Land off Mill Lane
Earl Shilton

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



Prepared by Pegasus Urban Design | Persimmon Homes North Midlands | May 2010 | EMS.1350_4

Vision

The development off Mill Lane will create a high quality residential neighbourhood, which will help facilitate, rather than prohibit, the wider Sustainable Urban Extension of Earl Shilton. The aspiration is to develop a design which is based on a contemporary interpretation of the existing character of the town and a commitment to high quality design which it is hoped will create a distinctive new area of housing.

CONTENTS

PAGE 5 — 1

INTRODUCTION
Purpose of the statement

PAGE 9 — 2

ASSESSMENT
The site
Physical context
Social and Economic context
Planning policies
Stakeholder Involvement

PAGE 29 — 3

EVALUATION
Constraints and opportunities

PAGE 35 — 4

DESIGN CONCEPT & PRINCIPLES
Design Concept
Design Principles

PAGE 41 — 5

DESIGN PROPOSALS
Use & Amount
Character Areas
Access and Circulation
Layout
Scale and Massing
Landscape Design
Appearance
Resource Efficiency

PAGE 65 — 6

SUMMARY

PEGASUS URBAN DESIGN
Pegasus Urban Design
4 The Courtyard
Church Street
Lockington
DE74 2SL

www.ppg-llp.co.uk I T 01509 670806 | F 01509 672247

Pegasus Urban Design is part of Pegasus Planning Group LLP
Prepared on behalf of Persimmon Homes.
May 2010 Project code EMS.1350_04
Contact; Urban Design - Paul Smith
Prepared by Sean Hindes

COPYRIGHT The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Pegasus Planning Group LLP
Front cover; Aerial Photo of Earl Shilton

Crown copyright. All rights reserved, OS Licence number 100042093



INTRODUCTION

1

This section sets out the background and purpose of the Statement.

Aerial Photo of the Site



Section 1: Introduction

Purpose of the Statement

1.1 This statement has been prepared by Pegasus Planning Group on behalf of Persimmon Homes North Midlands.

1.2 This statement has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Circular 01/2006 which requires such an application to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. In preparing this statement, reference has also been made to the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE) guidance on 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them' (CABE, 2006).

1.3 The purpose of this statement is to explain;

> **"the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with"** (para. 80, DCLG Circular 01/2006).

1.4 This document achieves this within the following sections:

Section 1 Introduction – outlines the purpose of the document;
Section 2 Assessment – considers the site and its surroundings in terms of the physical, social, economic and planning context;
Section 3 Evaluation – identifies the sites constraints and opportunities;
Section 4 Design Concept and Principles – presents the design concept and principles which underpin the proposals.
Section 5 Design Proposals
Sets out the uses and amount proposed, character areas, access arrangements, layout of the development, scale of buildings, landscaping treatment, appearance and use of resources;
Section 6 Summary – provides an overview of how the development proposals achieve the design principles established within Section 4.

1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with the detailed planning application and its accompanying documents including the:

- **Planning Statement** prepared by Pegasus Planning Group;
- **Flood Risk Assessment** prepared by BWB Consulting;
- **Ecological Assessment** prepared by Aspect Ecology;
- **Reptile Survey and Review** prepared by Ecology Solutions Ltd;
- **Transport Assessment** by White Young Green Group Ltd;
- **Travel Plan** by White Young Green Group Ltd;
- **Noise and Air Quality Assessment;**
- **Archaeological Assessment** prepared by ULAS.
- **Affordable Housing Statement** prepared by Pegasus Planning Group;
- **Energy and Sustainable Construction Statement** prepared by Pegasus Planning Group;
- **Ground Investigation Report** prepared by BWB Consulting; and
- **Arboricultural Assessment** by FPCR.


Havelock Farm
Track
Church Farm
THE POPLARS
School
CHURCH STREET
PW
Mlotte
Hill Top Farm
HILL TOP
119m
The Hall Field
PW
EARL STREET
Allot Gdns
Allot Gdns
HIGH TOR EAST
KEATS LANE
KEATS CL
WEST STREET
HIGH STREET
ALMEY'S LANE
AVENUE NORTH
AVENUE SOUTH
VICARAGE STREET
OXFORD ST
ALEXANDER AVENUE
RONALD TOON RD
AVENUE SOUTH
WEAVER ROAD
119m
Pav
King's Walk
PARK ROAD
PROSPECT W
CARR'S ROAD
TOWER ROAD
PW
ORTON RD
School
IVYDENE CL
COTTAGE G
PEGGS CL
ASTLEY ROAD
THE LEECROFTS
Pav
Playing Field
Car.Pk
KING'S WALK
109m
THE HOLLOW
PO
Liby
OD STREET
PW
CONISTON CL
WINDERMERE CL
BURGESS DR
CANDLE LANE
OAKS WAY
COURT ROAD



ASSESSMENT

2

This section provides a summary of the assessment of the site and its surroundings.

