



LAND AT RUSHDEN ROAD
WYMINGTON

VISION DOCUMENT
SEPTEMBER 2021

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**BARTON
WILLMORE**

VISION

“An attractive well-connected residential development of high quality new homes, set within a strong landscape setting, with attractive public open space and new community benefits as part of the proposals, located to the south of Rushden.”



High Quality New Homes

The proposals will provide a high quality, sustainable new development with new high quality homes of a range of types and tenures to suit local housing need.



New and Enhanced Landscape

The existing framework of hedgerows and tree planting will be retained where possible and enhanced throughout the site and along site boundaries. These green features permeate through the development, creating green links, providing increased exposure to green spaces, enhancing health and wellbeing and helping the development to sit sensitively within its setting.



New Community Benefits

The development will retain the existing allotments and has the potential to expand local community benefits with the potential to extend existing allotments on the site, a new community orchard and will enhance accessibility and connectivity to local facilities.



Highly Accessible with Improvements to Local Connectivity

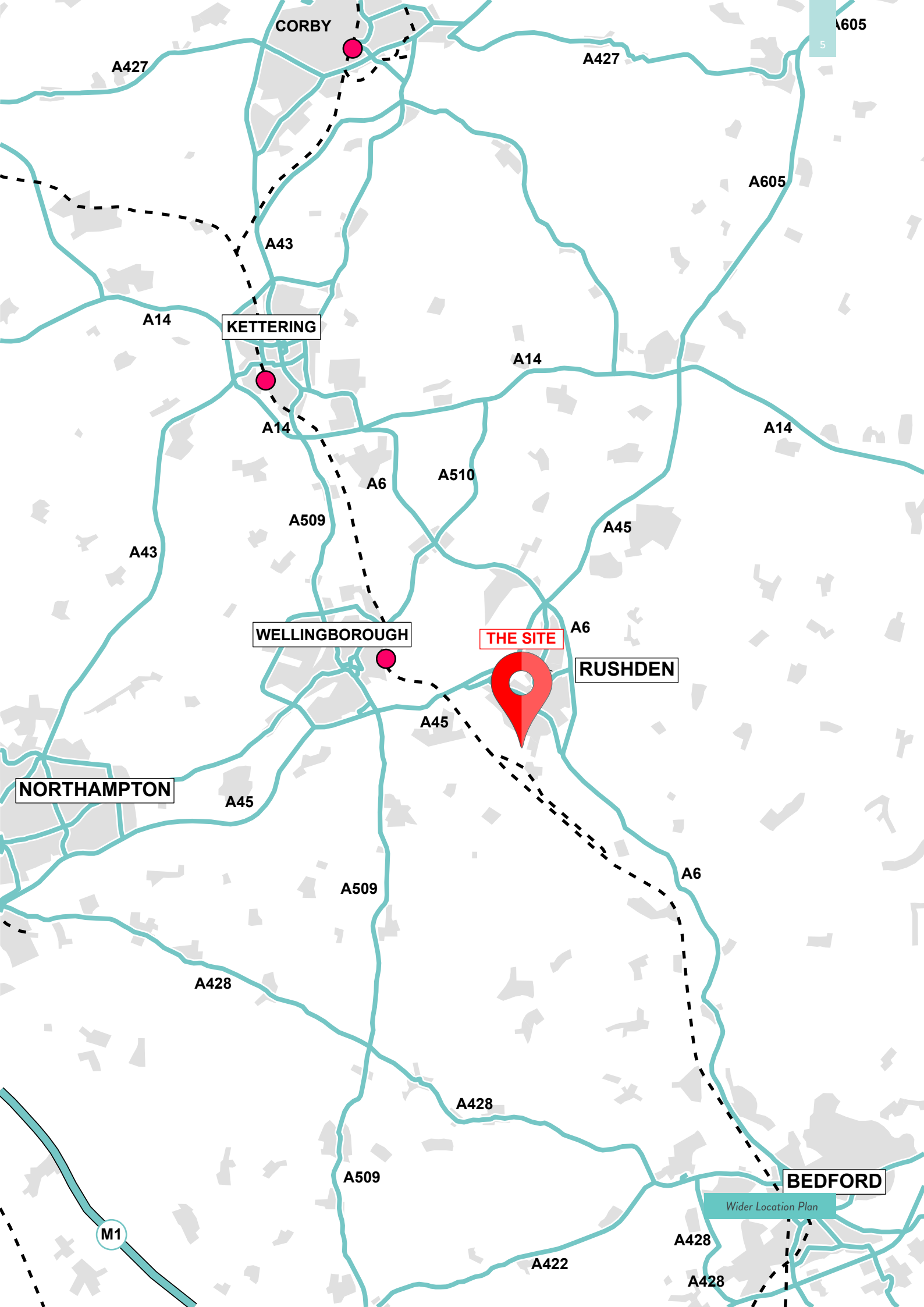
The development is well located for local facilities and public transport services as well as pedestrian and cycle routes. In addition to be well connected site, the development will improve local accessibility and connectivity by creating and enhancing pedestrian and cycle routes across the site, benefiting both the proposed and surrounding residential communities.

