

# LAND AT KEELEY LANE, WOOTTON



AUGUST 2020



*Rainier Developments Limited is a privately owned land and development company operating across the UK. With extensive experience within our executive team, chaired by Eric Grove, we work collaboratively with landowners and key stakeholders to bring forward development proposals to benefit all involved.*

*Our experience and track record is across the whole cycle of the development process from early engagement with the local community through to delivery.*

*This approach as a land promoter, aided by our carefully selected external consultants, allows us to ensure that each development is brought forward in a sustainable manner with the overriding aim of delivering much needed new housing to help local authorities meet their housing requirements.*

*The land at Keeley Lane is being promoted by Rainier Developments as a sustainable extension to the village of Wootton, working in conjunction with lead planning consultants Barton Willmore.*

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# 1. The Vision

*Our Vision for the site is to design a landscape-led approach to deliver a development that recognises existing site features and complements the surrounding area. The proposal will create a high quality extension to Wootton that reinforces the identity of the village and is well integrated both physically and socially. A sustainable neighbourhood will be created that encourages walking, cycling and public transport use. Up to 50 new homes are envisaged, with a wide range of housing types and tenures, helping to meet the needs of Wootton and the wider area.*

To support the vision, this document clearly articulates the opportunities presented by the Site, and shows how development would accord with the requirements of the NPPF and can:

-  Meet housing needs in a **sustainable** location as an appropriate growth progression of Wootton with strong **connections** provided back into the village centre
-  Propose an appropriate edge to mitigate the impact upon the landscape and help assimilate the development into its surroundings
-  Retain (where possible) existing soft landscape features and provide new **green infrastructure** to develop attractive green corridors through the development
-  Provide a high quality environment using well considered urban design principles and **landscape** to meet the needs of future and existing residents
-  Make the most of the attractive **views** within the site, adding to the character of the development and improving the amenity of new residents
-  Provide a safe and convenient new access onto Keeley Lane
-  Create a network of **pedestrian** and **cycle** routes through public open space to key destinations and **public transport** links to increase accessibility and encourage sustainable movements to and through the site
-  Provide additional land set out for public use that will restrict future encroachment into the countryside and maintain openness
-  Respond to climate change through the introduction of sustainable technologies and design features.





Aerial View of Site



## 2. The Site












The site being promoted for housing development is located in the administrative area of Bedford Borough Council (BBC), on the north-western edge of the village of Wootton. It lies outside but on the edge of the identified settlement boundary of Wootton, adjacent to the residential development along Hollies Walk to the east.

The site extends to approximately 3.1ha and sits due south of Keeley Lane. It is currently used for grazing horses and comprises two fields enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows. In addition, the site is intersected by a hedgerow running north to south.

To the south and west of the site, the farmland continues. To the east is the built-up area of Wootton.

To the north is Keeley Lane. There are six Grade II listed buildings along Keeley Lane in close proximity to the site including 35 Keeley Lane to the northwest, and 18/20 Keeley Lane to the northeast.

There are also ponds within and adjacent the site, and there are public footpaths to the west, east and southern boundaries. The site is wholly within flood zone 1.

-  Site Boundary (3.1ha)
-  Bus Stop
-  Public House
-  Play area
-  Memorial Hall
-  Library
-  Local Shop
-  Place of Worship
-  Lower School
-  Pharmacy
-  Wootton Blue Cross FC



Site Context Plan



### 3. Site Context

Wootton is a sustainable location for new development. It has numerous local facilities including a Lower School, Upper School, pre-school, library, Healthy Living Centre, pharmacy, two shops, three public houses, two churches, a Memorial Hall and village hall. There are also employment opportunities within the village.

