

Vision Document

# Land off Bedford Road, Roxton

---

Rainier Developments Limited | August 2020





A421

Bedford Road

Parcel A

Bedford Road

Parcel B

Park Road

High Street

School Lane

above: The site sits on the northern edge of Roxton.

# 1. Introduction

This Vision Document sets out a preliminary site analysis and a conceptual proposal for sensitive residential development at Land off Bedford Road, Roxton.

## 1.1 Summary

**1.1.1** This document has been produced to inform discussions with local stakeholders regarding the opportunity for development at Land off Bedford Road, Roxton. The document sets the background context for the proposals and demonstrates why the site is suitable for residential development.

**1.1.2** The site sits on the northern edge of Roxton, to the south east of Bedford Road. The site comprises two plots which are currently in agricultural use. The two plots are referred to as Parcel A (to the north) and Parcel B (to the south) within this document.

**1.1.3** The proposals have been designed with input from a number of preliminary technical studies of the site. This document sets out headlines of all the environmental and technical findings relating to the site and demonstrates the suitability of the site for development.

**1.1.4** The document reviews the site in the context of Roxton and its facilities, services and community resources and seeks to demonstrate how the development of this site can help deliver growth in a sustainable manner.

## Contents

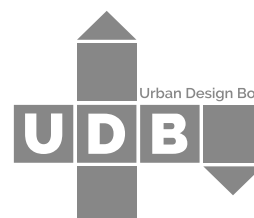
Introduction	3
Site Context	4
Background Technical Information	6
Site Features	18
Development Concept	20
Conclusion	22
Key Benefits	23

**RAINIER**   
DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED



**Jubb**

**edp**



## 2. Site Context

### 2.1 The site within Roxton

**2.1.1** Parcel A is bounded by Bedford Road to the north and to the west, existing residential development to the south and farmland to the east. Parcel B is bounded by High Street to the north, High Street and the houses along it to the east, an open field and existing development to the south, and existing development to the west.

**2.1.2** A public footpath runs north to south through Parcel A and National Cycle Route 12 runs along the northern and western boundaries of both parcels.

**2.1.3** The X5 bus route runs along Bedford Road, with the closest stop at the intersection of Bedford Road and Park Road, approximately 4 minutes walk to the south west of the site. The route provides regular services to St Neots and Cambridge in the east, and Bedford, Milton Keynes, Buckingham, Bicester and Oxford in the west. The nearest railway stations are in St Neots (approximately 6 miles north of the site) and Sandy (approximately 6 miles south of the site).

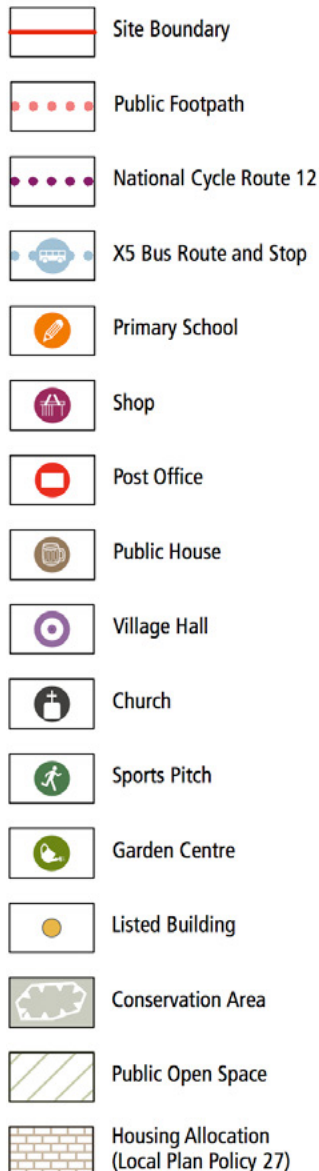
**2.1.4** The closest primary school to the site is Roxton Church of England School, which is approximately 500m to the south of the site. A safe walking route is possible from the pedestrian access points to both parcels of the site.

