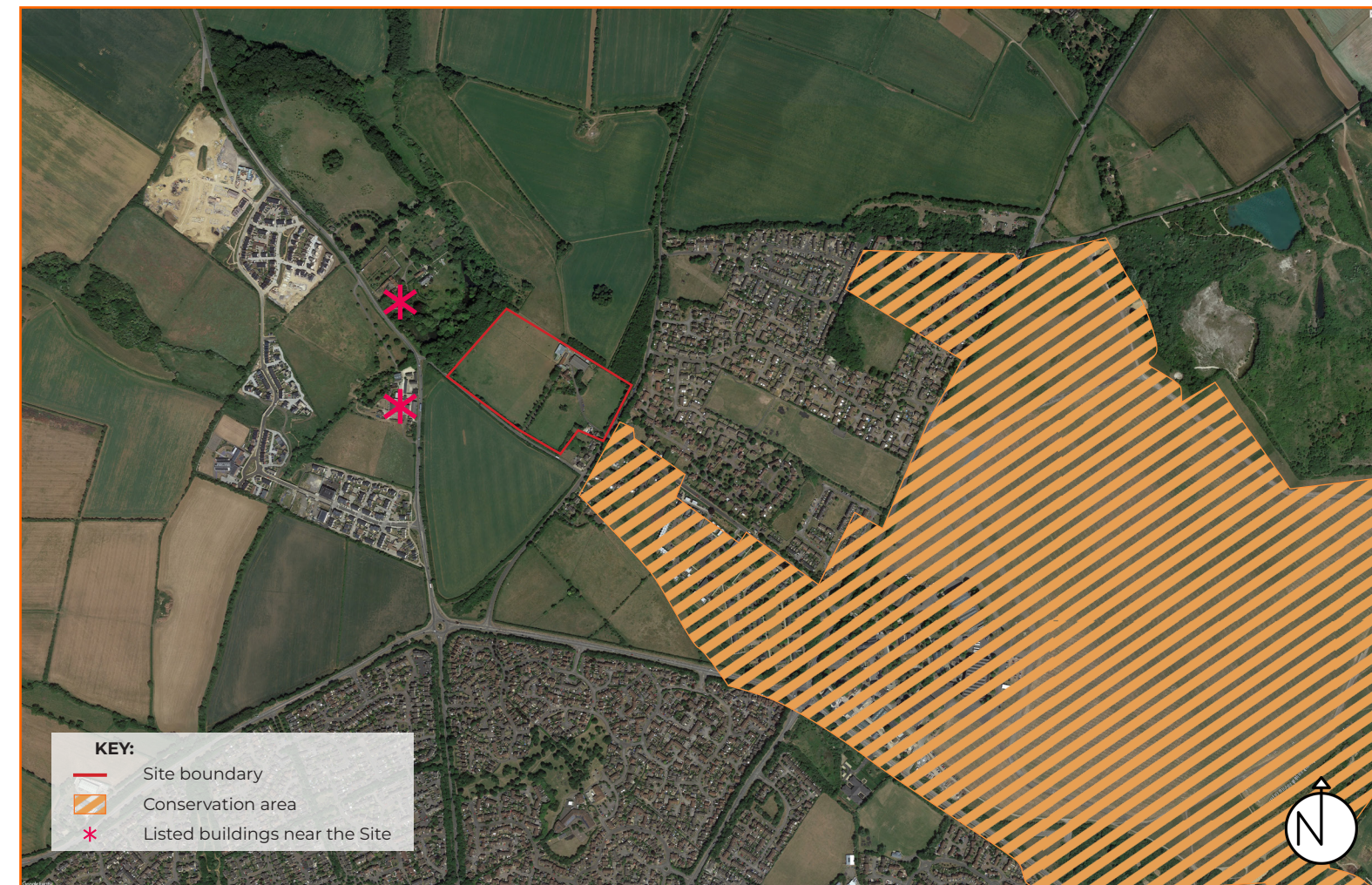
SGN have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the local low pressure gas network.

Electricity

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks have provided a budget estimate to connect the proposed development to the existing HV network with a total capacity sufficient for Air Source Heat Pumps and Electric Vehicle Charging Points at each dwelling.

Diversions

Existing services will be diverted as required to facilitate the development proposals.

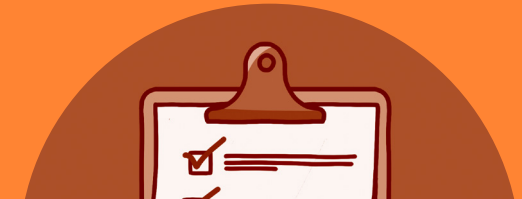
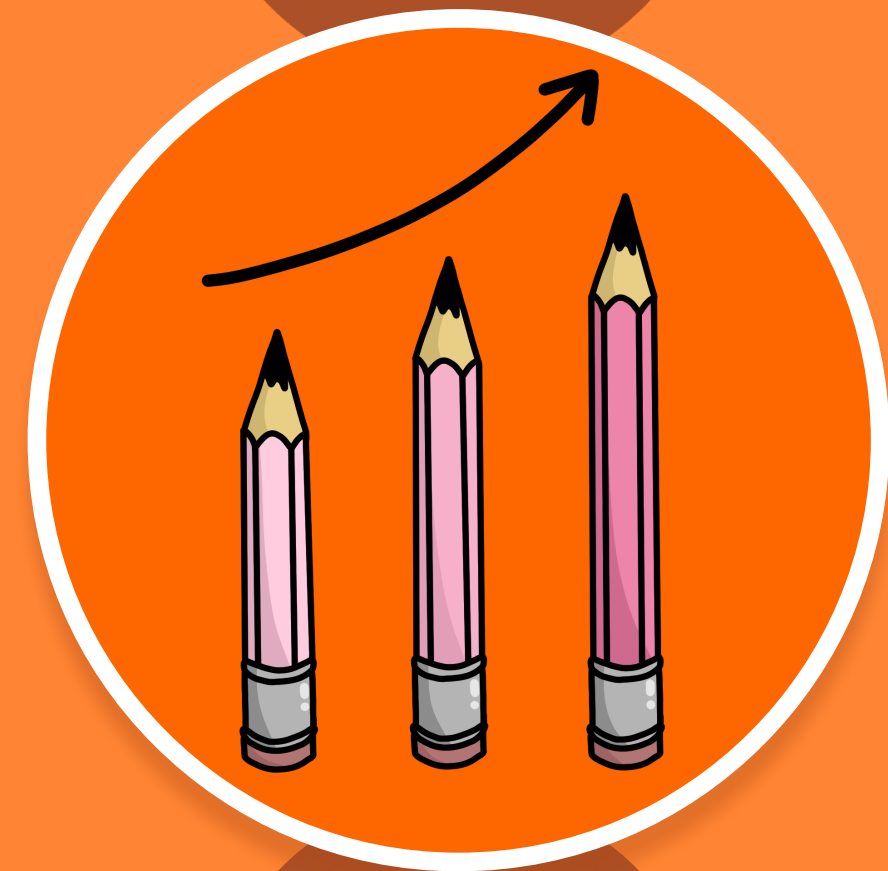