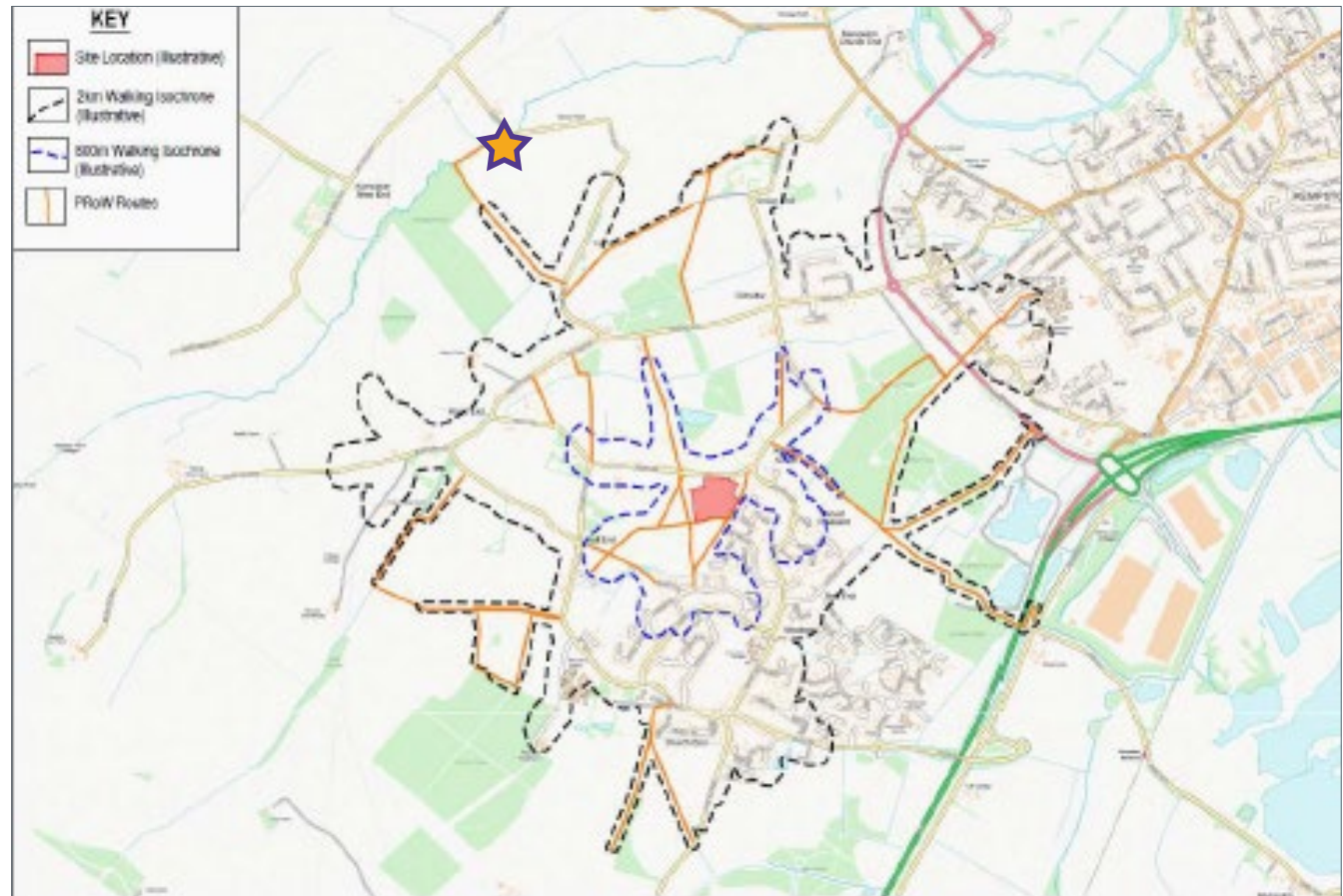
The Site has good public transport links to Bedford and Milton Keynes, with the nearest bus stops to the north-east of the site on Wootton Road. The Site allows good access to the centre of Bedford, located approximately 4 miles to the north-east, whilst avoiding the main arterial routes in the vicinity.

Wootton is classified as a Key Service Centre. The Local Plan does not allocate any dwellings to Wootton within the plan period to 2030. The other Key Service Centres of Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford and Sharnbrook have been identified to accommodate 500 dwellings each.

