

LANDSCAPE LED MASTERPLAN

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

“The site and its relationship with the Palace, Park and general landscape and townscape contexts seems weak. I'm not sure the relationship between the built form and the wider landscape has been understood.

Thus the response has been to hide the development behind hedgerows and trees. Whilst this might be appropriate in some locations I would question the wall of greenery proposed.....

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015

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8.0 | CAPABILITY BROWN'S LEGACY

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

The landscape strategy for the site has been **based on, and inspired by the history of Woodstock, Blenheim Palace and Parkland**. The strategy has been integrated with contemporary methods of landscaping to enhance the characteristics of the site.

Blenheim Park is considered to be one of the masterpieces of the famous landscape architect; Lancelot Brown, better known as 'Capability' Brown. In c.1764-74 Brown dramatically **transformed the park** from the original formal layout by Vanbrugh and Henry Wise.

Brown replanted the park and built the lake in his own **'naturalistic' style**. Landscapes by Brown are recognisable for their large serpentine lakes, a curvaceous landscape and lawns sweeping up to a building which provides a dramatic focal point.

His landscapes illustrate the concept that, where previously the manor house had dominated the landscape, in Brown's

schemes this became **an integral part of a landscape composition** viewed by many as an idealised landscape created from an Italian landscape painting, as was fashionable at the time.

When redesigning the park he retained the **avenue of trees** leading up to the Column of Victory, one of the intersecting avenues of the park's original layout. Today this tree-lined avenue is composed of lime trees.

In 1908-30 the ninth Duke employed Duchene to make formal gardens east and west of the house. These made for **a less abrupt transition** between the curvaceous lawn and the formal architecture.

Lancelot Brown described himself as **a 'placemaker' and not a 'landscape gardener.'** To create attractive places and spaces within the development; the same methods and some of Brown's key landscape concepts and features have been incorporated into the design of this landscape-led scheme.

In order to create a landscape-led masterplan which is inspired by the work of Capability Brown, we have introduced **a network of open spaces that link together seamlessly** and help to aid connectivity across the masterplan and to the wider rural context, both north-south and east-west.

The town of Woodstock already has a fantastic landscape offer in the Parkland at Blenheim Palace.

The Parkland is used by all residents of Woodstock, on a daily, and very frequent basis as a place to walk, run, cycle, have family picnics, walk their dogs and take in the fantastic legacy of Capability Brown. Although this landscape-led masterplan cannot compete with the Park in this respect, **the one facility that the Park cannot provide to the town is a facility for sports.**

We feel that our masterplan is unique in the fact that it does provide the opportunity

We feel that our masterplan is unique in the fact that it provides the opportunity to integrate sports and play facilities into the town.

We feel that this is a very strong offer providing much benefit and a truly complimentary offer to the existing landscapes in and around the town.

In addition to a plethora of sports facilities and relocation of Woodstock Town Football Club, which have been informed by recent discussions with Sport England, the masterplan also delivers a network of Green Open Spaces.

'Woodstock Park' takes its name from the original name for Blenheim Palace. The new park comprises a 7.5 hectare public park surrounding the Scheduled Monument which consists of the foundations of a Roman Villa buried under ploughed agricultural land. To all but the expert eye the villa is invisible, however it is proposed that interpretative material would be used

to better reveal the significance of this heritage asset and open it up to the public.

The landscape proposals seek to create an appropriate setting for the Scheduled Monument and ensure that an appropriate transition between this heritage asset and the proposed built environment is achieved.

The creation of **tree lined streets**, which front onto the Scheduled Monument create an **attractive green and spacious area** between the open space and the built form, with the treescape softening the built elevations and maintaining a semi-rural appearance. The use of tree-lined avenues is also considered appropriate in the context of the Blenheim Estate to the south and the relationship between the Heritage Park and the proposed development.

