

# Blossom Fields, Bodicote Village



## Design and Access Statement

December 2014

**COPYRIGHT © RPS**

The material presented in this report is confidential. This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of Mr Oliver Wells and shall not be distributed or made available to any other company or person without the knowledge and written consent of RPS.

## Contents

### 1. Introduction

- *Overview*
- *DAS Guidance*
- *Consultation and Involvement*

### 2. Planning Policy

- *Cherwell Local Plan 1996*
- *Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031*
- *National Planning Policy Framework*

### 3. Local Context Appraisal

- *Bodicote Village*
- *The Wider Landscape*
- *Local Vernacular and Village Structure*

### 4. Site Appraisal and Concept Design Evolution

- *The Application Site*
- *Site Accessibility*
- *Opportunities and Constraints*

### - *Design Evolution*

- *Option 1*
- *Option 2*
- *Option 3*
- *Option 4*

### 5. The Preferred Approach

- *Proposals Indicative Site Layout)*
- *Amount, Density and Housing Mix*
- *Implementation and Delivery*
- *Proposals (Appearance and Materials)*
- *Other Matters/Local Enhancements*

### 6. Summary

## **Figures**

Figure 1: Blossom Fields Site Location

Figure 2: Bodicote Spatial Context

Figure 3: Church Street, Bodicote

Figure 4: High Street, Adderbury

Figure 5: High Street, Adderbury

Figure 6: High Street, Church Street Junction, Bodicote

Figure 7: Examples of Bodicote Traditional Vernacular

Figure 8: Blossom Fields, Key Features and Surrounding Land Uses

Figure 9: Existing Woodland Belt – View From Within the Application Site

Figure 10: Existing Woodland Belt – View From Outside the Application Site

Figure 11: Site Opportunities and Constraints

Figure 12: Design Evolution Option A

Figure 13: Design Evolution Option B

Figure 14: Design Evolution Option C

Figure 15: Design Evolution Option D

Figure 16: Preferred Approach Overview Plan

Figure 17: Illustrative masterplan

Figure 18: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 1

Figure 19: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 2

Figure 20: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 3

Figure 21: Indicative Building Heights Plan

Figure 22: Potential Footpath Network Improvements

## 1. Introduction

### Overview

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement (The DAS) is submitted in support of an outline planning application (including details of site access) by RPS on behalf of Mr Oliver Wells, for the development of land at Cotefield Farm, Oxford Road, Bodicote. The site is known locally as 'Blossom Fields'.
- 1.2 The site is identified by Figure 1.

Figure 1: Blossom Fields Site Location



- 1.3 The site is located on the southern edge of Bodicote and consists of a single field which is broadly rectangular in shape. The land is currently in agricultural use and is

accessed directly from an existing road junction with the A4260, which also serves Cotefield Nurseries, and the Cotefield Business Park.

- 1.4 The development will immediately abut a residential development consented to the north (appeal reference APP/C3105/A/11/2159619), providing 82 new homes. The current planning application seeks permission for an extension of that site to the south within a parcel of land well enclosed by an existing strategic landscape buffer and Cotefield Business Park.
- 1.5 These surrounding features and land uses are discussed further in Section 3 of the DAS.
- 1.6 The application site is owned by Mr Rowland Bratt (the Landowner). Should planning permission be forthcoming The Landowner will release the site for development.
- 1.7 RPS has been instructed to prepare an illustrative Masterplan for the site, to sit alongside The DAS Statement. The DAS discusses how the Masterplan for the site has evolved, the considerations and influences that have affected its evolution, and the objectives and principles that have guided it. The illustrative Masterplan is presented in Section 5 of this DAS.
- 1.8 The Statement is not intended to prescribe the future layout or appearance of the development, nor does it necessarily represent the only way in which the site could be

developed. These decisions will be reserved for future consideration and will be subject to subsequent detailed reserved matters submissions at a later date, should planning permission be forthcoming for the proposed development.

#### DAS Guidance

- 1.9 The DAS has been prepared in accordance with the best practice guidance 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them', (CABE 2007), and summarises the process of assessment, involvement, evaluation and design that has been undertaken in preparing the application and with reference to the emergent guidance encouraging good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance. It has also had regard to the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013, which sets out the latest Government guidance on the matters a DAS should cover.
- 1.10 In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013, the DAS has been prepared to:
  - (a) Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;

- (b) Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
- (c) Explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;
- (d) State what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and
- (e) Explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

- Detailed layout considerations and urban form,
- Effects on the highway network,
- The provision and positioning of public open space, and
- The extent of new and enhanced walking routes to be provided.

#### *Pre-application Discussions*

- 1.12 RPS submitted a pre-application package to Cherwell District Council on 2 July 2014 and attended a meeting with the Council's appointed planning officer, Ms Linda Griffiths, on 6 August 2014. The Council's response to this pre-application submission, dated 18th August 2014, is attached to the accompanying planning statement at Appendix 2.
- 1.13 RPS also submitted a pre-application package to Oxfordshire County Council on 22nd May 2014, in order to agree the scope of the Transport Assessment. Correspondence relating to these pre-application discussions is attached at Appendix B to the accompanying Transport Assessment.
- 1.14 RPS has also engaged in pre-application consultation with Bodicote Parish Council and presented to the full council meeting on 18th June 2014. The Council provided a written response, following the meeting, in which they highlighted questions relating to surface water drainage; foul drainage; transport; and, the availability of sufficient materials.

#### Consultation and Involvement

- 1.11 Pre-application discussions have been held with both the Parish and District Councils. These discussions related to the various aspects of the proposed development, including:-
  - The proposed site layout,
  - Access, circulation and permeability (with particular focus on the relationship with the adjoining consented residential development site),
  - The form of new housing,

1.15 The response also confirmed that the Council would like some bungalows as part of the development and would not want to see any negative impact on the screening value of the perimeter tree belt. Both RPS's presentation and the Parish Council's subsequent response are attached to the planning statement at Appendix 3.

#### *Public Consultation*

1.16 RPS hosted a one-day public consultation at The Old Church House, Bodicote on 13th August 2014, at which the draft proposals were displayed and a number of the project team attended in order to discuss the proposal with visitors. As part of this exhibition we prepared a short questionnaire, which was used to record any responding comments from visitors. The public exhibition was attended by approximately 30 people and a number of comments were provided by visitors. Copies of RPSs display boards, the short questionnaire and also the responding comments received are attached to the accompanying planning statement at Appendix 4.

1.17 Feedback received from these earlier consultations has been fed into the design proposals and, where appropriate, the proposals have been adjusted in response.



## 2. Planning Policy

- 2.1 This Section of the DAS identifies relevant matters of planning policy, in particular those relating to design.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this application the adopted Development Plan comprises saved policies from the Cherwell Local Plan 1996.
- 2.3 The draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (dCLP) was submitted for examination on 31 January 2014. Once adopted, it will provide the District’s development strategy for the period up to 2031. However, on 4 June 2014 the independent Planning Inspector suspended the examination hearings in order to allow the Council undertake substantial modifications to its proposed housing strategy. In the intervening period, the Council has significantly modified the dCLP, in order to address the Inspector’s reasons for suspending the examination hearings. These modifications have, between 22nd August 2014 and 3rd October 2014, been the subject of a focussed public consultation, ahead of their submission to the Inspector and the planned re-opening of the examination hearings in early December 2014.
- 2.4 As the dCLP has advanced to the stage that is currently at examination, its policies therefore carry weight, in the context of determining a planning application.

- 2.5 The accompanying Planning Statement provides a detailed analysis of planning policies, at Section 3 of that document, however, for completeness we set out below those policies of relevance to the nature, scale and design of the proposal.