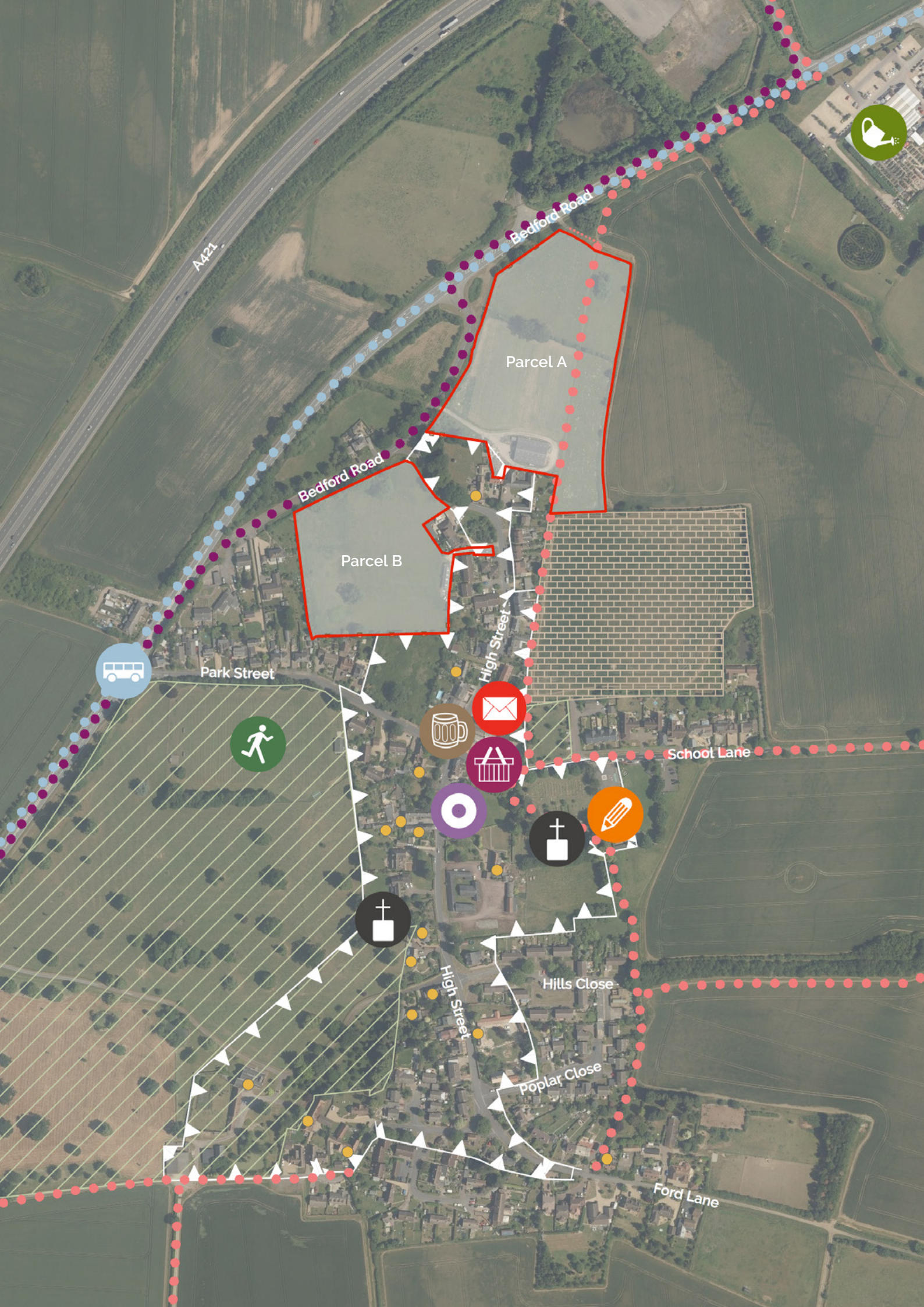
**2.1.5** Roxton has a village hall and two churches, both of which are Grade II\* Listed Buildings. There are a number of other Grade II Listed Buildings in the village, most of which are contained within the Conservation Area, as can be seen on the adjacent plan.

**2.1.6** There is a shop and a post office contained within the Royal Oak public house. Roxton Garden Centre lies to the north of the village along Bedford Road.

**2.1.7** Roxton Park forms a large area of public open space to the south west of the village, approximately 5 minutes walk from the site, and also contains cricket and football pitches. There is also a small area of public open space to the north of St Mary Magdalene Church.

**2.1.8** Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 has identified an area for housing development to the north of School Lane which adjoins the southern boundary of Parcel A.





A421

Bedford Road

Bedford Road

Parcel A

Parcel B

Park Street

High Street

School Lane

High Street

Hills Close

Poplar Close

Ford Lane

## 3. Background Technical Information

---

### 3.1 Transport

#### Proposed Vehicular Access Parcel A

3.1.1 A preliminary assessment of access options has been undertaken, which indicates that suitable access can be achieved along a large part of the site frontage with Bedford Road.

3.1.2 An initial access design is shown below. The access would likely take the form of a proposed priority 'give-way' junction with a 5m carriageway, with 2m footways to either side, joining to Bedford Road with radii of 6m.

3.1.3 A visibility splay of 2.4m x approx 40m would be provided and maintained in both directions from the proposed priority 'give-way' junction. The 30mph speed limit would be moved further north to include the proposed access.

#### Proposed Vehicular Access Parcel B

3.1.4 The preliminary assessment of access options for Parcel B also indicates that suitable access can be achieved along a large part of the site frontage with Bedford Road.

3.1.5 It is likely that the access design for this parcel will take the same form as for Parcel A. Moving the 30mph speed limit further north will also reduce the speed limit for this access point.

3.1.6 The proposed priority 'give-way' junction and associated visibility splays will be appropriate for Manual for Streets (MfS) standards.

