



Land at Gibraltar Corner,
Wootton Road, Bedfordshire

Vision Document

July 2022

Carter Jonas

Contents

Vision and Key Principles

1.0 Introduction	8
1.1 Purpose of the Document	8
2.0 Planning	10
2.1 Planning Background	12
2.2 Emerging Planning Policy	14
3.0 Site & Context	16
3.1 The Site	18
3.2 Accessibility	20
3.3 Community facilities	22
4.0 Technical	24
4.1 Considerations	26
5.0 Design	28
5.1 Design Rationale	30
5.2 High Level Concept	32
5.3 Conclusions and Recommendations	34

Appendices

List of Figures

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This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2000.



Carter Jonas

Vision Document: Wootton, Bedford

Vision



Our vision is for the Site to support the sustainable growth of Gibraltar Corner and Wootton in offering homes for new residents and opportunities for existing residents to relocate.

The Site will deliver a range of types and tenures to cater for all and create a mixed and balanced community. The development will be designed to reflect the architectural character, massing and form of the existing Gibraltar Corner townscape, including the use of locally distinctive materials, ensuring that the visual setting of the settlement is protected.

We envisage that the site can form an integral part of the draft housing allocation for Gibraltar Corner as part of the emerging draft Local Plan.



Key Principles

- 1. Integration** - ability to form part of the wider draft housing allocation at Gibraltar Corner.
- 2. Clear Identity** - A distinctive local identity which takes character clues from Gibraltar Corner.
- 3. Sustainable Scale** - Creation of a neighbourhood which can harbour close knit communities.
- 4. Well Designed Place** - A sustainable extension to Gibraltar Corner, with provision of community-focussed open space on site and direct access to an expansive network of open spaces.
- 5. Great Homes** - Provision for new homes, which will be across a range of types, sizes and tenures. Committing to this diversity of dwelling types can assist with creating a mixed and balanced community.
- 6. Accessibility** - Ensuring accessibility for all is at the heart of the masterplan. Integrating pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to streets and open spaces, to encourage more active lifestyles and reduce the reliance on the private car.



Fig 01: Vision precedent imagery

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document



Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

This vision document has been prepared by Carter Jonas LLP on behalf of London Square Developments promote land at Wootton, Bedford as a sustainable and logical residential extension to Bedford which can logically complement the wider draft allocation HOU13 which the Council is seeking to make at Gibraltar Corner.

The document will:

- Illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal and explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied.
- Introduce the illustrative masterplan and explain the rationale behind its development.
- Set out high level vision and broad design principles.
- Justify and confirm why the Site is available, suitable and deliverable and should be considered for development.
- Enable positive engagement with Bedford Borough Council and the Local Plan 2040 examination process.



Fig 02: Local landmarks and facilities (top to bottom); LIDL store on the western edge of Bedford; Kempstone Rural Primary School to the east; St Mary's Church in Wootton to the south.

2.0 Planning

- 2.1 Planning Background
- 2.2 Emerging Planning Policy



2.1 Planning Background

The Site is located in a residential area known as Gibraltar Corner that is located between Wootton and Kempston. Wootton is located 1 mile to the south (approximately a 3-minute drive) and Kempston is 1.6 miles to the northeast (approximately a 5-minute drive). Kempston High Street lies northeast of the Site and is defined as a District Centre within the Core Strategy. The majority of services are located here including a Sainsbury's and Tesco, as well as Lidl which is the closest to the Site at Bridge Road (approximately a 3-minute drive away). The nearest 'key service area' is Wootton which contains two small convenience stores, a post office, village hall, two public houses, both an Upper and Lower school, a library and a medical centre.

The relevant development plan documents include the Local Plan (adopted 15 January 2020); Saved Local Plan 2002 Policies (adopted 2002); and the Allocations and

Designations Local Plan (adopted 2013). Whilst Bedford Borough Council only adopted their new Local Plan in 2020 the Council is committed to an early review of the Local Plan which is now underway. This Vision is being prepared to support the landowner's objective of achieving a draft allocation on this site for residential development.

The Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan 2040. Certain policies will be superseded and others will be saved. The policies which are expected to remain relevant to this site are adopted policy 36S Forest of Marston Vale (this expects new development to be accompanied by 30% tree cover) and adopted policy AD42 Local Gaps which seeks to maintain visual and physical gaps between settlements.