INTRODUCTION

This Vision Document has been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of IM Land who are working with the landowners to establish a Vision for the Land at Rushden Road, Wymington, 'the site'. The site measures approximately 30.8 hectares and consists of a number of agricultural fields and an area of existing allotments, located on the southern edge of Rushden, north of the village of Wymington.

— Site Boundary





CORBY

A605

A427

A427

A605

A43

A14

KETTERING

A14

A14

A14

A6

A510

A43

A509

A45

WELLINGBOROUGH

THE SITE

A6

RUSHDEN

A45

NORTHAMPTON

A45

A509

A6

A428

A428

A509

BEDFORD

Wider Location Plan

M1

A428

A422

A428

LOCAL CONTEXT

The site is located on the southern edge of Rushden, approximately 1 mile south of Rushden town centre, 12 miles east of Northampton and 17 miles north of Milton Keynes.

The site is bounded as follows:

- Immediately to the north of the site are existing properties in Rushden with a public right of way running along the site's northern boundary.
- To the east the site is bounded by residential development on Rushden Road as well as Rushden Road itself from which the site is also accessed.
- To the south the site is bounded by Green Lane with agricultural fields beyond and railway lines approximately 200m from the site boundary. The village of Wymington lies to the south east.
- To the west the site is bounded agricultural fields with an existing tree belt along some of the site boundary.

Facilities and Services

There are a number of facilities and services within walking distance of the site located in Rushden to the north. These facilities include the town centre, convenience stores, supermarkets, pubs, a number of primary schools, a post office and medical facilities. Additionally there is also a primary school and pubs in Wymington to the south.

The site is also within walking distance of a number of sports, recreational and community facilities including Hall Park, Rushden Skate Park and a number of sports clubs including golf and rugby clubs within close proximity of the site.

There are a number of primary schools in the local area, the closest being St Lawrence VA School in Wymington to the south and South End Junior School located in Rushden to the north.

Transport

Bus

The closest bus stops are located along Rushden Road, immediately adjacent to the site and eastern boundary, and along Grangeway to the north. All stops are noted as flag stops. Services 25 and 30 operate along Rushden Road with the 30 providing hourly services to Bedford and Kettering. Services 49 and X46 Gold operate along Grangeway with the 49 providing hourly services to Kettering.

Train

The closest railway station to the site is Wellingborough approximately 6.2 miles (a 16 minute drive or 34 minute cycle) to the north west of the site.

Wellingborough offers regular services to Corby via Kettering and London St. Pancras via Bedford and Luton Airport.