The proposals maintain access to the Scheduled Monument, with proposed **wildflower grassland** offering a species rich, bio-diverse habitat and **an informal**

recreation space. This adds further to the open, spacious character of the Scheduled Monument and its setting.

The proposed network of open spaces in the masterplan as highlighted on the landscape concept drawing can emulate many of the concepts that Capability Brown employed, for example - copses of Copper Beech, Beech and Oak can be grouped to begin to define the open spaces and form backdrops to key public open space.

'Woodstock Park' can be defined by large individual specimen trees located within grassland. Blenheim has presence of evergreen groups within its parkland and it would be good to emulate this approach by implementing species such as Copper Beech, Sweet Chestnut, Lime, Cedar of Lebanon, Blue cedar and Oak.

Avenues are a characteristic of the Blenheim landscape defining vistas and key approaches and drives. Within the built environment, the introduction of fastigate

variety street trees will enable the creation of such a feature, which will **soften the built elevations** without compromising accessibility. Species appropriate here may be Oak (fastigiata), Hornbeam and Cherry.

Open space avenues will be created within the more open areas of the site, where space is not at a premium, Lime is used within the Blenheim Estate and as such would be a good species to incorporate. The avenues will be spaced evenly to create **a formal landscape feature**.

The woodland belt will have the appearance of **naturalised woodland** with native understorey planting to **create a diverse and varied habitat**. The understorey will be thinned towards the public edge to ensure that the woodland does not appear oppressive. Native trees will make up this edge.

The A44 avenue will have **a tranquil character** of evenly spaced, large specimen trees, set out to **reflect the**

existing treescape on the south western side of the road which will create a formal avenue, thereby reinforcing the landscaped approach to Woodstock from the south east.

The principle is to avoid creating an unsympathetic, solid vertical green edge to the site but rather to create more of **a softened, designed edge to the development** which draws on the woodlands within the Blenheim Parkland and the rural approach to Woodstock, immediately to the north west of the site.

The creation of a belt of generic structural planting to create a dense block is not considered characteristic and therefore is not appropriate in this setting. The proposals will instead, establish a tree belt incorporating broadleaf and evergreen species which are characteristic to the local area; creating **a robust green edge** to the development that **complements the localised landscape character**.

Native understorey planting, including

species such as hazel, elder and holly, will then be proposed in a band parallel to the A44, but **set back from the road corridor**, allowing an appreciation of the treescape which forms the edge of this landscape belt.

The setting back of the understorey from the streetscene ensures that **the planting reflects the localised character** and will also ensure that lower level views of the proposed built form are curtailed and enclose this landscaped approach to Woodstock, which exists to the north west and is extended along the site frontage.

A key principle in ensuring that this masterplan is site specific, is to take a lead from the famous landscapes by Capability Brown, specifically Blenheim Palace



