Joint Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document
Appendix 1
Adopted in June 2022

South Oxfordshire District Council

Vale of White Horse District Council

Joint Design Guide – Appendix 1

Additional information and Drawings

Throughout the Joint Design Guide website, there are a series of interactive plans.

These provide further information and design guidance on certain aspects through illustrated examples in the form of a pop-up when clicked on.

Due to the nature of a printed document, this interaction cannot function in the same way.

This appendix provides all of the further information that is available through the interactive plans on the Joint Design Guide website.

What is this information?

Pop-up with text aimed at providing supplementary context to drawings and diagrams within the Joint Design Guide.

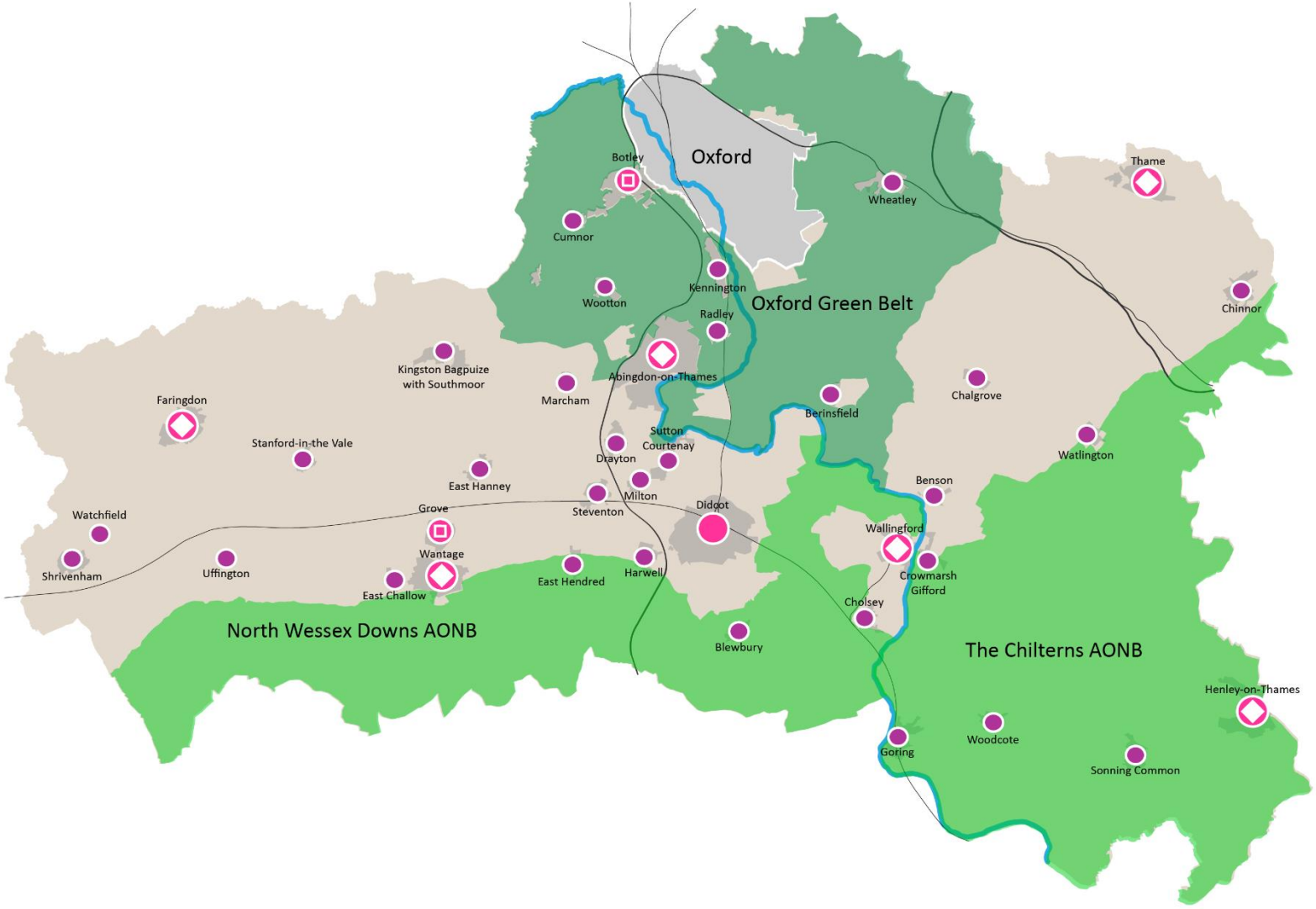
These are listed in the order they appear within the guide.

Figure numbers refer to each drawing or diagram.

Page numbers refer to the location of each drawing or diagram within the printed document only.

Contents

Settlements and designations map for South Oxfordshire and the Vale



The Oxford Green Belt

In common with all other Green Belts, the primary planning purpose of the Oxford Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl into the countryside and the coalescence of settlements. It is also intended to protect the setting of the historic City and to encourage the re-use of derelict land (brownfield sites) within it. It also serves as an opportunity for city dwellers to have ready access to the countryside. (The five purposes of Green Belts are set out in section 1.5 of Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts)

In planning terms, the quality and nature of the land within a Green Belt is irrelevant.

Agriculture is an important aspect of this Green Belt. The proportions of land registered as being in agricultural use and taken up by Agri-Environment schemes aimed at promoting more environmentally sustainable land management, are also higher than the national average.

There are important resources in terms of a dense public rights of way network. This Green Belt has proportionally more land at risk of flooding than any other Green Belt (6920 hectares or 20% of the land area).

For more information see Oxford City Council

The Chilterns AONB

The Chilterns is a belt of high ground stretching from the River Thames at Goring in Oxfordshire, north-eastward through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire and into Hertfordshire, where it almost reaches Hitchin. It is fringed by substantial settlements, including Luton, Dunstable, Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted, Chesham, Amersham, Beaconsfield, High Wycombe, Marlow, Henley-on-Thames and Reading. The hills are formed by an outcrop of chalk on the north-western side of the London basin. The chalk strata have been tilted to create a dip-slope that rises so gently to the north-west that it generally has the character of a plateau.

However, it ends abruptly in a steep scarp slope, which forms the more dramatic north-western face of the Chilterns. The plateau is cut by a series of through valleys that divide it into roughly rectangular blocks, with many branching dry valleys further dividing these blocks, to create a varied mix of landscapes.

The most notable feature of the characteristic vernacular buildings in the AONB, both in villages and elsewhere, is the consistent use of materials, especially the flints that occur in both the chalk strata and the overlying clay with flints. Flint is often combined with brick, both in the walls of older buildings and in boundary walls around gardens. Most vernacular buildings also have tiled roofs, with the tiles often having been made from local iron clay. Thatch appears relatively infrequently, with notable concentrations in the northern and southern extremities of the AONB.

For more information see: The Chilterns

The North Wessex Downs AONB

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the special qualities of our finest landscapes are conserved and enhanced. In planning policy terms, they have the same status as National Parks.

The primary purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. The AONB also has secondary purposes to increase awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the AONB, to take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities and those who live and work in the area.

The setting of the AONB does not have a defined geographical boundary but it should be addressed as the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials or design can be considered to have an impact, either positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB.

The surroundings of the AONB and the protected landscape of the AONB add value to each other as the landscape and landforms link visually and functionally, joining the surroundings to the AONB. Proposals for change in the setting should, therefore, have regard to the inter-relationship with the AONB and the landscape character and special qualities.

The North Wessex Downs is a visibly ancient landscape of great beauty, diversity and size. It embraces the high, open arable sweeps of the chalk downs and dramatic scarp slopes with their prehistoric monuments and beech knolls, the moulded dip slopes, sheltered chalk river valleys, intimate and secluded wooded areas and low-lying heaths with a rich mosaic of woodland, pasture, heath and commons. The North Wessex Downs AONB forms a surprisingly remote, expansive and tranquil landscape in the heart of southern England.

The designation of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty recognises the character, value and quality of the North Wessex Downs. Although almost entirely a chalk landscape, the North Wessex Downs' character differs markedly across the area, depending on local surface geology, soils, landform, land use, vegetation and settlement patterns. The greatest contrast, for example, is between the open arable chalk downs and the acid heathlands of the lower river valleys

The depth of history can still be seen in these landscapes, including the Uffington White Horse, and the Ridgeway – the oldest road in England. The built environment makes a strong contribution to the beauty of the landscape, with historic towns and villages, churches, spectacular barns and manor houses with their parks and gardens. The Saxon name of Wessex reveals the area's literary connections, revived by Thomas Hardy and used as the setting for many of his novels. Around a century later, Richard Adams provided a vivid evocation of this area in 'Watership Down'.