#### Internal Road Layout

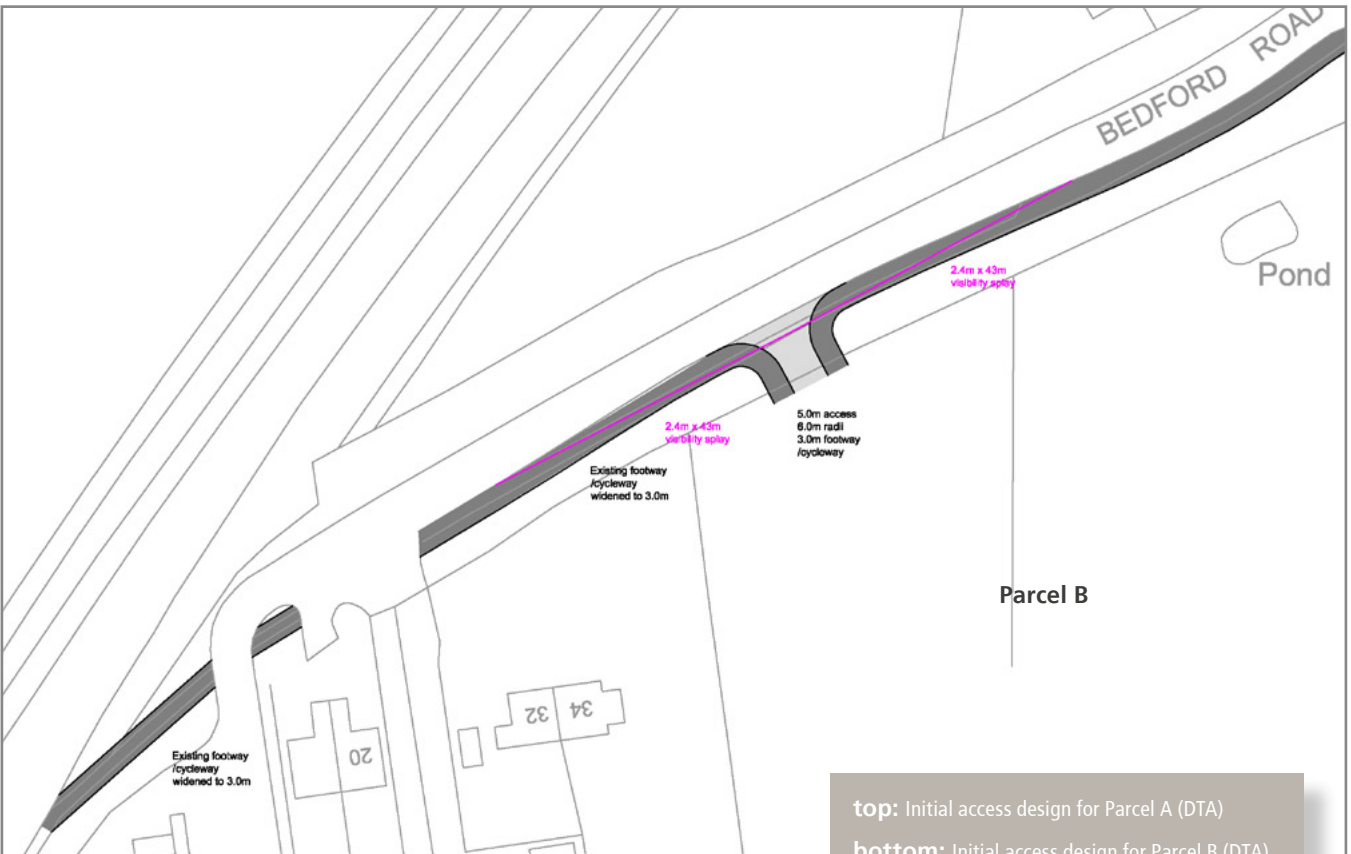
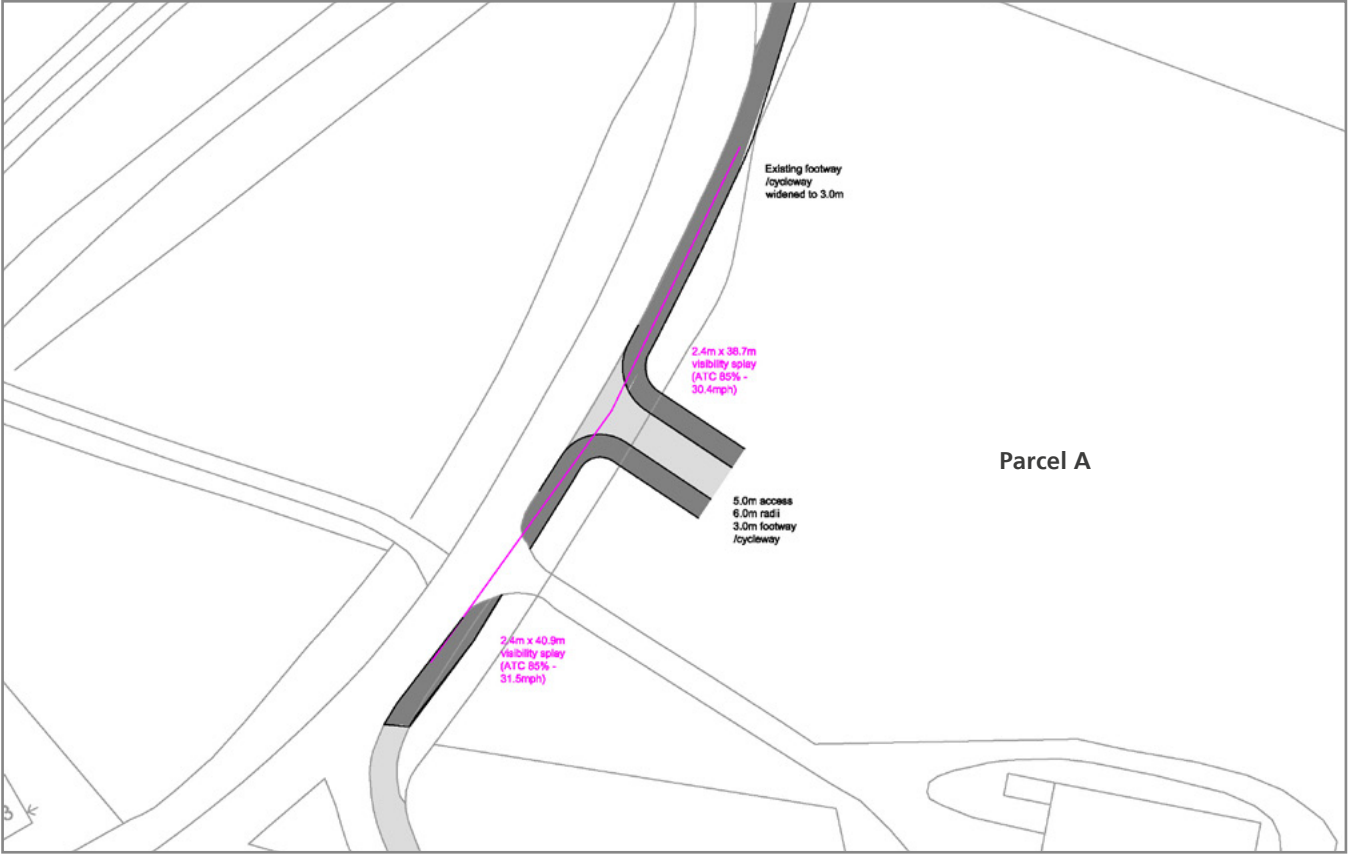
3.1.7 The internal road network of both parcels will be designed in line with the guidance provided in MfS. This will therefore promote access on foot and by bicycle through the creation of safe routes throughout the two parcels.

