

## 5.6 Scale- Massing and Townscape



Viewpoint 8 - Proposed view 1 year following construction



Viewpoint 8 - Proposed view 15 years following construction



## 5.6 Scale- Massing and Townscape



Viewpoint 9 - Proposed view 1 year following construction



Viewpoint 9 - Proposed view 15 years following construction



## Scale- Massing and Townscape



Viewpoint 10 - Proposed view 1 year following construction



Viewpoint 10 - Proposed view 15 years following construction

## 5.6 Scale- Massing and Townscape

### Flatted accommodation

The flatted accommodation is located along the high street sequence and plays an important role in reinforcing the importance of this street by defining corners and by marking the landing point of the bridge to the west of the green watercourse. The buildings have been intentionally grouped in pairs either side of the road to provide a formality and strength to the route and provide a rhythm to the townscape.

The height of this accommodation has been carefully considered with the flats to the east of the watercourse being three storeys and the west, two. The former assists with the transition between the residential scale of the southern field and the village centre.

The second flatted building opposite the pub helps form the space to the end of the bridge, but also mitigates the scale change between the village centre and the single storey school building located at the end of the high street sequence.

The plan forms of these buildings are also designed to reinforce this sequence. The most easterly pairing are linear, whilst the two buildings adjacent to the eco business centre and energy centre display a small shift in plan and roofscape to acknowledge the grouping with the bookends around the important junction connecting the southern field to the south.

The shift in plan is further exaggerated in the final building, paired with the public house to define a space at the end of the bridge.

### Detached

The detached properties are typically two storeys in height and incorporate car parking within garages. The way garages have been included distinguishes the 4bed and 5 bed properties. The former places single storey garages separate from the home to the side and rear of the property forming a driveway.

The 5 bed properties include a garage within the building form and allow accommodation to sit above. This results in variety within the detached properties, with the four bed houses reading as a singular form with an outbuilding and the five bed as an accumulated mass with made of two elements. The two elements are controlled so that

the more dominant of these contains the front door and the principle approach to the property.

The houses are further distinguished by their roofscape and the schedule of heights for the properties included in this document exhibits the linear and gable variations for each of the housing types and designs.

### Feature Housing

#### Higgs Young Architects

The 4 bed house has been designed in plan on the same basis as the other 4 bed units in the development, placing the garage to the side and rear of the home. The roofscape of these 'feature' properties is however more complex, driven by its design philosophy to maximise efficiency of photovoltaics. Therefore an asymmetric roof is employed to home and garage, leading to a relationship in roof pitches between the two forms. Again the entrance is placed within the dominant feature of the buildings elevation (the larger sloped roof element). The roofscape is optimised and naturally lit by means of windows, creating a third level of accommodation.

The five bed design reorganises the typical garage provision for the five bed properties, placing them one in front of the other. This creates more of an 'L' shape plan and supports the expression of a longer sloped roof element and a 'pop-up' roof line.

### Panther Hudspith

The five bed design looks to make reference to the 5 bed properties across the site but further exaggerates the composition of the two forms by dislocating and rotating the garage element. The link is expressed at upper level by a linear window. The modification in plan and the subsequent three dimensional form reduces the massing of the building with the property reading as two elements. The roofscape is articulated with a pop-up roof vent.

The complexity of the roofscape and the variations in plan looks to make the feature buildings more recognisable and, as set out in later chapters, reinforces their urban design role in the layout of the development.

### Building Size:

Considering the Typical dimensions of a dwelling and its resulting effect on the landscape:

The typical dimensions for the housing are:

Floor to floor height: 2.95m

Floor to ceiling height: 2.60m

The heights above ground for different designs are listed below:



## 5.6 Scale- Massing and Townscape

	Height to u/s of eaves (m)	Height to top of ridge (m)	Height to u/s of eaves (m)	Height to top of ridge (m)
<b>Design Type One</b>				
Terrace (Linear)	5.60	9.50	5.60	9.42
4B Detached (Linear)	5.60	9.96		
5B Detached (Linear)	5.60	9.54		
<b>Design Type Three</b>				
2 Bed Bungalow	3.04	6.27		
3 Bed Bungalow	3.04	6.33		
Terrace (Linear)	6.05	9.95	6.05	9.88
Terrace (Gable 1)	6.05	10.70	6.05	10.98
Terrace (Gable 2)	6.05	9.18	6.05	9.40
4B Detached (Linear)	6.05	10.45	6.05	10.54
4B Detached (Gable)	6.05	10.00	6.05	10.99
<b>Design Type Five</b>				
Terrace (Linear)	6.05	9.95	6.05	9.88
Terrace (Gable 1)	6.05	10.70	6.05	10.98
4B Detached (Linear)	6.05	10.45		
5B Detached (Linear)	6.05	10.25		
5B Detached (Gable)	6.05	9.86		
<b>2 Storey Flats</b>			6.05	10.0
<b>3 Storey Flats</b>			9.0	13.6
<b>Feature House Type 1</b>				
Terrace	5.77	8.69 / 8.86	5.77	9.09
4B Detached	6.64	9.67		
5B Detached	5.94	9.67 / 10.30		
<b>Feature House Type 2</b>				
Terrace	5.85	8.75	5.85	10.70
5B Detached	5.60	9.10		

All heights allow a 150mm zone for external drainage level changes.

### Massing of the Non Residential Units

	Length (m)	Width (m)	Height (m)
High Street	82	10 -12	13.50-13.75 +/- 0.5m
School	81	27 - 50	.6 +/- 0.5m
Eco Pub	20.67	13.35	10.0 +/- 0.5m

The non-residential uses are organised along a high street (refer to section 5.3). The significance of this route has been marked with three storey buildings on corner positions. The high street parade, as a space is defined by using three storey 'bookends' to provide containment and to announce the central public space. The additional height in this area will mark the concentration of amenities for the phase one community. The bookends also help to allow for the reading of the topography of this part of the site by acting as a reference against which the parade roofs step down. The scale then drops to two storeys to the public house, which is again typical for this function before reducing again to the single storey school. The scale of this building has been determined by Oxfordshire County Council's design guidance (The primary school brief (consultant's guide)) for these facilities.