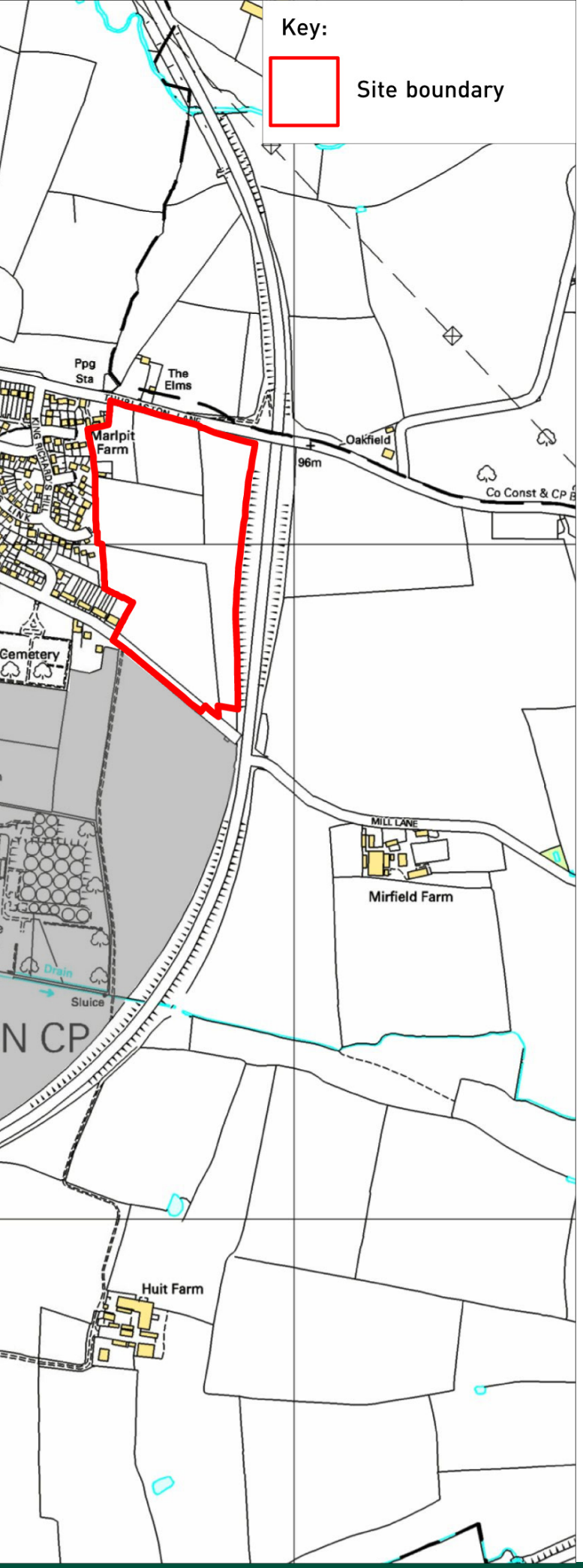
Site Context Plan

Proposed Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extension

Earl Shilton

EARL SHILTO

North



Section 2: Assessment

2.1 This section provides a summary of the assessment undertaken of the site and its surroundings.

The Site

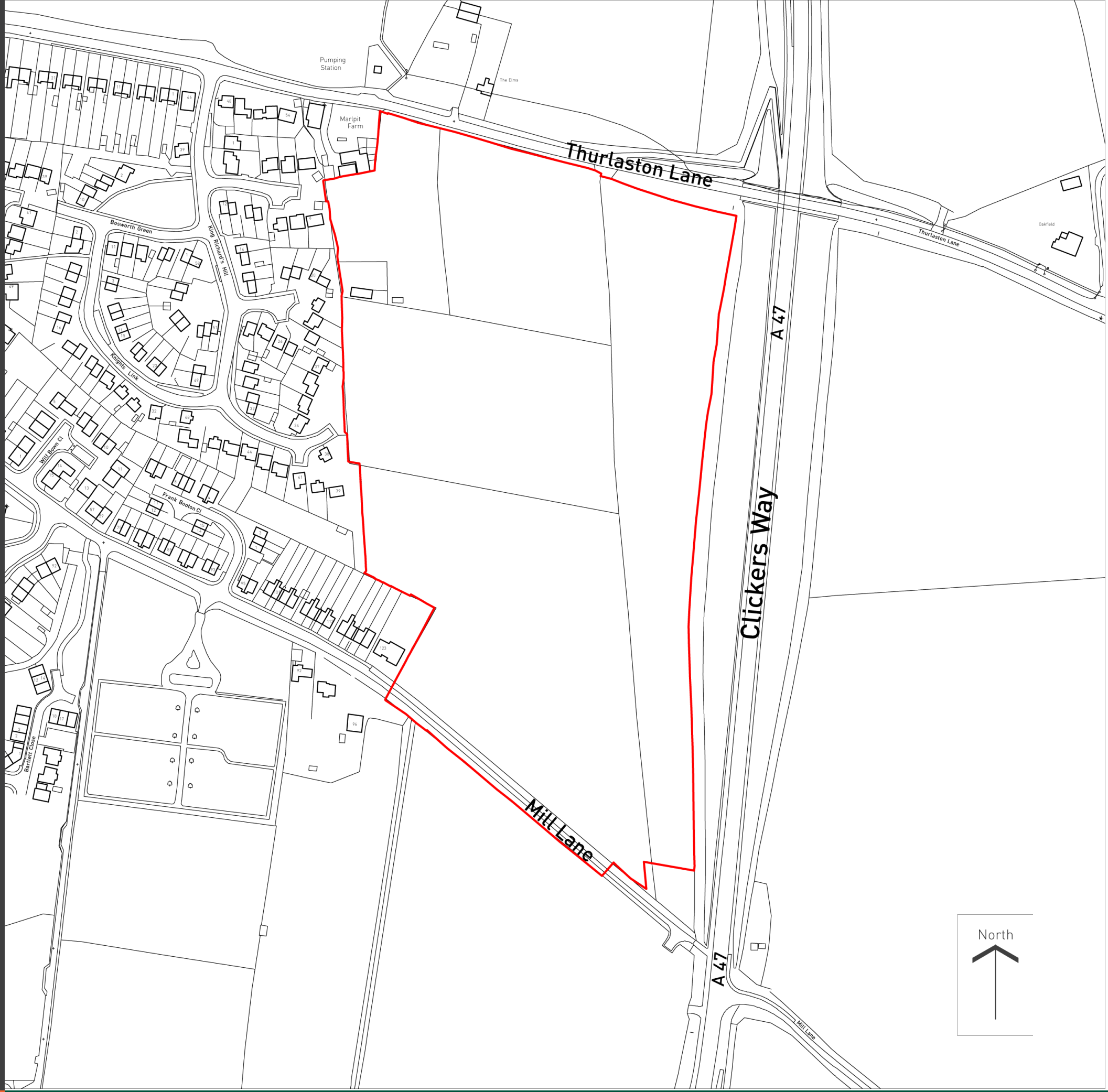
2.2 The town of Earl Shilton is located approximately 10km to the south west of the urban fringe of Leicester. The existing settlements of Earl Shilton, Barwell, Hinckley and Burbage are located within close proximity of each other, and although the town centres are approximately 2km apart, edge of town development over the years has resulted in the coalescence of the two urban areas.

2.3 The application site is located to the east of the existing built up area of Earl Shilton, extending to some 7.8 ha. The site is enclosed by the existing residential development to the west, Thurlaston Lane to the north, Mill Lane to the south, and the new A47 bypass to the east.



View looking north west across the site

Site Location Plan



Physical Context

Existing Land Uses

2.4 As previously mentioned the existing built up area of Earl Shilton lies immediately to the west of the site boundary. To the north and south, beyond Thurlaston Lane and Mill Lane respectively, is large open farmland comprising of arable and improved grassland fields. The new A47 bypass and its associated landscape and land remodelling lies immediately to the east of the site, beyond which is further agricultural land.

2.5 The site itself is comprised largely of agricultural fields dominated by arable and improved grassland and existing hedgerows including a small number of trees both along the boundaries and within the site.

Topography

2.6 There is an existing ridge line running in an east west direction across the southern section of the site which forms the high point within the application boundary at approximately 103.5m AOD. The land then gently slopes from this ridge to the north and south towards Thurlaston Lane and Mill Lane respectively. The low point of the site is located in the northeast corner where the existing land form is approximately 96m AOD.

2.7 Although the vast majority of the site is gently sloping, there is a small area in the north west of the site where the site boundary adjoins Thurlaston Lane, where the gradient increases slightly.

Visual Context

2.8 Due to its edge of town location, the site will inevitably have a more rural character although this has been diminished by the construction of the recently completed A47 bypass. A number of mid and long distance open views to the east and northeast can be gained from the site and whilst aiming to exploit these views, mitigation measures will also be required to reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding landscaped character. It is recommended that existing landscape features are retained and enhanced where possible, notably along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.

2.9 It should be noted that whilst the existing urban edge of Earl Shilton is quite soft with garden spaces and perimeter hedgerows and a number of trees, the built form is very much evident in the wider landscape. Along with this, the alignment of the new Earl Shilton bypass renders the site as a residual piece of land lying between the existing urban edge and the new road.

View looking north across the site





Existing vegetation along western site boundary

Existing landscape features

2.10 There are a number of existing hedgerows which are currently located within the site predominantly and on the northern, southern and eastern site boundaries although there are regular breaks in these hedgerows.

2.11 A small number of semi-mature and mature trees are also present within the site, all of which are associated with the existing hedgerows. The species present include oak, Scots pine, ash and holly.

2.12 The Arboricultural Assessment of this site carried out concluded that the site offered a mixture in quality of specimens however the majority consisting of low quality specimens. This may be due in part to the absence of any apparent formal management over their history and in many cases by virtue of their age or size. Most specimens were of fairly small dimensions therefore having a limited visual contribution to the surrounding landscape.

2.13 No trees found within the assessment site were considered to be retention category A (High Quality) and neither were any trees found, at the time of inspection, to be hazardous or to offer less than ten years contribution and as such considered category R (Remove).

2.14 To mitigate for any tree losses across the site suitable replacements should be included within new landscaping as part of the overall scheme. Areas of buffer planting and public open space and the replacement planting should seek to enhance the local tree population for the future and compliment the proposals.

Drainage and Flood risk

2.15 A Flood Risk Assessment was carried out by BWB Consulting in May 2008 which concluded that the site is not considered to be at significant risk of flooding, therefore there is no specific mitigation required with regard to finished floor levels. It is recommended however that the finished floor levels are elevated above surrounding ground levels in accordance with 'Best Building Practice'.

2.16 It is recommended that surface water runoff should not exceed the existing runoff rate and should be drained to existing outfall positions where available.

Archaeology

2.17 An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) between the 17th and 31st March 2010. Previous geophysical results had suggested high archaeological potential therefore a programme of trial trenching was requested by Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team.

2.18 Twenty-six 30m long trenches were excavated within the proposed development area targeting geophysical anomalies and testing blank areas. Overall the evaluation produced clear evidence for archaeological activity in twelve trenches. It was however concluded that there are no absolute constraints to where development can go on site.

Ecology

2.19 The application is supported by an Ecological Assessment prepared by Aspect Ecology and Reptile Report prepared by Ecology Solutions Ltd. The reports confirm that the site is not subject to any statutory ecological designations. A number of Ecological Surveys have been carried out and are discussed in more detail in the reports mentioned above.

2.20 The existing vegetation and buildings present within the site offer negligible opportunities to support roosting bats. Although the hedgerows and trees do provide linear features that offer potential foraging in commuting corridors for bats, this is limited by their broken and incomplete nature, and as such it is recommended that these be retained and enhanced with additional planting wherever possible.