#### Site Accessibility

3.1.8 The site is within easy walking distance of the existing facilities and services in Roxton. The site is also close to the bus stop along the X5 route.

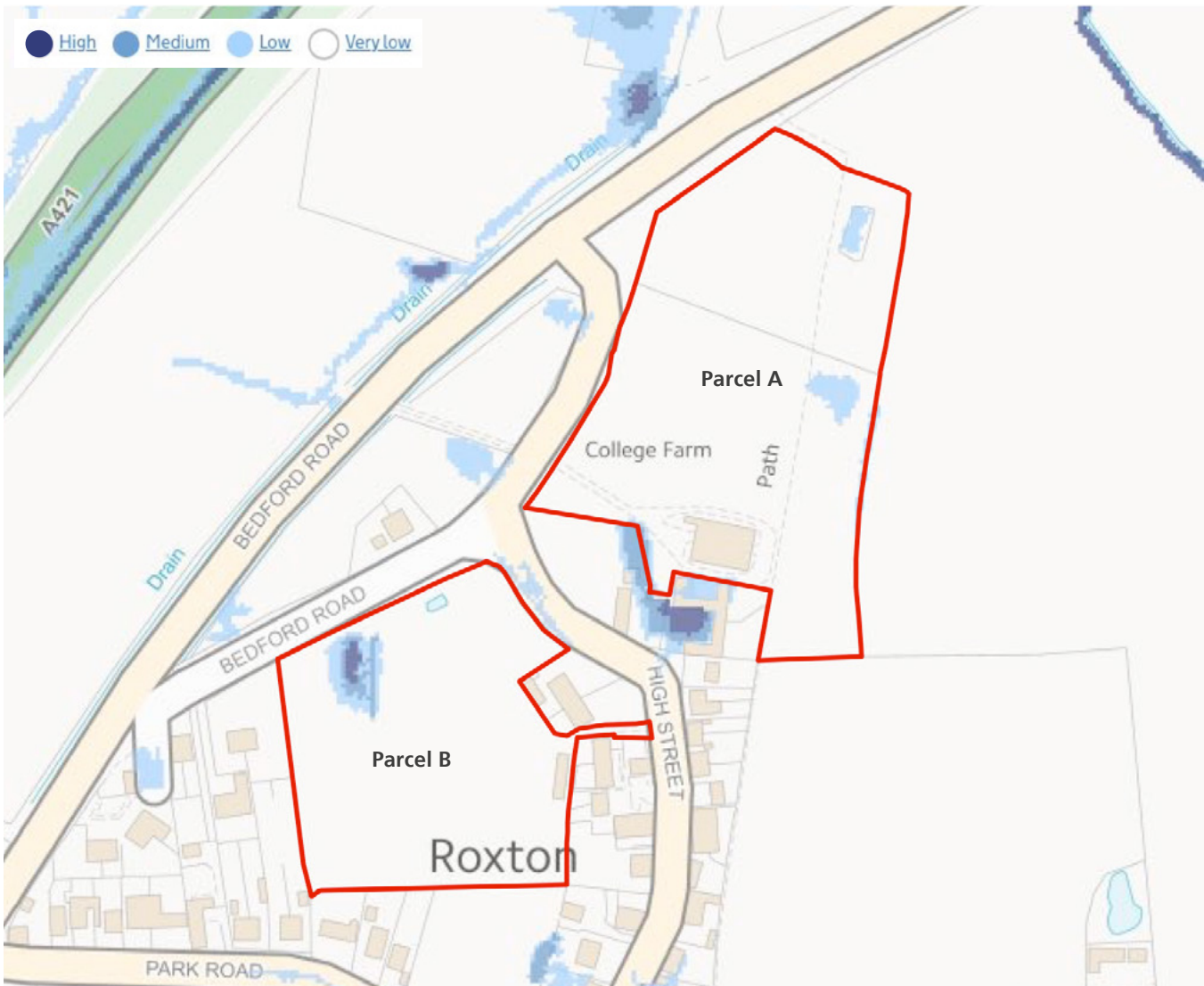
#### Development Trip Generation

3.1.9 Based on the preliminary assessment of the anticipated trip generation of the sites, it is reasonable to conclude that the development proposals will result in a low level of traffic generation, which is unlikely to have a material impact on the local highway network.



top: Initial access design for Parcel A (DTA)

bottom: Initial access design for Parcel B (DTA)



### 3.2 Flood Risk

**3.2.1** The proposed site is not at risk of tidal or fluvial flooding and lies within flood zone 1 on the Environment Agency (EA) flood maps.

**3.2.2** Whilst the majority of the site is not at risk from surface water flooding there are some small areas of surface water flood risk as shown on the extract from the EA flood map. It is expected that this flood risk on site will be mitigated through the site wide drainage infrastructure proposed.

**3.2.3** An initial investigation of the site has identified a risk from groundwater flooding. Bedford Borough SFRA states 75% of the land in a 1km<sup>2</sup> region of the site is at risk of groundwater flooding. It is recommended that detailed ground investigation is undertaken to inform further assessment of the risk the groundwater poses within the site.

**above:** Extract from Environment Agency Surface Water Flood Map with site boundary added



### 3.3 Drainage

#### Surface Water

**3.3.1** The proposals will provide a sustainable surface water drainage strategy (SUDS) to dispose of surface water run-off. The SUDS options include infiltration via soakaways or infiltration basins or attenuation and discharge into a local watercourse.