BBC decided not to allocate any dwellings to the village of Wootton in the Local Plan due to existing committed developments (identified in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013) being delivered in east Wootton.

The housing trajectory however shows that the existing commitments will be completed in 2022/23. Wootton Parish Council are in the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan and Rainier are promoting land at Keeley Lane as a suitable location for housing development. The neighbourhood plan is only intending to allocated sites for a maximum of 25 new homes which would only utilities part of the site for housing. Rainier have however advised the Parish Council that the site has capacity to provide up to 50 new homes.

It is imperative for BBC to allocate sufficient deliverable sites in sustainable locations to ensure a robust Local Plan. Sites such as Keeley Lane can assist BBC in achieving the housing need. The Site is immediately available, in single ownership, and is able to deliver up to 50 dwellings. This would make an important contribution to BBC’s housing land supply.



N  
 Accessibility to Local Facilities and Services Plan  
 The Site

# 4. Technical Assessment

## Access

It is proposed that vehicular access to the site is provided off Keeley Lane which is located to the north. Keeley Lane is suitably wide and the posted traffic speed limit is appropriate to serving residential development and indeed already provides direct frontage access to existing residential properties.

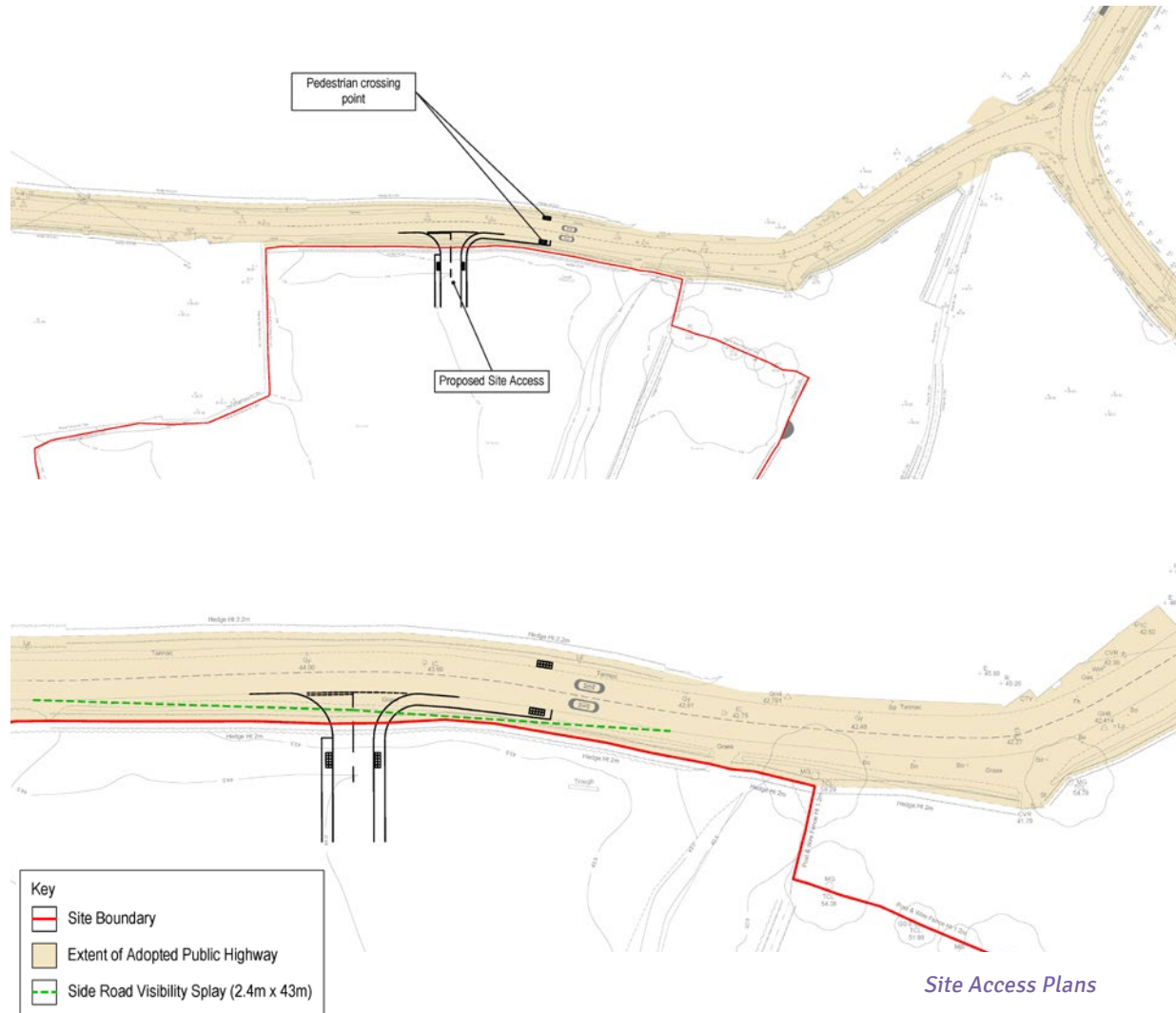
The proposed access junction to serve the site would take the form of a simple priority 'give-way' junction where Keeley Lane would form the major arm and the site access would form the minor arm.