2.21 The Reptile Survey did not record any common reptile species within the site and as such no specific mitigation is required with regard to this group.



View looking east along Mill Lane



Existing Cycle route along new bypass



View looking east along Thurlaston Lane



Existing Cycle route along Thurlaston Lane

Existing access

2.22 At present there is no vehicular access into the site although there is gated access in the southeast to allow agricultural vehicles access into the site.

2.23 The application boundary does adjoin the existing adopted highway along Thurlaston Lane to the north and Mill Lane to the south. Thurlaston Lane currently provides vehicular links between the Town Centre and outlining Villages to the east. Whilst connecting to the Town Centre to the west, vehicular access along Mill Lane is restricted to the east just beyond the existing residential properties along the road. Previously Mill Lane did extend out to the outlying Villages to the east although this section of road was closed on completion of the A47 bypass. As a result the old road remains in place although vehicular access is restricted, it is still passable by foot or by cycle.

Public transport

2.24 The nearest local service to the site is route 81 which offers a frequent service (20 minutes) to the centre of Earl Shilton and Hinckley town centre. This service operates along Mill Lane with an existing stop just north of Alexander Avenue, approximately 300m from the site.

Public rights of way

2.25 At present there are no existing public rights of way running through the site although there are existing footways along Mill Lane to the west of the site. As part of the recently completed A47 bypass, new pedestrian and cycle links have been provided to the northeast and southeast of the site. These new links extend approximately halfway along the northern boundary along Thurlaston Lane, and include a new pedestrian and cycle crossing of the bypass along the former line of Mill Lane in the southeast.



View looking north along new bypass



Existing Cycle route along new bypass

Context Study Images



















Neighbourhood Character Assessment

Immediate Context

2.26 The residential area immediately to the west of the site has been subject to a number of phased developments over the past 40 or 50 years. This has resulted in a varied approach to both the built form and road layout in the immediate context.

2.27 Development along Mill Lane follows a more linear pattern and is characterised by typical 1960's and 1970's edge of town development. There are a variety of building types ranging from larger detached units to semi-detached and small runs of terraces. The built form follows a continuous building line and is set back approximately 5-7m and in many cases allows for on-plot parking at the front of buildings. Redbrick and tiled roofs tend to dominate the street scene although there is evidence of light render used particularly to the east of Mill Lane adjacent to the application site. Standard window and door detailing is prominent along Mill Lane as is the occasional use of bay windows. In terms of the roofscape there is a prominence of pitched and hipped roofs which are often animated with regular chimney stacks.

2.28 Development along Thurlaston Lane is also typically two storeys in height although buildings are set slightly further back than Mill Lane, often up to 15m from the curb side allowing access to on-plot parking either at the front or side of dwellings. Dwellings along this road are typically detached or semi-detached and include rear gardens with a depth up to 30m. Again buildings are typically constructed from redbrick with the occasional use of light render and gabled frontages provide animation within the street scene.

2.29 The infill development located behind Mill Lane and Thurlaston Lane is more typical of a 1980's approach to residential development with a more informal road layout and a more haphazard building line. Buildings are typically two storey in height and are predominantly detached and semi-detached. The highway design has a more engineered feel to it with cul-de-sacs terminating in turning heads which creates a more highways dominated character to this area. Roof pitches tend to be at a lower degree than the surrounding area and the building types appear to be of little architectural quality.

Wider Context

2.30 The existing settlement of Earl Shilton exhibits a more traditional vernacular built form typical of the early 20th and late 19th Century. There is a predominance of redbrick and slate roofs and the built form tends to follow a more consistent and continuous building line located up against the curb side and tends to be at a high density than the immediate site context. There is also evidence of more contemporary design within the Town Centre. Architectural detailing in these locations includes Juliette balconies and projecting box windows along with glazed elevations.

Recent Housing Development in Earl Shilton

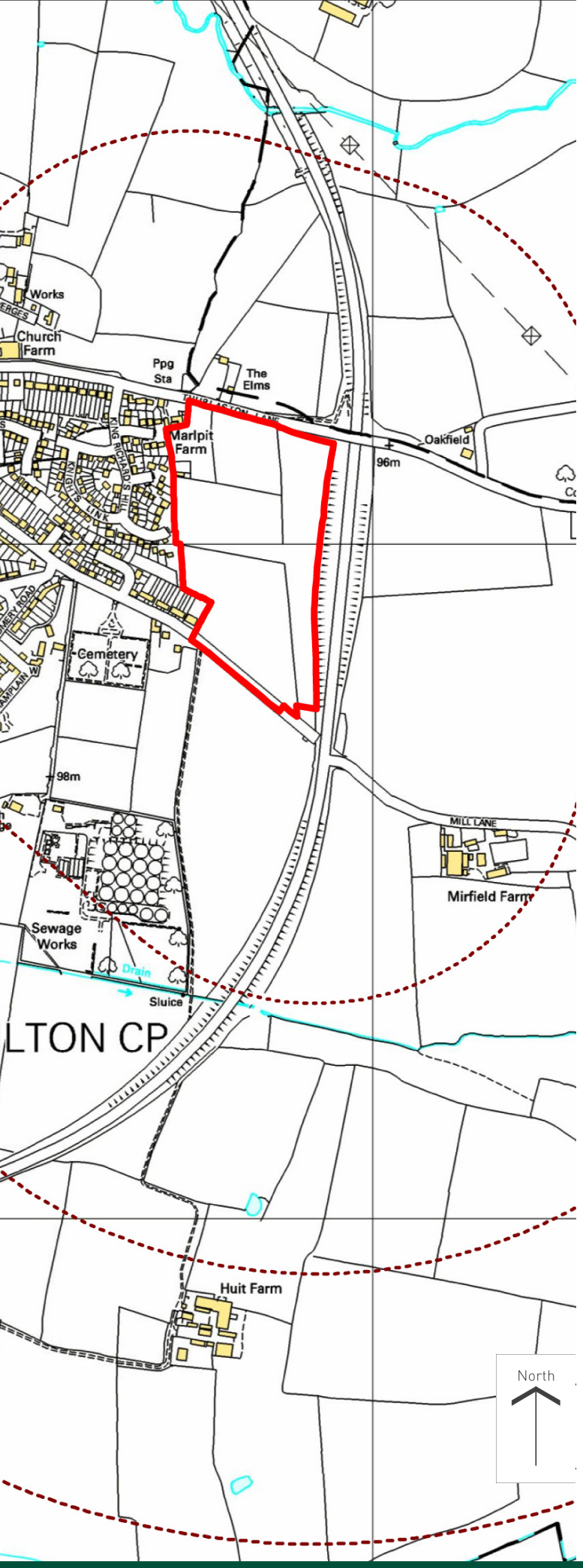
2.31 There is a new residential development currently being built out located off Mill Lane, approximately 250m to the south west of the application site. Although the development has sought to respond to the local context by including design features found elsewhere within the town such as bay windows Juliette balconies and including chimney stacks to elevate the roofscape, the development does however create quite a hard landscape environment with little opportunity for planting and vegetation. Much of the development is also 2.5 and 3 storeys in height which creates an overbearing appearance.