**3.3.2** Due to the underlying ground conditions it is anticipated that discharging flows via infiltration will be unsuitable. It is therefore proposed to attenuate surface water in an attenuation basin sited within each parcel, then discharge flows to an existing watercourse.

**3.3.3** Two potential points of discharge have been considered for the development; either a direct connection to the Rockham Ditch, or a connection to the existing concrete drainage ditch which conveys flows to the Rockham Ditch. Due to topographical constraints, flows from Parcel A will require pumping to the point of discharge.

**3.3.4** Due to the existing site levels and site constraints with regards to the location of the basin, it is anticipated that site levels will require raising in areas in order to accommodate the proposed drainage strategy.

#### Foul Water

**3.3.5** The development will increase foul loadings from the site, increasing the peak discharge rate to approximately 1.94 l/s. Anglian Water has confirmed that there is sufficient existing capacity for flows from the development to be discharged to the existing 150mm diameter sewer within the High Street, Bedford Road junction.

**3.3.6** Due to the existing site levels and the level of the existing sewer network at the proposed point of connection, it is anticipated that foul flows will require pumping from the site.

### 3.4 Utilities

**3.4.1** Utility providers asset plans have confirmed there is no existing utility infrastructure located within the proposed site. Beyond the site boundaries, UK Power Networks, BT and Anglian Water all have existing supply networks located throughout the existing residential areas of Roxton.

**3.4.2** Cadent Gas has confirmed there is no existing gas infrastructure available within reasonably proximity to the site. Therefore, it is proposed that the development will utilise electric heating and cooking appliances. All other utilities are available at the site.

**3.4.3** A new on-site substation will be required to provide the electrical supply to the new development. From this substation a new network of LV and service cables will be laid throughout the development to supply the individual properties.

### 3.5 Landscape

**3.5.1** Both parcels are areas of grassed farmland on the north west edge of the village of Roxton. The Parcel A contains a single modern barn and comprises two fields, divided by a hedgerow, with a pond and footpath. Parcel A is bounded to the west by a road, to the south by the College Farm complex, and to the east and north by farmland.

**3.5.2** Parcel B contains a single modern poultry shed, and comprises a single field. Parcel B is bounded by a mixture of 20th century and older residential dwellings to the east, south and west, and by a small paddock to the south and a road to the north and north west.

**3.5.3** Both parcels are flat, lying at approximately 20m above Ordnance Datum.

**3.5.4** As part of the evidence base to support the adopted Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has undertaken a landscape sensitivity study. The study identifies that both parcels fall within the Great Ouse Clay Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA); it does not identify any in principle landscape constraints.

**3.5.5** The Local Plan identifies Parcel B as being subject to the 'saved' Village Open Space policy. There is no up to

date objectively assessed evidence base to support this designation, and the site is afforded no public access. The proposed development would be accompanied by a package of demonstrable community and environmental benefits.

**3.5.6** With regard to Parcel A, the site is bounded on the north by Bedford Road and part of an adjacent arable field which wraps round the north east corner and down the full length of the eastern boundary. The southern end of the site is bounded partly by another smaller arable field to the south and residential properties on Roxton High Street. The High Street then wraps up and around the western side of the site to meet Bedford Road. The main character and fabric of the site is a mix between the intimate smaller village edge field parcel and the wider open arable field character. However, overall, the site landscape fabric does not form a prominent part of the appreciation of the wider landscape character.

**3.5.7** Views to the site from surrounding rights of way and roads are generally contained to those that are closest to the site, with trees and boundary vegetation and the profile of the surrounding major A roads acting to prevent views from the wider landscape. Views are mostly afforded from footpaths and roads in very close proximity to the site, especially looking from the north and east, where the site boundaries are the most open.





### 3.6 Archaeology and Heritage

**3.6.1** Neither parcel contains any world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields. Both Parcel A and Parcel B contain small portions of the Roxton Conservation Area.

**3.6.2** Archaeological investigations ahead of the A421 construction, c. 200m to the north west, identified a small group of early Roman sub-rectangular enclosures, which may have had Iron Age predecessors. Archaeological remains associated with these enclosures were sparse.

**3.6.3** Given the site's location on river terrace gravels, and their proximity to prehistoric and Roman finds, there is considered a medium potential for them to contain archaeology from these periods. However, considering the results of nearby investigations, it is unlikely they would be of such significance as to warrant preservation in situ. It is probable that both parcels were farmland throughout the medieval period, as well as subsequently into the post-medieval and modern periods. As such, it is considered that there is a low potential for either Parcel A or Parcel B

to contain archaeological remains of such significance that they would inhibit the deliverability of the site or influence its capacity.

**3.6.4** There is a medium potential for prehistoric and Roman remains, and a low potential for all other periods, apart from 'negligible' value deposits and features related to medieval and later farming practices.

#### Roxton Conservation Area

**3.6.5** No publicly available conservation area appraisal was identified for this asset and the following is based on observations made during a site walkover in November 2019.

**3.6.6** Roxton Conservation Area appears to incorporate the historic core of the village and some adjoining paddocks and fields. The arrangement of the village core is broadly linear, stretching from College Farmhouse in the north to Roxton Park in the south.

**above:** View toward modern buildings within former farmyard locations, to the east of Grade II Listed College Farmhouse on left of picture (EDP)

**left:** View from the north end of the High Street, looking south across Parcel B (EDP)

**3.6.7** The conservation area extends into a small part of the Parcel A, comprising a modern storage yard. As such, this is not considered to contribute to the character and appearance of the asset. Given the local topography and built and planted environment, there are no opportunities to experience Parcel A from within the conservation area, although the footpath within Parcel A allows views to College Farmhouse and the church.