The upper and lower parameters for the outline elements of the scheme are:

The bookend buildings on the high street are three storeys high, measuring from 13.50m to 13.75m +/-0.5m from ground

The high street parade is two storeys high, measuring from 9.80m to 10.35m +/-0.5m from ground

The eco business centre is two storeys high, measuring 10.0m +/- 0.5m from ground

The eco pub is two storeys high, measuring 10.0m+/- 0.5m from ground

The school is one storey high measuring 6.0m+/- 0.5m from ground



## 5.7 Movement and Linkages

The new linkages are fundamental for the exemplar scheme in isolation and as part of the NW Bicester masterplan. The key aspirations for the Eco Town include the reduced need for travel by providing facilities on site, promoting walking and cycling and therefore reducing dependence on private car usage.

The new connections have been considered under the three following criteria; connections to Bicester, linkages to NW Bicester and internal linkages within the site.

A key linkage for the phase one proposal is the new pedestrian and cycle connection to Bicester town along Banbury Road, including new crossings to link with Caversfield and a crossing over Lord's Lane connecting to Bure Park. Two new entrances to the site have been formed on Banbury Road, to allow vehicular access to the southern and northern sections of the site. This facilitates the introduction of a new bus service to support the new community.

The layout also illustrates a number of connections to the NW Bicester masterplan that will connect further to the town centre. The key to this has been the overarching idea that the green infrastructure would support cycle and pedestrian connections that can connect with enhanced green links present within the grain of the existing town. The watercourses therefore facilitate this movement.

Vehicular movements will be discouraged but the layout allows for future connections to the expansion of the Home Farm village centre southwards and the plan allows for the future extension of the high street in a south-westerly direction. It is envisaged that this road would extend and connect with Hawkwell village, travelling through the hedgerow and moving past the extended school playing fields in the next phase.

The exemplar layout has been planned to retain and conserve the hedgerows and their environments, however the first phase looks to extend its legible open network of streets to the next phase boundary edges. Pedestrian and cycle routes allow for multiple connections to the south and west ensuring that the latter phase of Home Farm village will form part of a highly connected and integrated network of routes. This approach also provides flexibility in planning for the latter phases.

Access points to the two next phase Phipps' fields have been included to allow access for livestock from Home Farm initially and then a vehicular route during construction and occupation.



Connections to the town and the next phases of NW Bicester



Multiple connections are made to the next phases



## 5.7 Movement and Linkages



Vehicular travel distances are extended



The main route through the site

The first phase places the communal facilities near the centre of the scheme to improve accessibility for the residents and reduce walking and cycle times.

The concept of contrasting the orthogonal nature of the working fields with the organic reading of the watercourse zone has led to a varied response to permeability. The fields to the north and south are intentionally welcoming with a legible network of streets set out on a grid that encourages pedestrian and cycle movement through a number of landscape character areas. Meanwhile the central zone facilitates pedestrian and cycle links but has a more meandering nature that works with and in contrast to the contours. With the larger settlement of housing to the north and the greater size of fields it has allowed greater opportunity to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement ahead of car usage. Access to the properties is made more difficult by extending the travel distance by road and by reducing speeds by means of various landscape features including raising and diverting the carriageway. In turn the public realm is enriched with a number of landscaped zones that prioritise non-vehicular movement and car parking locations are less prominent, making them more difficult to access and resulting in residents having easier access to cycle storage.

The extended nature of the red-line boundary has led to a number of studies into the nature of the movement corridor that unifies all zones within the first phase. The proposal allows for pedestrian, cycle, vehicle and bus movement through the scheme but restricts vehicular travel speeds by constricting the carriageway to allow a single flow of traffic with passing places. This decision has been led by a viability assessment by the retail/commercial provider due to the number of houses in the first phase. It is agreed that the connection will be limited to pedestrians, cycles and buses when the next adjacent phases are developed.

The roads extent and form has been carefully modified to respond to the different character areas through which it passes. These are explained in the following sections.



## 5.8 Ecology

The masterplan and first phase proposals retain and enhance existing green infrastructure helping to inform the character of the settlements that they transect and connect.

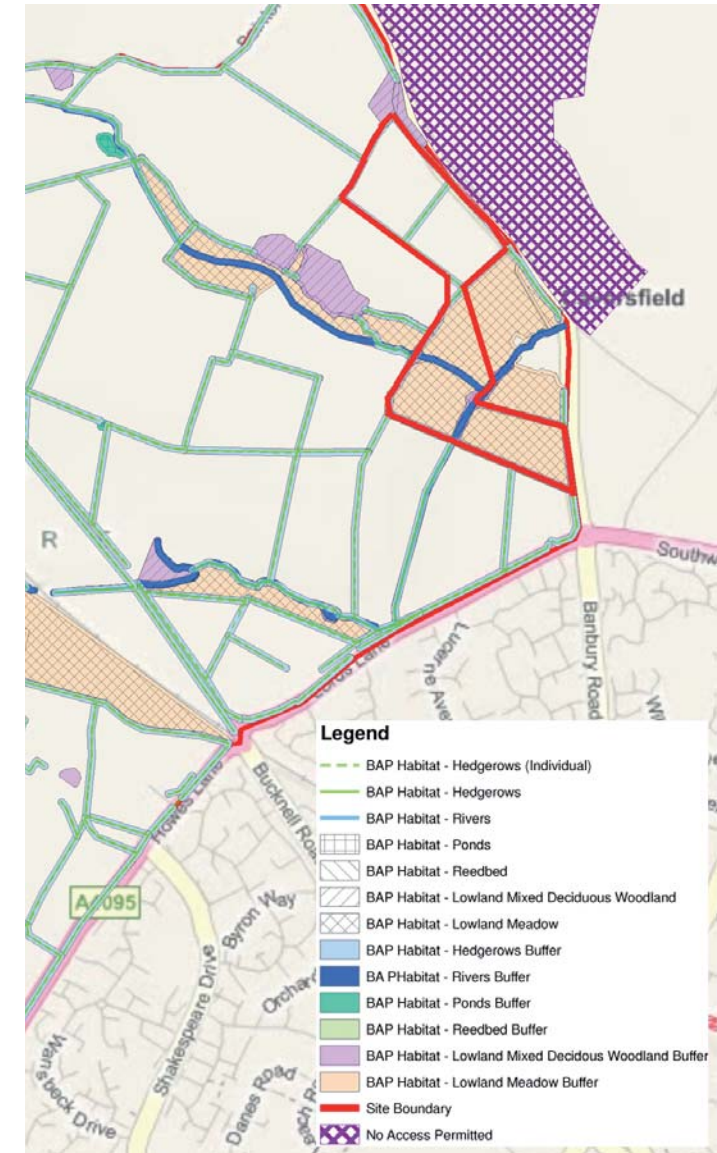
There is an extensive network of hedgerows that frame the first phase site. These have been identified by Arup during their ecological surveys as the landscape features of greatest biodiversity and subsequently these have been retained as a priority. Where this has not been possible they have been translocated and where connections are required from field to field small penetrations have been permitted.