Fig 03: Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2040

2.2 Emerging Planning Policy

Development Plan

The adopted Local Plan does not identify any land for development in Gibraltar Corner. However the emerging draft Local Plan 2040 identifies a large potential allocation at draft Policy HOU13. This seeks the following: Policy HOU13 Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural "Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural will be developed for a mix of residential uses and open space including the delivery of strategic green infrastructure improvements". Key principles of development include:

- i A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community. This document will accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework and will be prepared in advance of the submission of a planning application and will pay particular regard to ensuring that the development is designed to preserve the setting of heritage assets;
- ii Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii Submission of a Transport Assessment;
- iv Measures to facilitate access by bus services across the site including a shuttle bus connecting the site with Kempston Hardwick and Wixams railway stations and the provision of a mobility hub;
- v Provision of a pedestrian cycleway between the site, Kempston and surrounding green infrastructure and NCN 51;
- vi Provision of a 2.4ha serviced site to

- accommodate a 2FE Primary school to include early years' provision;
- viii Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;
- viii Delivery of improvements to the green infrastructure network;
- ix Masterplan to ensure development is designed to preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by setting including for:
 - Grade II listed The Cottage,
 - Grade II Kempston House,
 - Grade II Ramsay Cottage,
 - Grade II 157 Bedford Road, and
 - Listed buildings in and around Keeley Green;
- x Include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary for heritage assets listed under ix;
- xi Pre-determination archaeological evaluation for the parts of the site to be developed; xii. Areas of ridge and furrow earthworks to be protected during construction;
- xii The developable area shall be located within Flood Zone 1;
- xiii Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access and may include areas of wet woodland;
- xiv Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- xv Provision of land to facilitate the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park to the east of Gibraltar Corner;

xvi Provision of a public car parking area to provide parking for local residents and visitors, including those to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park, Forest of Marston Vale, walking and cycling routes. The proposed car park shall be designed and located to minimise disturbance to the best preserved sections of ridge and furrow earthworks in this area;

xvii A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified and could consider the ability of the Waterway Park to assist with flood mitigation;

xviii Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;

xix Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure”.

This site is referred to as site no. 2410 in the Council's evidence base.

The draft allocation envisages c. 250 dwellings on the potential development area surrounding the site and we demonstrate in this vision that we are able to deliver a further 38 dwellings on site 2410 and that we are able to satisfy all the relevant criteria associated with draft Policy HOU13. Therefore, is our view that the subject site would be an obvious addition to this draft allocation.