**3.6.8** Parcel A can also be seen from Bedford Road, which forms the main access to the village from the north. Therefore, it makes a very limited contribution to the conservation area's significance by forming part of the rural edge of the asset and containing a historic route into the village centre.

**3.6.9** In terms of Parcel B, only a small part of this is included in the conservation area, formed by a gravel track that leads from the High Street to a modern poultry shed within the eastern edge of the parcel. Otherwise the majority of Parcel B is outside of the asset and is mainly experienced through glimpsed views, filtered through the planted and built environment, with the clearest views from the very north end of High Street (see image on previous page). In terms of these views, Parcel B is appreciated as an area of grassland enclosed by mainly 20th century development and cut off from the wider landscape. Therefore it makes a limited positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area by forming part of the farmed edge of the asset, and, along with Parcel A, being one of the first elements experienced on the approach from the north, notwithstanding its enclosed character and context of modern development.

## St Mary Magdelene Church

**3.6.10** This is a 14th and 15th century church built of brown cobblestones and ashlar dressings, with slate roofs.

**3.6.11** The tower of the church is visible from the footpath which runs north to south through Parcel A (see image above). Given that this pathway leads up to a point opposite

the church on School Lane, it is plausible that the footpath is aligned on this locally distinct feature. As such, this footpath and the approach to the church is considered to make an, albeit very limited, contribution to the significance of this listed building.

**3.6.12** Parcel B is not considered to make any contribution to the significance of the church due to the very limited visible connections with it, the tower being almost entirely hidden by the planted and built environment, and the lack of any other known links.

## Grade II listed College Farmhouse

**3.6.13** College Farmhouse is a 16th/17th century timber framed building in a T-shape arrangement with old clay tile roof and brick and stone chimney stacks. The High Street runs immediately to its south and, in combination with the garden and farmyard, provides the best opportunities for experiencing its significance, in terms of its outward form.

**3.6.14** Parcel A comprises farmland that abuts the farmyard and gardens of College Farmhouse. There is an element of separation from the farmhouse, due to the high modern brick boundary walls and the converted stable blocks, which create a physical and visual barrier. The contribution of Parcel A to the significance of the farmhouse is considered to be limited, providing only rural context to the farmhouse and reflecting its historic setting.

**3.6.15** There is a limited appreciation of the farmhouse from Parcel B due to the built and planted environment. Nevertheless, Parcel B also contributes to the significance of the farmhouse by forming an area of farmland providing rural context in close proximity to the listed building, also considered to be a limited contribution.



**above:** View looking south from the northern field of Parcel A, along the footpath towards St Mary Magdalene Church (EDP)

## 3.7 Ecology

**3.7.1** Parcel A comprises of two fields of semi-improved grassland which are divided by a species rich hedgerow that contains two mature oak trees. The northern field contains a pond with steep sloping sides that is surrounded by scrub and tall ruderal vegetation. The pond would still be accessible to amphibians including great crested newts. Within the south of the parcel is a small patch of arable land which has been used for growing vegetables. In the south west corner of the parcel is an apple orchard. There is a large barn building with a metal exterior and an asbestos roof that is considered to be of negligible potential for roosting bats. Along the parcel boundaries are areas of tall ruderal that would be suitable for reptile species.

**3.7.2** Parcel B is comprised of a single field of species poor semi-improved grassland. There is a strip of tall ruderal vegetation within the field and a patch of dense bramble scrub. The field also contains a pond with very steep edges. The pond is surrounded by thick scrub and tall ruderal vegetation. There is a mature sycamore tree within the field that is of moderate potential for roosting bats. The northern edge of the parcel that borders Bedford Road consists of a line of mature trees. The field margins contain areas of tall