In addition, the hedgerows have been augmented by creating new and adjacent habitats with varied buffer zones as a supporting habitat to improve biodiversity. Together with the river corridors and local topography these form a skeletal framework for the green infrastructure.

New habitats have also been created in the ponds and swales that form part of the above ground SuDS strategy, whilst the placement of orchards and allotments facilitate the creation of dark corridors with benefits for bat commuting.

The identification of a bat roost and badger setts on the site have influenced the designs to ensure zones are created to ensure habitats are fully respected and protected.

Further information can be found on this subject in the Environmental Impact Assessment.



Priority Habitats

## 5.9

## Character Areas



The Character Areas

The layout for the first phase is a direct response to the characteristics of the site and in turn the emerging masterplan for NW Bicester.

The 21 hectare site is large enough to support a number of character areas informed by local landscape, topography and immediate context. The five areas described in the following chapters provide a variety of settings for residential and communal uses that will be distinct and memorable allowing for mental mapping and orientation within the first phase and beyond.

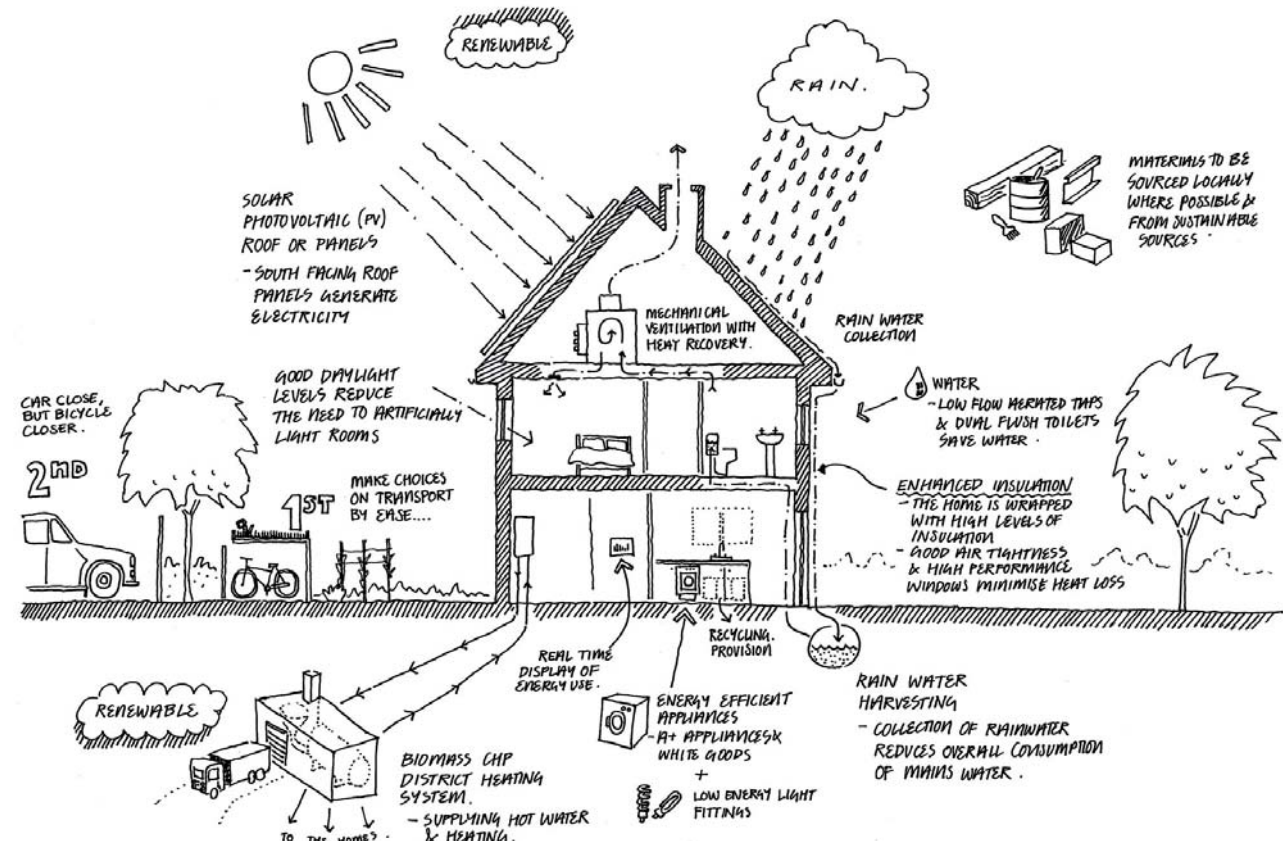
The likely construction by a number of contractors combined by the groupings of house styles and material palettes will add greater richness and an overlaid complexity to the experience of living in and moving through the exemplar scheme.