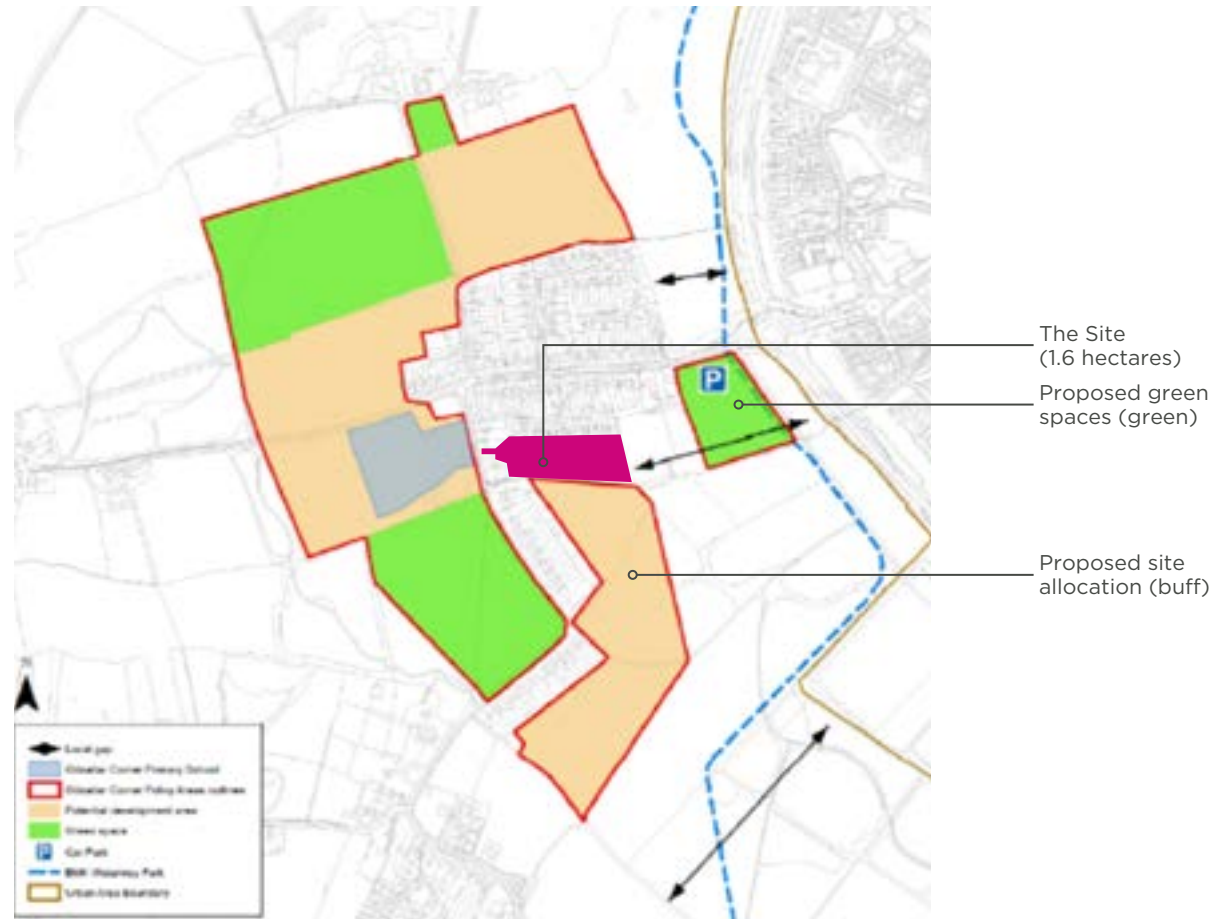


Fig 04: Extract from the Bedford Borough Council “LOCAL PLAN 2040 PLAN FOR SUBMISSION (April 2022)”.

3.0 Context

- 3.1 The Site
- 3.2 Accessibility
- 3.3 Community Facilities



3.1 The Site

Description of the Site

The preceding section set out the high level position of the Site relative surrounding villages. Here provide further detail which has helped inform the high level concept.

The Site is located east of Wootton Road and south of homes fronting The Chase.

The Site is 1.67 Hectares in size and comprises mostly of a grouping of trees at the westerly end of the Site and overgrown ground cover elsewhere. A field drain runs along the southerly boundary of the Site with trees & hedgerows along the easterly boundary. Existing, low-rise residential properties are located to the immediate north and west. Properties to the north are accessed via The Chase (itself accessed from The Ridge) and the two homes to the immediate west are accessed via Wootton Road.

The Site is relatively flat in terms of topography though does generally drain to the existing field drain along the southern boundary of the Site. The existing site access is from Wootton Road, via an existing track running between 11 and 15 Wootton Road. Farm buildings of Brook Farm are located immediately opposite the existing entrance from Wootton Road. Wootton Road itself connects the small settlement known as Gibraltar Corner to the village of Wootton located approximately 700m south by road.

LEGEND






-  Site boundary (1.67Ha)
-  Grazing / pasture
-  Existing built form
-  Existing highway
-  Existing trees / vegetation



Fig 05: Site location plan





3.2 Accessibility

The Site is located in between existing development within Gibraltar Corner and is nestled in between Ridge Road and Wootton Road. Gibraltar Corner itself is located between the Kempston neighbourhood of Bedford and the village of Wootton (and Keeley Green, which is located at the northeast corner of Wootton).

Ridge Road, which runs east-west through Gibraltar Corner, connects the site to Kempston (first crossing the A6) and then north-eastward to the rest of Bedford. The A6 is almost on the door step of Gibraltar Corner and provides easy links to the A421, A428, and beyond towards Rushden, Luton and many other settlements in Bedfordshire. Hence the Site is very well connected, providing ease of movement between local villages and facilities.

Bedford Rail Station has regular direct services into London Kings Cross St Pancras via Luton in just 42 minutes.