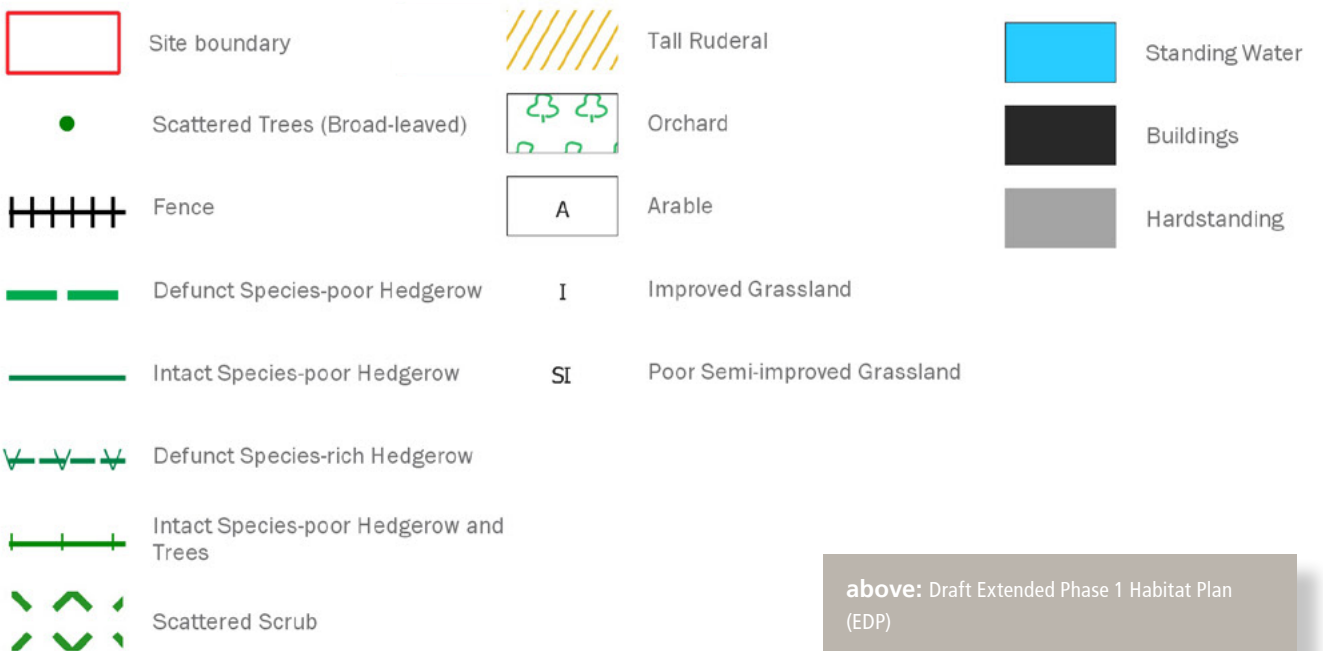
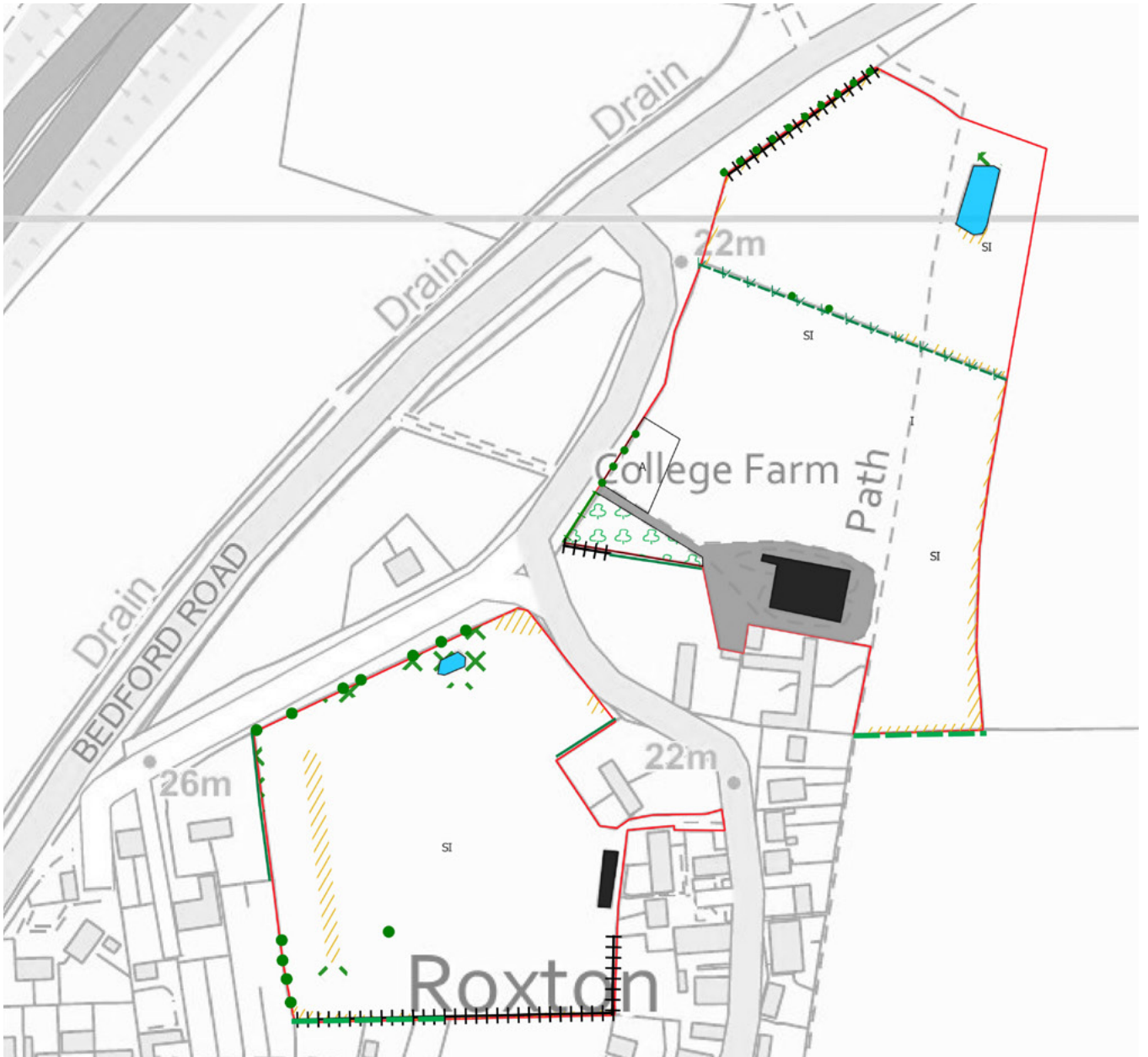
ruderal vegetation. There is a species poor hedgerow on the west of the parcel. There is a single storey building in the east of the parcel. The exterior walls are tiled and the building is of low potential for roosting bats.

**3.7.3** Neither parcel of land contains any habitats that would be in-principle constraints to development and both provide opportunities to be enhanced and provide a net gain to biodiversity.

**3.7.4** Consideration should be given to the ponds and mature trees within any forthcoming development proposals. Although some of the habitats present are of low ecological value they should be considered in relation to the protected and notable species they might support.

**3.7.5** There was no evidence of badgers found on either parcel of land. Phase 2 surveys relating to reptile, bat and great crested newts will be required on both land parcels.

**3.7.6** Great crested newt eDNA surveys have been undertaken the results of which have confirmed an absence on ponds within both parcels.



above: Draft Extended Phase 1 Habitat Plan (EDP)

### 3.8 Sustainability, Climate Change and Energy

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

3.8.2 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.