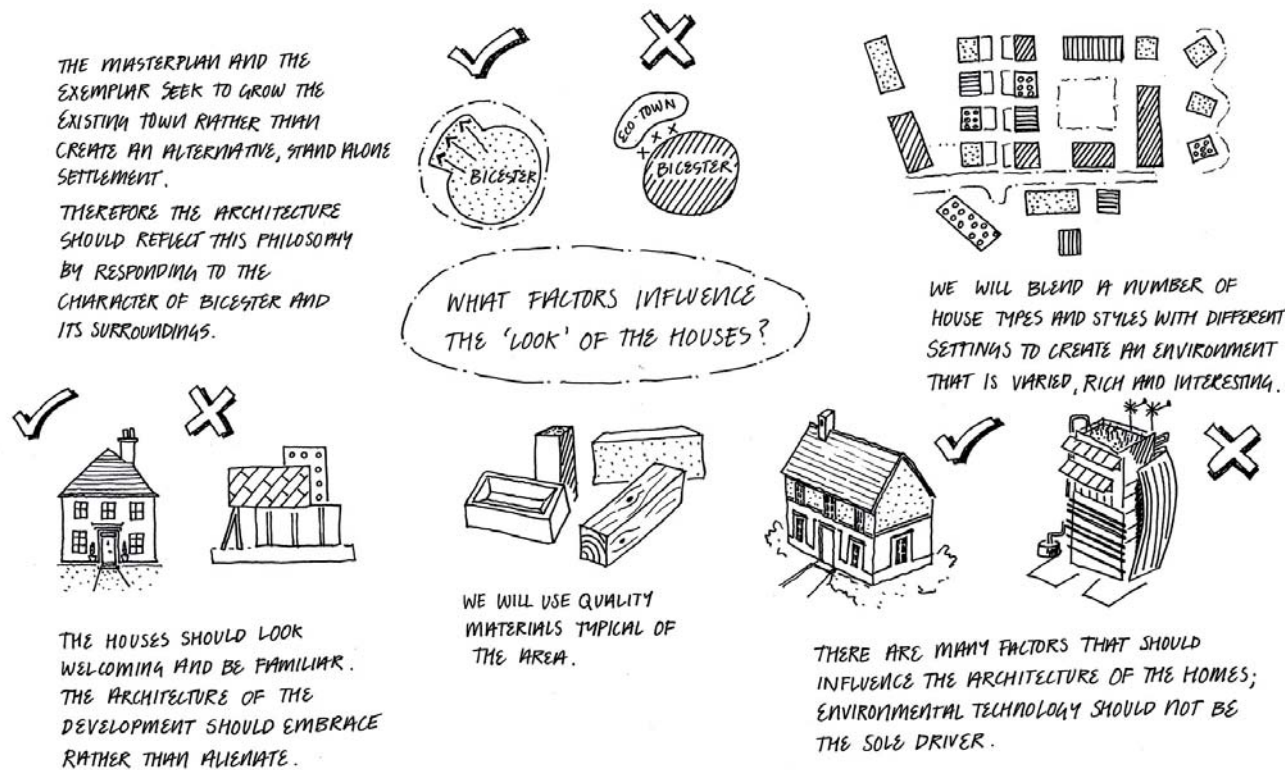
## 5.9 Character Areas

Good practice suggests that energy use should be minimised first before energy production is considered. Therefore, the buildings will be designed to be highly insulated, to achieve air tightness with internal heat recovery systems for re-circulation of warm air and be fitted with low energy equipment throughout therefore minimising the energy needed.

To generate energy there will be an on-site energy system which combines the use of photovoltaic (PV) roof tiles for all homes, with a gas combined heat and power plant, supported by a Biomass district heating system. Subject to the efficiency of the photovoltaics excess electricity can be sold back to the grid.



The Code Level 5 House



The housing technologies are therefore 'smart'; however they alone have not been the driving factor for the aesthetics for the residential buildings. There have been much publicised schemes, like BedZed that use the environmental technology of their properties to define their aesthetic. The approach for the first phase is different and is based on contextualism.

The masterplan and the first phase seek to grow the existing town rather than create an alternative, stand alone settlement. Therefore the architecture should reflect this philosophy by responding to the character of Bicester and its surroundings. The Client's brief required the houses to look welcoming and familiar, with the development aiming to embrace the general public.

Housing design influences



## 5.9 Character Areas

A lot of thought was given to what the architecture of this extension to Bicester should be. Research into traditional Bicester typologies led us to conclude that a re-use or interpretation of the typologies would not meet our Client's brief but an understanding of the local material palette and its use could influence the new design and embed the new development into its surroundings.

For clarity, the materials that will be used within the exemplar are typical of or make reference to the local area, whilst the form of the buildings is not influenced by local typologies; instead inspiration has been drawn from further afield.

A careful balance was struck between A2Dominion's commercial requirements to provide housing that was recognisable and competitive in the Oxfordshire marketplace and the high aspirations of the Eco Town development. The first phase proposals aim to create a transition between the current perceptions of traditional housing that our Client believes will sell in this location, with more cutting edge sustainable design which it is anticipated will feature increasingly on the later phases of the masterplan.



Material precedent; Bicester and Bucknell



## 5.9 Character Areas



The architectural language of the scheme is grounded in its locality by making reference to local materials whilst looking further afield to develop the language for the housing. A study of successful housing developer-led precedent studies was undertaken to assess the qualities that contributed to a successful streetscape and architectural language. These included reference to built schemes including Poundbury but also emerging developments and developers including Kevin McCloud's Hab Oakus. Five design themes were created for the new housing and the Client then selected three to use within the exemplar phase.





## 5.10 High Street and Entrance

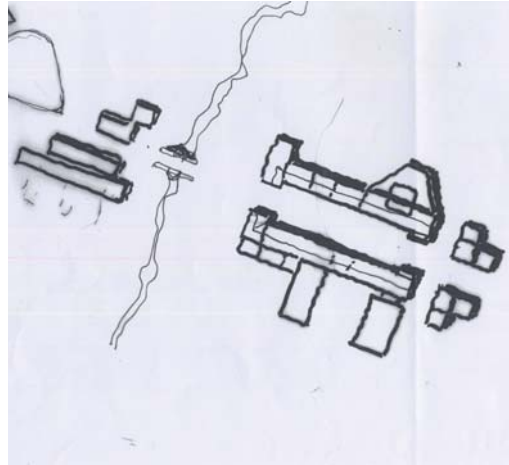


The Southern Fields

## 5.10 High Street and Entrance



The green entrance space



High Street concept sketch

The High Street setting begins upon entering the first phase on the Banbury Road and establishes the character for the whole of the southern field. A generous green landscape is formally framed by terraced buildings providing an address on the Banbury Road and focusing the view along the High Street sequence.

The impact of forming a junction at this point is mitigated by translocating the hedgerow, splaying the green edge and offering improved views into and out of the site. In contrast to the formal arrangement of the entry buildings, properties to the north and south sit back from the edge and are arranged on the orthogonal grid, resulting in heavily planted triangles of green space, buffering the development from Banbury Road.

The High Street sequence develops westwards with a 6m carriageway with large formal tree planting to the north (to afford a sunny environment to the thoroughfare) and an engineered swale SuDS feature to the south, that allows reed planting to grow from a metal grid covered channel. The controlled nature of this swale system is intentionally contrasted with the looser organic form of the northern fields' swale system.