The access road is of suitable proportions and dimensions to cater for the typical residential traffic that would be associated with the development. From the site access visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m can be achieved - these accord with current visibility standards for 30mph roads.

In addition, footways would be provided within the site which would connect with a new uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point provided east of the site access. This would enable crossing between the existing footway on Keeley Lane and proposed site access point thus providing access to the wider pedestrian network.

Hence safe, convenient and direct vehicular and pedestrian accesses will be provided to support the site.

The proposed site is located in a sustainable location, with a wide range of local facilities and services, including the centre of the Village of Wootton, lying within a reasonable walking and cycling distance and the site is well placed to access the existing local foot and cycle networks. As such, the site is well placed to reduce reliance on the use of the private car.





## Flood Risk and Drainage

### Flood Risk

The proposed site is identified as lying outside of the fluvial and tidal flood risk zone according to the Environment Agency's published flood map for planning. The EA flood risk for planning map identifies the site within Flood Zone 1 – very low probability of flooding (land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding).

The National Planning Policy Framework planning practice guidance states that all types of development are suitable for this flood zone.

A small area within the north-east corner of the site is identified as being at low-high risk of surface water flooding. It is anticipated that this is a result of modelled run-off being conveyed and retained within the north-east corner due to the existing topographical profile of the existing land. However, this is not a significant risk to the site, and it is expected that the development proposals and drainage strategy will alleviate these areas of flood risk.

No other sources of flooding have been identified for the proposed site. This includes flooding from existing sewers, groundwater and artificial sources.

### Drainage

Anglian Water own and operate the existing local public foul and surface water sewer networks supplying the local area. Anglian Water asset plans confirm there is no existing drainage apparatus located within the proposed site boundaries.

Within the surrounding area, Anglian Water asset plans show there is an existing foul sewer network running immediately to the north of the site within Keeley Lane.

As the site is not currently positively drained, a new foul and surface water sewer network will be designed to collect and convey flows from the proposed development.

Current legislation and guidance require developers to manage surface water run-off from new developments, to mitigate flood risk to the site and the surrounding area and provide a sustainable means of disposing of run-off from impermeable areas of the site. Surface water run-off from the new development should be managed via the design of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS). The possible drainage options considered for the site include the use of infiltration methods and discharging to a local watercourse.