For more information see: The North Wessex Downs

Place and setting

Figure 1: Illustrative example of a constraints and opportunities plan (major example)

Adjacent countryside and AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a designated exceptional landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are precious enough to be safeguarded in the national interest. AONBs are protected and enhanced for nature, people, business and culture.

For more information see:

The National Association - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Flood zones

Flood Zones refer to the probability of river and sea flooding, ignoring the presence of defences. They are shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea), available on the Environment Agency's web site, as indicated in the table below.

Zone 1 Low Probability: Land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. (Shown as 'clear' on the Flood Map – all land outside Zones 2 and 3)

Zone 2 Medium Probability: Land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding; or land having between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding. (Land shown in light blue on the Flood Map) Zone 3a High Probability: Land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding; or Land having a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of sea flooding.(Land shown in dark blue on the Flood Map)

Zone 3b The Functional Floodplain: This zone comprises land where water must flow or be stored in times of flood. Local planning authorities should identify in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessments areas of functional floodplain and its boundaries accordingly, in agreement with the Environment Agency. (Not separately distinguished from Zone 3a on the Flood Map).

flood risk information for planning in England

Woodland

The definition of woodland in United Kingdom forestry statistics is land under stands of trees with a canopy cover of at least 20% (or having the potential to achieve this), including integral open space, and felled areas that are awaiting restocking. There is no minimum height for trees to form a woodland at maturity, so the definition includes woodland scrub but not areas with only shrub species such as gorse or Rhododendron.

For more information see:

UK Forestry Commission

Sun path

The sun's position at any time can be located by observation or calculated. Sun path diagrams have been devised as visual aids so that the solar position can be easily and quickly established for any hour in any day throughout a year. A sun path or sun angle diagram provides a valuable tool for designers and planners to understand how it affects the site.

Built Edge

Identify the extent of the existing built edge of a settlement or adjoining development. When a scheme is backing onto existing development ensure to create a positive relationship between existing and future development when backing onto each other.

Where a back-to-back building line can be achieved, new development should abut or adjoin the existing curtilage along a settlements edge; with rear gardens joining existing rear gardens, unless this would result in development facing away from a road or frontage on the next plot of the new development.

Where required to avoid building lines facing the wrong way, back to front development can be used, when set back from existing curtilage and with a landscape buffer provided with access to provide separation between existing and proposed development.

Unallocated development (not designated within the Local plans), should strongly avoid development outside of a settlement boundary as this leads to a sprawling effect on settlements, undermining character and the open countryside.

Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are designated areas of “special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” – in other words, they exist to protect the features and the characteristics that make a historic place unique and distinctive.

It is an area of significant historic, architectural, aesthetic, and communal value where change is managed more carefully in order to preserve its special character. The special interest of the area should be identified and considered where a designated area forms part of the context of proposed development – both with a designated conservation area and in its setting.

Reference should be made to relevant published Conservation Area Appraisals which can be found on the council's websites.

For more information see

South Oxfordshire Conservation Area Appraisals

Vale of White Horse Conservation Area Appraisals

Heritage Assets and Listed Buildings

Heritage Assets, both designated and non-designated, form an important part of a place's identity, development history and local distinctiveness. In understanding a site's context you should undertake a contextual analysis that includes assessment of all heritage assets within the site's surroundings. Heritage assets are defined by the NPPF as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)' (NPPF July 2021).

This includes, but is not limited to, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and non-designated heritage assets. A non-designated asset, such as buildings or structures of local interest that are not statutorily designated, should also be considered as part of a site analysis. Some of these may have been identified through the council's Conservation Area Appraisals [see links] but many may not be fully understood or identified until the planning process highlights them. Care should be taken to ensure that relevant heritage assets have been considered in the analysis of a site's features and setting.

All designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Battlefields) can be found on the National Heritage List for England and all designated Conservation Areas can be found on the council's website.

National Heritage map search for England

Reference should be made to relevant published Conservation Area Appraisals which can be found on the council's websites.

For more information see:

South Oxfordshire Conservation Area Appraisals

Vale of White Horse Conservation Area Appraisals

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings: Structures of special architectural or historic interest placed on a national statutory list.

A listed building is granted statutory protection for its special architectural and historic interest. All works of alteration to a listed building requires listed building consent from the local authority prior to works commencing.

Statutory listing protects the entirety of a building and everything affixed to it, inside and out and in some instances, structures considered to form part of its historic curtilage are also protected. It is a common misconception that listing only protects the exterior or select parts of a building.

Place and setting

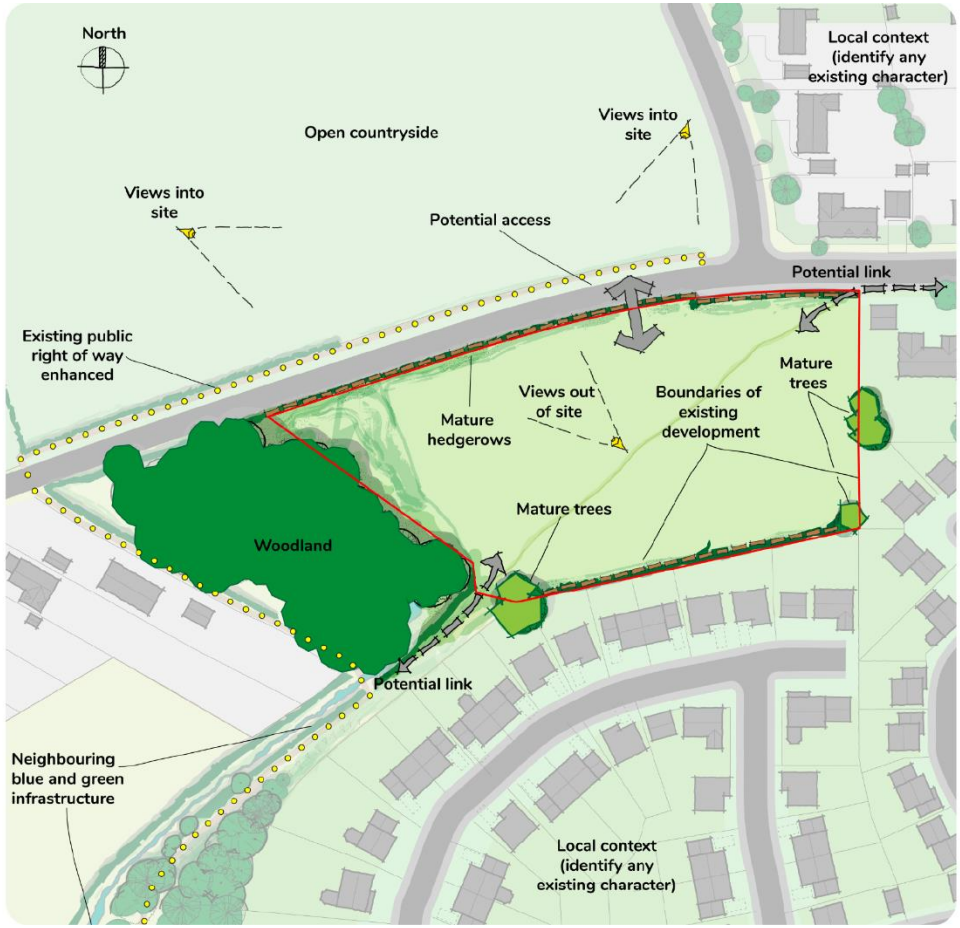


Figure 1a: Illustrative example of a constraints and opportunities plan (minor example)

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For more information see:

UK Forestry Commission

Open Countryside

The open countryside is essentially land that sits outside of a settlement boundary, it is not subject to any further designation but it is essentially land that is considered to contribute to the openness of the countryside beyond it, so again matters associated with visual harm and landscape harm are the essential focus. Development should always address the open countryside when in proximity and face outwards helping define the settlement edge.

Built Edge

Identify the extent of the existing built edge of a settlement or adjoining development. When a scheme is backing onto existing development ensure to create a positive relationship between existing and future development when backing onto each other.

Where a back-to-back building line can be achieved, new development should abut or adjoin the existing curtilage along a settlements edge; with rear gardens joining existing rear gardens, unless this would result in development facing away from a road or frontage on the next plot of the new development.