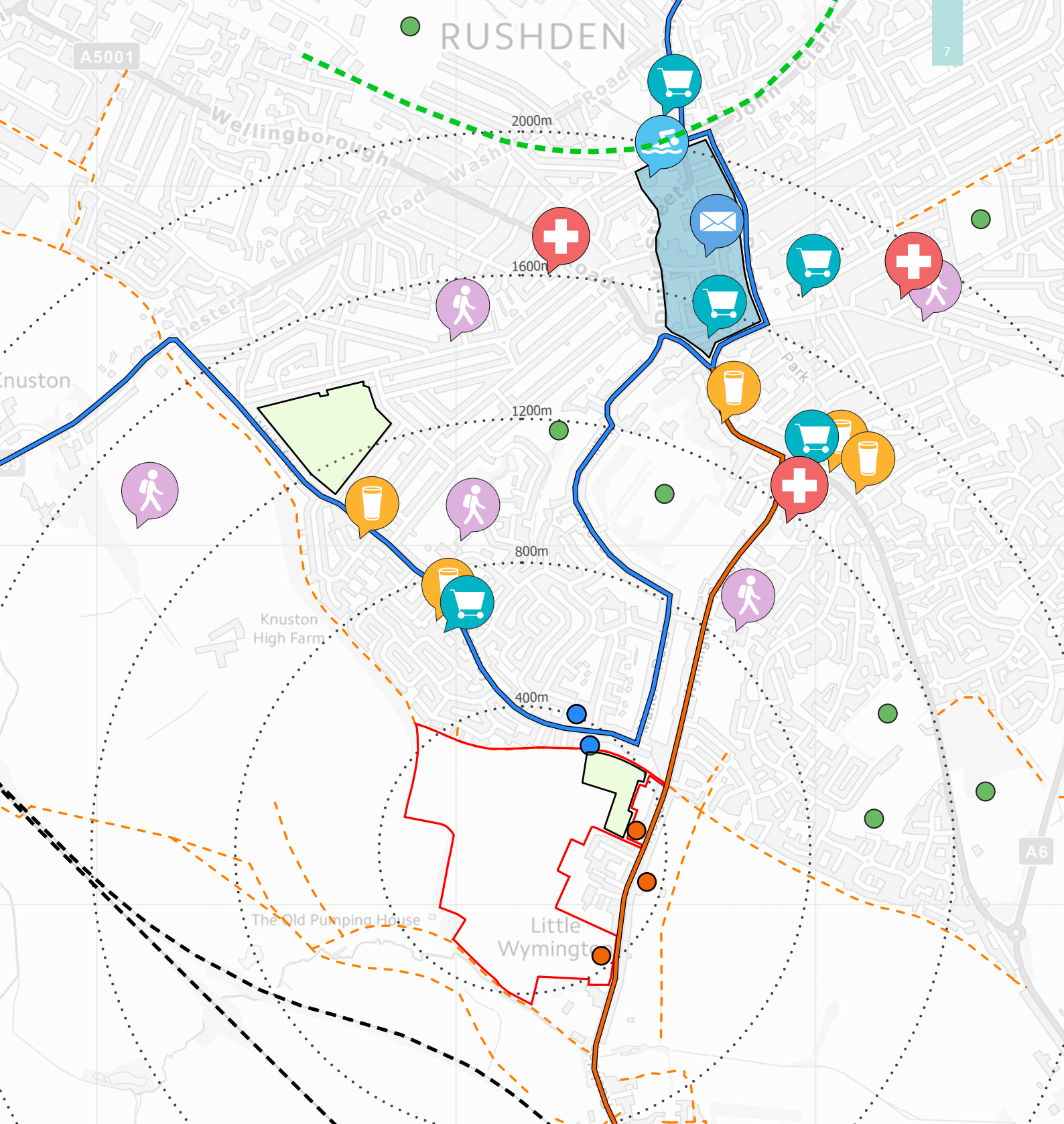
Walking/Cycling

There are a number of public rights of way (PRoW) running through and in close proximity to the site, including routes along the northern and southern boundaries. As part of our proposals we will retain and enhance the existing PRoWs on site for pedestrian and cycle usage whilst creating new routes, enhancing sustainable connections through the site to benefit local residents and provide improved accessibility to local facilities and the surrounding countryside.