3.8.3 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.




























**above:** View looking south from footpath within Parcel A, towards St Mary Magdalene Church (EDP)

## 4. Site Features

4.1.1 The adjacent plan provides a summary of the features of the site, drawn from the preceding technical work and plans. The plan sets a brief for the development of the following concept masterplan.

4.1.2 The following key principles for development have been identified:

1. Existing planting should be retained with appropriate buffers as far as possible, or enhanced, to provide structural landscaping and maintain ecological habitats.
2. Development should front on to Bedford Road and High Street but be set behind the retained boundary trees and hedgerows to create a new entrance to the village.
3. The new open space within the site could including new tree planting and drainage attenuation areas which could be designed to provide ecological benefits.
4. There are two options for the location of the drainage attenuation basin and associated pumping station in Parcel A, both of which are equally effective. For Parcel B drainage attenuation will be located at the lowest part of the site, along the north eastern boundary.
5. Small parts of Roxton Conservation Area lie within both parcels of the site. College Farmhouse and 14 High Street (Grade II Listed) are also close to the north and south parcels of the site respectively. The relationship with these features should be carefully considered.

	Site Boundary
	Area of site frontage suitable for all modes access
	Existing farm access
	Existing pedestrian access
	Existing public footpath
	Existing National Cycle Route 12
	Existing trees and hedgerows with root protection areas
	Trees with tree preservation order (off site)
	Existing orchard
	Existing ditch
	Existing pond
	Potential location for foul pumping station
	Potential location for drainage attenuation area and surface water pumping station option 1 (Parcel A)
	Potential location for drainage attenuation area and surface water pumping station option 2 (Parcel A)
	Proposed drainage attenuation area (Parcel B) (TBC)
	Area requiring additional noise attenuation measures
	Existing building to be demolished
	Existing hard standing to be removed
	Existing fence
	Sensitive boundary with neighbouring properties
	Conservation Area
	Grade II Listed Building
	View to St Mary Magdalene Church



## 5. Development Concept

### Parcel A

- Residential development is found in the southern and northern fields, to the west of the public footpath, with open space to the east of the public footpath and around the central hedgerow.
- A drainage attenuation area is located in the northern field with surface water and foul pumping stations.
- Structural open space is found along the southern boundary, containing buffer planting outside of private gardens, to screen the development from the adjacent Listed Building.

**Approximately 38 dwellings.**

**Approximately 1.2ha of public open space, including drainage area.**

### Parcel B

- Residential development is found along the western boundary and within the centre of the site, with open space found surrounding the retained central tree and along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries.
- Drainage attenuation will be located at the lowest part of the site, along the north eastern boundary.


















**Approximately 32 dwellings.**

**Approximately 0.6ha of public open space, including drainage area.**

### Total Provision

**Approximate number of dwellings = 70**

**Approximate amount of public open space, including drainage area = 1.8ha**

	Site Boundary
	Main access route
	Proposed pedestrian access
	Existing public footpath
	Proposed development
	Proposed roads and private drives
	Proposed public open space
	Proposed structural open space
	Proposed drainage area
	Proposed surface water pumping station
	Proposed foul pumping station
	Existing trees
	Existing hedgerows
	Proposed trees
	Proposed hedgerows
	Potential play area + 20m offset
	Potential acoustic fence (subject to technical design)



Existing pedestrian access point retained

Acoustic fence

Open space around existing boundary and hedgerow trees to be retained

Development will front on to Bedford Road, set behind the retained hedgerow, to create a new entrance to the village

Development fronts on to the public open space to provide natural surveillance

All modes access

Parcel A

Drainage attenuation area

Play area

Open space surrounding existing trees to be retained

All modes access

Bedford Road

Development fronts on to High Street, set behind open space

New hedgerow to soften views of the development from the public footpath

Development fronts on to Bedford Road, set behind open space

Existing pedestrian access point retained

New tree planting to soften views of the development from wider views to the east

Parcel B

New pedestrian access point

Planting buffers to existing properties

Open space surrounding existing trees to be retained

Development backs / sides on to western boundary to preserve amenity

Park Road

High Street

above: Concept Diagram

## 6. Conclusion

There is an opportunity for sensitive residential development of 70 new homes on Land off Bedford Road, Roxton.

### 6.1 Conclusion

**6.1.1** The site could provide a variety of sizes of new homes, including affordable homes. The proposals would include new public open space which would be accessible to both new and existing residents.

**6.1.2** 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.

**6.1.3** The scheme will create a new green edge for the village, including new planting alongside the existing public footpath.

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

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

**6.1.6** 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.



above: The site within Roxton

# 7. Key Benefits

The site will provide a number of key benefits to Roxton and Bedford Borough as a whole:



Mix of family homes, including affordable properties, thus increasing opportunities for home ownership in the local area



The public footpath is integrated into the development providing access to the existing footpath network



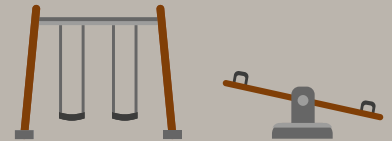
Creation of new public open space for leisure and recreation and a new green edge to the village



The team are committed to the provision of high standard of design and construction enabling an enhanced residential amenity



Increased use of existing bus routes as a result of new residents travelling in the area



Creation of new equipped play area for the benefit of new and existing residents



Employment opportunities including full time and supply chain jobs during the construction period



Good links to the village facilities available within Roxton and the facilities available in the wider area



The protection and enhancement of existing landscape features and biodiversity net gain



Section 106 agreement and CIL opportunities to benefit Roxton and Bedford Borough



Increased spending in the locality as a result of new residents coming to the area



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