Facilities Plan

Key:

- Site boundary
- 1 College
- 2 Secondary School
- 3 Primary School
- 4 Library
- 5 Pharmacy
- 6 Allotment
- 7 Recreation Ground
- Town Centre

1,600m 1,200m 800m 400m



Social and Economic Context

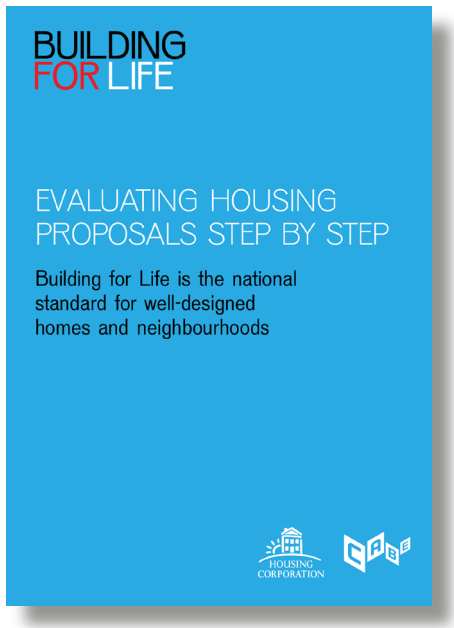
Local Facilities

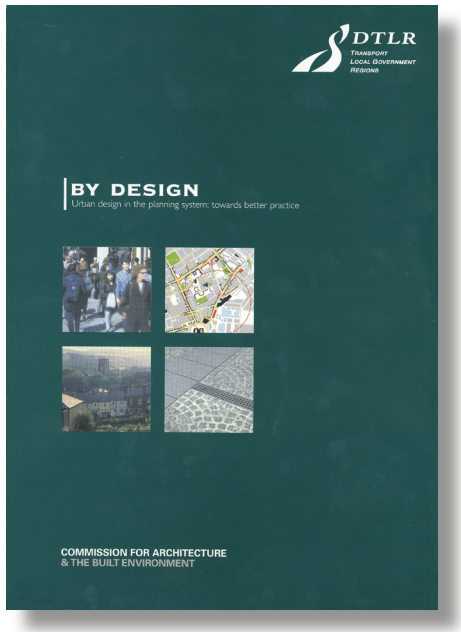
2.32 Earl Shilton has a range of services and facilities including a number of primary schools, the closest of which is St Peters Primary School located approximately 500m from the site along Mill Lane. The William Bradford Community College is also located approximately 2km to the west of the application site and serves both Earl Shilton and Barwell along with the outlying villages.

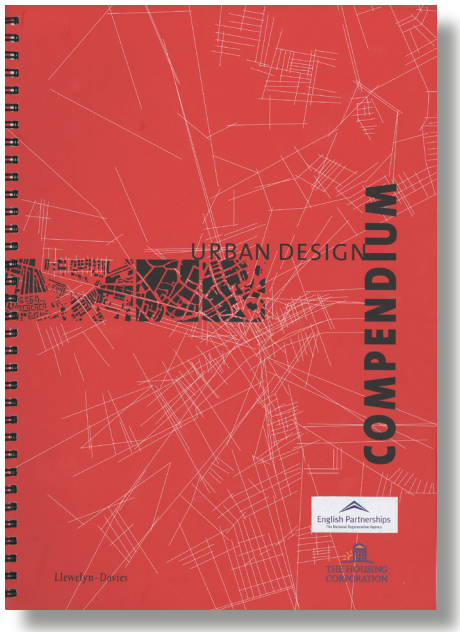
2.33 Earl Shilton Town Centre includes a wide range of shopping facilities along with a number of pubs and restaurants. The Local Facilities Plan shown opposite shows the range and location of local facilities in the context of the application site.

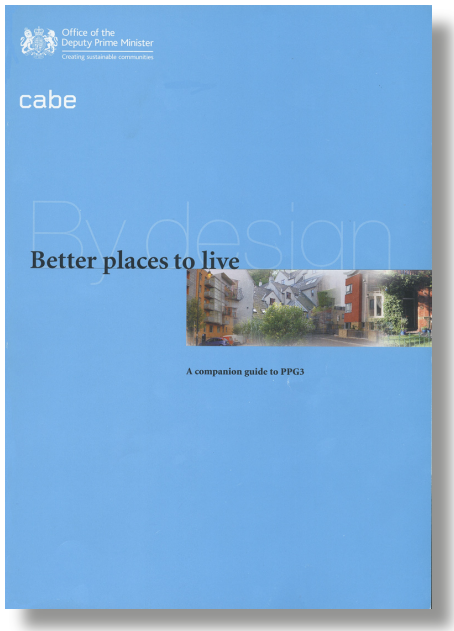


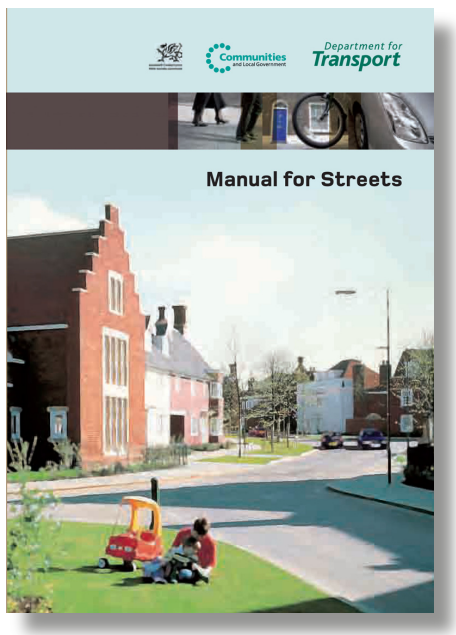
Current Urban Design Guidance

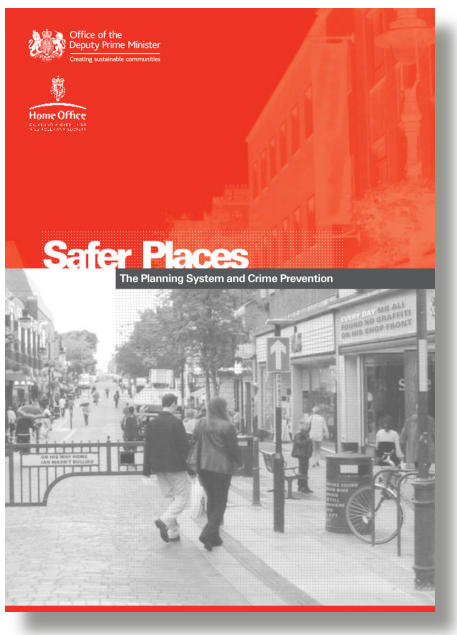




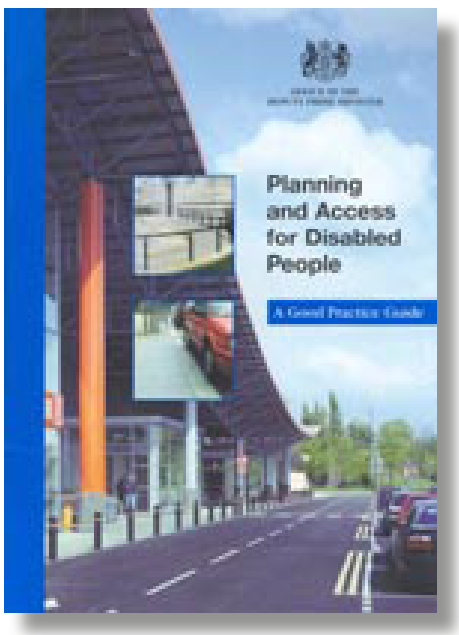












Planning policies

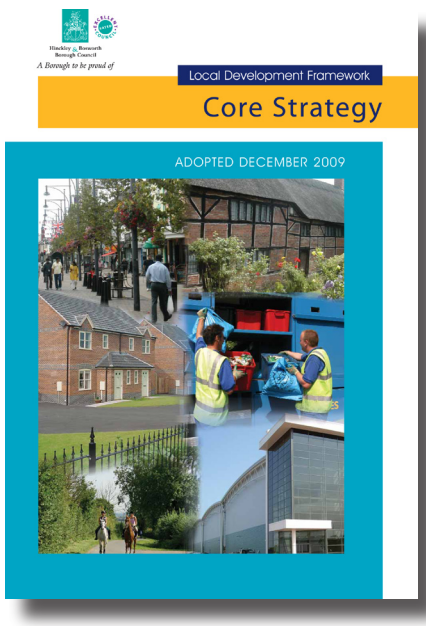
"...good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted"
(PPS3, para 13).

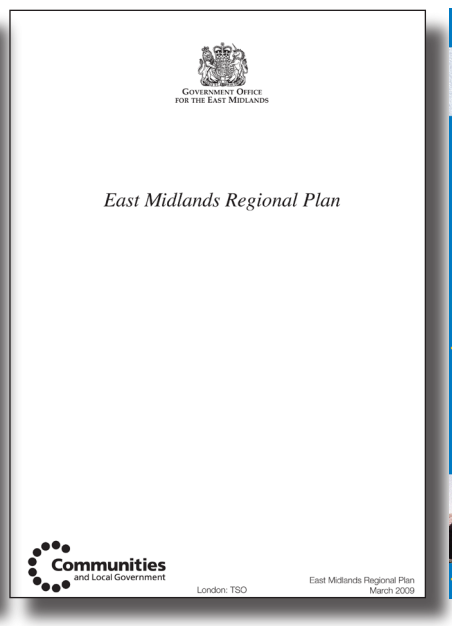
2.34 Government guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's) and the emerging Planning Policy Statements (PPS's) set the context within which those involved in the development process should promote excellence in sustainable development in order to achieve a high quality of design. Relevant Government guidance and policies are discussed in more detail within the Planning Statement which accompanies the application.