Car

The site has direct access onto Rushden Road with nearby connections onto the A6 via Wymington and the A45 via Rushden. Connections from the A45 include the M1 and A1(M) via the A14, with onward connections into the wider strategic road network.

RUSHDEN



- Site boundary
- ➔ Site access
- Public rights of way
- Bus Route No. 49
- Nearby bus stops to site
- Bus Route No. 25
- Nearby bus stops to site
- ... 400m Walking distances
- Railway line
- Local centre
- Allotments
- Local green space and play areas
- Completed greenway project
- 🚶 Primary schools

- 🏊 Leisure pool
- + Parklands surgery
- ✉ Rushden post office
- 🍷 Pubs, restaurants and takeaways
- 🛒 Supermarkets/food shops

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Current Development Plan

Bedford Local Plan (2002)

The Local Plan 2002 was adopted on 20th October 2012 and covers the period up to 2006.

A number of the policies are saved, however, none of the saved policies are considered relevant to this Site.

Allocations and Designations Local Plan (2013)

The Allocations and Designations Local Plan was adopted on 17th July 2013 and covers the period 2001 to 2021. A number of policies have been saved following the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 and those relevant to this Site are as follows:

- Policy AD1 – Sustainable Development Policy;
- Policy AD28 – Provision of Open Space and Built Facilities in Association with New Development;
- Policy AD39 – Cycling; and
- Policy AD40 – Village Open Spaces and Views.

Policy AD40 (Village Open Spaces and Views) sets out that “development will not be permitted on land designated as a village open space or view unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for designation are not compromised or that other material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space or View undeveloped”. It is considered that this policy is outdated.

Local Plan 2030

The Bedford Borough Local Plan was adopted on 15th January 2020 and covers the period from 2015 to 2030.

The Inspector’s Report (dated December 2019) set out the requirement for a review of the plan and any update of it/new plan to be submitted for examination within three years of adoption of the current plan. This is due to the need for the plan to respond appropriately to longer term requirements, and in particular the proposed ‘Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Arc’.

Emerging Planning Policy

Local Plan Review

The Review of the Local Plan is currently being progressed and will extend the plan period to 2040.

The latest stage of consultation on the 'Strategy Options and Draft Policies' is ongoing and focuses on the following key policy areas:

- Development Strategy to 2040 and delivery of growth in order to meet national policy requirements;
- Town centre and retail policies in order to support a more flexible future for our centres;
- Updated development management policies (those used to help make decisions on planning applications) to do with Environmental net gain;
- Quality of development and residential space standards; and
- Self-build and custom homebuilding.

In respect of housing provision, an increased figure is being targeted (the previous Plan was assessed under the transitional arrangements) with an additional 305 dwellings per annum required. Over the plan period, in total, the Council will need to allocate land to enable a minimum of 25,500 dwellings to be delivered (20 x 1,275). Current commitments amount to around 13,000 dwellings which means that land to accommodate in the region of 12,500 dwellings must be allocated as part of the Local Plan Review.

With regards to spatial strategy, there are four options to be evaluated, however, all of the options set out that approximately 1,500 dwellings will be located within the urban area and approximately 1,500 dwellings will be located adjoining the urban area. The urban area is defined as the extent of Bedford. Other options for the location of housing include key transport corridors and potential new settlements, however, the Site is not located within or nearby to any of these locations.

The National Planning Policy Framework

The Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Paragraph 11 identifies that plans should identify a presumption in favour of sustainable development and therefore strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring authorities.