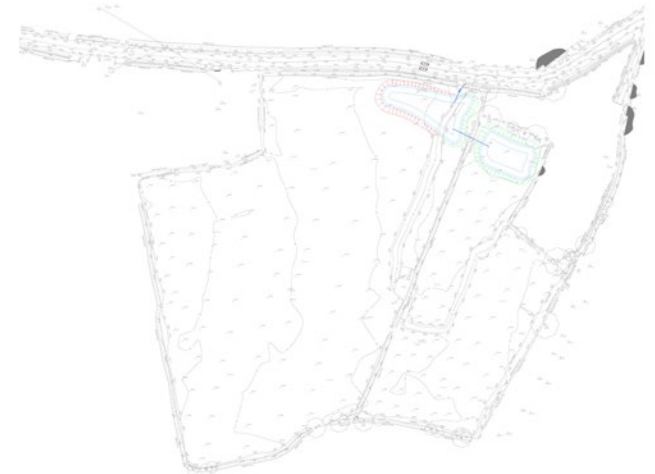
Due to the characteristics of the underlying ground conditions, it is anticipated that the use of infiltration methods will not be suitable for the discharge of flows from the site. Consequently, an alternative option of discharging to a local watercourse is the preferred option.

An existing drainage ditch runs along the northern site boundary, running parallel to Keeley Lane. This ditch currently accommodates flows from Keeley Lane and the existing undeveloped site, before conveying flows to the east.

It is proposed to attenuate flows onsite, before discharging flows at a restricted predevelopment rate.

Onsite attenuation will be provided via an attenuation basin which will also provide ecological and water quality benefits through the dilution, filtration and settlement of pollutants. Additional SuDS features will be included throughout the development where possible, to provide further ecological, water quality and amenity benefits.

It is proposed that the new development will discharge foul flows to the existing public sewer infrastructure located within Keeley Lane.



*Proposed Attenuation Areas Plan*

## Landscape

The site comprises two irregular arable fields used as pasture, being located along the western settlement edge at the north of Wootton, Bedford, with existing residential development adjacent to the east and a further pocket of residential development on the north-western corner of the site.

The Site largely consists of pasture grassland, bounded by mature hedgerow on all boundaries with the exception of the eastern boundary which features a public right of way (PRoW) and the rear garden fences of dwellings along Hollies Walk. A mature hedgerow separates the two field parcels running north to south down the centre of the site.

Topographically, the site is relatively flat and slopes from the western boundary to the eastern boundary, with levels sloping from approximately 44m aOD to 42m aOD.

The underlying vale character of the area forms an expansive, generally flat landscaping. As such, distant visibility is limited due to subtle variations in topography and by mature vegetation within the landscape, or built form forming settlements. From within the site distant views of the elevated land to the south-west can be obtained from parts of both field parcels.

In landscape terms, there is a very limited sense of association between the site and the wider setting; being divorced both physically and visually from it by mature vegetation, and the adjacent housing on the both the north-west and eastern site extent.

## Heritage and Archaeology

An archaeological and heritage assessment was produced in 2019 by EDP Ltd to consider the principal issues of the site's allocation in terms of these subjects. This identified that only three designated heritage assets draw significance from the site, all of which are Grade II listed buildings and comprise (i) 35 Keeley Lane, (ii) 18 and 20 Keeley Lane; and (iii) Pear Tree Cottage. In all instances, there are no historic or functional connections between the listed buildings and the site, and the contribution is purely from the site forming a small part of their wider semi-rural setting. This contribution is experienced in obscured views of limited parts of the site. However, in each instance the nature of this association is such that the site makes no more than a 'very limited' or 'negligible' contribution.

A number of recommendations are proposed to be included within the illustrative masterplan, such as retaining the western edge as open space and offsetting built form from the north east corner. This would minimise or otherwise avoid the potential for harm to these assets through the allocation/development of the site.

In terms of archaeology the site has a low potential to contain remains that would be of such significance as to warrant preservation in situ and influence its capacity or deliverability for residential development. In terms of the ridge and furrow within the site, this forms one small part of a much wider area of earthworks that extends to the west and south, which is not considered to be of more than local/low value. The ridge and furrow in the north, east and centre of the site has either been removed or heavily eroded by post-medieval quarrying and modern farming practices, and therefore it is recompensed that the development of the site includes the western parcel as open space which would retain the best preserved ridge and furrow within the site.