LEGEND

-  Site Location
-  Railway line and station
-  Motorways
-  A Roads

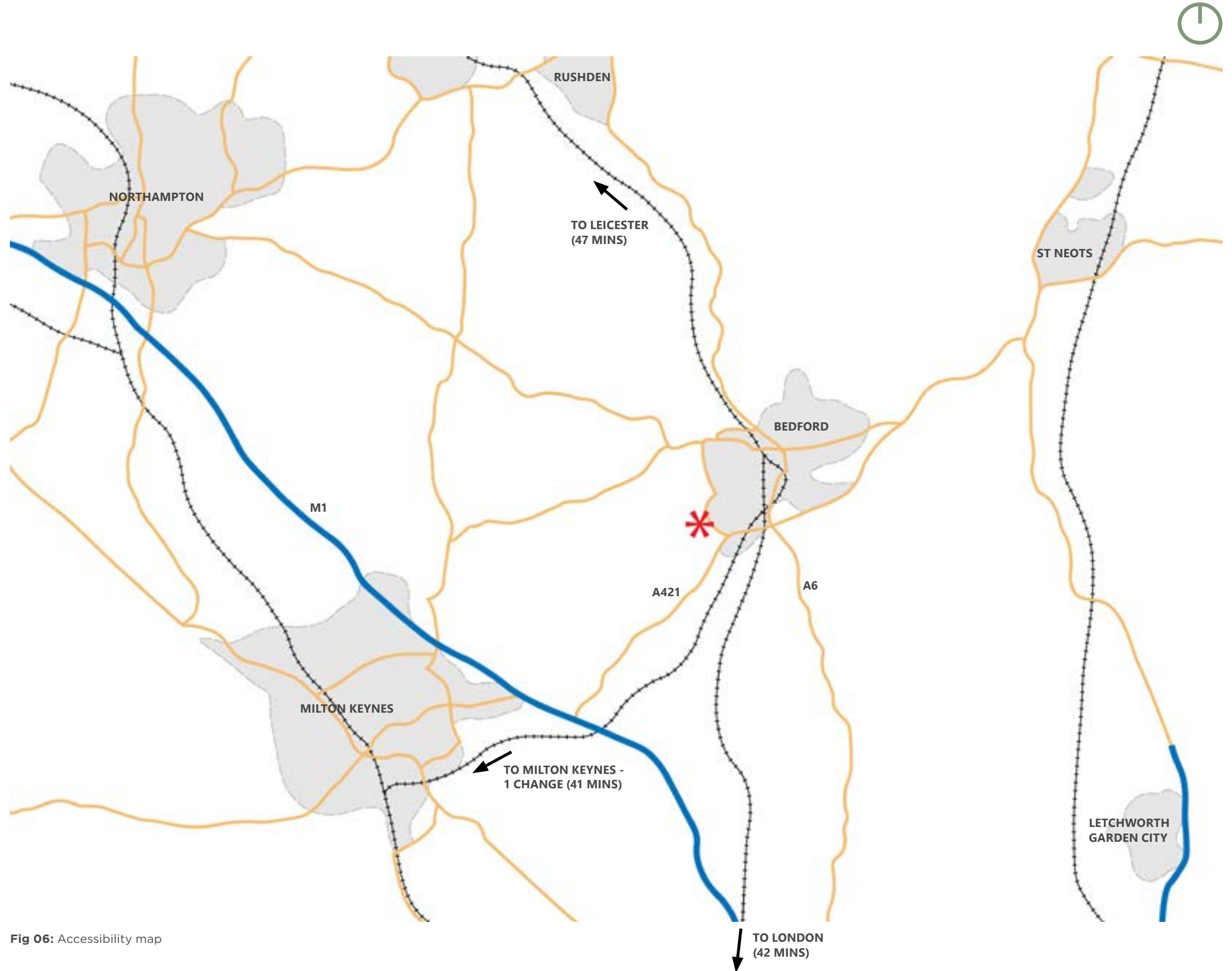


Fig 06: Accessibility map

3.3 Community Facilities










Gibraltar Corner is well served by a range of community facilities, notwithstanding there are no existing facilities within the immediate boundaries of the settlement there are several facilities within a short drive/cycle ride.

Key local facilities shown in Fig. 07 are as follows:

- Kempston Rural Primary School (0.4 miles) 9 minute walk
- Ridgeway School (0.8 miles) 16 minute walk
- Bizzy Bees Pre-School (0.9 miles) 17 minute walk
- Lidl (0.6 miles) 12 minute walk
- Co-op Food (1.2 miles) 25 minute walk
- Sainsburys (1.4 miles) 28 minute walk
- Premier Store (0.9 miles) 21 minute walk
- Kempston Hammers Sports & Social Club (0.8 miles) 16 minute walk
- Great Denham Playground & Park (2.1 miles) 26 minute walk
- All Saints Church (1.0 miles) 20 minute walk
- Kempston Post Office (1.3 miles) 27 minute walk
- The Cross Keys Country Bar & Restaurant (0.6 miles) 13 minute walk
- The Legstraps Village Pub (0.8 miles)

Gibraltar Corner is also served by local bus routes C1 (Cranfield to Bedford) and 53 (Wootton to Bedford).

LEGEND

-  Site area
-  Primary road
-  Local road
-  Rail
-  River
-  Retail
-  Places of worship
-  Pubs/restaurants/hotels
-  Schools
-  University
-  Places of interest
-  Sports and leisure
-  Golf