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Place and setting

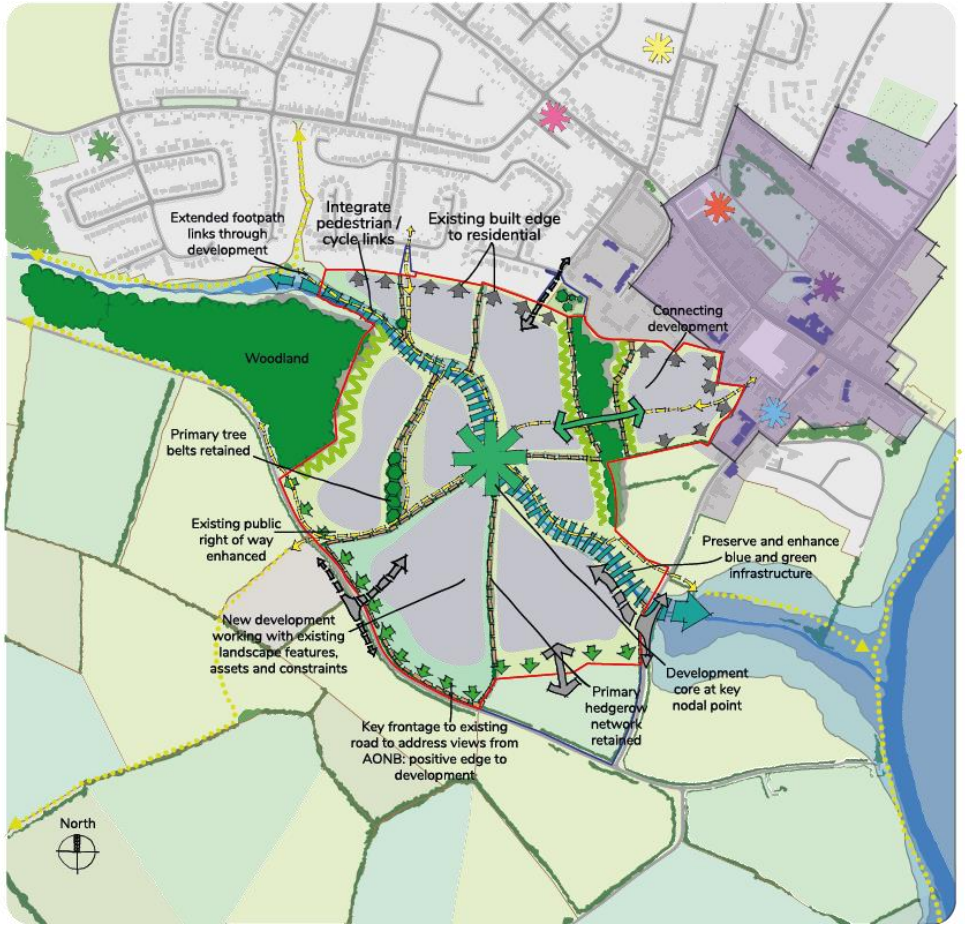

Figure 2: Develop a design rationale based around the site's features, opportunities and constraints (major example)

Blue and green infrastructure network

The creation of a network of blue (water-based areas) and green spaces (vegetation-based areas) provides multiple benefits for biodiversity, nature, recreation, climate change resilience and support health and wellbeing. They include elements such as street trees, canals, rivers, former railway lines, roadside verges and other transitionary land that form important green and blue corridors and spaces.

Public open space will be part of the blue and green network of spaces but not all land within the blue and green corridors will be accessible to the public such as road and railing verges.

Watercourses corridors form part of the blue network and are important wildlife habitats in themselves allowing the movement of species throughout the landscape.

Green corridors with additional planting can join up a series of features creating an important network of green spaces.

Woodland buffers

Provide a buffer appropriate to the sensitivity of the woodland. A minimum of 15 metres for ancient woodland.

Development core at key nodal point

Development core at key nodal point/ nodes: Nodes are central or connecting points in a neighbourhood that have a mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings, such as shopping areas, community centres, libraries and medium to high density housing. Local services and facilities should be conveniently located along main routes and/or at the junctions of main routes to maximise accessibility. The clustering of facilities should be encouraged to reinforce their role as a focus for the community. A place where activity and routes are concentrated.

Green edges

Development facing outwards to avoid rear boundaries to countryside and improve security with the integration of vegetation to soften this interface. Development edge should be designed to address and soften the interface of development with countryside including views to and from the adjacent landscape.

Future links

Make sure to provide links to neighbouring land that could be developed in the future making them an integral part of the street network and hierarchy as a consideration from the outset of your design.

Development access

Successful development depends on good access and connections. Make sure to provide more than one access point to provide one way in and one way out. This would result in an overall well-connected development.

Built edge

Development relating to existing: Create a positive relationship between existing and future development. The style of existing edge treatment, location of existing Public Rights of Ways and Open Spaces will inform the approach to a new development edge.

In areas where existing development backs onto a site, boundaries should be back-to-back. This allows for privacy and deals with security issues and does not expose back boundaries straight onto public realm.

Land use / development parcels

Start identifying where potential land use parcels for built form will be located based on existing site constraints, these parcels will also need to cater for areas for public open space, schools, SuDS, ecology as well, this is particularly important to consider when beginning to determine varying densities of development across the site and its available parcels.

Place and setting

Figure 2a: Develop a design rationale based around the site's features, opportunities and constraints (minor example)

Woodland buffers

Provide a buffer appropriate to the sensitivity of the woodland. A minimum of 15 metres for ancient woodland.

Development access

Successful development depends on good access and connections. Make sure to provide more than one access point to provide one way in and one way out. This would result in an overall well-connected development.

Open countryside

The open countryside is land, generally agricultural, that sits outside of a settlement boundary. It is not subject to any further designation, but it is land that is considered to contribute to the openness of the countryside beyond it. In this context, consideration needs to be given to matters associated with visual and landscape impact/harm. Development should always address the open countryside when in proximity and face outwards, helping define the settlement edge as well as maintaining a visually subtle character, including scale, massing and form. Visually recessive colours are encouraged in areas visible to the wider countryside.

Land use / development parcels

Start identifying where potential land use parcels for built form will be located based on existing site constraints, these parcels will also need to cater for areas for public open space, schools, SuDS, ecology as well, this is particularly important to consider when beginning to determine varying densities of development across the site and its available parcels.

Natural environment

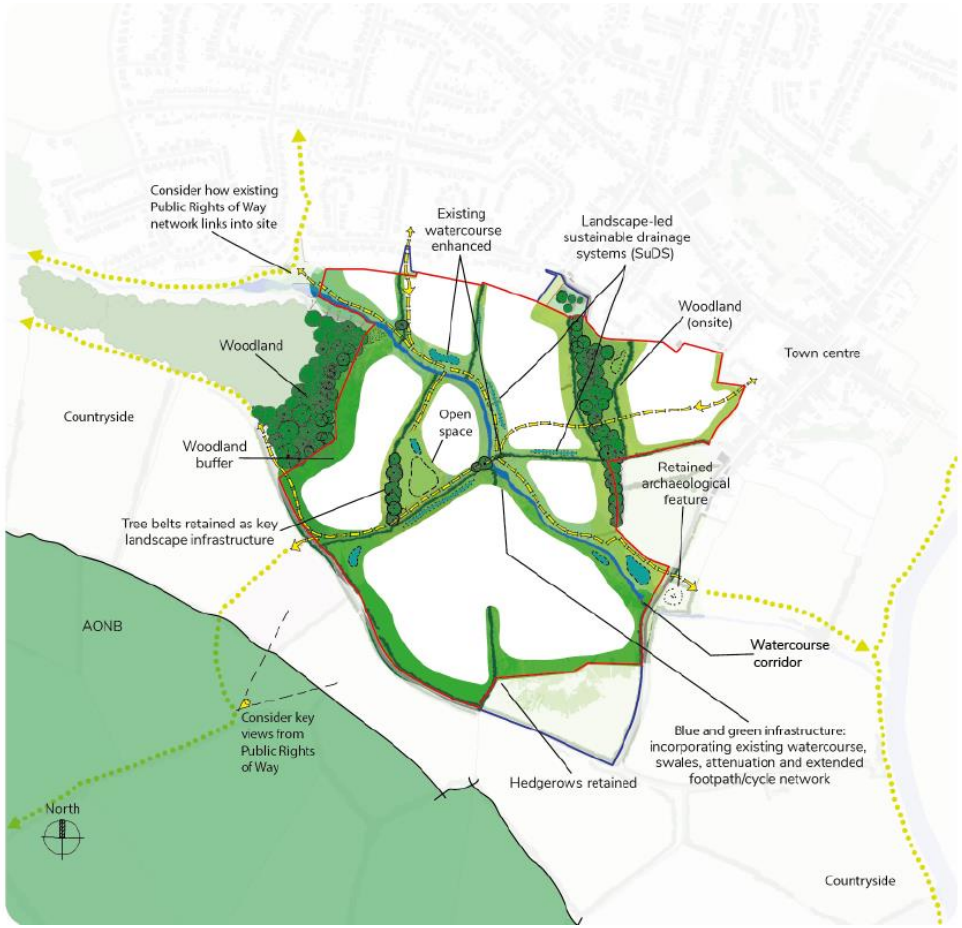

Figure 3: Identify, retain, and enhance the green infrastructure and natural features as part of a scheme (major example)

Blue and green infrastructure network

Ensure new features on the site such as public open spaces, street trees are linked into the existing blue and green network. Incorporate SuDS of various scales and types throughout the site to provide visually attractive features with wildlife value. Allow sufficient space to retain, incorporate and enhance existing habitats of wildlife value both green and blue.