The assessment therefore found that the potential impacts of the draft allocation on designated and non-designated heritage assets are of insufficient scale to warrant development being prevented or severely restricted, such as to make its deliverability unviable. Therefore, in archaeological and heritage terms, there is no reason why the site should not be allocated for residential development in the Local Plan.








## Ecology

Statutory designations represent the most significant ecological receptors, being of recognised importance at an international and/or national level. International designations include Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar Sites. National designations include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs). There are no international statutory designations within 10km of the Application Site and no national statutory designations within 2km of the site. The site is within the impact risk zone of two SSSIs, Marston Thrift SSSI and Hanger Wood SSSI. These risk zones are for aviation proposals and livestock or poultry units. As the nature of the proposals for the site is for residential development neither of the SSSIs would be directly affected.

The majority of habitats within the site are of negligible intrinsic value. However, the hedgerows and pond are considered to be of site value. Habitats within the site also require consideration in relation to their importance in maintaining populations of protected and/or notable species. Overall, the site supports habitats of low intrinsic ecological value, with a typical suite of likely protected species interests (to be confirmed through further detailed survey). There are considered no 'in principle' ecological constraints to any forthcoming development. Furthermore, the scheme has potential to be delivered in accordance with current national and local planning policy with regard to the natural environment and would be capable of delivering a high-quality scheme in response to local needs.



### Site Character and Context Plan

-  National Cycle Routes 51 (Sustrans)
-  Public Rights of Way
-  John Bunyan Trail (Promoted Route)

1. Large open arable fields surround the site on the south and west side.
2. To the south land slopes down away from the development limiting views.
3. Residential dwellings along Hollies Walk define the settlement edge of Wootton.

4. Ribbon development along Keeley Lane extends the built context from the settlement edge of Wootton west.

5. Moderate network of public rights of way on site and within the immediate vicinity of the site provide recreational opportunity and access to the wider landscape.

Densely vegetated field boundaries curtail views into the site from the wider landscape.