Section 5 of the Revised NPPF (Paragraphs 60-80) seeks to deliver a sufficient supply of homes. Paragraph 60 identifies that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

Furthermore, Paragraph 73 highlights that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by necessary infrastructure and facilities.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The Opportunities and Constraints Plan opposite demonstrates a number of key opportunities and constraints on the site, also summarised as follows:

Opportunities

- There is potential for vehicular access from Rushden Road to the east of the site.
- A network of Public Rights of Way weave around the site, with two routes running along the site boundaries with the opportunity to link these and create new routes across the site as part of the development.
- The site is within close proximity of local bus services and a range of facilities and services in Rushden and Wymington.
- The retention of the existing allotments and an opportunity to extend them further in the north east area of the site to create further community benefit.
- There are a number of hedgerows and trees within the site and along the site boundaries which should be retained and enhanced where possible.
- The existing site topography can be used to create a sustainable drainage strategy.
- The site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, making it suitable for development.

Constraints

- There are a number of overhead cables running across the site. Consideration will be given to undergrounding these.
- There are water mains running along the northern boundary and across the northern part of the site. These will be considered in the design proposals.
- There are foul water sewers running along the eastern boundary of the site and across the eastern part of the site. These will be considered in the design proposals.
- There are existing dwellings adjacent to the site to the north and west which will need to be considered and responded to appropriately.
- A listed building is located approximately 300m from the site boundary and is not affected by potential development on the site.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Public rights of way
- Overhead lines and towers
- Railway
- Adjacent properties to site
- Bus route no. 49
- Route 49 bus stops
- Bus route no. 25
- Route 25 bus stops
- Public green spaces
- Schools
- ★ Listed buildings
- ★ Existing trees and hedgerows on site
- Clean Water Pipe (4m easement either side)
- Foul Sewer (3m easement either side)
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Allotments
- Traditional orchards



TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

These inputs represent a summary of some technical constraints and opportunities which have been investigated by a range of consultants. Further information with regards to each of these areas can be found in their respective reports.

Archaeology

Online resources (heritagegateway.org.uk, Historic England and historic mapping) suggest that the area surrounding the Site has been occupied since at least the Iron Age/Romano British period, although the earliest nearby finds are two Neolithic flint implements.

Medieval pottery has been found in the centre of Wymington approximately 250m to the south of the Site, and a limekiln and sand pits are shown on late 19th century mapping a similar distance to the west of the Site. Two small rectangular structures are shown within the southern part of the Site on the 1900 Ordnance Survey map. Although they are not labelled, they were likely farm buildings such as small barns.

With appropriate monitoring and evaluation work prior to any planning application, the Site would be suitable for development from an archaeological perspective.

Ecology

A desk-based review of the Site suggests that the majority of the habitat comprises arable field, which is likely to be of relatively low ecological value. The Site does also include an area of allotments, with hedgerows across the Site and along the boundaries, and patches of woodland to the immediate west and south.

The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA) is located within 5km of the Site, to the north west. The Site falls within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the gravel pits, with the proposed development type (residential) included in one of the risk categories. Whilst this may require further assessment, it is noted that there is a significant transport network between the Site and the gravel pits, with the settlement of Rushden located in between.

The Site is likely to provide opportunities for common foraging and commuting bat species; however, this would largely be restricted to wooded Site boundaries and hedgerows. Similarly, roosting opportunities may be present within semi-mature to mature trees. If trees with a potential to support roosting bats are retained and protected, and dark corridors are maintained along wooded Site boundaries, then foraging, commuting, and roosting bats are unlikely to be affected by development on the Site.

The requirement for a mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10% will be accommodated as part of the development proposals for the site.

The Site is presently arable land and of relatively low ecological value and therefore 10% net biodiversity gain is achievable, and there are therefore no constraints to development from an ecological perspective that could not be adequately mitigated or compensated.

Highways and Accessibility

Local Highway Network

Rushden Road forms the eastern boundary to the site and runs north to south past the site. To the north Rushden Road becomes Wymington Road which in turn forms T-junction with High Street. To the south Rushden Road provides access to the village of Wymington and forms a T-junction with Podington Road/High Street.