Petworth House serpentine lake



Burghley House ha ha splits spaces and creates a curved landscape



Castle Ashby part of landscape composition framed by a formal avenue



Highclere Castle sweeping lawns lead up to castle



Stowe vistas - to monuments in a mature landscape setting

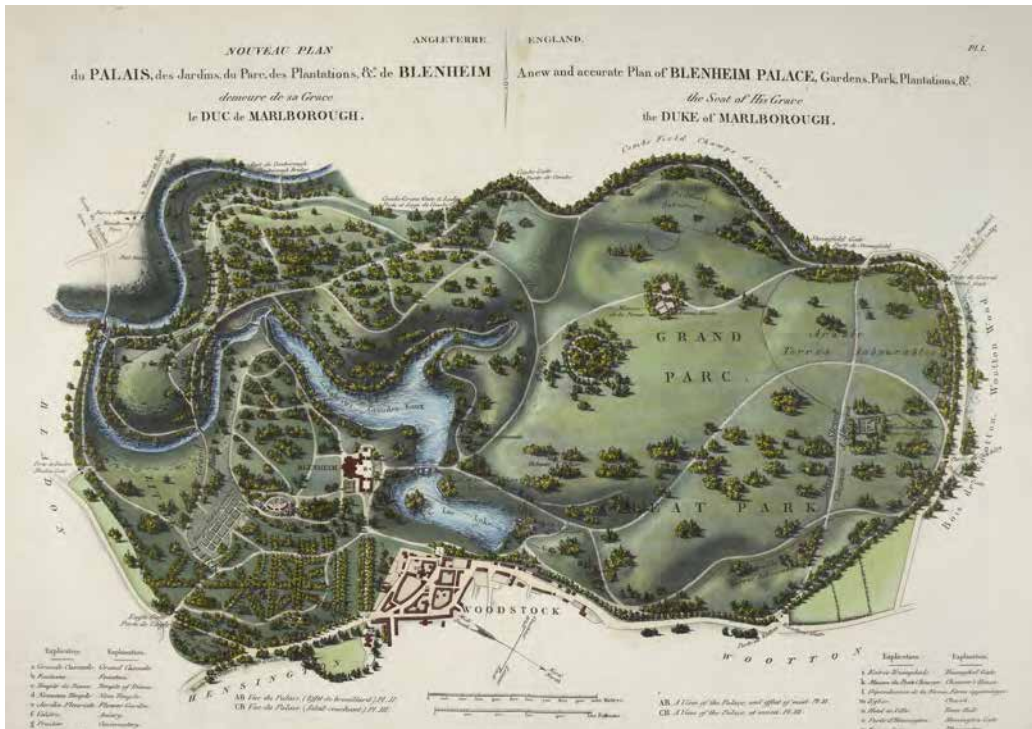
Taking inspiration from the Parkland at Blenheim Palace presents an undeniable opportunity to create a special place and a landscape led approach