### Cherwell Local Plan 1996

- 2.6 Blossom Fields is situated within ‘The Ironstone Downs’ landscape character area. Development proposals within this character area are subject to compliance with Policy C13, which states:-
- “The Ironstone Downs, the Cherwell Valley, the Thames Valley, North Ploughley, Muswell Hill and Otmoor are designated areas of high landscape value within which the Council will seek to conserve and enhance the environment”.*
- 2.7 The explanatory text of this policy discusses the need to carefully control the scale and type of development, in order to protect the character of the Areas of High Landscape Value. It confirms that particular attention will be paid to siting and design.
- 2.8 The design of new development is controlled under Policy C28, which states:-
- “Control will be exercised over all new development...to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external finish materials, are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of that development. In sensitive areas*

*such as...Areas of High Landscape Value, development will be required to be of a high standard and the use of traditional local building materials will normally be required”.*

- 2.9 It is then confirmed that the standard of design acceptable will be influenced by the environmental context of the site and its surroundings, and the nature, size and prominence of the development proposed. Design considerations will, when appropriate, include the siting, layout, size, scale, architectural style, building materials and landscaping.
- 2.10 The Council will seek to avoid discordant or badly designed development that would harm the appearance and character of the existing built environment, the Green Belt or the countryside.
- 2.11 Policy C30 confirms that design control will be exercised to ensure that new housing is compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing residential development in the area, and to ensure that new housing development provides acceptable standards of amenity and privacy for future residents.

**Draft Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031**

- 2.12 Draft Policy BSC2 requires effective and efficient use of land. In relation to housing density the policy confirms

*that “Housing development in Cherwell will be expected to make effective and efficient use of land”.*

- 2.13 Draft Policies BSC3 and BSC4 relate to both affordable and market housing. Developments such as this will be expected to provide 35% affordable housing, whilst housing mix will be negotiated using the Council’s most up-to-date evidence on housing need.
- 2.14 Public open space provision as part of new residential developments is controlled under draft Policy BSC10. The Council’s full requirements can be seen in Table 2.1 below.

*Table 1: Public Open Space Requirements*

Type of provision	Quantitative standard	Accessibility standard	Minimum size of provision	Threshold for on-site provision
General green space	2.4ha per 1000 urban dwellers	5 minute walk (amenity open space) (400m)	200sq.m.	10 urban dwellings
	2.74ha per 1000 rural / urban edge dwellers	15 minute walk other		6 rural/urban edge dwellings
Play space	0.78ha per 1000 people	5 minutes walk (400m) except for NEAPs 15 min walk (1200m)	LAP - 100sq.m. activity zone; 400sq.m. including buffer	10 dwellings (for a LAP)

			LEAP - 400sq.m. activity zone; 3600sq.m. including buffer	50 dwellings (for a LEAP and LAP)
--	--	--	--	--------------------------------------

2.15 Draft Policy ESD3 sets out the Council’s requirements in terms of sustainable construction. It states:-

*“All development proposals will be encouraged to reflect high quality design and high environmental standards, demonstrating sustainable construction methods including but not limited to:*

- *Minimising both energy demands and energy loss*
- *Maximising passive solar lighting and natural ventilation*
- *Maximising resource efficiency*
- *Incorporating the use of recycled and energy efficient materials*
- *Incorporating the use of locally sourced building materials*
- *Reducing waste and pollution and making adequate provision for the recycling of waste*
- *Making use of sustainable drainage methods*

- *Reducing the impact on the external environment and maximising opportunities for cooling and shading (by the provision of open space and water, planting, and green roofs, for example); and*
- *Making use of the embodied energy within buildings wherever possible and re-using materials where proposals involve demolition or redevelopment.*
- *Should the promoters of development consider that individual proposals would be unviable with the above requirements, ‘open-book’ financial analysis of proposed developments will be expected so that an in house economic viability assessment can be undertaken. Where it is agreed that an external economic viability assessment is required, the cost shall be met by the promoter”.*

2.16 Draft Policy ESD7 requires all developments to use sustainable drainage systems for the management of surface water run-off.

2.17 Draft Policy ESD13 is the Council’s updated landscape protection policy. It seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive and highly valued local character of the district, confirming that development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character and secure appropriate mitigation where damage cannot be

avoided. Development proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *“Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside*
- *Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography*
- *Be inconsistent with local character*
- *Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity*
- *Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or*
- *Harm the historic value of the landscape”.*

2.18 Draft Policy ESD16 is the Council’s updated design policy. It requires all new development to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. The policy states that new developments should:-

- *“Be designed to deliver high quality safe, attractive, durable and healthy places to live and work in.*
- *Development of all scales should be designed to improve the quality and appearance of an area and the way it functions.*
- *Deliver buildings, places and spaces that can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions.*

- *Support the efficient use of land and infrastructure, through appropriate land uses, mix and density / development intensity.*
- *Contribute positively to an area’s character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting.*
- *Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated ‘heritage assets’ (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF. Regeneration proposals that make sensitive use of heritage assets, particularly where these bring redundant or under used buildings or areas, especially any on English Heritage’s At Risk Register, into appropriate use will be encouraged.*
- *Include information on heritage assets sufficient to assess the potential impact of the proposal on their*

*significance. Where archaeological potential is identified this should include an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

- *Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings. Development should be designed to integrate with existing streets and public spaces, and buildings configured to create clearly defined active public frontages.*
- *Reflect or, in a contemporary design response, re-interpret local distinctiveness, including elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors, building and surfacing materials, mass, scale and colour palette.*
- *Promote permeable, accessible and easily understandable places by creating spaces that connect with each other, are easy to move through and have recognisable landmark features.*
- *Demonstrate a holistic approach to the design of the public realm to create high quality and multi-functional streets and places that promotes pedestrian movement and integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing. The principles set out in The Manual for Streets should be followed.*
- *Consider the amenity of both existing and future development, including matters of privacy, outlook,*

*natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space.*

- *Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*
- *Be compatible with up to date urban design principles, including Secured by Design and Building for Life, and achieve Secured by Design accreditation*
- *Consider sustainable design and layout at the masterplanning stage of design, where building orientation and the impact of microclimate can be considered within the layout*
- *Incorporate energy efficient design and sustainable construction techniques, whilst ensuring that the aesthetic implications of green technology are appropriate to the context (also see Policies ESD 1 - 5 on climate change and renewable energy)*
- *Integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible (see Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment and Policy ESD18 Green Infrastructure). Well-designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the micro climate, and air*

*pollution and provide attractive places that improve people's health and sense of vitality.*

- *Use locally sourced sustainable materials where possible”.*

### National Planning Policy Framework

2.19 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government planning policies and guidance, to be used by all local authorities in England when preparing development plans and determining planning applications. A golden thread underpinning the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with the policies set out within the Framework, taken as a whole, constituting the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice.

2.20 Paragraph 9 confirms that *“pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):*

*...replacing poor design with better design;*

*...widening the choice of high quality homes”.*

2.21 Paragraph 50 states that in order to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, a mix of housing should be planned for, based on current and future demographic

trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.