Adjacent to the site Rushden Road is approximately 5.5m wide with a footway on both sides of the road. Street lighting is present and the road is subject to a 30mph speed limit. On street parking is noted along parts of Rushden Road/ Wymington Road although adjacent to the site the majority of existing properties have off road parking provision.

Pedestrians and Cyclists

Footways are present along Rushden Road which provide access north and south of the site. To the north of the site the footway connects into the urban area of Rushden and to the south Wymington Village. In addition to the footways along Rushden Road, Public Rights of Way are noted along Green Lane to the south and along the northern site boundary and this route provides access to the west and other areas of Rushden. Connections from northern Public Right of Way are available into the existing residential network including onto Redding Close and Carlton Close.

These connections provide access to a wide variety of amenities and facilities. Within acceptable walking distance of the site the following facilities are noted:

- Grangeway local centre including Co-op food and various takeaways
- Whitefriars Primary School
- South End Infant and Junior School
- Parklands Surgery

- Hall Park
- Allotments
- The New Inn Pub
- St Lawrence Primary School

Cycling in and around the local environment is considered to be safe and convenient due to the prevailing speed limits and generally low levels of traffic.

Access and Movement

Primary access will be taken from Rushden Road through the provision of a suitable junction type to serve the development. This will take the form of a T-junction with right turn lane or a roundabout. In this location approximately 140m of highway frontage is available and suitable junction geometries and visibility splays can be achieved based on the 30mph speed limit.

Other access opportunities exist from the following locations:

- 2 existing tracks serving the allotments
- Redding Close and Carlton Close
- Green Lane

As a minimum all these routes provide opportunities for pedestrian, cycle and emergency access provision into the site but wider opportunities to serve the site from these locations will be explored. Enhancements and improvements to these routes will be facilitated as part of the proposals to aid connectivity through the site and into the existing area ensuring high quality access to available facilities and amenities.

Bus service provision will need to be enhanced and if required incorporated into the development proposals. Discussions will take place with the highway authority and local public transport operators in due course and suitable contributions will be made available to ensure the delivery of a sustainable service.

Capacity analysis of local junctions will be undertaken for the morning and evening peak hours as part of a future Transport Assessment that will accompany any eventual planning application. At this stage the following matters would be considered in detail:

- On street parking along Rushden Road
- Impacts within Wymington village
- Operation of Wymington Lane/A6 junction and Wymington Road/High Street South junction

Flood Risk

The site is greenfield comprising mainly of farming land.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of fluvial and tidal flooding). Surface water flood risks are noted within the site following the north to south topography. Overland flows routes will be maintained and the drainage proposals for the development will improve the management of these flows. Appropriate Finished Flood Levels applied on nearby dwellings.

No watercourses or ditches are noted within the site area. A watercourse is noted on the southern side of Green Lane and flood zones are associated with this watercourse although they don't encroach into the site area.

No other sources of flood risk are identified at the site.

Drainage Strategy

Surface Water

It is proposed that surface water runoff from the development will be restricted to pre-development (greenfield) runoff rates up to the 1 in 200 year storm even on the basis the site is located within the River Nene catchment.

Local geology maps show the site comprises Limestone with superficial deposits of Diamicton. At this stage it is considered unlikely traditional soakaways would be feasible. Surface water flows will therefore be accommodated in detention basins located in the lowest part of the site adjacent to Green Lane. The basins will discharge to the existing watercourse.

At this stage it is estimated 7,000m³ of storage will be required.

Sustainable drainage systems will be used throughout the development to provide amenity and biodiversity improvements as well as mitigate against any pollution risk from development generated surface water entering the existing water course systems.

All connections will be subject to agreement with the Lead Local Flood Authority

Foul Water

A public foul water sewer is located within the southern part of the site and so it is envisaged foul flows will discharge to this sewer via a gravity connection. All connections will be subject to agreement with Anglian Water.