Local policy and guidance

2.35 Policy and guidance, which covers the local area, has been utilised to inform the design process. These include:-

- East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy);
- Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan;
- Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (adopted December 2009).







Stakeholder Involvement

Consultation by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

2.36 Significant formal and informal public consultation on the principle and form of development at Earl Shilton has been undertaken by officers of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy and more recently through the process of preparation of the emerging Area Action Plan for Barwell and Earl Shilton. The application site forms part of the area subject to the proposals for growth.

2.37 Consultation as part of the Area Action Plan preparation included:

- A pre-masterplan public engagement exercise, the results of which are summarised in a report by Larnaca in October 2008.
- A "Where we are" stakeholder workshop on 23rd July 2009, the conclusions of which informed the Masterplan Brief and consultation strategy for the AAP. A representative from Persimmon attended this workshop.
- Informal engagement with stakeholders as part of an evidence gathering exercise to inform Masterplan options.
- A Masterplan Feasibility testing developer forum in Autumn 2009.
- A public exhibition of two masterplan 'options' in November 2009, both of which showed residential development at the application site. Opportunity was also given for attendees to show how they would plan the urban extension through the use of a 'game board' approach.

2.37 As a result of the above engagement, the following bodies provided information which has informed the proposals:

2.38 HBBC Environmental Health and Green Spaces

- Green Infrastructure should seek to connect to the surrounding countryside
- A population of 2.3 persons per dwelling is used to calculate open space requirements in accordance with Policy 19 of the Core Strategy.
- The relationship between the proposed employment areas and existing and proposed residential areas needs to be carefully considered to avoid unacceptable impacts on residential amenity.

Pre-application discussions

2.39 The applicants have sought to engage with the local planning authority and other statutory consultees at an early stage.

Planning

2.40 Two meetings have been held with officers of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in relation to this site. On 13th May 2008 representatives from Pegasus Planning Group met with Katanya Barlow of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. Representatives of the applicant met with Sally Smith, Tracey Miller and Cathy Horton of the Council in relation to the site again on 15th December 2009. These meetings related mainly to the principle and timing of a planning application.

2.41 A request for a Screening Opinion under Regulation 5 was submitted to the Council in April 2008. A screening direction was subsequently issued by the Government Office for the East Midlands on 7th December 2009 confirming an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required.

Masterplanning

2.42 Representatives of the applicant have attended the various workshops detailed above at which the vision for the emerging masterplan has been discussed. Initial informal discussions have also taken place with the consultants, Capita Lovejoy, in relation to the principles of the masterplan for the application site, and the applicant would welcome the opportunity to engage further in order to demonstrate how the application proposals meet the principles of the Masterplan Brief and do not prejudice the emerging options.

Highways and Transportation

2.43 A series of scoping discussions have been held with LCC to establish the parameters of the Transport Assessment. The issues raised have been taken into account in the formation of the proposals.

Flood Risk and Drainage

2.44 The Environment Agency was originally consulted in relation to the proposals in April 2008. The response letter is included as an Appendix to the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. The EA confirmed its requirements in terms of the scope of the FRA and also that it had no objections in principle to the storage of surface water discharge in hard paved areas, public open space and highways, on the understanding that water levels are not high and these will be stored for short periods only.

Housing

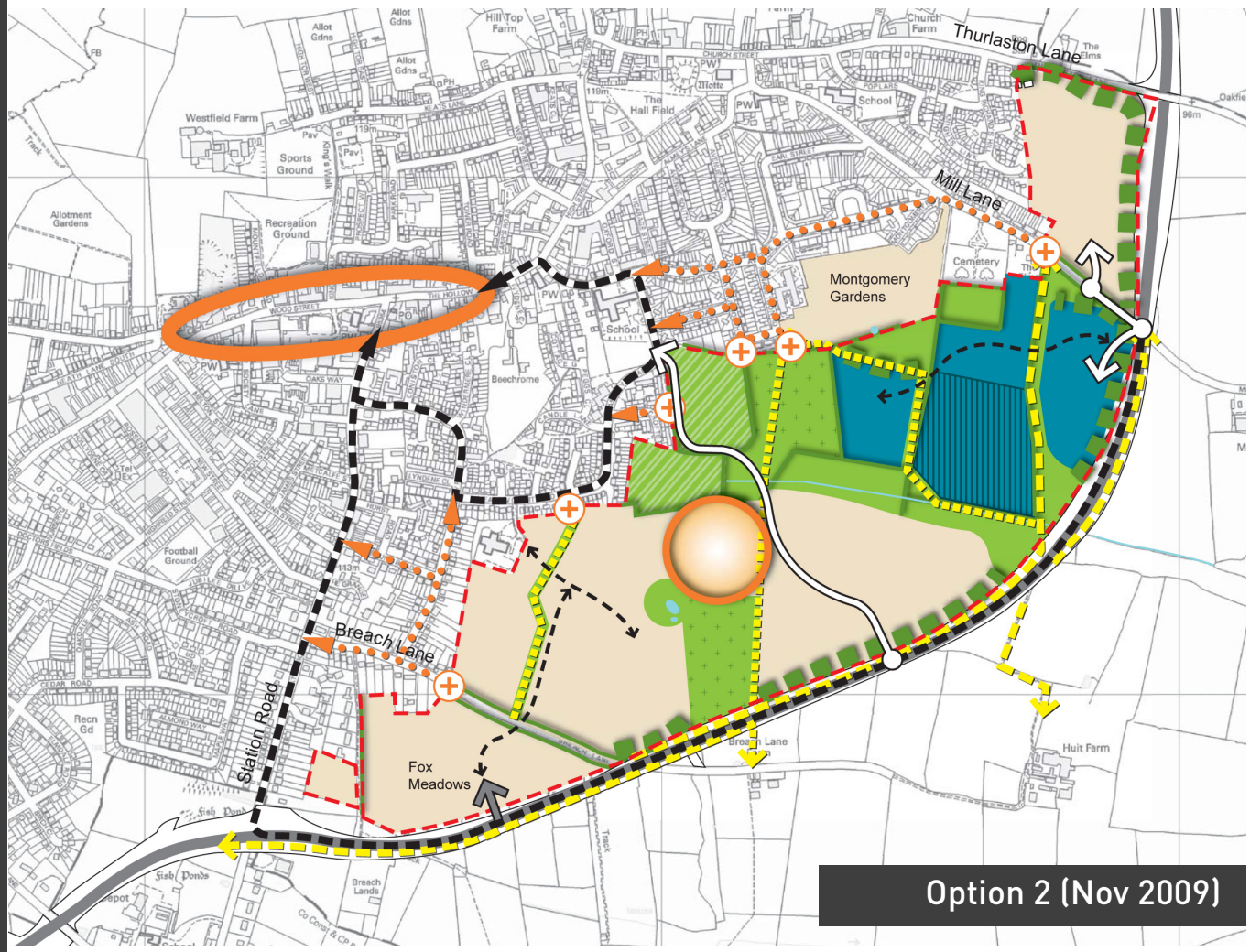
2.45 Informal discussions have taken place with Valerie Bunting of Hinckley and Bosworth, who confirmed that the Council's preference would be for smaller affordable properties, particularly 1 bed properties for social rent, as well as a mix of other 2 and 3 bed properties. These requirements have been reflected in the proposed affordable housing mix.

Facilities

2.46 A combination of verbal discussions, as well as the responses to the AAP preparation from various statutory bodies has informed the application proposals and the s106 draft heads of terms submitted with the application.