2.22 Design is a key aspect of sustainable development, as is set out in Paragraph 56, and it is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. This key point is extended at Paragraph 58, where it is stated that *“planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments:*

- *Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- *Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*

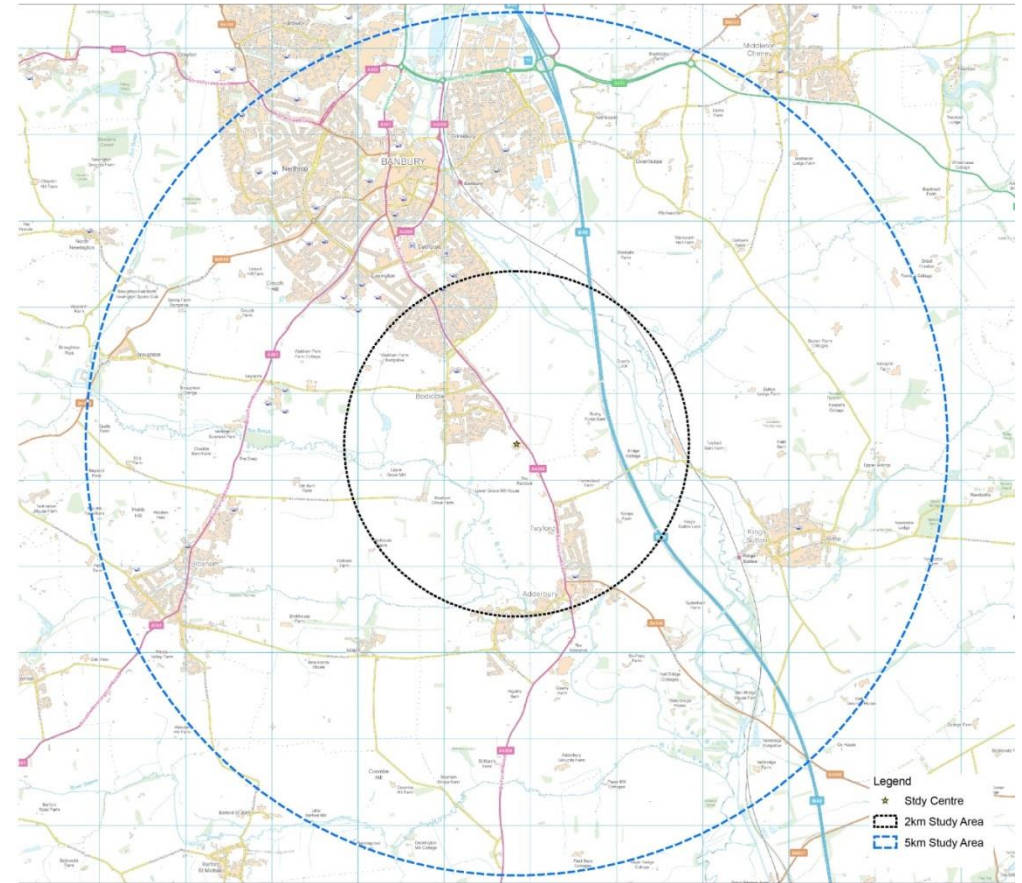
- *Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life of community cohesion; and*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.*

### 3. Local Context Appraisal

#### Bodicote Village

- 3.1 Bodicote lies immediately to the south of Banbury, the two settlements separated by a thin wedge of green space between White Post Road and the A4260 Oxford Road, and to the north of Adderbury. Bodicote maintains a distinct identity as a relatively small village in the North Cherwell countryside whilst benefiting from the close spatial and social linkages with Banbury to its immediate north, and the wide range of services and facilities that are located there.
- 3.2 Figure 2 shows the spatial relationship between Bodicote and Banbury to the North. The settlement to the south is Adderbury Village.

Figure 2: Bodicote Spatial Context



- 3.3 Bodicote’s early history is linked to the expansion of the nearby village of Adderbury during the middle ages.



- 3.4 The development of the village, however, owes more to its proximity to the market town of Banbury, particularly following the building of the canal and railways in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Cotefield House, to the south of the site, is one of a number of larger houses built on the edge of the village in this period. Parkland planting associated with Cotefield House is shown on 19th Century maps of the area, and it is possible that isolated Oak trees in the field to the south of the site boundary are remnants of this.
- 3.5 The village doubled in size during the post-war years most recently with the approval of 82 units on land to the north of the application site under appeal reference APP/C3105/A/11/2159619.
- 3.6 The countryside to the south shows evidence of the typical post-war pattern of hedgerow removal, although in recent years new shelter belt tree planting has taken place, forming a significant woodland belt. Other 20th Century encroachments on the landscape to the south are limited.

### The Wider Landscape

#### *Ironstone Downs Character Area*

- 3.7 An assessment of the site requires consideration of both the village setting and the surrounding countryside. The

analysis has taken into account the intimate relationship between built form and open countryside.

- 3.8 The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment identifies eight broad character areas. The area within which the site lies is designated as the ‘Ironstone Hills and Valleys’, an extensive area stretching south west of Banbury, described as:

*“Rolling hills with rich soils...medium and large arable fields still surrounded by hedges and the boundaries marked by hedgerow trees”.*

- 3.9 The description of the ‘Ironstone Downs’ character area is expanded upon in CDC’s Countryside Design Summary, which draws attention to the visibility of settlements in the hilly landscape:

*“...village location and topography means that many villages are not visible over long distances. Churches located near the highest point of the village provide a landmark in the wider countryside”.*

### Local Vernacular and Village Structure

- 3.10 Village layouts have enclosed over time in response to circumstances, for instance the position of roads and junctions, and the location of the village in relation to the surrounding landform.

- 3.11 However, there is a strong consistency in the vernacular architecture of the area, with many two-storey terraced and detached houses built of ironstone.

Figure 3: Church Street, Bodicote Village



- 3.12 The typical village layout is nucleated and compact. Bodicote, a linear settlement, is untypical in this respect, although it retains a clearly defined historic core of ironstone housing.
- 3.13 Depending upon the status of the village (which varies – Adderbury and Bloxham, for instance are bigger than

Bodicote) there is a hierarchy of building scale and public realm which helps order the layout of the settlement – e.g. the church is a landmark building, with an intermediate scale of larger houses often at the edges of the village.

- 3.14 The most typical building type and scale is the domestic cottage, usually constructed in the distinctive local ironstone, 2 storeys, with a thatch or (more often) slate roof and red brick chimney stacks. The historic core of Bodicote has many examples of this building type.
- 3.15 Typically, the domestic cottage forms the structure of the village with rows of cottages defining the main street(s) and spaces.

Figure 4: High Street, Adderbury



- 3.16 In the small settlements, such as Bodicote, the building line is often directly to the back of the pavement and tends to widen and narrow in an attractively irregular arrangement.
- 3.17 Most properties face directly onto the street although some are at right angles to it and the frontage is often broken by narrow passageways.

Figure 5: High Street, Adderbury



- 3.18 As in the surrounding landscape, long sightlines are rare, with the streetscape tending to be closed within 100m by the irregularity of the building line. The variation in street width and closure tends to define subsidiary spaces along the length of the street.

Figure 6: High Street, Church Street Junction, Bodicote



3.19 Public space in the larger villages is on a bigger scale and often incorporates grassed areas, including distinctive grass verges between cottages and the street. Some of the larger grassed spaces are planted with mature strands of trees and fronted by prestigious houses with stand alongside the cottages. Examples of this can be seen in Adderbury.

### Local Palette of Materials

- 3.20 A detailed assessment of materials and details evident throughout Bodicote has been carried out. This has been used to establish a design theme for the new development which exhibits local architectural quality and ensure the architectural response of the proposals reflects the traditional local character.
- 3.21 The appearance of the new development should seek to reflect the varied character that is contextually sensitive and sympathetic to the local vernacular of Bodicote.