Utilities

Water mains, overhead electricity cables, foul sewer and rising main are located within the development areas. This apparatus will be accommodated with appropriate easements and/or diverted as required. It is not anticipated that there any utility constraints (capacity and diversions) which will stand as a barrier to the allocation of this development site.

Landscape

From a landscape perspective, a suggested recommendation would be to locate proposed built form away from the western and southern parts of the Site, concentrating built form against the existing settlement edges of Rushden and Little Wymington. This is in order to minimise visual encroachment upon the rural landscape of the valley slopes towards the west of the Site, which are visible from PRoW within the wider rural landscape. This will help to minimise the change in views experienced from these PRoW since the settlement edges of Rushden and Little Wymington are already visible on the skyline here, such that additional residential built form in this part of the Site would have a lesser effect on views here than it would nearer to the western boundary of the Site.

The existing vegetation along much of the western and south-western Site boundary would limit the influence of the development on users of the PRoW to the south and west of the Site, though all boundaries of the Site should be reinforced with vegetation where possible, to strengthen screening effects on glimpsed views from these PRoW and from Rushden Road. This reinforcement of the boundary vegetation would also help to filter and soften views of the development from residences on the settlement edges of Rushden and Little Wymington, as well as from the railway to the south-west.

The elevated north-western parts of the Site should be proposed as open green space to limit the effects of the proposals, since these areas have some of the greatest existing intervisibility with the landscape to the south and west of the Site. Buffer vegetation should also be considered internally to the Site here, in order to further soften and filter views of the development.

There are several existing points of access between the footpath within the Site and the residential area immediately to the north. Where possible, these access points should be kept relatively open by aligning them with the development's circulation routes and allowing space for planting that will channel views through the development and towards the wider landscape, with clear and legible pedestrian routes from these access points through the development to the rural landscape beyond.

The southernmost parts of the Site should be proposed as open green space with vegetated buffers to the north and south, in order to retain the perception of enclosure and remoteness experienced by users of the PRoW along Green Lane and to minimise the effects of the development on enjoyment of this footpath.

The existing hedgerow between the two arable fields of the Site provides an opportunity to include a strong east/west vegetated buffer that will further soften and filter views of the development within the northern parts of the Site, as well as reinforcing the historic field pattern and providing additional substantial biodiversity enhancements.

Due to the elevated topography of the northern parts of the Site and its open character, the aim of concentrating development towards the settlement edge, with the roofline where possible avoiding breaching the existing rooflines on the southern edge of Rushden, would ensure that the Proposed Development would not be perceived to encroach extensively upon the wider landscape and would not result in an unacceptable level of harm to the character and appearance of the edges of Rushden and Little Wymington and the surrounding landscape.

Heritage

Five designated heritage assets have been identified within a 750m radius of the Site:

- Parish Church of St Lawrence, Wymington (Grade I)
- Manor Farm, Wymington (Grade II)
- Poplar Farm, Wymington (Grade II)
- Nos. 5 and 7 Church Lane, Wymington (Grade II)
- Knuston High Farm and attached Barn (Grade II)

Knuston Hall lies over 1km from the Site to the north west and given the intervening distance and natural environment is unlikely to be affected by the development of the Site. Bedford Borough Council and East Northamptonshire Council do not currently have an adopted “Local List” of non-designated heritage assets. An online search of the Historic Environment Record for both boroughs did not identify any potential non-designated heritage assets within the Site itself but does record a number of archaeological find spots and buildings within the wider vicinity of the Site, including historic buildings within Wymington.

















The four designated heritage assets within Wymington are located within its historic core over 400m from the Site. The heritage significance of these assets is derived from their architectural and historic interest as part of the 17th century development of the village, utilising local building materials. The surroundings of these listed buildings have changed significantly over the years due to the expansion of the village from the 1870s to the present day as the shoe industry in nearby Rushden developed. Whilst historically, these buildings formed a coherent group with other buildings in the village (as identified by the HER) they now provide evidential value of the post medieval development of Wymington. The Site does not contribute to their significance other than forming part of the intervening landscape surrounding the village.