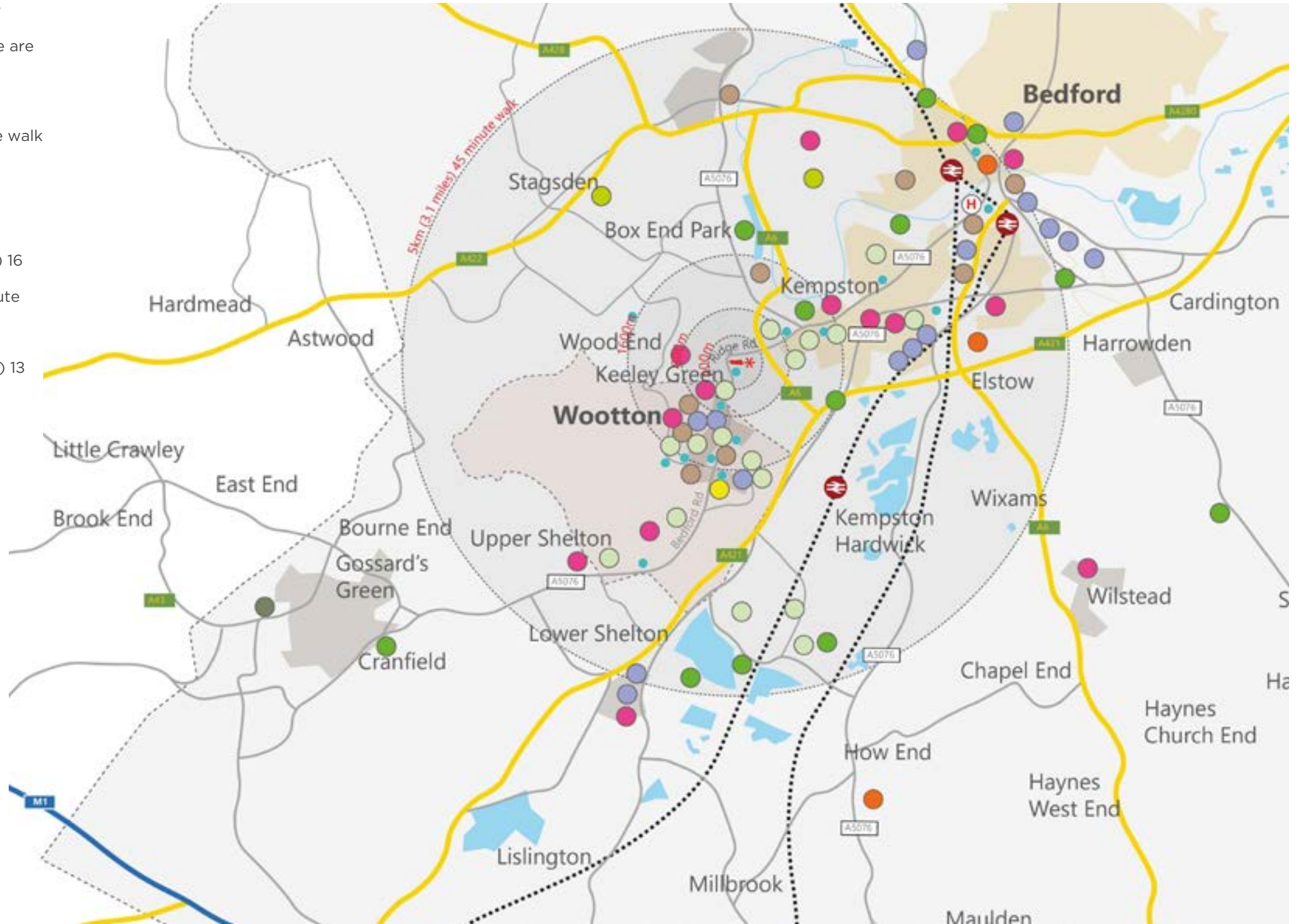


Fig 07: Community facilities

4.0 Technical

4.1 Considerations



4.1 Considerations

The plan opposite illustrates the key considerations identified through the contextual and technical analysis of the Site explained within Chapters 2.0 and 3.0 of this document, including:

- 1 The site slopes broadly from north to south
- 2 Access is via an existing farmers access off Wootton Road to the west
- 3 There is some vegetation within the site areas including trees and low level scrub vegetation
- 4 Housing to the north along The Chase backs directly onto the site
- 5 The south-eastern corner of the site lies within EA Flood Zone 2 and 3
- 6 The site directly to the south forms part of the draft Local Plan allocation HOU13.

LEGEND

Existing Features







-  Site boundary (1.67Ha)
-  Grazing / pasture
-  Existing built form
-  Existing highway
-  Existing trees / vegetation
-  Direction of level change
-  High point
-  Low point
-  Existing access off Wootton Road
-  Land drain / watercourse
-  Sensitive boundary
-  EA Flood Zone 2 and 3