Figure 7: Examples of Bodicote Traditional Vernacular



3.22 Bodicote has a distinctive and high-quality architectural vernacular and it is recommended that the design throughout the site should take its lead from this and incorporate the following details, all of which can be observed in the locality:

- Inclusion of varied fenestration depending on dwelling type. Larger dwellings would have sash or portrait shaped windows and smaller cottage type dwellings casement style windows
- To add emphasis to windows flat heads and sills are proposed in stone or brick depending on main elevation treatment
- The use of bay windows to the ground floor front elevations of certain dwellings
- Inclusion of simple canopies above main entrance doorways
- The inclusion of chimneys on certain larger properties to add interest to the roof-scape.

- Use of dormer windows on front elevations of appropriate dwelling types to provide greater presence and interest to the roof scape within the street scene

3.23 Materials used for construction of the proposed dwellings should reflect those found in the village of Bodicote. It is proposed that the elevations of the proposed dwellings are finished in a combination of Ironstone or brick (or equivalent materials). Roofs should be finished either slate or plain tile.

3.24 Contrast within the elevations can be achieved through the use of contrasting materials or features such as heads, sills and quoins. As an example limestone heads may be used against an otherwise red brick elevation.

#### Summary

3.25 The following key characteristics in the local vernacular have been identified:-

- There is a strong pattern of terraced and detached housing in the area, often of ironstone construction.
- Housing often fronts directly onto the pavement but this sometimes widens, in an irregular but attractive arrangement.
- Public open space often incorporates grassed areas, including as distinctive grass verges between

cottages and the street, and is interspersed with trees of varying sizes.

- The local area has a distinctive and high-quality architectural vernacular, with varied fenestration, window arrangements and window detailing.

3.26 These key characteristics and features in the local area should be considered and incorporated within the site layout.

## 4. Site Appraisal and Concept Evolution

### The Application Site

- 4.1 The application site is located immediately on the southern edge of Bodicote village and consists of arable land.
- 4.2 The site is bounded to the north by the consented housing development and Cotefield Nurseries and to the east by Cotefield Business Park.
- 4.3 Figure 8 identifies these key features and surround land uses.



- 4.4 The site is bounded to the south east and south west by an established landscape screening belt, comprising mature woodland planting. The woodland belt was planted fourteen years ago and has reached a height of up 12m in some locations.

*Figure 8: Blossom Fields, Key Features and Surrounding Land Uses*

- 4.5 This gives the application site a clear sense of enclosure in the landscape and insulates the site from views in the wider landscape and countryside to the south.
- 4.6 Figure 9 provides a view of the woodland belt, on the western boundary of the application site, looking broadly southwards.

*Figure 9: Existing Woodland Belt – View From Within the Application Site*



- 4.7 Figure 10 demonstrates the sense of enclosure from *outside* the application site. This photograph was taken from land to the south of the site, looking north in the opposite direction to Figure 9. The building visible toward the centre of the

photograph is Unit A within Cotefield Business Park, which has a ridge height of over 8m. The woodland belt in this location (beginning to the left of Unit A) is clearly in excess of that height. No public views into the site in this direction would be possible.

*Figure 10: Existing Woodland Belt – View From Outside the Application Site*



#### Site Accessibility

- 4.8 A detailed assessment of the sites accessibility by road, public transport, pedestrian and cycling modes has been



carried out as part of the Transport Assessment (TA) that accompanies the planning application (see paragraphs 3.6 to 3.41 of that document). A summary of the main conclusions in respect of sustainable, non-car modes, is presented in the following paragraphs.

- 4.9 The TA concludes that the site is situated within an accessible location within recommended walking and cycling distance of a local shop, post office and local bus stops to Banbury and wider area. Bodicote and Banbury offer a full range of services for residents and are accessible by alternatives to the private car.

#### *Pedestrian Accessibility*

- 4.10 A footway is provided on both sides of the carriageway north of Broad Gap. Approximately 150 metres south of the access junction with the A4260, the speed limit reduces from 60mph to a 40mph restriction. Approximately 2 kilometres north of the access junction with the A4260, the speed limit further reduces to 30mph as the A4260 passes through Banbury.
- 4.11 Approximately 250 metres north of the site access junction, the A4260 Oxford Road meets Weeping Cross via a newly installed signalised junction. Weeping Cross is 6.5m wide and has street lighting and a continuous footway on the northern side of the carriageway. Weeping Cross leads into Bodicote village and is controlled by a 30mph speed

restriction. The closest southbound bus stop to the site is also located on this junction.

#### *Pedestrian and cycle linkages*

- 4.12 A footway is provided on the western side of the carriageway along the A4260 Oxford Road and it varies in width from 0.9-1.8 metres. The footway provides pedestrian access from the application site to both Banbury and Bodicote village.
- 4.13 A bridle path runs south of the development site, which provides a pedestrian and cycle link to the Sor Brook and Austin Road from the A4260 Oxford Road.
- 4.14 Once completed, the adjacent residential development site will provide a formal pedestrian and cycle link to the village of Bodicote, via the current farm access point on to Molyneux Drive at the northernmost point of the site. Footways are provided on either side of the carriageway on Molyneux Drive, with an approximate width of 2 metres.
- 4.15 A number of the footways in close proximity to the site have dropped kerbs and street lights; however, they vary in width and condition.
- 4.16 The Institute of Highways and Transport (IHT) publication 'Providing for Journeys on Foot' (IHT 2000) suggests

acceptable walking distances for various land uses, as set out in Table 2:

*Table 2: Suggested Acceptable Walking Distances*

Definition	Town Centres (m)	Commuting/Schools (m)	Elsewhere (m)
Desirable	200	500	400
Acceptable	400	1,000	800
Preferred	800	2,000	1,200
Maximum			

Source: Providing for Journeys on Foot, IHT, 2000

- 4.17 Pedestrian isochrones from the development site have been generated using the accessibility software, Visography TRACC. The isochrones have been plotted at time intervals of five minutes from the site up to a maximum of 25 minutes (approximately 2km). These are based on an average walking speed of 1.33m/s equating to approximately 400m in 5 minutes or 2000m in 25 minutes which is considered the preferred maximum commuting distance by foot in the Institute of Highways and Transportation (IHT) document 'Providing for Journeys on Foot'.
- 4.18 The resulting pedestrian isochrones are shown on Figure 2 of the TA. This demonstrates that there is potential for journeys to be made to/from the development site by foot to key attractions and facilities such as employment, education and leisure opportunities. The neighbouring consented residential development and Cotefield Nurseries

are within a 5 minute walk from the centre of the site. Within a 10 minute walk of the site is Bannatynes Gym, the bus stops at on the A4260 at Weeping Cross, the bus stops on Molyneux Drive, Bodicote Stores

- 4.19 Within a 25 minute walk of the site are Bodicote village, Cherwell District Council offices, Adderbury, Twyford, the Esso Garage, Bishop Loveday Primary School and Christopher Rawlins Primary School.

### *Cycling*

- 4.20 A number of off and on road cycle routes are provided in the vicinity of the site, including National Cycle Route (NCR) 5, which is located approximately 1.5 km west of the development site. This is accessed via a combination of track roads and off road cycle routes as shown on Figure 3 of the TA.
- 4.21 NCR 5 routes from Banbury through Bodicote, down to Oxford. Locally the route passes along Church Street, the High Street, White Post Road and Bankside and can be accessed 1.0km west of the site at the Freemans Road junction with Church Street.
- 4.22 Cycle lanes are provided on both sides of the carriageway on the A4260 Oxford Road north of Broad Gap. North of Mayfield Road these become shared cycle footways and provide a link to Sainsbury's and Horton Hospital.

4.23 A signed cycle route is provided along Bankside and Tramway Road, which provides a route from the A4260 to Banbury Railway Station and Town Centre.