## 5. Opportunities and Constraints

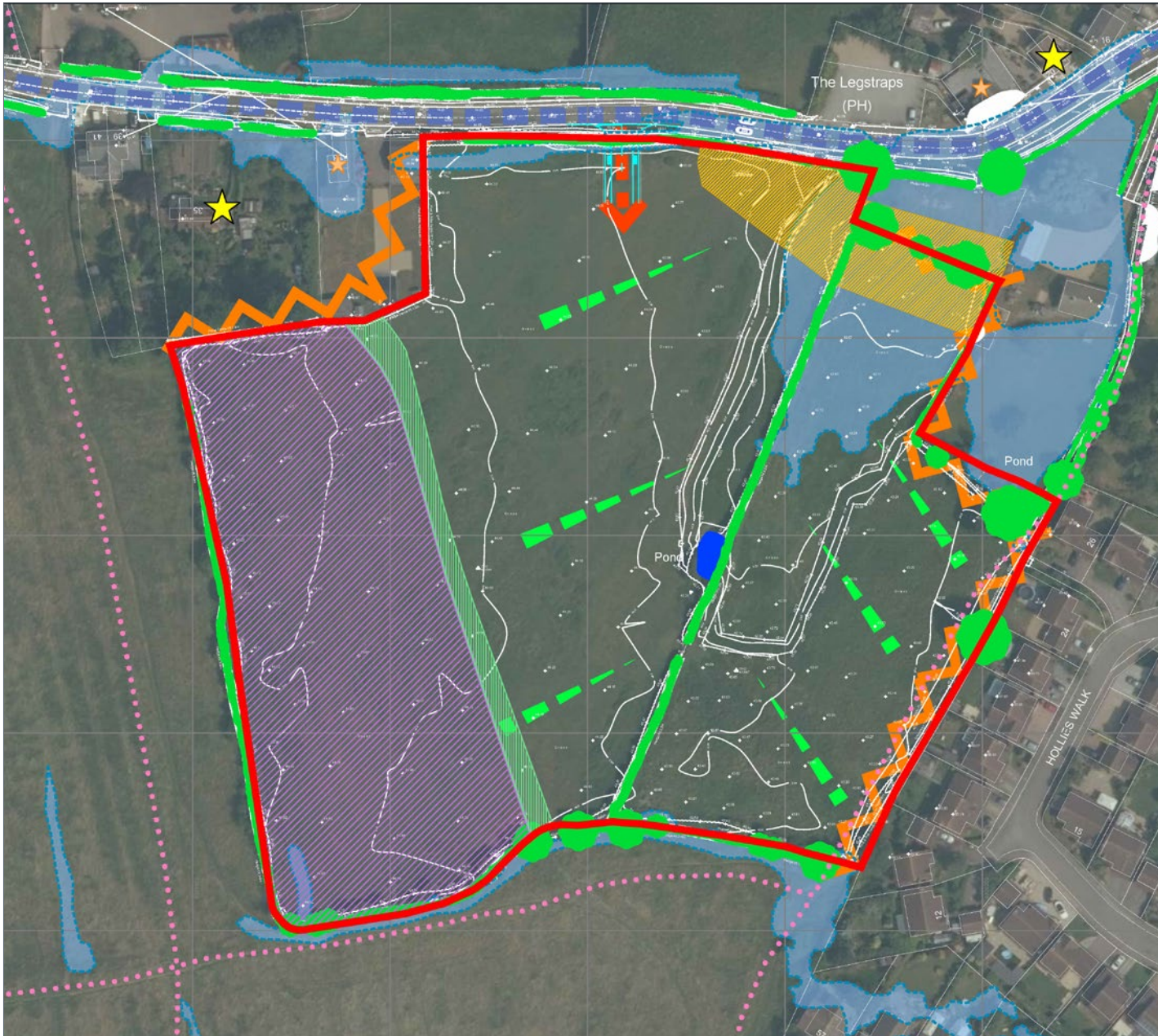
### Opportunities

- » The site is within walking distance of local facilities including the Legstraps Public House, a local shop, library, schools and bus stops on Wootton Road and Bedford Road
- » The site falls entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at very low risk of flooding and suitable for residential development
- » The site accommodates an established network of soft landscape, hedgerows, trees, wildlife and green infrastructure that development will be able to utilise and respond to
- » The northern, western and southern boundaries are marked by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees that filter views of the site, to the east the site abuts existing development
- » The site is relatively flat with a gentle fall, creating the potential to utilise topography for sustainable drainage (SUDs)
- » Public footpaths run through and adjacent to the site, providing linkages to Wootton and Hall End

### Constraints

- » The site is located outside but on the edge of, the settlement boundary of Wootton in the open countryside, however there is significant scope to integrate with adjacent development to the east without significant visual impact on openness
- » There is a pond roughly in the centre of the site and another pond outside the site on its eastern boundary
- » There are several Grade II Listed Buildings on Keeley Lane
- » There is a large area of ridge and furrow in the west of the site which will be retained





-  Site Boundary (3.13Ha)
-  Potential Access
-  PROW
-  Retained Ridge and Furrow
-  Landscape Buffer
-  Offset from Heritage Assets
-  Areas at Risk of Surface Water Flooding
-  Existing Vegetation
-  Backs / Sides of Adjacent Development
-  Slope
-  Retained Pond
-  Non-Designated Heritage Asset
-  Listed Buildings

*Opportunities and Constraints Plan*



## 6. Concept Plan

### Guiding Principles

The Concept Masterplan on the opposite page illustrates the key guiding design principles for the site:

- » Development nestles within high quality landscape and public open space
- » Primary and secondary movement routes ensure connectivity throughout the development and access to the village of Wootton and public footpath links
- » Retention of a large area of ridge and furrow land to the west with a strong new structural landscaping boundary
- » Retention and enhancement of existing soft landscape features where possible to enhance biodiversity and maintain green infrastructure within the site
- » The nearby village centre is within walking distance either through the countryside or the village of Wootton itself
- » Public open space to the south creates a soft buffer to farmland beyond and an appropriate soft edge to the development

### Sustainability, Climate Change and Energy

Development of the site will deliver energy efficiency standards that go beyond current normal requirements.