Fig 08: Considerations plan

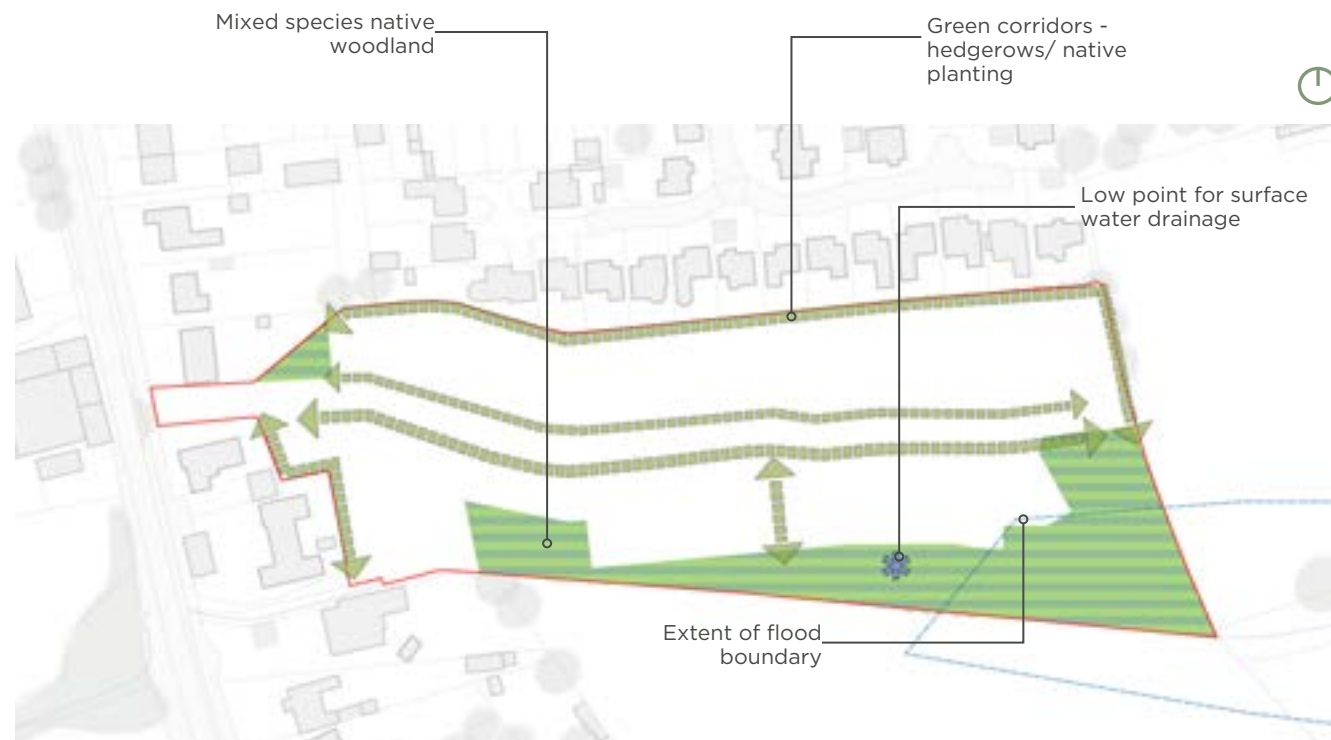
5.0 Design

- 5.1 Design Rationale
- 5.2 High Level Concept
- 5.3 Conclusion and Recommendations