4.24 Visography TRACC has also been used to generate isochrones to identify cycling accessibility to and from the site. The cycle isochrones have been plotted at time intervals of five minutes from the site up to a maximum of 25 minutes (approximately 5km). These are based on an average cycling speed of 16 km per hour equating to approximately 4 metres per second.

4.25 The resulting cycle isochrones are shown on Figure 4 of the TA. This demonstrates that all areas of Banbury are located within a 25 minute cycle of the site. This includes Banbury Town Centre and Railway Station, both of which are within a 20 minute cycle of the site.

*Bus*

4.26 The nearest bus stops to the site are located on the A4260 Oxford Road, towards Banbury. The southbound bus stop is located approximately 250m north of the site access, at Weeping Cross, and the northbound bus stop is located approximately 430m north of the site access. Both bus stops are in the form of bus flags and provide timetable information.

4.27 In addition, there are bus stops provided on Molyneux Drive near to the junction with Austin Drive, which can be

accessed via the adjoining consented residential development site development, approximately 400 metres from the centre of the application site.

4.28 The locations of bus stops within the vicinity of the site are illustrated in Figure 5 of the TA along with the routing of the local services; the full extent of the bus services servicing Banbury are shown in the attached map at Appendix C of the TA. The routes that stop at the aforementioned bus stops are summarised within Table 3.

Table 3: Bus Service Summary

Route No.	Route	Weekday		Frequency (approx. minutes)				
		First Bus	Last Bus	Mon-Fri Peaks	Mon-Fri Daytime	Mon-Fri Evening	Sat	Sun
499	Brackley – Evenley – Aynho – King's Sutton – Banbury	0755	1714	1 service	Every 2 hours	1 service	Every 2 hours	No service
B2	Bodicote – Banbury	0632	1852	2 per hour	2 per hour	1 service	2 per hour	Every 2 hours
S4	Oxford – Steeple Aston – Deddington – Banbury	0753	2013	1 per hour	1 per hour	3 services	1 per hour	4 services

Source: 'Traveline' [Accessed October 2014]

### *Rail*

- 4.29 Banbury Railway Station is located approximately 3.7km north east of the application site. A total of 80 secure cycle parking spaces are provided at the rail station.
- 4.30 The station is managed by Chiltern Railways, providing a direct and regular link to London Marylebone via High Wycombe, and Princes Risborough and Kidderminster via Birmingham. A summary of the services provided from Banbury station are shown in Table 4 below.

### *Public Transport Accessibility*

- 4.31 Visography TRACC has been used to generate isochrones to identify public transport accessibility to and from the development site. The public transport isochrones have been plotted at time intervals of five minutes up to a maximum of 45 minutes' journey time to and from the site (including the walking time to and from the appropriate bus stops and waiting times for services).
- 4.32 The resulting public transport isochrones are shown on Figure 6 of the TA. This indicates that King's Sutton, Adderbury, Bloxham, Broughton, Chacombe, Middleton Cheney, Bicester, Oxford and Chipping Norton are all located within a 45 minute public transport journey of the Site.

Table 4: Services from Banbury Station

Banbury

Operator	Route	Monday-Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
		First train	Last train	Freq.	First train	Last train	Freq.	First train	Last train	Freq.
Chiltern Railways	Kidderminster – Birmingham - Banbury- London Marylebone	05:20	22:30	12-37 mins	06:04	23:24	16-61 mins	08:40	22:15	18-33 mins
	London Marylebone (via High Wycombe) - Banbury – Birmingham – Kidderminster*	06:05	01:35	5-38 mins	07:05	01:11	9-35 mins	09:28	01:20	10-32 mins
Cross Country	Newcastle to Reading via Birmingham New Street and Oxford	09:19	21:19	60 mins	09:19	21:20	60 mins	17:24	21:19	5 services
	Reading to Newcastle via Birmingham and Darlington	07:26	19:31	60 mins	07:33	17:24	60 mins	13:37	18:25	6 services
Cross Country	Manchester Piccadilly to Bournemouth via Birmingham New Street and Reading	06:54	22:55	60 mins	06:55	21:55	60 mins	09:55	20:55	60 mins
	Bournemouth to Manchester Piccadilly via Reading and Birmingham New Street	06:54	22:53	60 mins	06:56	21:55	60 mins	09:55	20:55	60 mins

Source: Chiltern Railways / Cross Country (Accessed October 2014)\*Some services terminate at

*Access to Local Amenities*

4.33 The town of Banbury has a large number and range of facilities such as schools, shops, health facilities and leisure facilities. The location of these are shown in Figure 7 of the TA and summarised in Table 5 opposite with the approximate distances to each from the site access.

*Table 5: Local Amenities*

	Distance (m)	Journey Times (minutes)		
		Walk	Cycle	Bus*
<b>Education</b>				
Primary: Bishop Loveday Primary School	1,400	18	5	10
Secondary: Banbury Academy	3,100	39	12	19
College: Banbury and Bicester College	3,600	45	14	20
<b>Health and Community</b>				
Hospital: Horton General Hospital	2,500	31	9	9
Doctors: Hightown Surgery	2,500	31	9	12
Dentist: Cherwell Heights Dental Practice	2,000	25	8	10
Library: Adderbury Library	2,400	30	8	13
<b>Shopping / Retail</b>				
Post Office: Bodicote Post Office	650	7	2	-
Convenience Store: Bodicote Stores	650	7	2	-
Supermarket: Sainsbury's Supermarket	2,100	26	8	8
Town Site: Banbury town centre	3,600	45	14	18
<b>Leisure</b>				
Cinema: Odeon, Horse Fair, Banbury	3,400	41	10	16
Leisure Site: Bannatynes Gym, Oxford Road	<100	1	<1	-
<b>Existing Public Open Spaces</b>				
Recreation Ground: Bodicote Park, Oxford Road	<100	1	<1	-
<b>Public Transport</b>				
Bus Stop: Oxford Road	250	4	1	-
Bus Station: Banbury Bus Station	3,800	45	13	18
Railway Station: Banbury Railway Station	3,700	46	14	23

Note: Assumed walking speed of 1.33m/sec and cycling speed of 4m/sec.  
 \*Minimum journey time includes walk time to and from relevant bus stop and waiting time at the stop

## Opportunities and Constraints

### *Opportunities*

- 4.34 The site is contained by existing development to the north and east, and by a mature woodland belt to the south and west. The site presents an opportunity for an organic extension of the village to the south.
- 4.35 There are numerous opportunities to link new homes to both the existing village centre and the surrounding footpath network.
- 4.36 The A4260 Oxford Road provides a highly engineered access to the site from the east and, together with other footpath connections, ensures there is an opportunity to link new homes to the existing public transport network.
- 4.37 The existing mature Oak tree in the centre of the site presents a natural focal point, around which both recreational spaces and built form can be designed.
- 4.38 The existing woodland belt spanning the south and south-western boundaries presents an opportunity to both screen new development from surrounding countryside views and provide a pleasant outlook for new homes.
- 4.39 The adjoining residential development site presents an 'open-ended' green corridor along its southern boundary and this provides an opportunity to create a strongly linked

network of open and green spaces within both the proposed development and the adjacent consented residential development site.

### *Constraints*

- 4.40 The site is largely unconstrained by natural features, with the exception of the mature woodland belt along the south and south-western boundaries and the in-field Oak and Sycamore trees. Consideration must be given to protection of natural assets which are to be retained as part of the development.
- 4.41 New housing must be orientated to ensure there is an acceptable residential environment for future residents.
- 4.42 Development at the interface between the application site and the adjoining residential development should be sensitively designed and formed, to ensure an acceptable relationship between both developments. Appropriate physical and visual connections should be provided.
- 4.43 The undulating topography of the site requires careful consideration in order to ensure there are acceptable gradients within the development.

