

SHORTS PARK



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DRAFT

GALLAGHER
DEVELOPMENTS

THE VISION

Development at Shorts Park offers the unique and exciting opportunity to create a high quality place on previously developed land that serves to protect and connect to the existing context.

Attractiveness, vibrancy and high-quality will drive the design at Shorts Park to create a successful place that celebrates the existing features and the context the site sits in.

The design features attractive open spaces that provide a community asset for the proposed and neighbouring developments. It also provides a setting for movement corridors promoting travel by foot or cycle.

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Illustrative sketch of new park and housing at Shorts Park



1. THE SITE

The site, which comprises a former airfield, is located to the southeast of Cardington Sheds and east of the settlement of Shortstown.

The Grade II* listed Cardington Airship Sheds are situated to the immediate north of the Site, and these form significant features within views of the landscape and are important visual landmarks.

The landform of the Site itself is broadly flat at an elevation of 30m AOD.

The Site borders existing and proposed residential development to the east and west of the sheds.






View of site from the east



View to sheds from south of the site



-  Site Boundary -14.49Ha
-  Ecological Mitigation Area
-  Land controlled by the applicant

Site Location Plan

2. PLANNING CONTEXT

The site is a former airfield and is therefore considered to comprise 'previously developed land' (PDL). The Government's 'standard method' identifies a minimum annual housing need figure and for Bedford this currently stands at 1,340 homes per annum compared to the current objectively assessed need of 970 homes. This will require allocation of housing land for an extra 5,550 homes over the next 15 years, as a minimum.

The Bedford Local Plan review will therefore need to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites to meet a much higher level of housing need than currently planned for the next 15-20 years. This can be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as extensions to existing villages or towns or new settlements, provided they are well located and designed and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (as per para. 72 of the NPPF).

Shortstown is one such location, and is already defined in the current Local Plan 2030 as a 'Key Service Centre' comprising a good range of services and facilities and being well connected to larger town centres by public transport and cycling. It is approximately a 20 minute cycle and 20 minute bus ride from Bedford Town Centre and also benefits from close access to the A421 for wider transport connections.

Planning Policy

Shortstown is defined in the current Local Plan 2030 as a 'Key Service Centre' comprising a good range of services and facilities and being well connected to larger town centres by public transport and cycling. It is approximately a 20 minute cycle and 20 minute bus ride from Bedford Town Centre and also benefits from close access to the A421 for wider transport connections.

Development to the east of Shortstown already contributes to the Borough's growth strategy in recognition of both its sustainable location and the industrial buildings that once stood next to the Sheds. Residential development has more recently been permitted to the east of the Sheds forming an interconnected series of neighbourhoods. The Site therefore has the potential to continue this series of neighbourhoods to the southeast of the Sheds, whilst preserving the main vistas of the listed buildings and their open frontages to the west.

The Site can accommodate up to 350 new homes within easy walking or cycling distance of Shortstown's local centre, contributing to the economic and social vitality of the existing settlement. It would also contribute to the Borough's housing needs by making best use of previously developed land, which are expected to rise from the current objectively assessed need of 970 homes to at least 1,340 homes per annum over the remaining Local Plan Period.



3. HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Shortstown History

Shortstown is a village located just south of Bedford. It was built from 1916 when demand for housing arose to accommodate the workforce needed in the establishment of the Cardington Airship Works to the southeast. The village then evolved into a settlement for people working at the RAF Cardington base.

The initial vision for Shortstown was to create a new "Garden City" type settlement alongside the works, but only 151 houses were built. Further phases that were envisaged to the south and west, but by the time these were realised, they no longer resembled the original Garden City aesthetic.

The architectural style in this initial development was heavily influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Houses are mainly red brick with dark red tile roofs and are more reminiscent of Hampstead Garden Suburb. The road layout is formal like in most Garden City developments, houses are mainly terraced, set-back distances vary, and the streets are softened by planting, either in the front gardens or within a verge.