Incorporate SuDS of various scales and types throughout the site to provide visually attractive features with wildlife value.

Allow sufficient space to retain, incorporate and enhance existing habitats of wildlife value.

This should also include formal play and informal recreation.

Open space

Existing mature trees integrated into potential Public Open Space (POS) utilised to form dominant landscape feature. Highlight individual trees, retain existing trees on site within open spaces.

Woodland (onsite)

Woodlands have elevated ecological value and can support a range of protected species. Many woodlands are priority habitats and benefit from increased protection in the planning system.

Development needs to be carefully planned to integrate woodlands appropriately. Root protection areas of trees should be protected, structures located where there is not likely to be any future arboricultural conflict and the ecological function of woodland edges safeguarded.

Woodlands can make valuable contributions to publicly accessible greenspace. Positive woodland management can enhance the ecological value of woodlands and make them more resilient to recreational pressures associated with development.

Retained woodlands will require a Woodland Management Plan including how they relate to the wider network of Public Open Space. Providing controlled access to retained woodlands (if appropriate) will reduce the pressure on more sensitive areas of woodland.

Green edges

Create a green edge/ transitional landscape between new development and wider open countryside.

Woodland buffer

Provide suitable buffer to woodland. A minimum of 15 meters for ancient woodland.

Retained hedgerows

Hedgerows are important landscape and ecological features. Many species use hedgerows to move throughout the wider landscape.

Development should seek to retain the characteristic hedgerow pattern of a site and protect 'important hedgerows'[1]

These linear site features could be used to form the basis of a green infrastructure network, supplemented with hedgerows, trees, and linked to offsite landscape hedgerow patterns.

1 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997

AONB

Assess impact of site on AONB and its setting.

Refer to AONB Management Plans, Character Assessments and Position Statements.

Consider Landscape Character of site and surroundings.

Refer to the hierarchy of Landscape Character Assessment.

Watercourse corridor

Watercourses[1] form important blue (water environment) and green (terrestrial vegetation) corridors through the landscape. These corridors are vital for flood alleviation, biodiversity and are key landscape features.

Development should respect watercourse corridors and provide a buffer of at least 10 metres from the top of either side of the bank. Watercourse buffer zones should be managed to enhance the ecological function of the corridor.

1 Land Drainage Act 1991

Ancient Woodland (offsite)

Ancient woodland is of prime ecological, landscape and heritage value. These areas have been continuously wooded since at least 1600AD, but many are much older. It is not possible to recreate ancient woodland once it is lost. This is why ancient woodland is identified as an irreplaceable habitat.

Ancient woodland benefits from strict protection in the planning system. Standing advice[1] requires that development is buffered from ancient woodland by a minimum of 15 metres. Larger developments will require buffers greater than 15 metres. Buffers help to avoid direct and indirect impacts of development on the ancient woodland.

Careful consideration should be given to the protection of ancient woodland areas when planning a development. Public access may need to be limited or restricted altogether. Buffers should be acknowledged in the masterplan and managed to bolster the green infrastructure of the site. It is not appropriate to have private gardens within ancient woodland buffers.

Development, including construction and operational activities can affect ancient woodland, having both direct and indirect effects. Effects to consider include:

changes to woodland and tree habitat, including understory, ground flora and roots;

changes to functional habitat connections;

changes to air quality, such as traffic and other pollution;

changes to ground water, from pollutants or changes in hydrology;

increased light pollution;

increased noise and vibration;

damage to archaeological features or heritage assets;

changes to landscape character

risk of garden encroachment, including potential invasive species;

risk of damage to people and property by falling branches or trees requiring tree management that could cause habitat deterioration.

1 Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions

Countryside

Assess the impact of proposed development on the adjacent Landscape Character, its setting and views.

Refer to the hierarchy of Landscape Character Assessment including the AONB Management Plans, Character Assessments and Position Statements where applicable.

Existing trees and tree groups

Individual trees and tree groups support biodiversity and make important contributions to the character and visual amenity of a site.

Integrating established trees can add instant maturity to developed areas and provide a range of benefits, including shading, noise alleviation and improving air quality.

Existing mature trees should be integrated into Public Open Space (POS) rather than garden spaces to aid their protection and add instant maturity to a development.

Development should avoid root protection areas of trees to be retained and sufficient space should be designed in the development for the canopies of trees to naturally develop. Buildings and structures should be located sufficient distance away from tree canopies, so a harmonious future relationship exists, that can be sustained in the long term.

Please be aware trees might be protected by a Tree Preservation Order or where they are located within a conservation area.

A check can be made on the Trees section of the Council's website:

South Oxfordshire District Council

Vale of White Horse District Council

Veteran and ancient trees

Veteran and ancient trees are identified due to their age, size or condition and are of exceptional biodiversity, landscape and heritage value. Very few trees ever reach the ancient life-stage. Similar to ancient woodland, veteran and ancient trees are irreplaceable habitats and benefit from strict protection in the planning system.[1]

All trees that are ancient are also veteran trees. However, not all veteran trees are identified as being ancient. The age at which a tree develops into an ancient or veteran stage will vary between species.

Veteran and ancient trees should be buffered from development by at least 15 times the stem diameter, or 5 metres greater than the widest part of the canopy; whichever is larger.

Natural environment

Figure 3a: Identify, retain, and enhance the green infrastructure and natural features as part of a scheme (minor example)

Open space

Existing mature trees integrated into potential Public Open Space (POS) utilised to form dominant landscape feature.

Highlight individual trees, retain existing trees on site within open spaces.

Blue and Green corridors

Blue and Green corridor with additional landscaping joining up a series of green features and providing extra green connections.

Incorporate SuDS of various scales and types throughout the site to provide visually attractive features with wildlife value.

Allow sufficient space to retain, incorporate and enhance existing habitats of wildlife value.

This should also include formal play and informal recreation.

Green edges

Create a green edge/ transitional landscape between new development and wider open countryside

Retain hedgerows

Retain characteristic hedgerow pattern where possible and Important Hedgerows. Use to form basis of green infrastructure network.

Natural environment

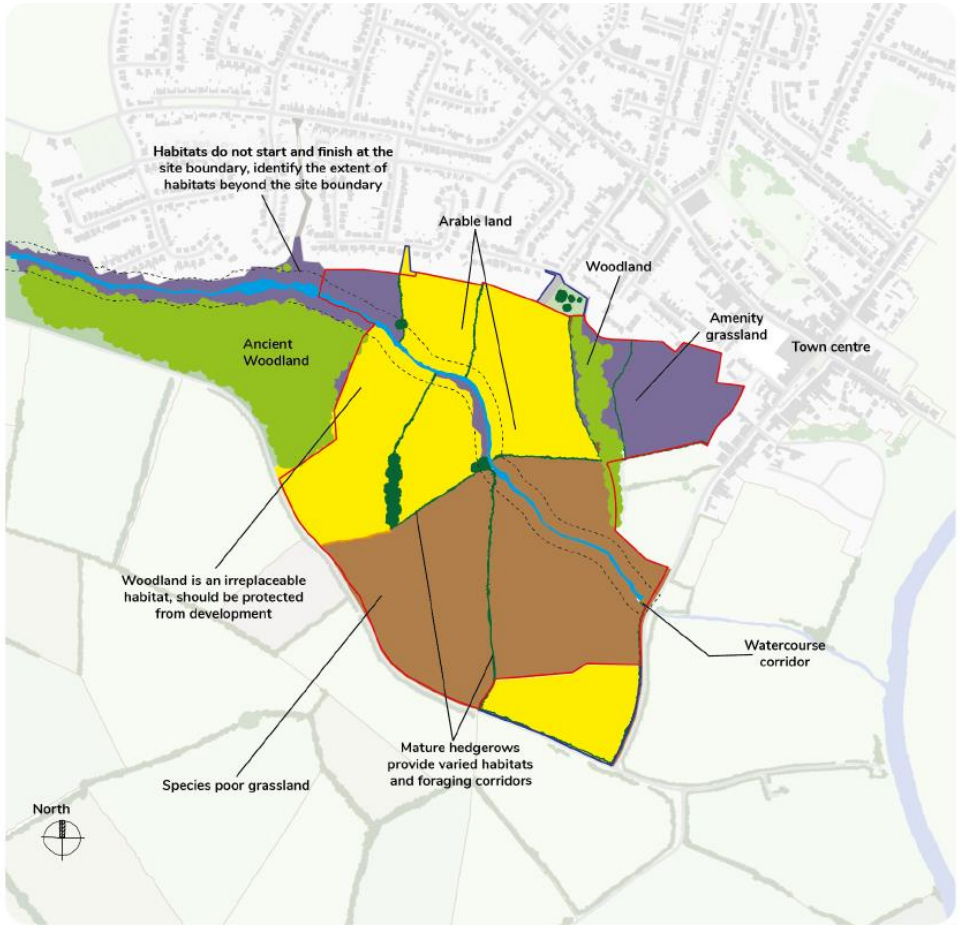

Figure 7: Illustrative example identifying biodiversity and habitats (major example)