KEY:
 Site boundary
 Conservation area
* Listed buildings near the Site

View from the centre of the Site towards the church



Design Evolution



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Design Evolution

Local Design Guidance and LP Policy

The Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD (Adopted 2018) and Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1 have informed our designs for the site ensuring that proposals are sensitive to Cherwell's special character and in keeping with The Ploughley Limestone Plateau Countryside Character Area in which the site sits.

Constraints & Opportunities

Considering the analysis carried out for the Site, the following constraints should be considered when developing the masterplan layout:

Development Potential

The Site proposals provide sustainable growth to Caversfield and the wider Bicester area. It has the opportunity to strengthen the local community by providing further housing, as well as enhancing the biodiversity of the area through substantial new landscaping.

Site Access & Movement

Access

Vehicular access to the development Site should be proposed off Fringford Road via a new priority-controlled T-junction around 50m north of the existing Fringford Road junction with Skimmingdish Lane.

Appropriate visibility splays should be provided at the access junction in line with the prevailing speed limit of 40mph; however, it is considered likely that a revised speed limit of 30mph should be delivered along the Site frontage via a Transport Regulation Order as part of the detailed development proposals.

As part of the access strategy, a new footway provision should be provided, connecting to the existing footway provision, along with a new signalised pedestrian (puffin) crossing on Fringford Road between the new Site access junction and Skimmingdish Lane.

The Site access junction should be designed to accommodate all vehicles that will require access, including large refuse vehicles.

Sustainable Travel Options

The proposed development Site is close to a range of local services and facilities, which include schools, doctors, local convenience stores, restaurants and places of worship. Several facilities are within the National Travel Survey average walking trip distance, whilst the vast majority are within 2km of the Site. Access to all of these facilities is via the existing footway and cycle network in the vicinity of the Site.

There are no dedicated national cycling network routes in the immediate vicinity of the Site, however the local roads are considered safe and suitable for cycle trips to Bicester, with several signed shared footway/cycleway routes provided across the local highway network.

Existing bus stops are located within walking distance and provide a good level of service in each direction between the Site itself, and local settlements of Bicester, Brackley, Milton Keynes, Buckingham, Bedford and Oxford.

A Travel Plan should be prepared to support the Site and seeks to promote sustainable travel from the development, including the provision of public transport vouchers for residents.

Landscape

The application Site is managed for equestrian pasture, and contains typical features such as medium scale rectilinear field pattern and undulating landform. The fields area enclosed by native hedgerows and scattered broad leaf trees.

Landscape fabric to the north and east has a large field pattern defined by extensive hedgerows, scattered hedgerow trees, tree belts and woodland plantations. To the east, beyond Caversfield and the former RAF Bicester, the large field pattern is enclosed by extensive field hedgerows, riparian tree belts and woodland plantations.

The north western and northern edge of the Site is enclosed by a native woodland and extensive tree groups associated with Caversfield House, with the western edge defined by extensive tree groups and native hedgerow.

Ecology

The majority of the Site is made up of semi-improved and poor semi-improved grassland habitats which are of Local-level and less than Local-level importance respectively. Some boundary hedgerows are present which are of Local level importance and are also priority habitats. All other habitats present are of Site-level importance or less.

The development layout retains important habitats as far as possible, including those important in supporting protected and priority species. Some habitat loss is unavoidable to make way for the proposed development, however habitat enhancement and creation is proposed, including a dedicated ecological enhancement zone with no public access on the western edge of the Site, which would mitigate such losses and result in net gains in the Site's biodiversity value.

Heritage

Designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site include the Grade II* Listed Church of St Laurence, and the Grade II Listed Home Farmhouse, as well as the non-designated Caversfield House.

The proposed development should be designed to respect the heritage significance of these assets.

Topography

The Site is relatively flat, sloping gently from a low point in the south-east corner of the Site to a high point in the north-west corner. Across the Site, there is a total level change of around 2m. The topography does not add to the visual prominence of the Site, and therefore a consistent building height of up to 2 storeys should be acceptable.

Drainage

The entirety of the Site is situated within Flood Zone 1. The provision of an on-site attenuation basin will ensure there will not be an increase in the likelihood of flooding elsewhere. Landscaping in and around the basins will create new habitats and aid in the delivery of biodiversity gains.