House raised and framed by trees to create a grand and imposing entrance



Serpentine lake - staged but naturalistic in style

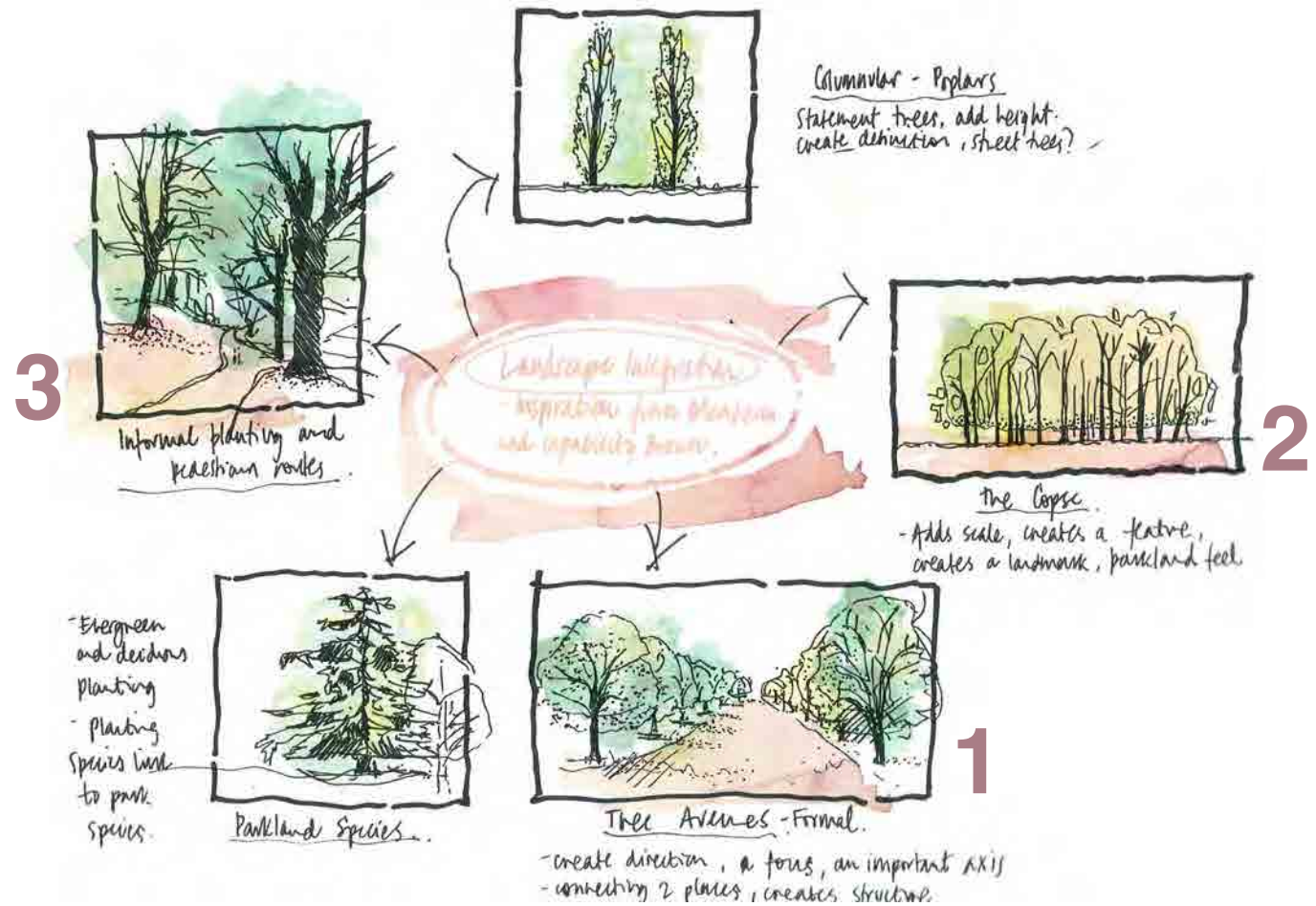


The improved parkland after Brown's intervention



Designed to inspire paintings

Brown used key landscape devices to create a naturalised yet formal approach to landscape and placemaking. Tree species and tree forms played a big role



This landscape led masterplan is a great opportunity to link the masterplan site to its landscape context by repeating these devices and implementing similar forms and tree species like those used by Capability Brown in the Park



The proposed tree species support this landscape strategy and help to give the spaces and places the impression of naturalistic yet formalised planting



Tilia x europaea



Prunus avium



Carpinus betulus



Tilia x europaea

Copse and common:

Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea Copper beech
Fagus sylvatica Beech
Quercus robur Oak

Parkland:

Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea Copper beech
Castanea sativa Sweet chestnut
Tilia x europaea Lime
Cedrus libani Cedar of Lebanon
Cedrus atlantica Blue cedar
Quercus robur Oak

Internal avenues:

Quercus robur Fastigiata Koster Oak (fastigiata)
Carpinus betulus Hornbeam
Prunus avium Cherry

Openspace avenues:

Tilia x europaea Lime
Cedrus atlantica Blue cedar
Carpinus betulus Hornbeam

A44 avenue:

Tilia x europaea Lime
Castanea sativa Sweet chestnut

Woodland belt:

Native trees, including field maple, bird cherry, hazel, holly, oak, beech, birch
 Specimens of oak, beech, sweet chestnut to provide instant presence