A procession of three storey corner buildings forms the progression to the high street centre, a sequence that is punctuated by a series of raised landscaped tables that connect the homezone areas north to south across the carriageway. The residential areas are organised orthogonally, inspired by the hedgerow pattern and face onto this ecological resource, ensuring the scheme is outward looking and enabling for the creation of a new and adjacent habitat. Their response to the north and the south is different, as is to be expected. To the south the terraced housing sits parallel and perpendicular to the hedgerow but pre-empt the next phase of development forming a linear edge to respond to. To the north, detached properties are deployed in a softening of the arrangement, with subtle angle changes to create a less rigid frontage onto the farm fields and the settlement of Home farm beyond.

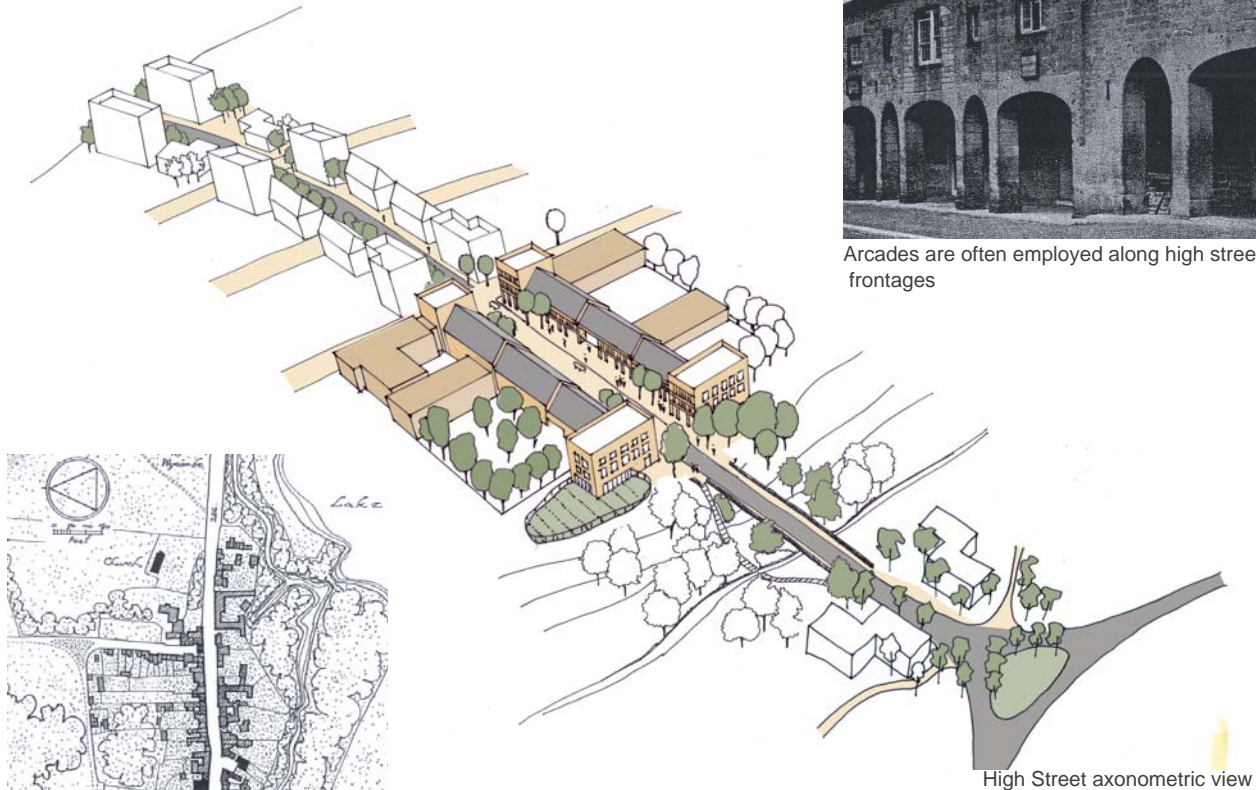


## 5.10 High Street and Entrance

The key junction between the road linking the southern field with Lord's Lane and the High Street is marked by the formation of a space framed by trees and defined by three storey corner buildings. The space also marks the start of the community centre and the non-residential amenities that form the core of the village.

The village centre is organised along the principal route but embraces the north/south watercourse as a major green feature, like a green or village pond may occur in a historic settlement. The High Street captures this landscape feature by extending beyond it, by means of a linear bridge, before finishing with a landscaped space defined by a pair of buildings on the far bank and a termination of the vista with the school beyond. The parade of shops, offices and first floor entrances are given cohesion by protruding corner blocks that help to define the space. The parade buildings sit back from the pavement edge to create generous footpaths that will allow for people to stop and meet and others to pass and continue with their daily business. The streetscape is further layered with the inclusion of a continuous arcade that provides the setting with a greater level of architectural cohesion but more noticeably with protection from the elements or opportunities for outside display or café seating.

A single landscape treatment is applied across the road with lowered kerb edges and parking deterrents to create a generous and quality public realm. Similarly car parking and servicing is placed at the rear of the parade to minimise the impact of cars and delivery vehicles on the space. These spaces are softened by allowing the watercourse landscape the blur their edges. In contrast the bus stop is placed at the heart of the High Street along with bike stands to promote these modes over private car use. The parade forms a strong edge to the High Street whilst the buildings that sit perpendicular to it and form it have an inconsistent unaligned rear footprint, which mirrors the traditional form of single street settlements.



The defined high street linear centre with inconsistent 'back' buildings

## 5.10 High Street and Entrance



Upper Plan



Ground Floor Plan

The uses along the parade have been carefully considered. A village store provided by the Co-op Group anchors the centre of the High Street, with two retail units leading to the watercourse. The corner unit enjoys views of the landscape feature and would be well placed to support a café or eatery. Above is office space. The service yard's efficiency is maximised by sharing its use with the village store and the biomass deliveries to the energy centre. The latter is placed adjacent to the hedgerow boundary to allow for future expansion to support the next phase to the south. The Eco Business centre is located to the northern side of the street and this facility shares its parking/drop off provision with the nursery located overlooking the watercourse. The nursery provides community space at first floor level and is located to the western end to minimise journey times to the primary school.