Shortstown Today

Since 2012 there has been significant housing development on land to the east of the A600, this is part of the village extension. Shortstown had received little growth up until 2012 when enlargement to its eastern side was allocated.

Figure 1 shows how growth was directed to both the west and east of Shortstown, with several large buildings close to the Sheds. This set a precedent for later residential development, which surrounds the Sheds and continues to eastwards towards Southill Road.

In recent years, further development has started to appear on the east of the A600. Shorts Park is an additional southeasterly expansion that can reflect and celebrate many of the heritage assets around it as well as provide further growth to the wider village.

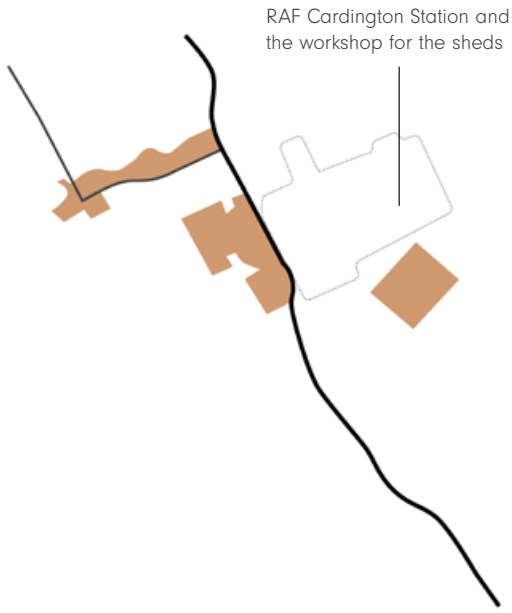
Additional homes would contribute towards greater vitality of the village, providing greater support for existing and future local services.