Quercus robur



carpinus betulus



Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea



Quercus robur
Fastigiata Koster



Tilia x europaea

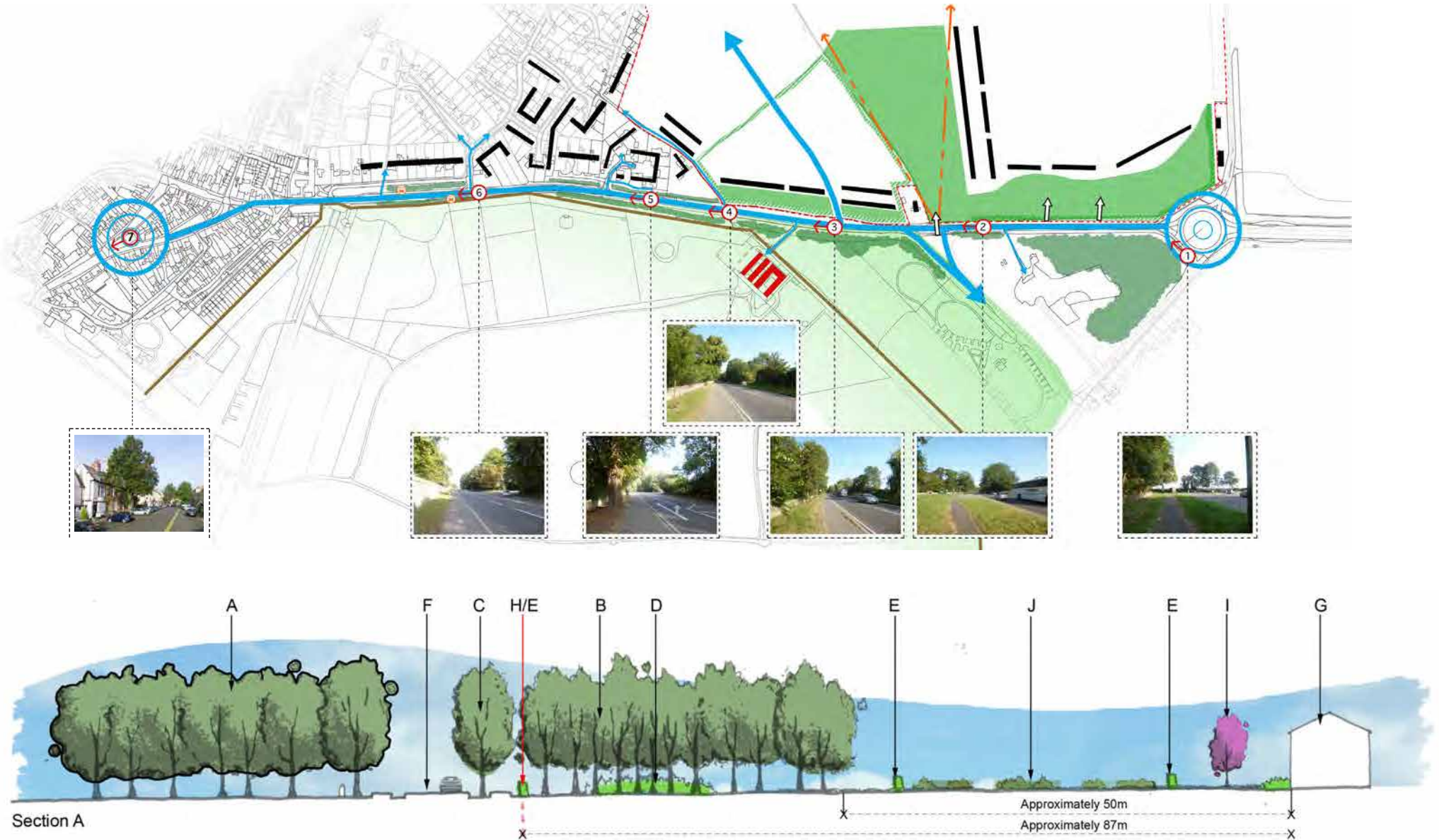


Cedrus atlantica

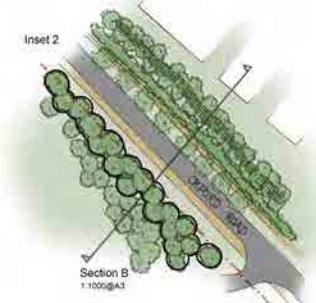
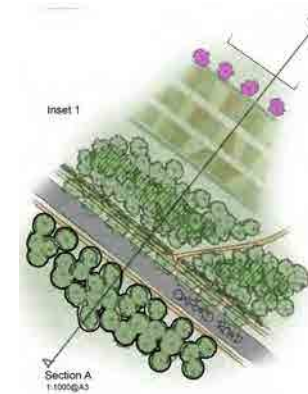
This is expressed by a network of high quality landscape spaces which are integral to the successful implementation of the masterplan and its relationship to Blenheim Palace Parkland