The bridge sits formally on axis with the High Street as the height of the land falls towards the watercourse. This allows for a dramatic opening of views (upon stepping beyond the closed end of the parade) of the watercourse and along the valley in both directions. Traffic is constricted to reduce speeds. There are footpaths either side of the carriageway leading to the public house and the school beyond. The bridge design has a duality fitting of its context. Its surface is a continuation of the High Street hard landscape palette whilst its light balustrading allows for views up and down the watercourse.

The arrival space to the end of the bridge is framed by the eco pub and residential accommodation acknowledging the transition over the green space. The public house is typically placed at a transition point, where the lane meets the High Street and it is envisaged that the outside seating will begin to animate this space and the terraced beer garden benefit from its watercourse setting.

An informal village green concludes the High Street sequence in this phase, with the school sat on axis terminating the view and presenting its main entrance and coach bay area to the green space in front. The village green marks the transition point northwards and in the later phase southwards (as explained in the Movement and Linkages chapter) forging a connection with Hawkwell Village.



## 5.10.1 Design Guidelines

The non-residential facilities provided within the first phase form the outline information for the application. The following drawings in this chapter document the extents and key features that set the principles for the High Street sequence but allow for creativity and flexibility to further enhance the design during a detailed design process.

A palette of materials has been established to ensure consistency and quality is achieved along the High Street.

The selection has been based on the Oxfordshire vernacular, deriving from its geological positioning and traditions. No assumptions are made as to the stylistic application of the materials but the selection responds to the high standards required by the Client and the setting of the exemplar scheme.

To achieve consistency and a statement of quality along the high street experience it is proposed to front the arcade, first floor accommodation, watercourse frontages and high street frontage of the school and public house with a warm coloured reconstituted stone. This responds to the limestone walls of St Laurence's Church and Home Farm, buildings of significance in the locality. Alec Clifton-Taylor states in Pevsner's guide to Oxfordshire, "Whereas the sandstones play no part in the Oxfordshire picture, the limestone is paramount. The whole of the western and northern part of the county fall within the Jurassic belt."

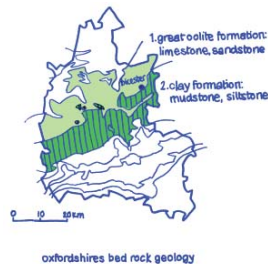
In contrast the facades to the sides or rear of the thoroughfare will deploy brick or render, signifying the importance of the high street frontages and the hierarchical ordering of the side or back lanes. Brick is typical of the Bicester area as it is clay country, Pevsner's guide states, "In the C18 and C19 bricks were made in the Vale at, among other places, Bicester, Wheatley and Great Milton..."

The roofing material when pitched is proposed to be slate. Historically welsh slate was used extensively in the region as local stonesfield slate production subsided and improved infrastructure allowed for its import from the west.

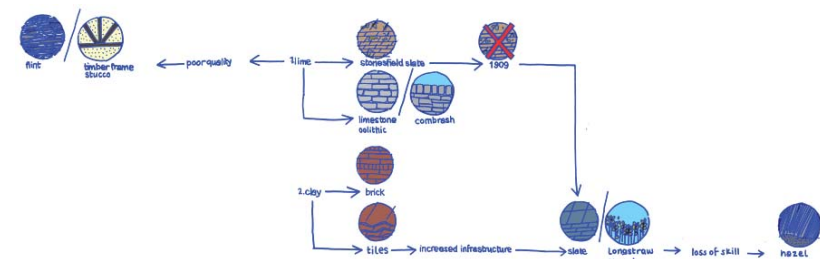
The next section contains illustrative material for the non residential buildings that make up the first phase.



High Street CAD Plan

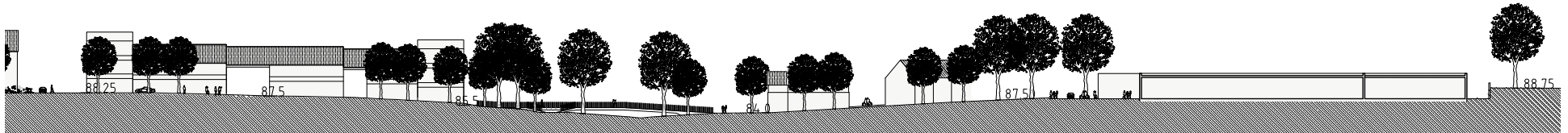


The Geological features of Bicester's location



The development of materials in the region

## 5.10.1 Design Guidelines



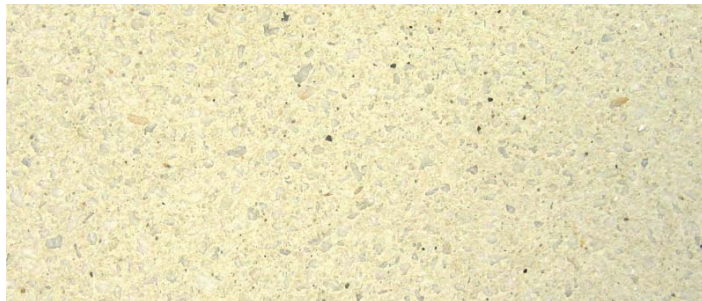
Section through High Street



Limestone walling from Home Farm



Brick



Reconstituted Stone



Render



Slate



## 5.10.2 Illustrative Material

The drawings and illustrations in this section provide an indication of the possible architectural character and arrangement of the non-residential buildings of the first phase.



Village High Street Elevation looking north



Village High Street Elevation looking south



Village High Street Elevation Options

## 5.10.2 Illustrative Material



Study perspectives looking west along the High Street



**Materials Legend**

	Bronze Anodized Aluminium
	Reconstituted Stone
	Slate
	Timber panels
	Timber Gates



'Bookend' options





NORTHERN BLOCK SW ELEVATION



SOUTHERN BLOCK NE ELEVATION

Village High Street Elevations 1:250





## 5.10.3 School

Further illustrative information is contained within this chapter about the technical assumptions made for the provision of the school in the first phase (1.34 hectare site).

In addition, studies have been undertaken to ensure the viability of the proposal for expansion in the phase westwards to provide the full 2.22ha facility. These are explained below.