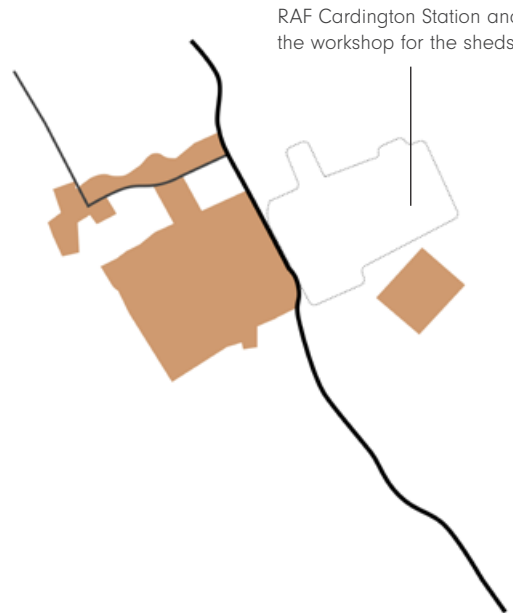
Shortstown local shops and services



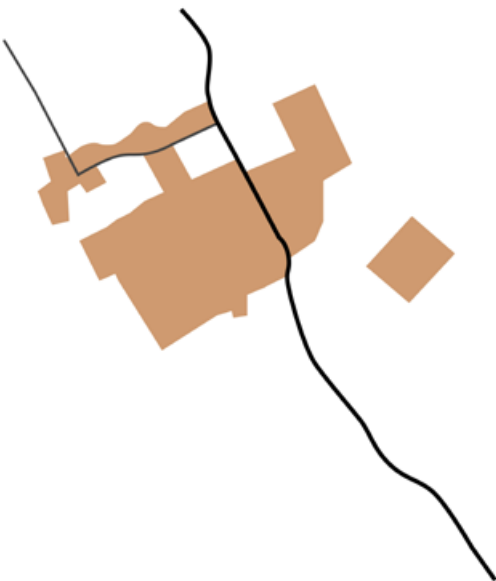
Figure 1: Early Shortstown plans c.1916



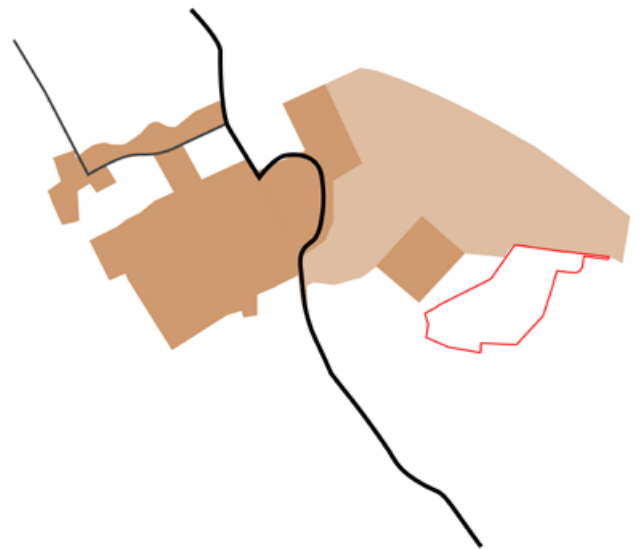
Early 20th century Shortstown appears as a Garden Village



Mid/Late 20th Century further westerly growth and expansion of the village



Further expansion to Shortstown in recent years



Present and future developments to aid expansion towards the east of the village

Heritage Significance

The Sheds are surviving examples of early airship sheds. Shed 1 is one of only a few *in situ* examples in Europe of a pre-1918 airshed. Shed 2 is later, dating from 1928 and is formed from a shed transferred from Pulham, Norfolk, which was then enlarged to house the R100 airship. The engineering and technological advances associated with the construction of the sheds, the airships and later balloons built within them is important to our understanding of the development of airship technology in the early 20th century.

Historically, the sheds and the surrounding base to the north and airfield to the south shared a close associative relationship which aids in an understanding and appreciation of the historic function of the sheds. However, this is no longer readily discernible within the landscape as a result of the loss of the airfield use, supporting infrastructure and consequent residential redevelopment of the surrounding area. The loss of RAF Cardington and subsequent residential development in the surrounding area has comprehensively altered the setting of the sheds.

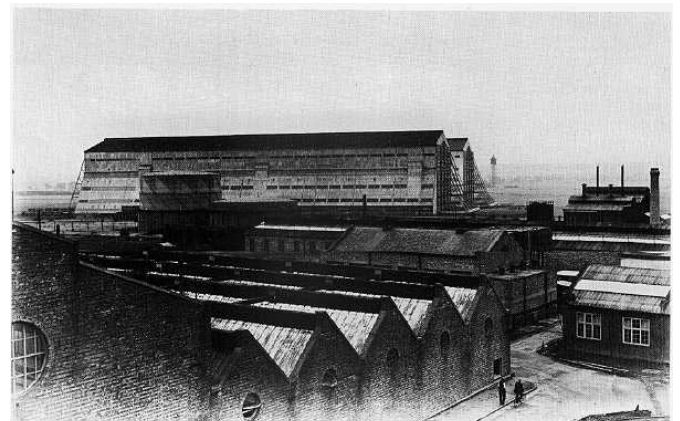
The current open space to the west of the site is considered to be sensitive allowing uninterrupted views to the principal elevation as well as historically being the main area in which the airships were manoeuvred.