Option 1 (Nov 2009)



Option 2 (Nov 2009)

Legend

- SUE Boundary
- Residential
- Employment
- Green Infrastructure
- Sports Pitches
- Existing Recreation
- Existing Allotments
- Existing Infrastructure (WWTW)
- Retained Hedgerows
- Existing Development
- Proposed Vehicular Route
- Existing Vehicular Route
- Potential Vehicular Links
- Community Focus
- Public Footpath
- Bridleway
- Vehicular Link to Town Centre
- Pedestrian Link (internal)
- Pedestrian Link to Town Centre
- Landscape Buffer
- Town Centre
- Existing Watercourse
- Existing Utilities (including easement)

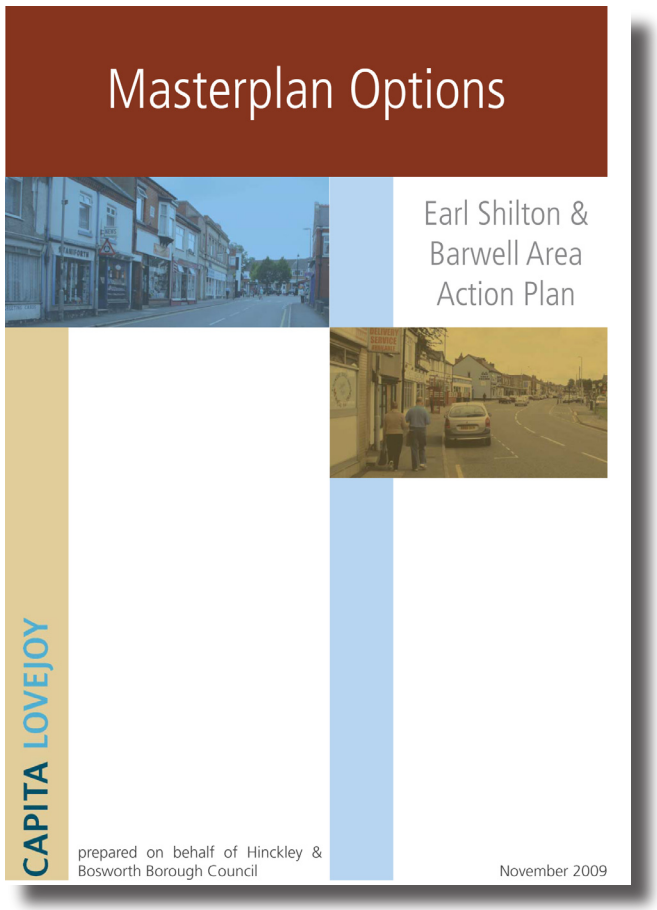
Barwell and Earl Shilton Urban Extensions

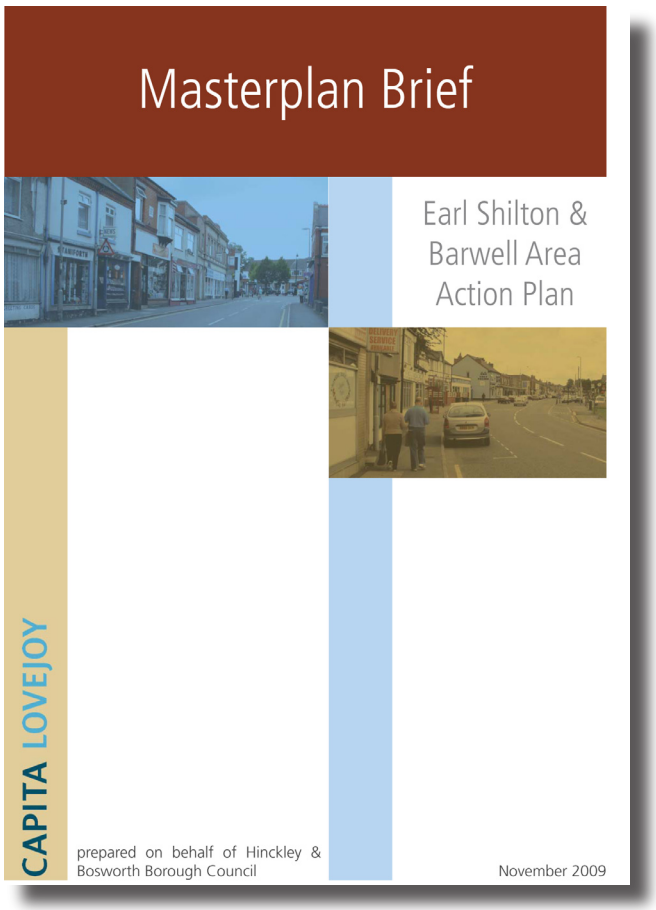
2.47 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council are currently in the process of preparing a formal Area Action Plan for urban extensions to the two settlements of Barwell and Earl Shilton. The adopted Core Strategy identifies indicative locations for these urban extensions. The urban extension at Earl Shilton has been earmarked for up to 2000 dwellings along with 10ha of employment and associated community and green infrastructure works.

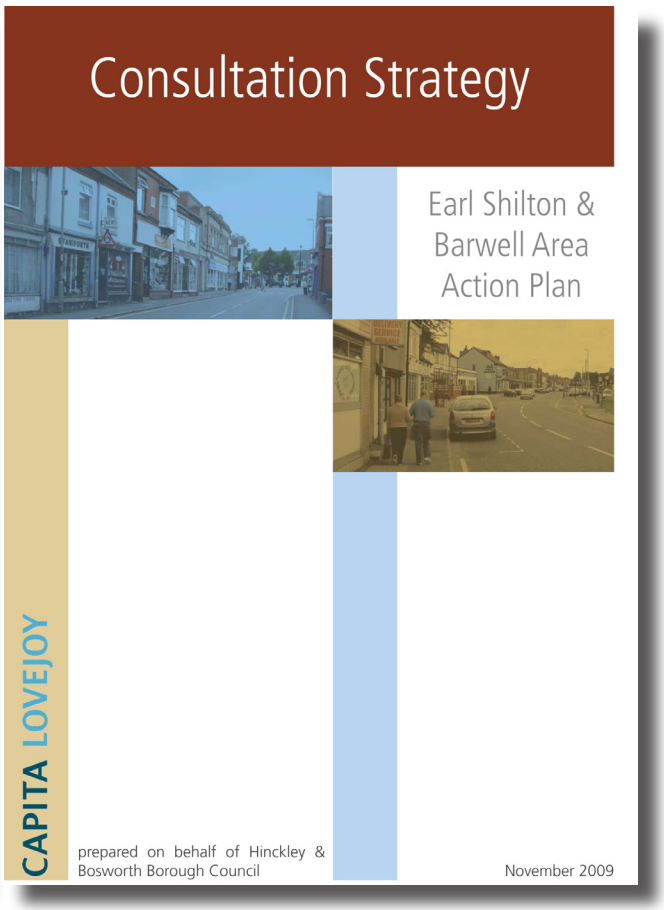
2.48 The area identified for the urban extension at Earl Shilton effectively infills the remaining land between the existing urban fringe and the new A47 bypass. It is bounded in the west by the existing built form along Station Road and to the north by Thurlaston Lane meaning that the application site defines the northeast of the urban extension boundary.