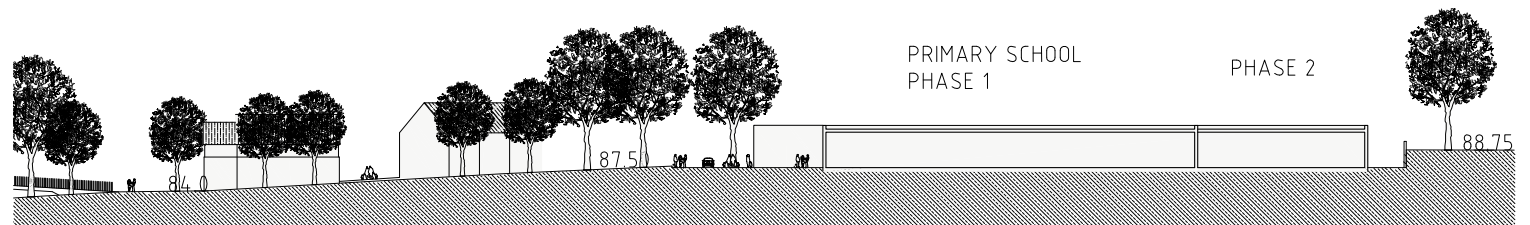
The school design has been provided by Oxfordshire County Council for inclusion into the planning application. It is envisaged that the south-eastern frontage facing the green and the watercourse beyond would be of reconstituted stone to provide a conclusion to the high street sequence. In turn and in keeping with the high street approach the remaining elevations would be in red brick. It is proposed that the building utilizes a brown roof.

OCC seek a site of 1.34 hectares to accommodate a single form entry school with the potential to expand to two form entry at 2.22 hectares. The requirements of OCC as LEA are set out in the OCC Primary School Brief (Consultant's manual).



Primary School Plan, Phase 1- 1.34 hectares

### 5.10.3 School



School Site Section



Primary School Plan, Phase 2- 2.22 hectares

## 5.11 The Watercourses

The central hamlet exhibits three settings that inform its distinct character.

The first is its transitional nature organised along the Lane (see following chapter) and its location between the High Street procession and the ordered northern fields.

The second is its response to the watercourses. The contour change and landscape features generate a varied frontage to these valleys, allowing the greenery to constrict and expand to create a softer heart to the settlement. Subsequently a variety of housing typologies are deployed, with bungalows, terraces and then two and a half storey detached properties running northwards along the watercourse to one edge whilst terraces are brought forward and detached properties recessed to another. Significantly both the flood risk zone and ecological opportunities have influenced the layout, manipulating the edges. The expansion of the greenery at this point pre-empt the next phase and the connection with the woodland copses to the west. Leisurely paths edge the watercourse and connect with a simple foot and cycle bridge linking the two residential groupings.

The final feature of the watercourse zone is the invented diagonal boundary that fronts the retained Home Farm pastures. The lack of hedgerows in this location is acknowledged with a tree planted edge fronting a post rail and stock fence, which draws from the vernacular of the working farm. The detached properties are arranged in a more ordered fashion to this boundary; a response to the human invention of the red-line.



The central watercourse zone



## 5.12

## The Lane



The Lane

The connecting route through the centre of the scheme is consciously restricted to minimise its impact on the surrounding area. The road at this point is conceived as a lane that departs from the formality of the high street area and descends to the bridge crossing.

The bridge is of a smaller and more rural feel and is set obliquely to the route to create interest as it crosses the watercourse.

The residential buildings have small front gardens that allow for homes to sit close to the street edge, defining the streetscape and increasing interaction with the residents. This arrangement is facilitated by the use of car parking courts to the rear of the properties. These are familiar in nature serving a small number of properties and are gated to provide usable amenity space for the residents. This in turn is overlooked by means of low level hedges to back gardens. The landscape treatment of these spaces elevates them from the functional to a meaningful shared space whilst the greening of walls and garage roofs could contribute to the green infrastructure of the site (refer landscape chapter for further details).

The lane then winds upwards as it climbs the gradient and turns to reveal increasingly open views as the built form changes from double sided to single sided. The lane is kept narrow by using passing points and there is a further shift of character as the route breaks free from built form affording views to Home Farm and St Laurence's to the east.

The introduction of cattle grids facilitates the crossing of livestock and importantly slows the traffic. Buildings are intentionally kept clear of this zone to form a natural break and allow for the creation of a new habitat around the balancing pond.