Woodland

Woodlands have elevated ecological value and can support a range of protected species. Many woodlands are priority habitats and benefit from increased protection in the planning system.

It is best to undertake ecological surveys of woodlands in late spring or early summer.

Appropriate woodland management can increase the ecological value of an area of woodland and contribute to the biodiversity net gain objectives of the development.

Arable Land

Arable land can have a reduced ecological value when compared other types of habitats. Disturbance from previous cultivation, application of chemicals (e.g. fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides) and crop monocultures are associated with lower biodiversity.

This is not to say that arable land has no biodiversity value. Crops can provide important breeding areas for ground nesting birds. Arable margins can be very species rich and support protected species.

The reversion of arable land to permanent grassland is possible with suitable management, but the previous treatment of the land m ay limit what habitats can be created in those areas.

Species Poor Grassland

Grasslands that have been subject to agricultural 'improvement' (application of fertilisers and more intensive management) are typically less species rich than grassland which have not. Species rich grasslands are important habitats, potentially even priority habitats, and should be protected from development.

Species poor grassland may have some development potential, but also has intrinsic value which contributes to a site's overall ecological baseline. With suitable management the value of the grassland area can be increased to deliver net gains for biodiversity.

It is best to undertake ecological surveys of grassland in summertime, when the greatest diversity of plant species will be observable.

Watercourses

Watercourses[1] are vital for biodiversity, forming important habitat corridors through the landscape and supporting a diverse range of species. Habitats which establish near to the edge of watercourses, such as within the floodplain, often contain species which are found only in those types of location.

Development should respect the watercourse corridor and provide a buffer of at least 10 metres from the top of either side of the bank.

Development crossing watercourses is not ideal. Road infrastructure can introduce light and noise disturbance, impact species movement through the landscape and remove habitats within or close to the watercourse. Any new crossings absolutely required should be designed as clear span structures, which maintain habitat continuity. Culverting should be avoided.

1 Land Drainage Act 1991

Natural environment

Figure 7a: Illustrative example identifying biodiversity and habitats (minor example)

Species rich grassland

Species-rich grassland is open, grassy habitat that is normally maintained by traditional grazing and cutting methods. A grassland is species-rich if it has:

- more than 15 plant species per square metre
- more than 30% cover of wildflowers and sedges (excluding white clover, creeping buttercup and injurious weeds)
- less than 10% cover of white clover and perennial rye grass
- Each grassland has its own community of plant species, which can be grouped into different types. The type of species-rich
- grassland depends on location, underlying geology, soil pH, its management and history.

Use MAGIC to check if you have species-rich grassland that's mapped as priority habitat and what type of grassland it is. You can find some types of species-rich grassland alongside other habitats, like scrub, fen or heath.

Defra MAGIC map

Arable Land

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Appropriate woodland management can increase the ecological value of an area of woodland and contribute to the biodiversity net gain objectives of the development.

Movement and connectivity

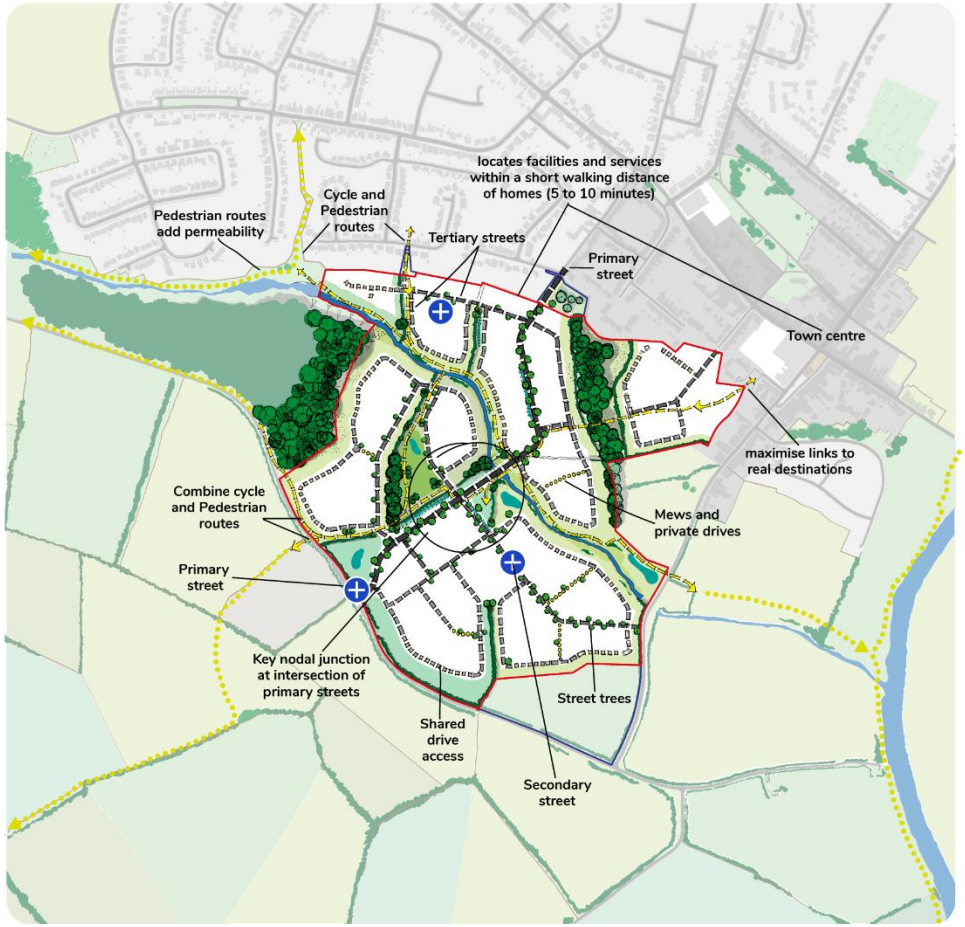

Figure 8: Develop a clear movement strategy and street hierarchy (major example)

Primary Streets: main routes, avenues and boulevards

Role: Main streets adopt the role of accommodating strategic trips in addition to more local movement, focusing activity on those streets that contain town, village and neighbourhood centres. This helps support the viability and vitality of existing and proposed centres by creating passing trade.

Type of Journey: Main streets should be thought of as true mixed priority routes, performing a number of roles that include accommodating through traffic and local trips as well as pedestrians and cyclists.

Character: Main streets should be the focus of public life in each neighbourhood. They should be rich, engaging and vibrant places where no one mode of transport is allowed to dominate and all users are made aware, through the local context, of how to behave and what to expect.

Frontage: Main streets should be lined with building frontage of a sufficient scale and continuity to reflect appropriately to the existing context, reflect its civic importance and provide an appropriate level of enclosure.

Public Transport: Bus stops and the alignment of the routes that serve them should be focused on the network of Main Streets, providing neighbourhoods with access to the public transport network by serving key nodes and junctions, local centres and other community infrastructure.

Parking: On-street parking should be allowed in designated bays.

Tree Planting: Street tree planting is required by National Planning Policy Framework. Tall growing full canopied trees should be planted on main and secondary streets, sufficient space should be allowed for these. Trees and planting. within highway adoptable areas should also confirm to Oxfordshire County Council Highways requirements. Trees and shrubs planting should take into account existing constraints such as service easements and be designed in tandem with proposed services including lighting.

Other Design Requirements: Cycling routes and parking should be incorporated into the street design, with the form of cycle facilities responding to local context.Generally, on-carriageway formal cycle lanes are encouraged. Facilities to aid pedestrian crossing should be designed-in. This may include formal signalised crossings or central medians that aid informal crossing movements.