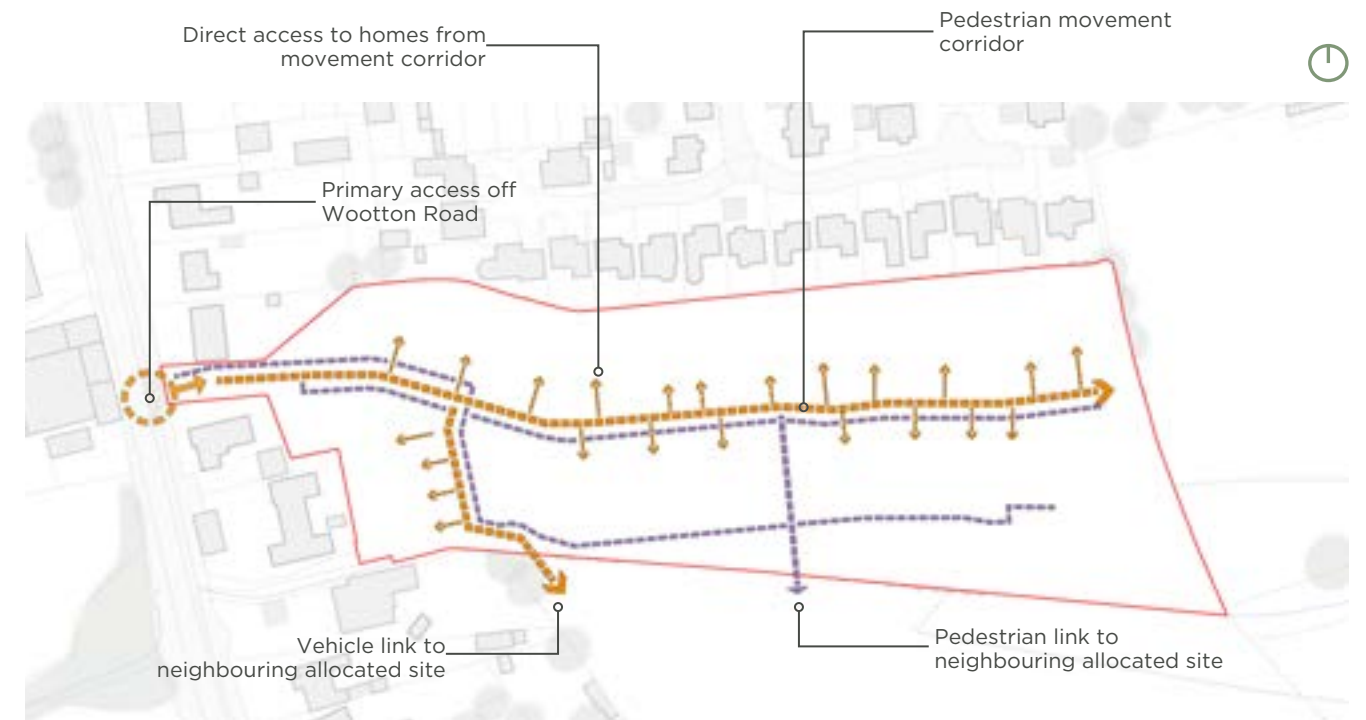
5.1 Design Rationale

A series of design rationale diagrams are shown below/opposite which illustrate the key design principles for the emerging concept masterplan (overleaf).



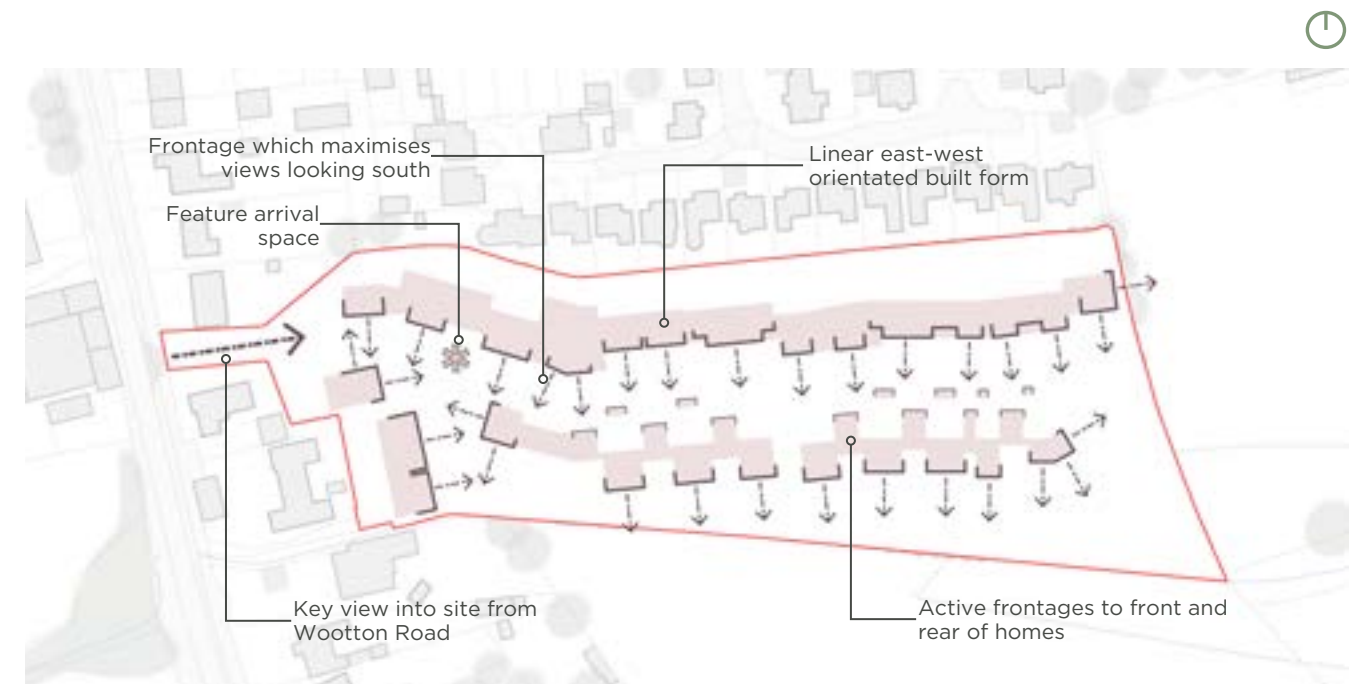
1. **Blue-green Infrastructure** - enhance the landscape and biodiversity, including achieving 30% woodland cover across the site area.