Through a range of design measures development of this site will aim to protect and enhance the local environment, through:

- Design of homes to utilise sustainable materials and construction methods to reduce resource use and impacts on the environment;
- Use of measures to reduce pollution during construction and operation including measures related to noise pollution, air quality and water pollution;
- The development will be designed to minimise the impact of the development on the site habitats and wildlife as well as a range of mitigation and enhancement measures to achieve at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity; and
- Measures to manage waste during both construction and occupation to reduce waste and maximise recycling.

The development will incorporate a range of measures to reduce carbon emissions, mitigating the effects of climate change, and adaptation measures to ensure the long term resilience of the development to the effects of climate change. Measures include:

- Homes designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy and a fabric first approach to reduce energy use and carbon emissions with homes achieving a 10% reduction in energy demand;
- Installation of water efficient fittings to target water use of 110l/p/d, beyond the requirements of the Building Regulations;
- Development of new homes in Flood Zone 1 and inclusion of a surface water management system including SuDS to manage the 1 in 100 annual probability plus 40% climate change rainfall event; and
- Homes designed to minimise the risk of overheating taking into account the UKCP18 climate projections.





Concept Plan: Indicative concept only, design subject to further detailed technical work and development

## Land Use Budget

Gross Site Area:	3.1ha
Net Developable Area:	1.7 ha
Retained Ridge and Furrow Land:	0.9 ha
Public Open Space:	0.5 ha

1.7 ha at 30 dwellings per hectare  
 =  
 approximately 50 dwellings



Land Use Inset illustrating Net Developable Area (Orange)

# 7. Development Benefits

## Conclusion

The site provides the opportunity to deliver a mix of new homes in terms of size, type and tenure, including a policy compliant level of affordable housing. The proposals would include new public open space which would be accessible to both new and existing residents and retain a substantial area of ridge and furrow in the western parcel.

The development concept outlined in this document shows how the site could come forward with an area of Public Open Space which is greater than Bedford Borough Council's policy requirements.

The initial technical studies which have been undertaken have found no technical reasons to prevent development of the site.

The site has good access to a range of village facilities and services within Wootton and is connected to the surrounding area via public transport links.

Through a range of design measures development of this site will aim to protect and enhance the local environment, provide an overall biodiversity net gain, reduce carbon emissions, mitigate the effects of climate change and incorporate adaptation measures to ensure the long term resilience of the development to the effects of climate change.



Up to 50 new homes, designed to meet localised need for market and affordable housing



Where possible existing trees will be retained within public open space to soften the visual appearance of the scheme and enable development to blend positively into its countryside setting



Responsive design that reflects local distinctiveness and sits comfortably within the current vernacular context of the site



A permeable site that is designed to encourage active travel, supporting and utilising existing walk and cycle links to key destinations



Incorporate a range of measures to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change



A sustainable development responding to the tenets of the NPPF whilst going above and beyond the norm to incorporate sustainable, environmental technologies in response



New public open space providing amenity to new residents and the existing neighbouring community



Retention of an area of existing ridge and furrow land with a new structural landscaping boundary



Protection and enhancement of existing landscape and habitat features to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%

 Site Boundary (3.13ha)

1. Primary Vehicle Access Point from Keeley Lane
2. Primary Vehicular Route
3. Secondary Vehicular Access Routes with Walk / Cycle Priority
4. Footpaths / Cycleways through Green Space
5. Potential Walk / Cycle Link to Public Rights of Way
6. Public Rights of Way
7. Development Parcels
8. Retained Ridge & Furrow Area
9. Thinning or Lowering of Existing Planting Adjacent to Retained Ridge & Furrow Area
10. New Hedge Buffer Planting
11. Local Area of Play (LAP)
12. Retained Hedgerow
13. Proposed SUDs
14. Proposed New Footpath Link





*Illustrative Masterplan: Indicative concept only, design subject to further detailed technical work and development*





**BARTON  
WILLMORE**