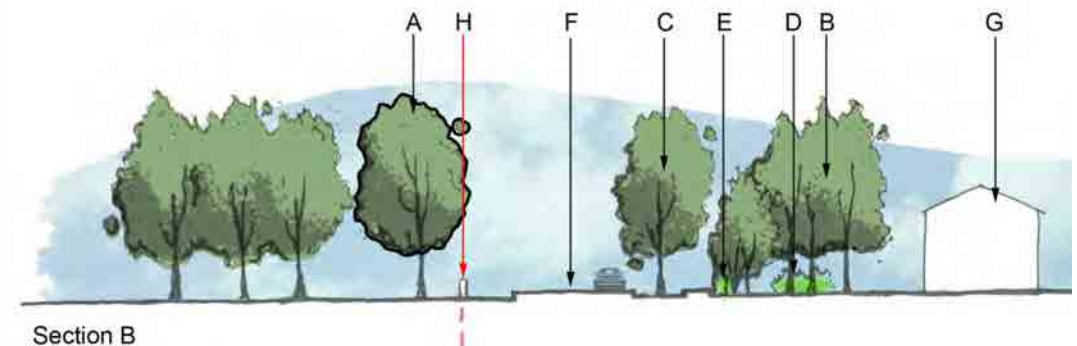
A key approach is the notion of enhancing a gateway - The A44 is currently a one sided approach, by mirroring this high quality landscape edge to the parkland and Campsfield Wood, we can create an improved and designed landscape to the Woodstock approach



This creates a robust green edge to the development that complements the localised landscape character. Native under storey planting, including species such as hazel, elder and holly will form the edge of this landscape belt



- A Existing trees
- B Proposed tree belt
- C Proposed avenue trees
- D Proposed understory planting
- E Proposed hedgerow
- F Oxford Road
- G Proposed dwelling
- H Site boundary
- I Proposed non-bearing fruit trees
- J Proposed community allotments



Seamlessly connected green spaces provide the opportunity to create a natural approach to planting and the opportunity to use localised small scale topography for play features



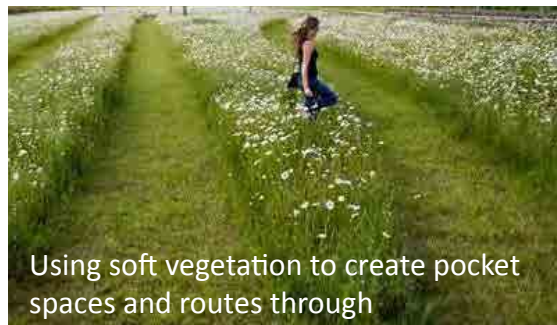
Using small grass mounds for play -Mountainville, NY



Mont-Evrin Park - Montevrain, France



Normand Park - London



Using soft vegetation to create pocket spaces and routes through



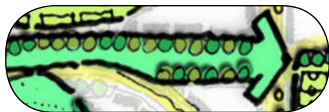
A masterplan created around high quality green spaces

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'Woodstock Park', a community park and nature reserve. The central focus of the masterplan, interpreting the scheduled ancient monument. A place for picnics, dog walking, running, cycling, flying a kite.

2



'The Avenue', Lime tree lined avenue linking the sports pitches and 'Victory Park' with 'Hensington Place'.

3



A network of sports facilities in the 'Victory Park' area and centre of the masterplan.

4



'Vanbrugh Square' - a green square surrounded by residential, linking to 'Woodstock Park'.

5



'Allotments' and 'Play and Fitness Trail' to the perimeter of the masterplan