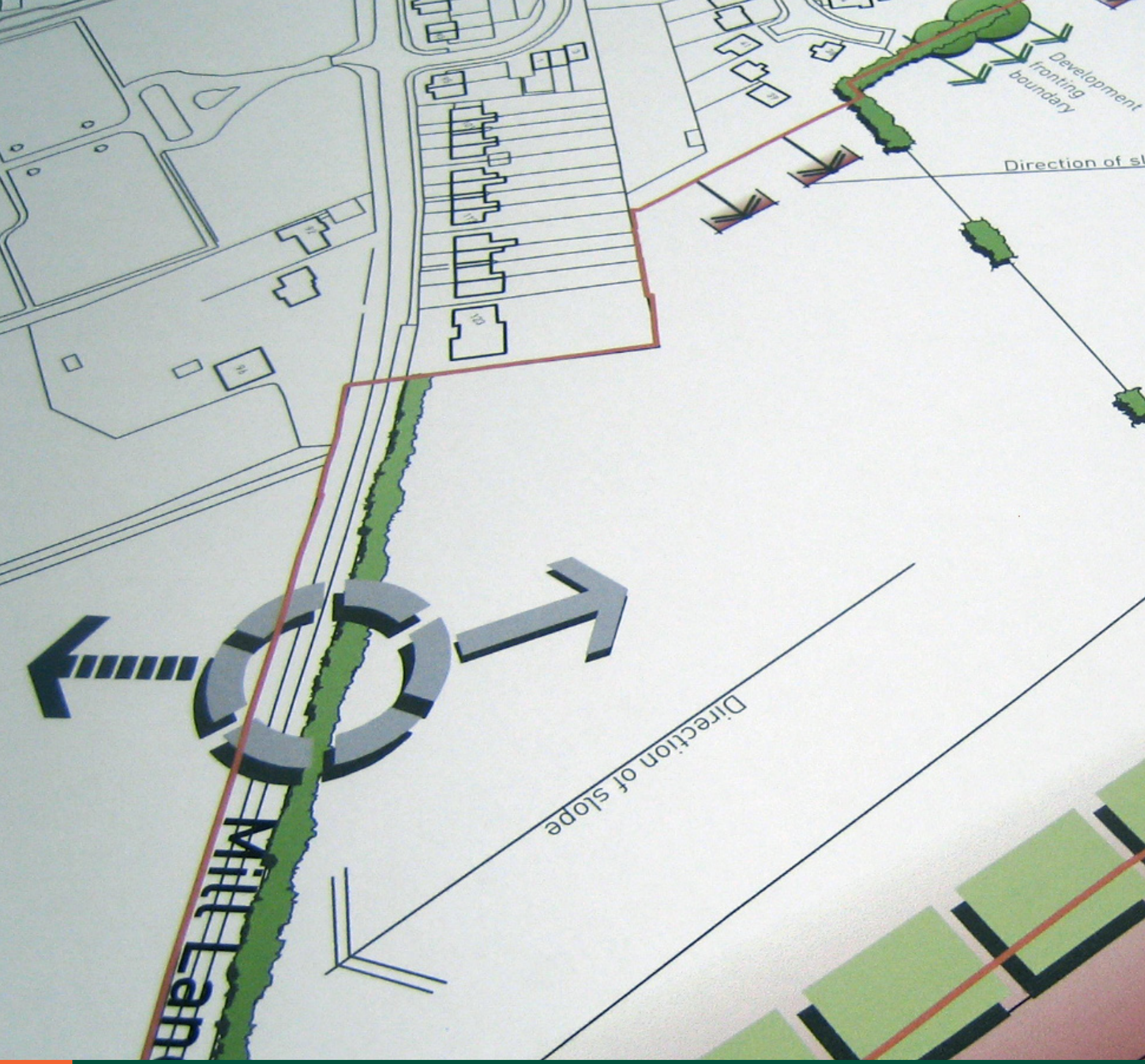
2.49 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council appointed Capita Lovejoy to prepare and assist them in the preparation of Masterplans for the growth and regeneration of Earl Shilton and Barwell. A Masterplan Options Document was produced which included two options for the potential urban extension at Earl Shilton. Both options seek to achieve the land uses and amounts mentioned above albeit in two different approaches. Whilst large areas of the site differ between the two options in terms of land use areas, the application site is identified for residential use along with a landscape buffer along the northern and eastern boundaries in both option plans.

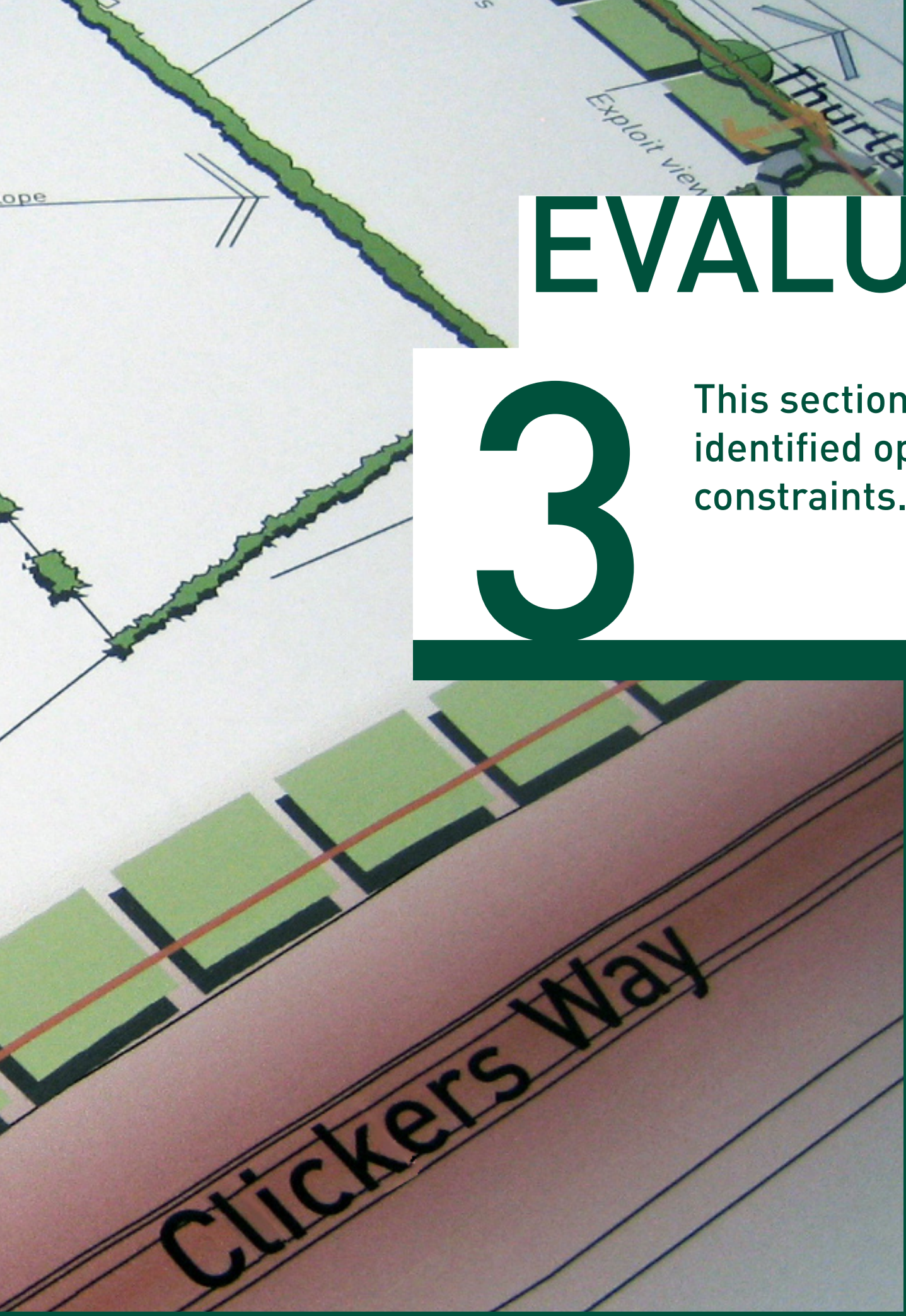
2.50 It is therefore reasonable to assume that the principle of residential development within the site is appropriate. A more detailed response to the development objectives and requirements set out within the document will be discussed in the relevant subsequent sections of this document.








Development fronting boundary
Direction of slope
Direction of slope
Mill Lan



EVALUATION

3

This section focuses on the identified opportunities and constraints.

Constraints and Opportunities



Section 3: Evaluation

Constraints and opportunities

3.1 Following the assessment of the site and its surroundings, as detailed in Section 2, a number of constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed development on the site have been identified. These are outlined below and illustrated, where appropriate, on the constraints and opportunities plan. Each of these constraints and opportunities has been used to inform the design proposals on the site.