Knuston High Farm lies 575m to the west of the Site. Its significance is derived from its architectural and historic interest as a farmstead historically associated with Knuston Hall. The farmhouse was constructed in the mid-18th to early 19th century which coincides with a change in ownership of the Knuston Hall estate. The Site is in the most part, physically and visually separate from the farmstead as a result of the topography of the land and intervening mature planting, however views may be gained from limited viewpoints along the public rights of way. Historic research has found no associative or historic link between the Site or the farmstead. As such, the Site is considered to make no contribution to the heritage significance of the farm and instead forms part of its wider landscape, within which residential development forms the backdrop to views to the north and northeast of the farmstead. The development of the Site would bring residential development closer to Knuston High Farm, however as the concept layout shows mitigation can be designed into the scheme to reduce any perceived heritage impact.

CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

The initial concept masterplan for the site is presented opposite. A summary of the design principles and development benefits is listed below:

- The proposals will be able to deliver approximately 13.1 ha of residential development, creating new homes across the site including a proportion of affordable homes.
- The proposed development retains and enhances existing hedgerows and planting across the site and along site boundaries. This includes extensive new screening planting along the development edge.
- An integrated sustainable drainage strategy utilises the existing site topography to inform the positioning of new attenuation ponds along the southern edge of the site.
- A clear street hierarchy provides a highly legible development. Access is from Rushden Road with a clearly defined primary route create a loop road through the development.
- As part of the proposals we will retain and enhance all existing PRoWs running through the site and link into the adjacent movement network in the wider context.
- The retention of the existing allotments and the potential to expand existing allotments in the north east area of the site to add to the current provision and create additional benefit for the local community.
- There is potential to utilise open space along the southern and western edges of the site to create new community benefits, including a potential new community orchard.

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
|  | Site boundary |
|  | Proposed primary access |
|  | Public rights of way |
|  | Proposed new pedestrian/cycle link |
|  | Proposed primary route |
|  | Proposed residential development |
|  | Proposed attenuation areas |
|  | Proposed central green spaces |
|  | Proposed community orchard |
|  | Existing allotments |
|  | Proposed allotment extension |
|  | Existing landscaping |
|  | Proposed landscaping |
|  | Proposed low-level landscaping |
|  | Proposed infrastructure |
|  | Proposed public open space |

RUSHDEN



Sylmond Gardens

Grangeway

Oxford Street

Rushden Road

Mill Est

Concept Masterplan

WYMINGTON

DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS SUMMARY

The proposed development will create a sustainable residential community as part of a development which responds to the local context and character. Potential site constraints have been mitigated where necessary, with the opportunities posed by the site maximised.

The development will deliver an attractive well-connected residential development of high quality new homes, set within a unique strong landscape setting, with attractive public open space located to the south of Rushden. The development also has the potential to deliver a number of new community benefits and will enhance accessibility and connectivity in the local area.



High Quality New Homes

The proposals will create a high quality, sustainable new development with new high quality homes of a range of types and tenures to suit local housing need.



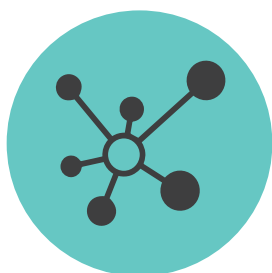
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The development will retain the existing allotments and has the potential to expand local community benefits with the potential to extend existing allotments on the site, a new community orchard and will enhance accessibility and connectivity to local facilities.



Highly Accessible with Improvements to Local Connectivity

The development is well located for local facilities and public transport services as well as pedestrian and cycle routes. In addition to being a well connected site, the development will improve local accessibility and connectivity by creating and enhancing pedestrian and cycle routes across the site, benefiting both the proposed and surrounding residential communities.