Figure 11: Site Opportunities and Constraints





### Design Evolution

4.44 The proposed development provides a logical opportunity to extend the village's settlement form, providing a sensitive and appealing form of development. A number of design alternatives were considered in the design evolution process.

### Option 1

*Figure 12: Design Evolution Option 1*



4.45 Vehicular access taken from the existing road access off the A4260, in the north-east of the site, with amenity grassland and landmark buildings providing a 'welcome' feature.

4.46 Residential blocks arranged along the contours of the site, with the access road looping around the central block which includes the Oak tree and principal public open space area. Pedestrian linkage to the adjoining residential development site provided at the point of vehicular access to the site and access to surrounding public footpath network provided in the south-eastern corner.

4.47 Key landmark buildings are provided in strategic locations, often framing a viewpoint.

#### Positive:-

- The public open space provides a focal point at the heart of the development, around which built form has been designed,
- A large number of properties enjoy views of the public open space and mature Oak tree in the centre of the development.

#### Negative:-

- Away from the central block, the development is dominated by built form,

- The relationship with the adjoining consented residential development site appears awkward and contrived, due to setback of new housing,
- The mature woodland belt is lost, as part of the rear gardens of perimeter properties,
- The road access appears isolated.

## Option 2

Figure 13: Design Evolution Option 2



4.48 Vehicular access taken from the existing road access off the A4260, in the north-east of the site, with amenity grassland and landmark buildings providing a 'welcome' feature.

4.49 Residential parcels arranged along the contours of the site, with the access road looping around the central block which

includes the Oak tree and principal public open space area. Built form provided in closer proximity to the north-adjointing site.

4.50 Pedestrian links to the adjoining residential development site are provided along the interface of both developments and access to surrounding public footpath network provided in the south and south-eastern corners.

### Positive:-

- The public open space provides a focal point at the heart of the development, around which built form has been designed,
- A large number of properties enjoy views of the public open space and mature Oak tree in the centre of the development,
- Additional smaller green spaces are provided in perimeter locations,

### Negative:-

- The relationship with the adjoining consented residential development remains awkward, with the proposal failing to interact with the adjoining development,
- The mature woodland belt is largely lost, as part of the rear gardens of perimeter properties,

- The road access appears isolated.

### Option 3

Figure 14: Design Evolution Option 3



4.51 Vehicular access moved further infield, along the consented residential development access, with landmark buildings and a tree-lined avenue providing a 'welcome' feature.

4.52 Residential parcels are designed around a strong physical and visual connection with the adjoining residential development site, with a 'green link' and generous public open space at its heart. In other locations, housing fronts onto the mature woodland belt, with a strip of open space spanning the perimeter of the site. Road access is comprised principally of a loop, with small off shoots allowing access to individual housing clusters.

4.53 Pedestrian connections are provided along the interface between the two developments, with access to the surrounding public footpath network available in a number of locations around the perimeter.

Positive:-

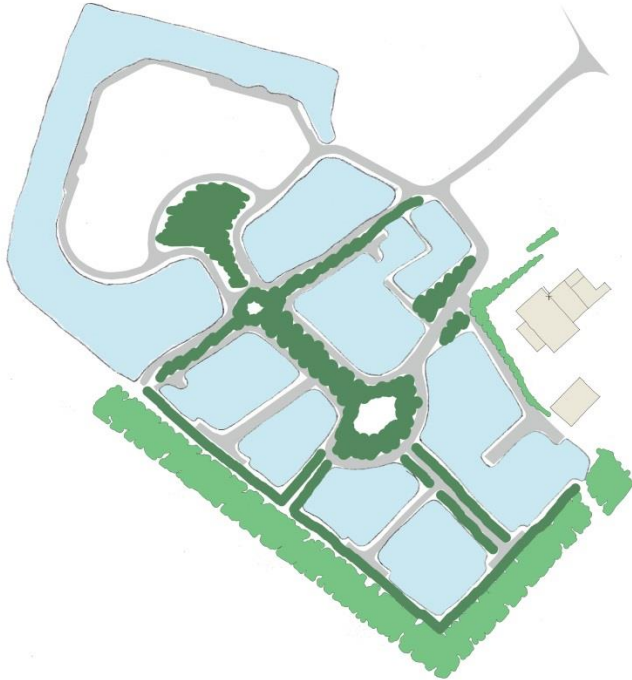
- The design of residential parcels and public open space gives the appearance of a single, cohesive development.
- Positive frontage along the woodland belt provides a pleasant view along this section of the site and allows interaction between both areas,
- The relationship with the adjoining consented residential development site is positive, with properties on both sides of the road in the area provided with a pleasing view of a small area of open space and also provided with access to the surrounding public footpath network via this green link.

Negative:-

- The access road is long and straight adjacent to the public open space, with little variation.

## Option 4

Figure 15: Design Evolution Option 4



4.54 Vehicular access moved further infield, along the road access serving the adjoining consented residential development, with landmark buildings and a tree-lined avenue providing a 'welcome' feature. Residential parcels are designed around a strong physical and visual connection with the adjoining residential development site, with a 'green link' and generous public open space at its heart.

4.55 This open space acts as a village green, overlooked by a number of properties including landmark buildings. Road access is comprised principally of a loop, with small off shoots allowing access to individual housing clusters.

4.56 Pedestrian connections are provided along the interface between the two developments, with access to the surrounding public footpath network available in a number of locations around the perimeter.

Positive:-

- The access road is now more comfortably accommodated within the context of residential parcels
- A village green at the heart of the development enriches the area, with the potential for long structured views through the development.
- The smaller block structure creates a more interesting spatial sequence, allowing pleasant views in north / south and east/west directions.

## The preferred Option

4.57 Of the options considered, Option 4 is considered to provide to provide the highest quality layout, which relates well to the adjoining consented development and also responds positively to other site constraints.

## 5 The Preferred Approach

5.1 Figure 16 presents a further developed overview plan identifying the key features of the preferred approach, identifying the following key features of the concept:

- The creation of a central 'Village Green' to serve as a focal point for the development, assisting in navigation of the site and enhancing the visual and social linkages between the application site and the consented residential development to the north.
  - Incorporation of the existing Oak tree as a focal point within the Village Green area, retaining a key existing feature in the landscape, giving the Village Green immediate character and a sense of place.
  - Creation of a strong north/south green connection, from the centre of the north-adjointing development, down through the proposed development, which connects both sites physically and visually and provides an interesting connection to the surrounding public footpath network.
  - A clear and logical hierarchical network of internal roads and footpaths, providing direct access across the site, north up into the heart of Bodicote Village, and out to the wider footpath network that lies just outside the site.
  - Provision of the preferred smaller residential block structure creating maximising views through and within the site.
  - 'Positive' relationships with all site boundaries, with housing facing onto all site boundaries and providing robust and interesting features in potential views.
- Landmark buildings in prominent locations throughout the development, in particular around the village green.
  - The creation of a long green corridor around the perimeter of the site, which allows for biodiversity improvements to be achieved and also allows access along the entire frontage of the development.