Secondary street: Secondary routes and local streets

Role: Access streets should connect to the wider network at either end, but do not necessarily have to form a gridded vehicular network. These street types are likely to have lower levels of connectivity for vehicles. The layout of development should accommodate further connections for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage a permeable, and walkable network.

Type of Journey: Access streets should only be used by traffic with a local origin and/or destination.

Character: Tree planting should be included in secondary streets, these could be of a smaller scale than for primary streets, as appropriate to the height of buildings. As these streets will be lightly used by vehicular traffic pedestrians should feel comfortable moving freely across the street. In some instances, the use of shared surface treatments may be appropriate. The design of the street should limit vehicular speeds to 20 mph, without the need for excessive traffic calming measures.

Frontage: Access Streets should be lined with building frontage of a sufficient scale to provide an appropriate level of enclosure responding to the context.

Public Transport: Bus services should not use access streets other than in exceptional circumstances.

Parking: On-street parking should be allowed unless there is a local reason why this may not be appropriate.

Other Design Requirements: Cyclists should be accommodated on carriageway.

Tertiary streets: mews, lanes, courtyards and other

Tertiary streets provide access to homes, not for use by through traffic. Type of Journey: The lowest order of street should only be used by traffic with a local origin and/or destination.

Character: Tertiary streets should also include trees. This lowest order street should be designed so that drivers feel like guests in an environment that clearly articulates that pedestrians are prioritised. This street type is least likely to rely on standard highway engineering solutions, such as signage, to inform drivers about context. Techniques such are shared surfaces can be used to convey this message. The design of the street should limit vehicular speeds to 10 mph without the need for active traffic calming measures.

Frontage: The informal nature of these streets can be reflected in the adjacent development with varying building line, massing and orientation. The scale of development should provide an appropriate level of enclosure and reflect the intimate nature of these street types.

Public Transport: Bus services should not use the lowest order of streets.

Parking: On-street parking should be allowed unless there is a reason why this is not appropriate. Opportunities for casual parking that may block the carriageway should be designed out to avoid a street scene that is dominated by parked cars.

Movement and connectivity

Figure 8a: Develop a clear movement strategy and street hierarchy (minor example)

Primary Streets: main routes, avenues and boulevards

Role: Main streets adopt the role of accommodating strategic trips in addition to more local movement, focusing activity on those streets that contain town, village and neighbourhood centres. This helps support the viability and vitality of existing and proposed centres by creating passing trade.

Type of Journey: Main streets should be thought of as true mixed priority routes, performing a number of roles that include accommodating through traffic and local trips as well as pedestrians and cyclists.

Character: Main streets should be the focus of public life in each neighbourhood. They should be rich, engaging and vibrant places where no one mode of transport is allowed to dominate and all users are made aware, through the local context, of how to behave and what to expect.

Frontage: Main streets should be lined with building frontage of a sufficient scale and continuity to reflect appropriately to the existing context, reflect its civic importance and provide an appropriate level of enclosure.

Public Transport: Bus stops and the alignment of the routes that serve them should be focused on the network of Main Streets, providing neighbourhoods with access to the public transport network by serving key nodes and junctions, local centres and other community infrastructure.

Parking: On-street parking should be allowed in designated bays.

Tree Planting: The opportunity to integrate trees within main streets should be taken wherever reasonable and appropriate. Trees and shrubs should not be planted over the route of sewers and furthermore tree planting should not impede access required for the maintenance of sewers.

Other Design Requirements: Cycling routes and parking should be incorporated into the street design, with the form of cycle facilities responding to local context. Generally, on-carriageway formal cycle lanes are encouraged. Facilities to aid pedestrian crossing should be designed-in. This may include formal signalised crossings or central medians that aid informal crossing movements.

Secondary street: Secondary routes and local streets

Role: Access streets should connect to the wider network at either end, but do not necessarily have to form a gridded vehicular network. These street types are likely to have lower levels of connectivity for vehicles. The layout of development should accommodate further connections for pedestrians and cyclists to encourage a permeable, and walkable network.

Type of Journey: Access streets should only be used by traffic with a local origin and/or destination.

Character: As these streets will be lightly used by vehicular traffic pedestrians should feel comfortable moving freely across the street. In some instances, the use of shared surface treatments may be appropriate. The design of the street should limit vehicular speeds to 20 mph, without the need for excessive traffic calming measures.

Frontage: Access Streets should be lined with building frontage of a sufficient scale to provide an appropriate level of enclosure responding to the context.

Public Transport: Bus services should not use access streets other than in exceptional circumstances.

Parking: On-street parking should be allowed unless there is a local reason why this may not be appropriate.

Other Design Requirements: Cyclists should be accommodated on carriageway.

Tertiary streets: mews, lanes, courtyards and other

Tertiary streets provide access to homes, not for use by through traffic.

Type of Journey: The lowest order of street should only be used by traffic with a local origin and/or destination.

Character: This lowest order street should be designed so that drivers feel like guests in an environment that clearly articulates that pedestrians are prioritised. This street type is least likely to rely on standard highway engineering solutions, such as signage, to inform drivers about context. Techniques such are shared surfaces can be used to convey this message. The design of the street should limit vehicular speeds to 10 mph without the need for active traffic calming measures.

Frontage: The informal nature of these streets can be reflected in the adjacent development with varying building line, massing and orientation. The scale of development should provide an appropriate

level of enclosure and reflect the intimate nature of these street types.

Public Transport: Bus services should not use the lowest order of streets. Parking: On-street parking should be allowed unless there is a reason why this is not appropriate. Opportunities for casual parking that may block the carriageway should be designed out to avoid a street scene that is dominated by parked cars.

Space and layout

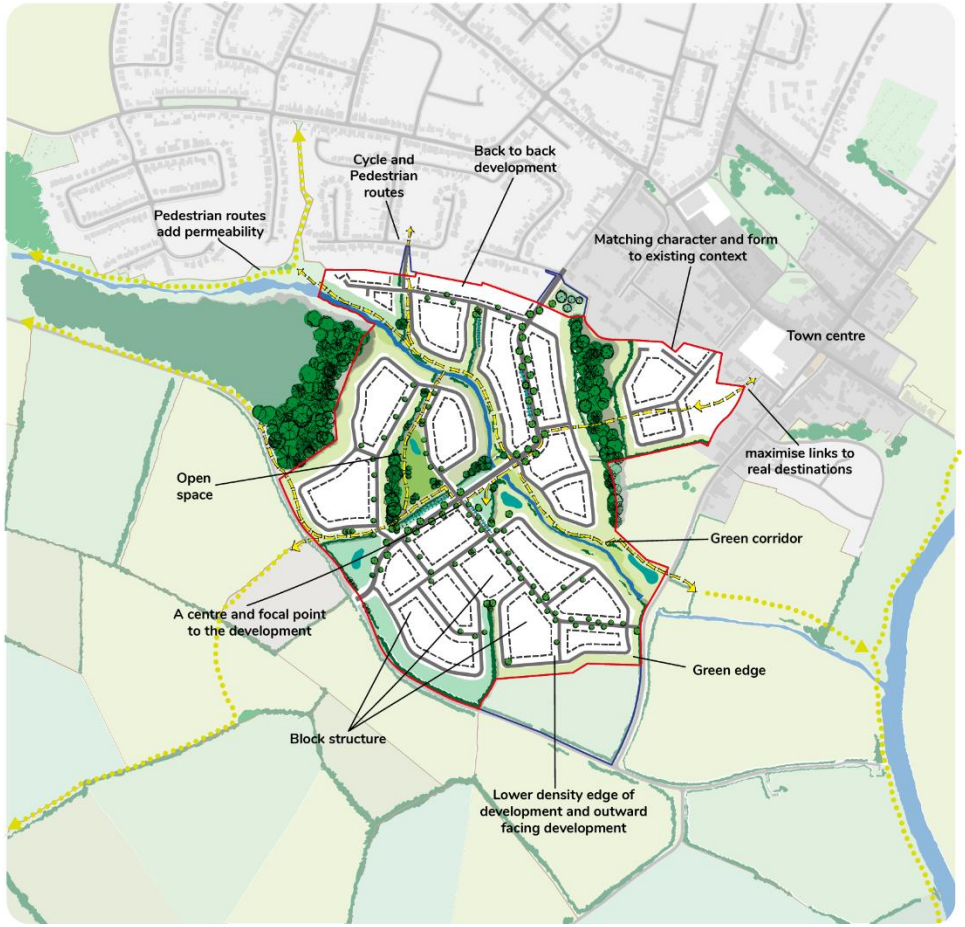

Figure 20: Establishing structure and a framework of parameters (major example)

Block Structure

New development should respond to the existing pattern of development within a settlement (its grain) taking cues from existing block sizes, patterns of plot subdivision and relationship between the built and non-built private space. This will ensure that new development will integrate more effectively within existing settlements as a natural extension of the original structure. The appropriate 'grain' of a settlement should be drawn from the contextual analysis.