Fig 09: Landscape framework diagram



2. **Access and circulation** - integrate with the existing movement network and safeguard future links to the southern area. 7.5 metre wide access onto Wootton Road to meet highways carriageway standards including visibility splays.

Fig 10: Access and circulation diagram



3. **Built form / views** - create a sense of place and identity, taking inspiration from the local context and analysis of urban forms. A minimum 11 metre stand off distance to the northern site boundary, incorporating rear gardens.

Fig 11: Built form and views diagram


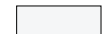



5.2 High Level Concept

The high level concept plan illustrates how 38 new homes can be delivered within the 1.67 hectare landholding, whilst preserving the area at risk of flooding. Key features of the concept plan include:

- 1 North-south facing housing, taking advantage of views to the south from higher ground
- 2 Housing backing onto existing curtilage to the north with 11-16m deep rear gardens
- 3 A 0.35 hectare swathe of woodland along the south and south-eastern site boundary
- 4 A linear tree and hedgerow lined primary movement corridor running east-west and serving access to most properties, whilst working with the natural contours of the land
- 5 A SuDs basin/habitat area positioned on lower ground to the south above the flood plain
- 6 A primary point of access taken from the public highway to the west (Wootton Road)

LEGEND

Existing Features

-  Site boundary
-  Highway
-  Water Bodies
-  Existing buildings
-  Existing vegetation

Proposed Features





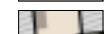

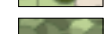
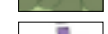

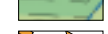
-  New homes
-  Primary highway
-  Secondary highway
-  Footpath
-  Parking, drives and footpaths
-  Street trees
-  Woodland
-  Potential connections
-  Wetland/habitat area
-  Primary access



Fig 12: Emerging concept plan

5.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

This document has set out the vision and emerging proposals for the Land East of Wootton Road, Gibraltar Corner.

In light of the initial design and technical work already undertaken to date, it is considered that the Site can deliver up to 38 high quality new homes which positively respond to the surroundings.

The key benefits can be summarised as follows:

1. Deliver approximately 38 new homes, including a mix of market and affordable housing to meet local identified need.
2. Form part of the wider draft residential allocation for Gibraltar Corner referred to as HOU13.
3. Create a development layout which seeks to maximise the use of existing and planned infrastructure - direct pedestrian and cycle connections to the Wootton Road and facilities and services in Kempton and Wootton.
4. Sensitively extend the built up area of Gibraltar Corner whilst retaining, and re-enforcing, the landscape setting of the Site.
5. Create a distinctive new place, which links to Gibraltar Corner and the “potential development areas” as identified by Bedford Borough Council in their Local Plan 2040 Plan for Submission.
6. Create a sustainable development which can provide 30% tree cover whilst also retaining the Local Gap.

We very much hope that the document will be able to facilitate positive engagement with key stakeholders, the local community and Bedford Borough Council.

Key Scheme Benefits

MIX OF NEW HOMES



Up to 38 new homes to meet a range of needs, including first time buyers, families and older people.

LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN LED



High quality scheme which responds to its landscape and environmental context.

AFFORDABLE HOMES



A proportion of much needed new affordable homes.

WOODLAND



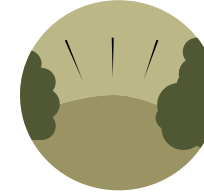
30% of the site area to be new native woodland and hedgerows in line with planning policy requirements (0.5 hectares).

ECOLOGY & WILDLIFE



Ecological enhancements and an overall Biodiversity Net Gain.

KEY VIEWS



Elevated views south across the wider landscape

CLOSE TO EXISTING LOCAL FACILITIES



Schools, shops and community infrastructure close by in Bedford and Wootton.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Convenient access to existing bus routes along Ridge Road.

PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ROUTES



Access to cycling and walking routes into Bedford to the east.

Fig 13: Scheme benefits infographic

Appendices

Appendix A - List of Figures



Appendix A: List of Figures

Fig 01: Vision precedent imagery

Fig 02: Local landmarks and facilities

Fig 03: Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2040

Fig 04: Extract from the Bedford Borough Council

Fig 05: Site location plan

Fig 06: Accessibility map

Fig 07: Community facilities

Fig 08: Considerations plan

Fig 09: Landscape framework diagram

Fig 10: Access and circulation diagram

Fig 11: Built form and views diagram

Fig 12: Emerging concept plan

Fig 13: Scheme benefits infographic

Carter Jonas

1 Chapel Place
Bond Street
London