Figure 16: Preferred Approach

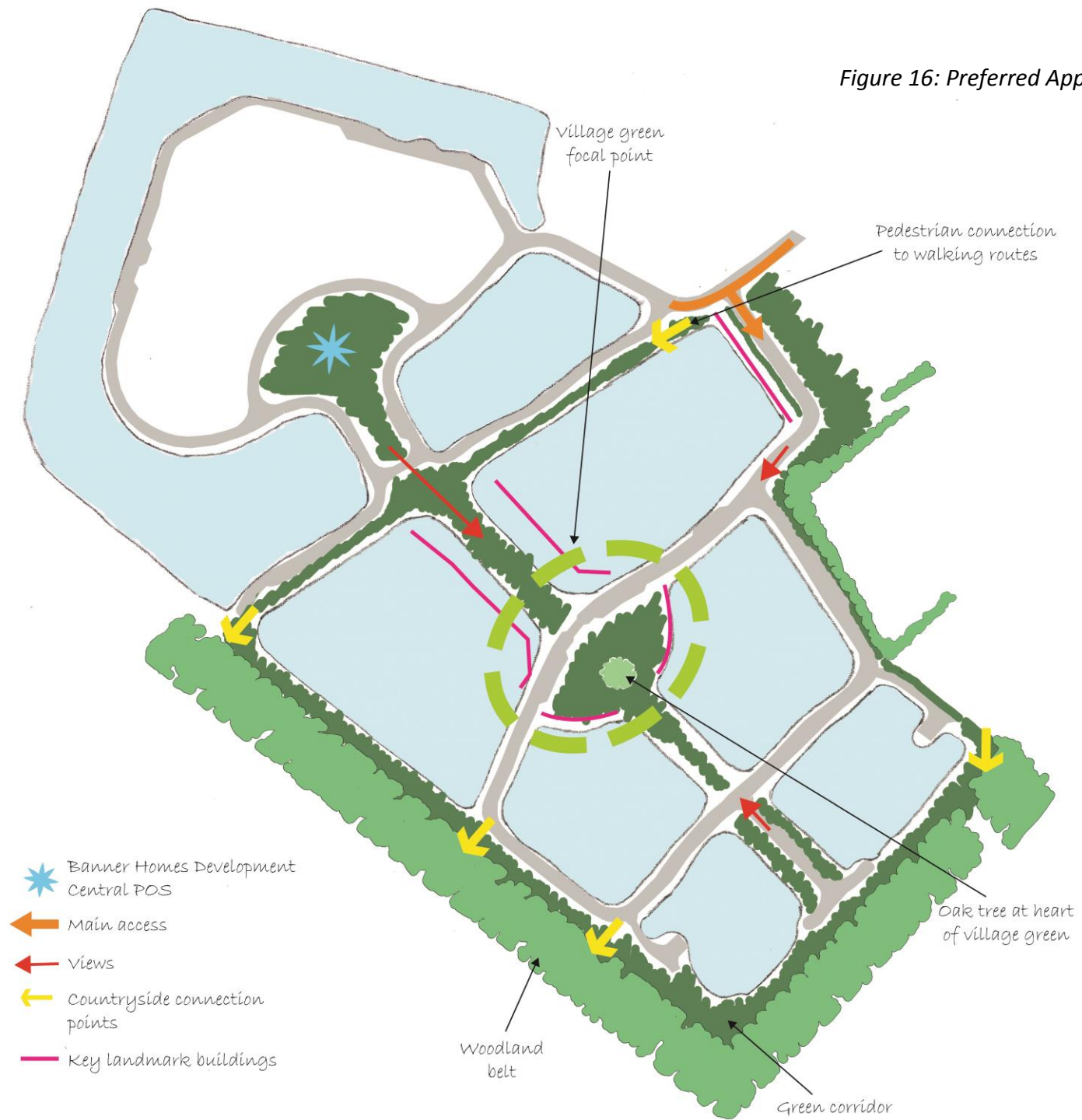


Figure 17: Illustrative masterplan

Proposals (Indicative Site Layout)

- 5.2 The Preferred Approach has been further developed to provide the illustrative masterplan that accompanies the planning application.
- 5.3 Figure 17 illustrates how the site could potentially be laid out and designed in accordance with the design principles and development concept set out above.

Amount, Density and Housing Mix

- 5.4 This application seeks Outline planning permission for a residential development of 95 houses, comprised of both market and affordable units.
- 5.5 The site is 4.5ha (11.1 acres) in size. With a total of 95 dwellings proposed, the gross density of the development will be approximately 21 dwellings per hectare.
- 5.6 Net density will be approximately 30 dwellings per hectare
- 5.7 This density has been confirmed by the Council as being acceptable during pre-application discussions.
- 5.8 The proposed mix of housing is set out in Table 6 overleaf.-



Table 6: Affordable Housing Provision

Affordable Housing Provision	
1-Bed Maisonette	4
2-Bed bungalow	1
2-Bed House	20
3-Bed House	8

- 5.9 The affordable housing mix has been discussed and agreed prior to the submission of this application with the District Council. Relevant correspondence is presented as an Appendix to the accompanying Planning Statement.

Table 7: Market Housing Provision

Market Housing requirements (Source: Oxfordshire SHMA 2014)	
2-Bed	6
3-Bed	25
4-Bed	13
5-bed	18

- 5.10 The proposed market housing mix accords with the latest available mix as set out in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) dated April 2014.

### Implementation and Delivery

- 5.11 It is anticipated that the proposed development will be implemented promptly following the grant of planning permission. Once commenced it is likely the site will be developed across a two year period, with delivery split roughly evenly in each of those years.



Figure 18: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 1





Figure 19: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 2



Figure 20: Preferred Approach Indicative Street Scene 3



### *Indicative Building Heights*

- 5.12 The indicative building heights plan incorporates a mixture of two-storey, two-and-a-half-storey and three-storey dwellings. Two storey housing is the dominant feature but there is a modest provision of three-storey properties along the road access and also around the village green.
- 5.13 These three-storey houses, which would also be key landmark buildings, would provide an interesting and attractive welcome feature as one travels along the main road access and would provide a strong, pleasant frame for the public open space and mature Oak tree which comprise the heart of the development.
- 5.14 A mixture of two-storey and two-and-a-half storey housing along the southern and south-western boundaries provides variation in the height of housing and, together with sympathetic spacing between dwellings, provides an appropriate transition between the built extent of Bodicote village and the open countryside.



Figure 21: Indicative Building Heights Plan





Proposals (Appearance and Materials)

5.15 A sample of the types of materials used in the new development is shown in the materials palette below.

*Elevation Materials*



Ironstone (Horton Stone)



Stone



Blended mix brickwork

*Roofing Materials*



Slate roof tiles



(

5.16 By applying a similar material palette to the adjacent residential development site (ass approved under references 11/00617/OUT and 12/01802/REM) and carefully controlling the way in which wall and roofs finishes are used, the intention is to help integrate new development so that it is generally of a traditional appearance.

*Fenestration*

5.17 Two types of window styles are proposed for use across the site:



Sliding sash windows



Casement windows

### *Boundary Treatments*

- 5.18 A variety of boundary treatments will be used throughout the site which will be chosen to reflect the scale of the buildings they enclose and for their appropriateness to the space they are within.

### *Public realm surfacing*

- 5.19 Surface materials proposed to be used throughout the development will be durable, smooth and slip resistant in all weather; this particularly applies to footways, cycle ways and parking areas. Various materials are proposed to distinguish between different pedestrian/cyclist and vehicular routes throughout the site. The use of simplistic high quality detailing to buildings and surface treatments throughout the site is strongly promoted.

### Other Matters/Local Enhancements

- 5.20 Should planning permission be forthcoming for the proposed development a package of financial contribution will be agreed between the Applicant and their representatives, the relevant statutory bodies and the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.21 Draft Heads of Terms are presented as Appendix 9 of the Planning Statement that accompanies the planning application.

- 5.22 In addition to these matters RPS would like to draw the District Councils attention to the following additional matters which are currently the subject of discussion between the Applicant, the Landowner, and Bodicote Parish Council.