The structure/layout of a proposal must create or contribute to a grid form (be it regular or irregular) of perimeter blocks. The perimeter block is most appropriate for achieving successful development as it:

- ensures the efficient use of land;
- optimises connections to surrounding areas;
- provides a clear distinction between public and private spaces;
- enhances permeability and legibility;
- increases natural surveillance of the street;
- can work at any scale or location, and;
- ensures attractive street frontages.

When designing the layout of development using perimeter blocks, it is important to ensure the blocks vary in size and shape according to the density, location within the masterplan and mix of uses. The blocks should take into account natural features, orientation and topography.

In general, blocks between 70 - 125 metres in length provide a better network for both pedestrians and vehicles. Given the size and

character of the settlements in the South and Vale, larger blocks are unlikely to be appropriate.

The continuity of development, fine grain and subtle variety in form and massing can add a richness to proposed development that responds to the unique characteristics of both South and Vale.

The structure or layout of new development should be easy to navigate and easy to understand.

Applicants should demonstrate how the use of landmarks, markers and vistas has informed their proposal. The location of landmarks should be clearly justified.

Open Space

The way in which landscape and open spaces are organised can make a significant contribution to the character and success of a development. It is critical that this is a consideration at an early stage in the design process and integrated with all other services and drainage requirements and informs the layout of new neighbourhoods.

The local context should be reflected in the design of local open spaces. This could be achieved through the use of landscape, materials, trees and other planting and street furniture.

Well-designed, accessible landscapes and public open spaces can improve social cohesion, health and wellbeing within an area.

All open space should have a purpose and be of the size, location and form appropriate for that use. Avoid space left over after planning (SLOAP) or pushing open space to the periphery of development. It is important that open spaces are high quality and have a specific role or function in order to avoid residual, unused or neglected open spaces.

Open spaces should be located within areas that are central to new and existing development, within walking distance and easily accessible. Opportunities should be taken to accommodate biodiversity within all types of open space, for example, by provision of wildflowers, trees and shrubs. However, the proposed landscape treatment/ biodiversity needs to reflect the open spaces function and location.

Applicants should link existing and proposed landscapes and open spaces together to form open space networks. Applicants should demonstrate within their application how proposed open spaces contribute and respond to the hierarchy of existing landscape and open space networks.

Consider opportunities to encourage local food growing such as community orchards, provision of allotments or other community garden projects.

Focal point

Density should be appropriate to the location, respond to and/ or enhance the character of the existing settlement.

For larger development proposals a range of densities, building types and forms will be required.

Increased densities should be focused around key movement intersections, along strategic routes, overlooking public spaces and within a neighbourhood, a local or village centre. This varied density profile adds character and interest, supports local facilities and public transport and can provide the building mass to create strong framing of public spaces.

Structuring development around the location where important routes converge, the ‘nodes’ within the settlement. Focal buildings at nodal points within a settlement also help to terminate vistas.

Green corridors

Make sure to create a network of safe and well-designed streets and public spaces that can have a social function. Provide opportunities for play, social interaction and recreation,

Provide the community with an infrastructure which encourages community and cultural activities.

Leave a legacy that allows the resident community to have some control over managing their surroundings.

Lower density areas

The density of a development must reflect the character of the surrounding area. Densities should vary across the site, with lower densities towards the countryside edge. This can help to provide a transition between existing built-up area and the open countryside.

These changes in density are important structuring elements that reinforce the sense of place of character areas across a site, less dense and more open grain towards the countryside. In these green edges, development should face outwards towards the countryside. In these areas, the landscape and vegetation are also an important component of the area’s character.

Positive relationship with the street or adjoining development

The siting of buildings in relation to the street can have a significant effect on the success of a development. The most successful layouts have ‘public fronts and private backs’. These streets have clearly defined ‘edges’ and allow for natural surveillance minimising opportunities for crime and escape.

The existing building line should inform the design and layout of a new development. The distance that the building line is set back from the street also defines the level of privacy enjoyed by a dwelling. It may, therefore, be appropriate to introduce a setback which offers a buffer between public and private realms. Even the smallest setback can help privacy and security as well as provide practical storage areas for cycles or refuse.

Space and layout

Figure 20a: Establishing structure and a framework of parameters (minor example)

Block Structure

Use the physical characteristics of a site including topography, orientation, landform, geology, drainage patterns, field patterns, boundaries and vegetation cover to influence the form and layout of new development.

New development should respond to the existing pattern of development within a settlement (its grain) taking cues from existing block sizes, patterns of plot subdivision and relationship between the built and non-built private space. This will ensure that new development will integrate more effectively within existing settlements as a natural extension of the original structure. The appropriate 'grain' of a settlement should be drawn from the contextual analysis.

The structure/layout of a proposal must create or contribute to a grid form (be it regular or irregular) of perimeter blocks. The perimeter block is most appropriate for achieving successful development as it:

- ensures the efficient use of land;
- optimises connections to surrounding areas;
- provides a clear distinction between public and private spaces;
- enhances permeability and legibility;
- increases natural surveillance of the street;
- can work at any scale or location, and;
- ensures attractive street frontages.

When designing the layout of development using perimeter blocks, it is important to ensure the blocks vary in size and shape according to the density, location within the masterplan and mix of uses.

The blocks should take into account natural features, orientation and topography.

In general, blocks between 70 - 125 metres in length provide a better network for both pedestrians and vehicles. Given the size and character of the settlements in the South and Vale, larger blocks are unlikely to be appropriate.

The continuity of development, fine grain and subtle variety in form and massing can add a richness to proposed development that responds to the unique characteristics of both South and Vale.

The structure or layout of new development should be easy to navigate and easy to understand.

Applicants should demonstrate how the use of landmarks, markers and vistas has informed their proposal. The location of landmarks should be clearly justified.

Open Space

The way in which landscape and open spaces are organised can make a significant contribution to the character and success of a development. It is critical that this is a consideration at an early stage in the design process and integrated with all other services and drainage requirements and informs the layout of new neighbourhoods.

The local context should be reflected in the design of local open spaces. This could be achieved through the use of landscape, materials, trees and other planting and street furniture.

Well-designed, accessible landscapes and public open spaces can improve social cohesion, health and wellbeing within an area.

All open space should have a purpose and be of the size, location and form appropriate for that use. Avoid space left over after planning (SLOAP) or pushing open space to the periphery of development (unless there is strong justification to create a landscape buffer, forinstance to reduce the impact of road/rail noise, to retain gaps between settlements or link open spaces). It is important that open spaces are high quality and have a specific role or function in order to avoid residual, unused or neglected open spaces.

Open spaces should be located within areas that are central to new and existing development, within walking distance and easily accessible. Opportunities should be taken to accommodate biodiversity within all types of open space, for example, by provision of wildflowers, trees and shrubs.

Applicants should link existing and proposed landscapes and open spaces together to form open space networks. Applicants should demonstrate within their application how proposed open spaces contribute and respond to the hierarchy of existing landscape and open space networks.

Focal point

Density should be appropriate to the location, respond to and/ or enhance the character of the existing settlement.

For larger development proposals a range of densities, building types and forms will be required.

Increased densities should be focused around key movement intersections, along strategic routes, overlooking public spaces and within a neighbourhood, a local or village centre. This varied density profile adds character and interest, supports local facilities and public transport and can provide the building mass to create strong framing of public spaces.

Structuring development around the location where important routes converge, the 'nodes' within the settlement. Focal buildings at nodal points within a settlement also help to terminate vistas.

Green corridors

Make sure to create a network of safe and well-designed streets and public spaces that can have a social function as well as accommodating vehicular movement.

Provide opportunities for play, social interaction and recreation as well as any formal sports requirements.

Provide the community infrastructure to encourage a legacy of community and cultural activities.

Leave a legacy that allows the resident community to have some control over managing their surroundings.

Consider opportunities to encourage local food growing such as community orchards, provision of allotments or other community garden projects.

Lower density areas

The density of a development must reflect the character of the surrounding area. Densities should vary across the site, with lower densities towards the countryside edge. This can help to provide a transition between existing built-up area and the open countryside.