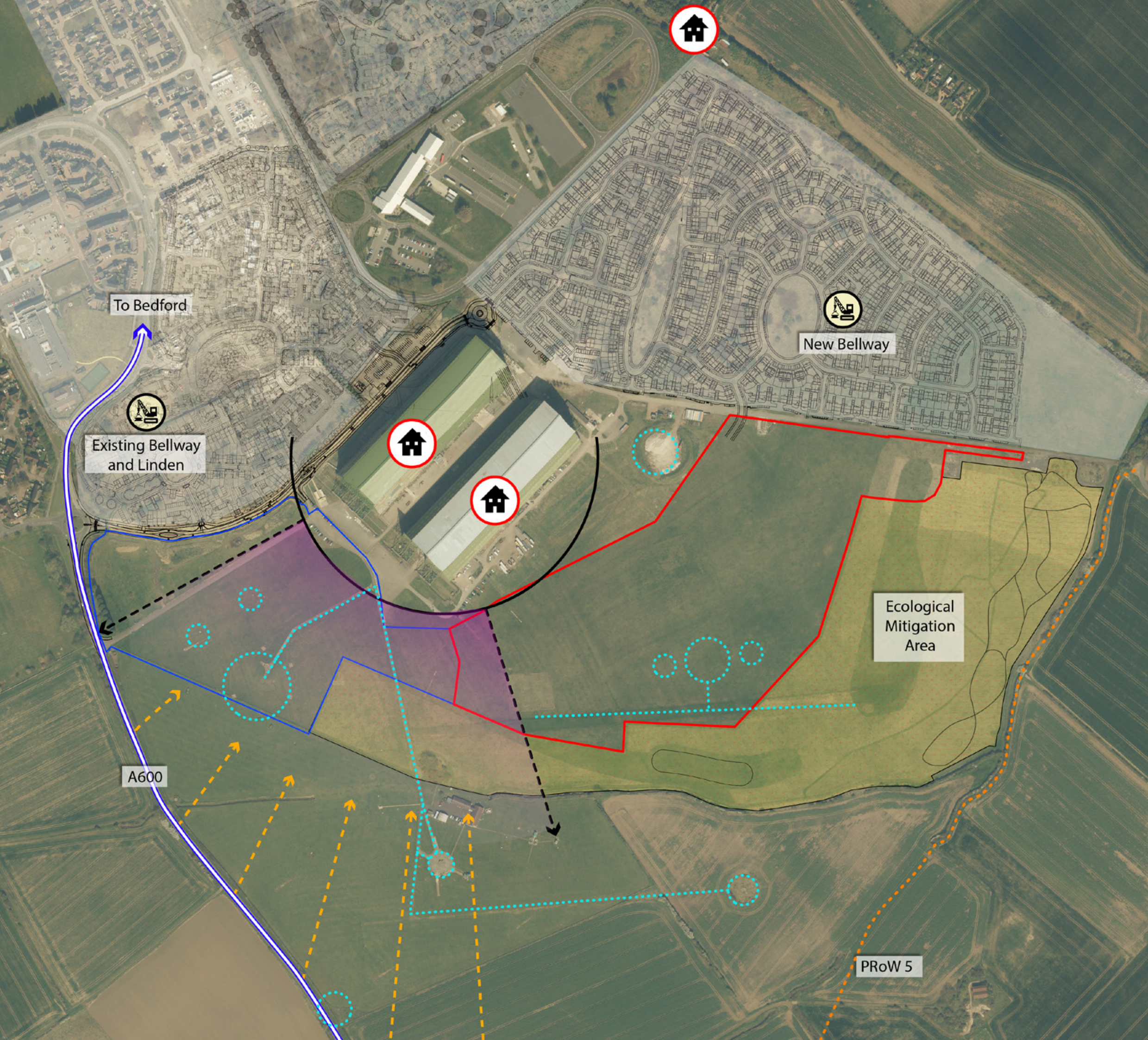
RAF Station Cardington



R100 Tethering Station



The original workshops by the Cardington Sheds



-  Site Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Airfiled Features
-  Key Views In
-  Public Right of Way
-  Retained Vista to Sheds
-  Ecological Mitigation Area
-  Land controlled by the applicant

4. SITE CONTEXT APPRAISAL

Early baseline reports have been produced for the Shorts Park site. The plan presented on the opposite page shows some of the key findings.