### *Potential for Custom Build Opportunities*

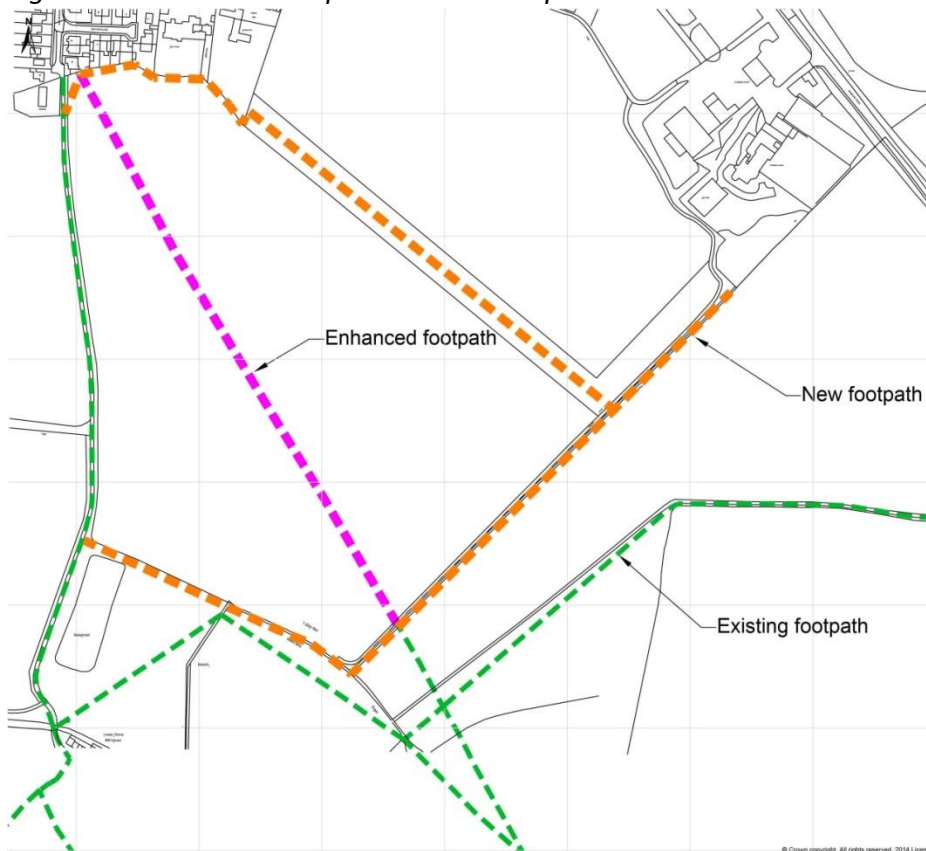
- 5.23 The Applicant would be interested to discuss further opportunities to incorporate custom build opportunities to the proposed development. There is a potential for all or part of the site to be utilised in this way, subject to terms and further investigation. The Applicant is aware of current proposals for custom build projects in the District and would be pleased to discuss this concept further in respect of the application site, in due course.

### *Footpath network improvements*

- 5.24 As part of the proposed development the landowner is offering to carry out works to improve and extend the existing informal footpath network that exists in the vicinity of the application site. All land involved is in single ownership and the proposals have been discussed in principle with the Parish Council. The applicant would be pleased to discuss ways the potential benefits of these possible works further with the District Council.

5.25 Figure 22 overleaf identifies the potential route of an entirely new footpath (denoted by an orange hatched line), a proposed enhancement to nearby public footpath number 137/6 (denoted by a purple hatched line) and the potential linkages that would be created/enhanced with bridleway numbers 137/4 and 137/5 (denoted by a green hatched line) and beyond.

Figure 22: Potential Footpath Network Improvements



#### Bodicote Village Road Safety Initiative

5.26 The landowner is currently in advanced discussions with the Parish Council and Oxfordshire County Council regarding providing potential funding for the agreement and implementation of a new 20 mph speed restriction through the centre of Bodicote Village, in order to promote more responsible driving practice and to improve personal safety in the area.

5.27 Although the plan is not directly linked to the proposed development and would therefore be unlikely to be secured via an associated legal agreement, it is the Landowners intention to progress this initiative in partnership with the Parish Council in parallel with the development proposals. Discussions regarding potential funding options are underway and it would be the intention to allocate funds from the potential uplift in value for the application site to this project, should planning permission be forthcoming.



5.28 RPS would be pleased to discuss these additional enhancements in further detail with the District Council.

## 6 Summary

- 6.1 This design and access statement is submitted in support of an Outline planning application, which seeks planning permission for the construction of 95 new houses at Blossom Fields, Cotefield Farm, Bodicote.
- 6.2 The proposed development will immediately abut a residential development consented to the north (appeal reference APP/C3105/A/11/2159619), providing 82 new homes.
- 6.3 The site, which is located on the southern edge of Bodicote and consists of a single field which is broadly rectangular in shape, is currently in agricultural use. The site is bounded to the south east and south west by an established landscape screening belt, comprising mature woodland planting.
- 6.4 Pre-application discussions have been held with both the Parish and District Councils, with feedback from these consultations fed into the design proposals where appropriate and feasible.
- 6.5 The adopted development plan for the purposes of the application is the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, although this is shortly to be replaced by the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031, which is currently being examined by an independently appointed planning Inspector.

6.6 The National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration in the assessment of all planning applications.

6.7 Bodicote is a rural village in Cherwell district, adjoining Banbury immediately to the south. It has distinctive and high quality vernacular, in particular:-

- There is a strong pattern of terraced and detached housing in the area, often of ironstone construction.
- Housing often fronts directly onto the pavement but this sometimes widens, in an irregular but attractive arrangement.
- Public open space often incorporates grassed areas, including as distinctive grass verges between cottages and the street, and is interspersed with trees of varying sizes.
- The local area has a distinctive and high-quality architectural vernacular, with varied fenestration, window arrangements and window detailing.

These key characteristics and features in the local area have been considered and incorporated within the site layout.

6.8 The proposed development has considered vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connections with both adjoining development and the adjoining settlements of Bodicote and Banbury. Bodicote in particular is accessible via a number of walking and cycling routes. There are also a number of bus stops in the vicinity of the site, which provide access to both Banbury and Oxford.

- 6.9 The proposed development has evolved through an iterative process, with key focus of visual and physical integration with the adjoining residential development, positive relationships with all site boundaries and also the provision of an attractive and interesting residential environment for future residents. The preferred option, as is shown on the accompanying illustrative masterplan Ref. 7993-0047-01 and Figure 17 above, provides a high quality residential development which respects the character of the Bodicote area and also interacts well with the adjoining development to the north.
- 6.10 Housing is to be provided in an appropriate mix, spread between two, two-and-a-half and three-storey housing. Careful consideration has been given to the distribution of housing, as is shown on the accompanying storey heights plan, Figure 21 above, to ensure key vistas and landmark buildings are appropriately discernible.
- 6.11 At the heart of the illustrative masterplan is a village green, serving as a focal point for the development. The village green is connected to the central open space within the adjoining residential development by a 'green corridor' which connects key open spaces within both developments. The existing mature Oak tree in the centre of the application site will be retained within the village green, giving the area an immediate character and a sense of place.
- 6.12 A similar palette of materials will be applied to the proposed development, as was applied to the adjoining development.

Ironstone construction will be a key and dominant material, maintaining the tradition of use of local materials.

- 6.13 The application also proposes improvement and extension of the existing public footpath network in the area immediately surrounding the application site, with excellent connections for future residents with both the proposed development and also the adjoining residential development to new and existing walking routes.