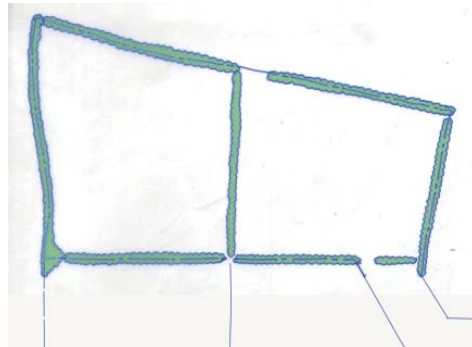
## 5.13 The Northern Fields



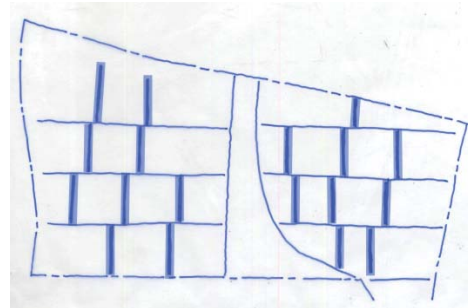
The Northern Fields



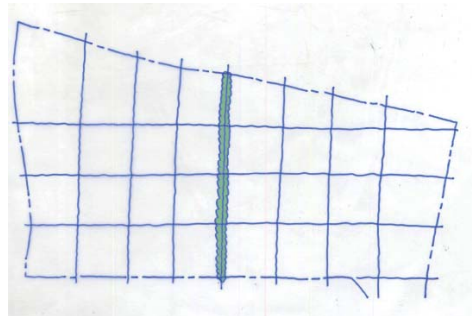
## 5.13 The Northern Fields



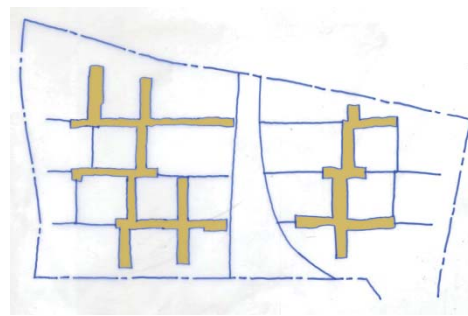
Field and Hedgerow Pattern



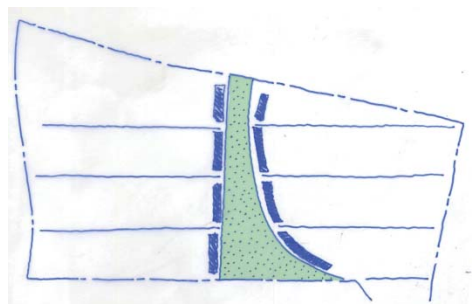
Shifting of North South Connections



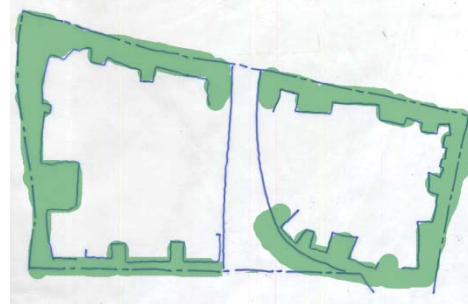
Applied Grid



Pedestrian Priority Zones



Green Link and 'Infection of Grid'



Softening of the Edge

The northern section of the site has large, flat regular fields contained by a strong framework of hedgerows. The central cruciform of hedgerows that dominate the four northern fields has been used as the generating geometry for the layout of the settlement in this section.

As opposed to the strong 'vertical' banding of the southern field the northern fields exhibit a 'horizontal' reading emphasising the connectivity between them. This creates legibility to the plan of the housing creating a welcoming environment for visitors as well as residents. This is in direct response to the planning philosophies of late eighties settlements that idealised and promoted an inward looking and complex network of curvilinear roads or cul-de-sacs under the premise of creating an organic streetscape of traditional villages. The resultant grain was impermeable and unwelcoming with limited views to discourage 'outsiders' from penetrating the estate. The first phase should promote an open attitude to all and its grain exhibits this philosophy and it is envisaged that the next phase for the two fields immediately south would continue this approach.

The basic ordering of the plot diagram is overlaid by a number of devices that take the basic grid arrangement and turn it into a varied, rich and memorable environment that responds to the existing landscape and provides numerous new landscape settings through which one can easily move and exist.



## 5.13 The Northern Fields

The first and most dramatic intervention is the introduction of a green link running from the northern perimeter through the fields to the central zone. This divides the northern site into two and allows for the reading of the two separate fields whilst containing and influencing the thoroughfare that supports vehicular movement through the scheme. The housing is 'infected' by this sinuous form and breaks with the grid and turns to front the green space.

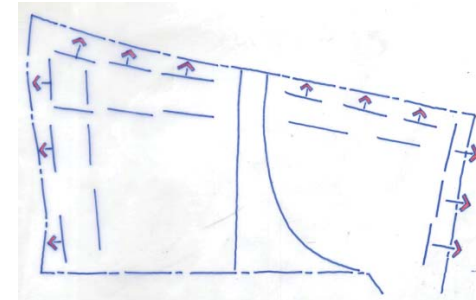
This significant piece of green infrastructure brings a number of additional benefits. Due to its accessibility, the central location makes it ideal for the provision of leisure space and in particular play areas. The grouping of provisions for a number of age groups helps to allow parents to better supervise children of different ages or allow for sibling care on adjacent facilities. The play areas will seamlessly blend with the character of the green link utilising 'play by design' principles. Spaces for activities will be provided within the landscape. In addition the green link provides a new habitat for the hedgerow and promotes a continued ecological corridor that allows animal movement and in potential bat commuting. It is envisaged that the green corridor will continue through the neighbouring southern fields. Further information for the green link can be found in the landscape submission.

The second modification to the framework is the subtle shifting of the north/south connections. This breaks the monotony of the grid but importantly allows for interlinked diagonal connections to be made. This is important as the residents are encouraged to walk and cycle to the village centre through a network of pedestrian priority zones. These routes are well greened and are organised and hard landscaped to deter vehicular movement and form a secondary root system of green linkages.

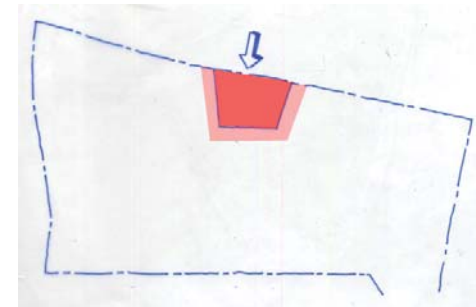
The perimeter context is then used to add further variety to the layout. To the eastern boundary the gentle flaring of the plan is acknowledged in the layout, with its influence repeated into the depth of the plan. The development edge is softened in response to its sensitive neighbours (for further information please refer to the Massing and Townscape chapter) and the building plots loosen and inflect. To the western edge the plan is similarly loosened but here the landscape buffer edge inhabits the framework with allotments and orchards creating a varied edge to the woodland cemetery planned beyond (part of the NW Bicester masterplan proposal). In contrast to the southern boundary, the next phase future neighbourhoods are acknowledged with a simple outward looking edge.

The Banbury Road frontage has an informal arrangement that is influenced by consistently angled boundary. The grid becomes barely perceptible to this frontage and the deflection of the red-line is allowed to work deeper into the plan so that alignments can be referenced one street back. A generous entrance is created to the Banbury Road, in this instance, by placing a green space either side of the central hedgerow. An interesting landform provides the focus and the culmination of the swale networks running either side of the north/south road.

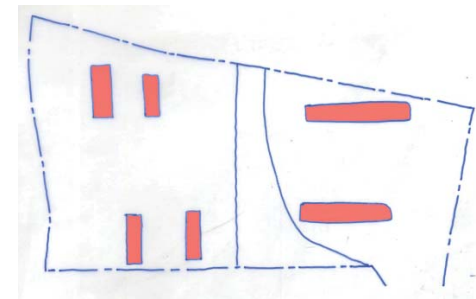
A series of homezone areas are created with differing characters, these support different arrangements of housing and landscaping, the integration of a pedestrian prioritised hard landscape, planters, shrub and tree planting, places to meet, places to play, access to footpaths, limited parking and a range of relationships to house fronts. It is proposed that the environments created will nurture a sense of community.



Influence of Boundary Angles



Entrance



Home Zones Created