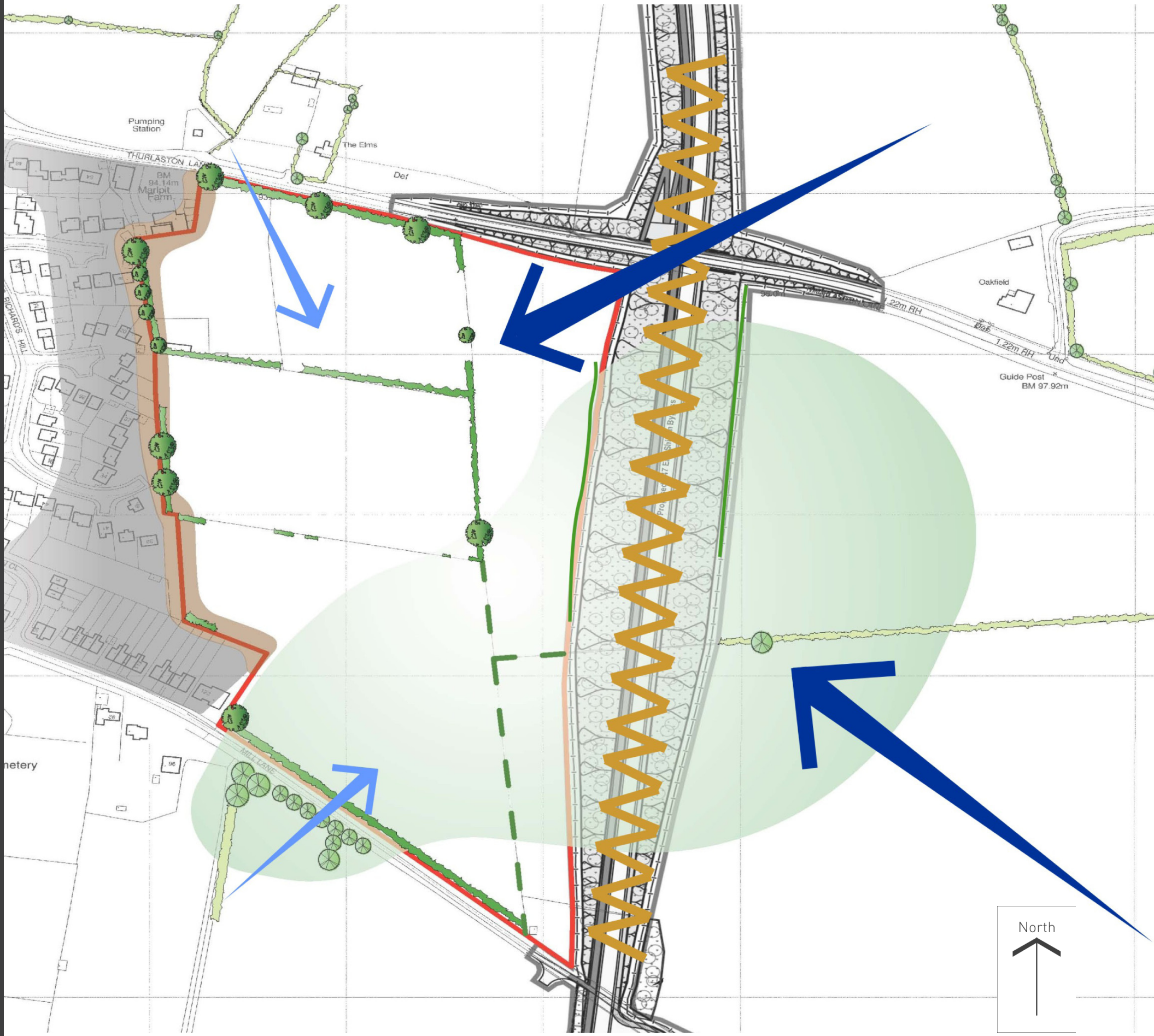
Constraints

- The need for a satisfactory interface between existing and proposed dwellings along the western site boundary;
- Sensitive boundary with adjoining agricultural land to the north and northeast of the site;
- Existing boundary and internal vegetation;
- Restriction of vehicular access to the site at present;
- Visually sensitive nature of parts of the site, where careful landscape mitigation will be required;
- Proximity to the new bypass and associated noise intrusion along the eastern site boundary.
- Existing Thurlaston Lane rising main.

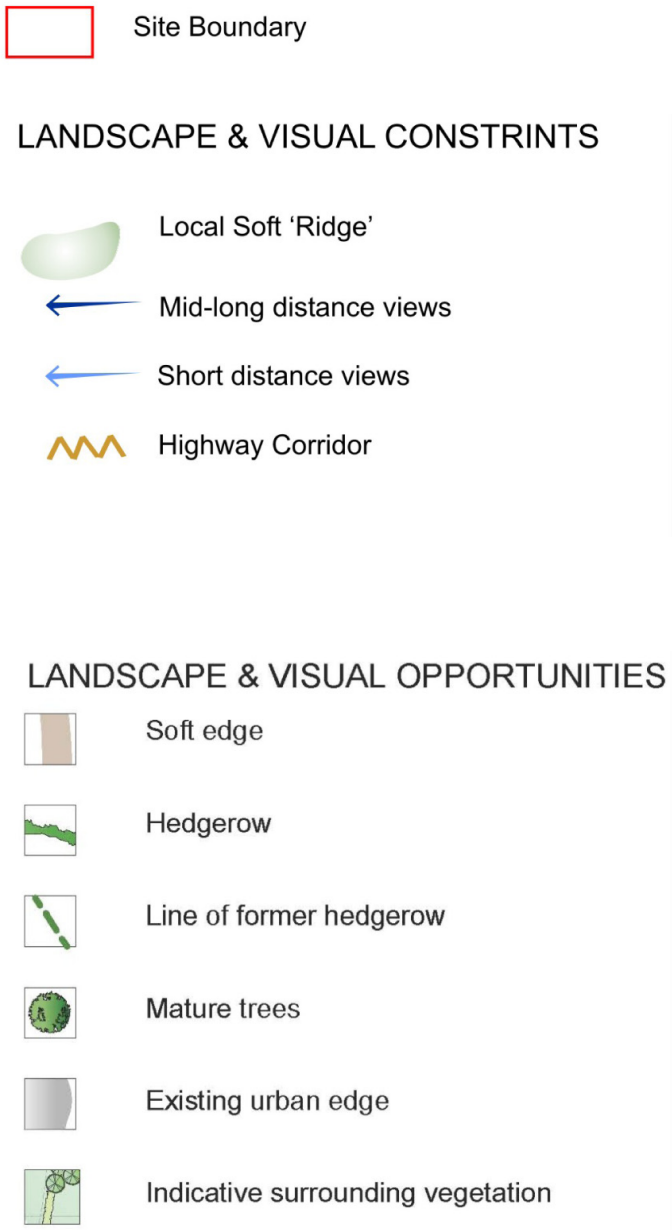
Opportunities

- Build a range of dwelling types to suit varied sized households and people of all ages and abilities (Masterplan Options Document);
- Create a locally distinctive development that is recognisable of Earl Shilton and influenced by the best examples of local architecture (Masterplan Options Document);
- Enhance the existing highway network and provide links and new access points into the town from the bypass (Masterplan Options Document);
- Create a network of interconnected streets and spaces that are easy to move around on foot, by bike and in the car (Masterplan Options Document);
- Retain and enhance existing routes, particularly where these could be used by pedestrians and cyclists to connect to Earl Shilton Town Centre, notably along Mill Lane (Masterplan Options Document);
- Incorporate existing landscape features such as trees and hedgerows within new developments to create a green infrastructure which has both ecological and amenity benefits and mitigate the visual impact of development (Masterplan Options Document);
- Make appropriate open space provision for children's play space, sports pitches and more informal open space (Masterplan Options Document);
- Provision of appropriate drainage measures which will form an integral part of the open space within the site;
- Exploit views across open land to the north, east and south.

Landscape Constraints and Opportunities



Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities



3.2 A landscape and visual appraisal has informed the concept masterplan and the following observations are made in landscape and visual terms:

- The alignment of the new Earl Shilton by-pass serves to 'sever' the site from the wider landscape to the east, as a residual piece of open land lying between the urban edge and the road;
- The slight is slightly domed in topographical terms, with land falling away to the north, east and south-east;
- Existing vegetation is limited to remnants of the original hedgerow infrastructure and the occasional hedgerow tree;
- The existing urban edge of Earl Shilton is quite 'soft', demonstrating a balance between built form and garden space and planting, but remains very evident in views towards it.

Constraints are considered to be as follows:

- The relative visual prominence of the site;
- The potential impact of the new by-pass, with specific reference to noise;

Opportunities are considered to be as follows:

- The existing hedgerow infrastructure, with the potential to both extend and diversify it;
- Mature trees that, although relatively few in number, create a strong presence in the landscape from day one;
- The existing urban edge/residential scale built form is a familiar feature in the local landscape;
- The new road corridor creates a well defined 'edge' in the landscape up to which development may logically extend.


Play
Residential
Play
Residential
Play