These changes in density are important structuring elements that reinforce the sense of place of character areas across a site, less dense and more open grain towards the countryside. In these green edges, development should face outwards towards the countryside. In these areas, the landscape and vegetation are also an important component of the area's character.

Adjoining onto existing development

The siting of buildings in relation to the street can have a significant effect on the success of a development. The most successful layouts have 'public fronts and private backs'. These streets have clearly defined 'edges' and allow for natural surveillance minimising opportunities for crime and escape.

The existing building line should inform the design and layout of a new development. The distance that the building line is set back from the street also defines the level of privacy enjoyed by a dwelling. It may, therefore, be appropriate to introduce a setback which offers a buffer between public and private realms. Even the smallest setback can help privacy and security as well as provide practical storage areas for cycles or refuse.

Built form

Figure 35: Establishing built form, character and identity (major example)

Nodal point/core development

A residential area should be structured around a nodal point or a series of nodal points. These are emphasised by key buildings or groups of buildings. For larger development proposals a range of densities, building types and forms will be required. Residential densities may be higher in the vicinity of such nodal points with lower density areas between one cluster and the next. If there is a sufficient concentration of non-residential uses and community facilities in the associated core area, it may be appropriate to locate other community facilities. Apartments with a good amount of fenestration and balconies can be located in these areas, above shops or community facilities. Human activity will be higher in these nodal points.

The scale of new buildings should relate to their context (rural or urban), their location within the hierarchy of routes and whether they act as a focal point, landmark or corner building. New development should generally reflect the scale of the existing settlement unless a strong justification is provided. For example, the location of a landmark building to terminate a key view. Landmarks are distinctive buildings, structures, landscape elements or sculptures that provide visual cues within a development and aid legibility. Landmark buildings may have additional height than the surrounding context, be architectural distinctive either in terms of their form or design. Landmarks should be located in or adjacent to important spaces, centres, nodal points or landscapes to aid the understanding of a place and enhance identity. The location and justification for potential landmarks should be developed in discussions with the Council to ensure they are proposed in areas where they will contribute to the wider legibility of the settlement.

In terms of form and massing, in some locations, such as in nodal points, more complex forms, such as L-shaped corner buildings may be appropriate. They should be composed of a hierarchy of simple rectangular elements each with its own pitched roof. Corner buildings should be designed so that they 'turn the corner' providing frontage to both streets. Corner locations are particularly suitable for flatted blocks and 'L' shaped buildings maintaining continuity of built frontage and incorporating corner windows and entrances. Applicants should demonstrate how the design of corner buildings will aid legibility. Exposed, blank gable ends with no windows fronting the public realm should be avoided.

Scale, density, form and massing

In terms of scale, subtle variations in height should here be used to add visual interest, particularly for key buildings. This can be achieved with differing ridge and eaves heights, as commonly found in traditional streets. Similarly, variations in frontage widths and plan forms can add further interest to the street scene. Bear in mind that the proportions of buildings, their fenestration and detailing are important to the character of the context.

The form and massing of development can have a significant contribution to the character of a neighbourhood. New development should adopt this simple form but good contemporary design that respects context will also be welcomed. Keep it simple! In most instances new development should adopt a simple form, with a rectangular floorplan and pitched roof unless a strong justification can be provided. In terms of enclosure, a simple way of evaluating enclosure is to calculate the ratio of the height of the buildings to the width of the street or space. As a rough guideline, a ratio of between 1:1.5 to 1:3 (height:width) is likely to be appropriate depending on the hierarchy of street or public space.

Development should be designed to ensure that urban streets and public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be achieved by ensuring that in urban areas, streets and spaces are overlooked by ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows. Make sure there is a clear distinction between public and private space.

The development edge

The edge of a development and its external appearance are critical aspects for urban extensions and new development on the edge of existing settlements. All too often the edge is poorly defined by wooden fences abutting the countryside.

Development should instead provide a positive edge which has a clear and well-defined external image. The nature of this edge will depend on the location but could be achieved through:

- Providing strong building frontage;
- Combining structural planting, boundary treatments (such as stone walls) and building frontage; and the use of planting to soften the mass of built form.
- Proposals should therefore avoid back fences abutting the countryside. Applicants (where applicable) will be required to demonstrate how their proposals provide a positive edge which has a clear and well-defined external image. In addition the edge of development should:
- Clearly define entrances to the development through the use of pinch points, corners or feature buildings;

- Use structural planting to frame views or as screening to hide existing unsightly views;
- Maintain views to important landmarks and/or key buildings and;
- Provide a varied skyline and roofscape.
- Grouping dwellings with different scales can add significant interest in rural or residential areas.

Built form

Figure 35a: Establishing built form, character and identity (minor example)

Nodal point/core development

A residential area should be structured around a nodal point or a series of nodal points. These are emphasised by key buildings or groups of buildings. For larger development proposals a range of densities, building types and forms will be required. Residential densities may be higher in the vicinity of such nodal points with lower density areas between one cluster and the next. If there is a sufficient concentration of non-residential uses and community facilities in the associated core area, it may be appropriate to locate other community facilities. Apartments with a good amount of fenestration and balconies can be located in these areas, above shops or community facilities. Human activity will be higher in these nodal points.

The scale of new buildings should relate to their context (rural or urban), their location within the hierarchy of routes and whether they act as a focal point, landmark or corner building. New development should generally reflect the scale of the existing settlement unless a strong justification is provided. For example, the location of a landmark building to terminate a key view. Landmarks are distinctive buildings, structures, landscape elements or sculptures that provide visual cues within a development and aid legibility. Landmark buildings may have additional height than the surrounding context, be architectural distinctive either in terms of their form or design. Landmarks should be located in or adjacent to important spaces, centres, nodal points or landscapes to aid the understanding of a place and enhance identity. The location and justification for potential landmarks should be developed in discussions with the Council to ensure they are proposed in areas where they will contribute to the wider legibility of the settlement.

In terms of enclosure, a simple way of evaluating enclosure is to calculate the ratio of the height of the buildings to the width of the street or space. As a rough guideline, a ratio of between 1:1.5 to 1:3 (height:width) is likely to be appropriate depending on the hierarchy of street or public space. Landscaping can help to create a sense of enclosure – e.g. specimen trees framing the street.

In terms of form and massing, in some locations, such as in nodal points, more complex forms, such as L-shaped corner buildings may be appropriate. They should be composed of a hierarchy of simple rectangular elements each with its own pitched roof. Corner buildings should be designed so that they 'turn the corner' providing frontage to both streets. Corner locations are particularly suitable for flatted blocks and 'L' shaped buildings maintaining continuity of built frontage and incorporating corner windows and entrances. Applicants should demonstrate how the design of corner buildings will aid legibility. Exposed, blank gable ends with no windows fronting the public realm should be avoided.

Local streets

In terms of scale, subtle variations in height should here be used to add visual interest. This can be achieved with differing ridge and eaves heights, as commonly found in traditional streets. Similarly, variations in frontage widths and plan forms can add further interest to the street scene.

The form and massing of development can have a significant contribution to the character of a neighbourhood. New development should adopt this simple form but good contemporary design that respects context will also be welcomed. Keep it simple! In most instances new development should adopt a simple form, with a rectangular floorplan and pitched roof unless a strong justification can be provided.

In terms of enclosure, a simple way of evaluating enclosure is to calculate the ratio of the height of the buildings to the width of the street or space. As a rough guideline, a ratio of between 1:1.5 to 1:3 (height:width) is likely to be appropriate depending on the hierarchy of street or public space.

Development should be designed to ensure that urban streets and public spaces have good levels of natural surveillance from buildings. This can be achieved by ensuring that in urban areas, streets and spaces are overlooked by ground floor habitable rooms and upper floor windows. Make sure there is a clear distinction between public and private space.

The development edge

The edge of a development and its external appearance are critical aspects for urban extensions and new development on the edge of existing settlements. All too often the edge is poorly defined by wooden fences abutting the countryside.

Development should instead provide a positive edge which has a clear and well-defined external image. The nature of this edge will depend on the location but could be achieved through:

Providing strong building frontage;

Combining structural planting, boundary treatments (such as stone walls) and building frontage; and

The use of planting to soften the mass of built form.

Proposals should therefore avoid back fences abutting the countryside. Applicants (where applicable) will be required to demonstrate how their proposals provide a positive edge which has a clear and well-defined external image. In addition the edge of development should:

- Clearly define entrances to the development through the use of pinch points, corners or feature buildings;
- Use structural planting to frame views or as screening to hide existing unsightly views;
- Maintain views to important landmarks and/or key buildings; and
- Provide a varied skyline and roofscape.

Grouping dwellings with different scales can add significant interest in rural or residential areas.