Drainage

The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, denoting a low annual probability of flooding from fluvial sources. Risk of flooding to the Site from groundwater and artificial sources has also been assessed and found to be low. The masterplan presents potential to include a wide-range of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUD) including permeable paving, rain gardens, green roofs on selected outbuildings and rainwater harvesting.

Due to the increase in foul flows post-development, it is anticipated that upgrades would be required to the Anglian Water sewer network to accommodate the additional flows. The proposed foul flows would be quantified as the masterplan develops.

Ecology

The site benefits from not being within any statutory designated sites and offers opportunity for biodiversity net gain. Existing habitats on the site provide potential for amphibians, invertebrates, reptiles and birds but, overall, the land is of relatively low ecological value due to its former use. Ecological mitigation and enhancement can be successfully delivered through a biodiversity management and enhancement plan.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

The character of the Site is open with few landscape features, relating to its historical use as an airfield. The Landscape Visual Appraisal has informed the masterplan. The central and eastern areas will provide more space for larger-scale tree planting to break up and filter the mass of the built form and to ensure that it does not detract from views of the sheds.














Ground Conditions

There are potential sources of on-site contamination due to the adjacent areas having been developed and utilised historically for commercial aviation and military purposes. However, based on the known severity of contamination within the wider site, the potential risk for significant impact on the Site is considered to be low to medium. Ground investigation is recommended across the Site to confirm ground conditions for the purposes of further contaminated land conceptual modelling and to inform foundation design for the proposed future development.

Noise

The development is relatively well distanced from the road traffic noise along the A600 and the intermittent noise from the use of the Sheds. Both of these noise sources can be mitigated through the design of the buildings and incorporation of standard thermal double glazing with trickle vents. For areas proximate to the A600 and south of The Sheds, enhanced glazing and ventilation may be required subject to further detail noise surveys and accounting for screening afforded by the new buildings themselves.



-  Site Boundary
-  Potential Main Access
-  Potential Route to Site
-  Potential Emergency Route to Site
-  Listed Buildings
-  Airfiled Features
-  Key Views In
-  Public Right of Way
-  Flood Zones 2 & 3
-  View Corridors and Green Links
-  Approved Attenuation Pond
-  Ecological Mitigation Area
-  Land controlled by the applicant

5. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING THE SITE

There are 3 important design themes relating specifically to Shorts Park in order to create a distinctive new place in the continued growth of Shortstown.

1 Delivering a high quality place - The overall development will focus on the delivery of **high quality** housing and open spaces that cater for the needs of all users.

2 Providing new connectivity - Shorts Park has the potential to deliver sustainable travel modes, aiding its **connectivity** to Shortstown, surrounding facilities and permeability from east to west.

3 Creating attractive open spaces - The site seeks to provide different areas of **open space** that contribute to the needs and overall well-being of the existing and future residents.

The following sections further explain the delivery of each of these objectives and principles.

**1. DELIVERING A HIGH
QUALITY PLACE**



**2. PROVIDING NEW
CONNECTIVITY**



**3. CREATING ATTRACTIVE
OPEN SPACES**





High Quality Place




















Delivering a High Quality Place

Design at Shorts Park will aim to respect the character of the historic sheds and reflect the aesthetic of Shortstown, sitting sensitively within its context.

- Use of high-quality building materials and surface materials in the public realm.
- Generous planting of trees including, where possible, street trees in most of the streets.
- Enhances its surroundings, creating attractive and distinctive areas.





-  Site Boundary
-  Residential Development
-  Main Infrastructure
-  Main Access (Right of way in control of Applicant)
-  Emergency Access
-  Proposed Bus Route
-  Pedestrian / Cycle Corridor
-  Pedestrian / Cycle Entrance
-  Public Open Space
-  Equipped / Natural Play Area
-  Long Distance Views
-  Green Links
-  Wet Land
-  Swale
-  Proposed Planting
-  Ecological Mitigation Area
-  Land controlled by the applicant



Connectivity



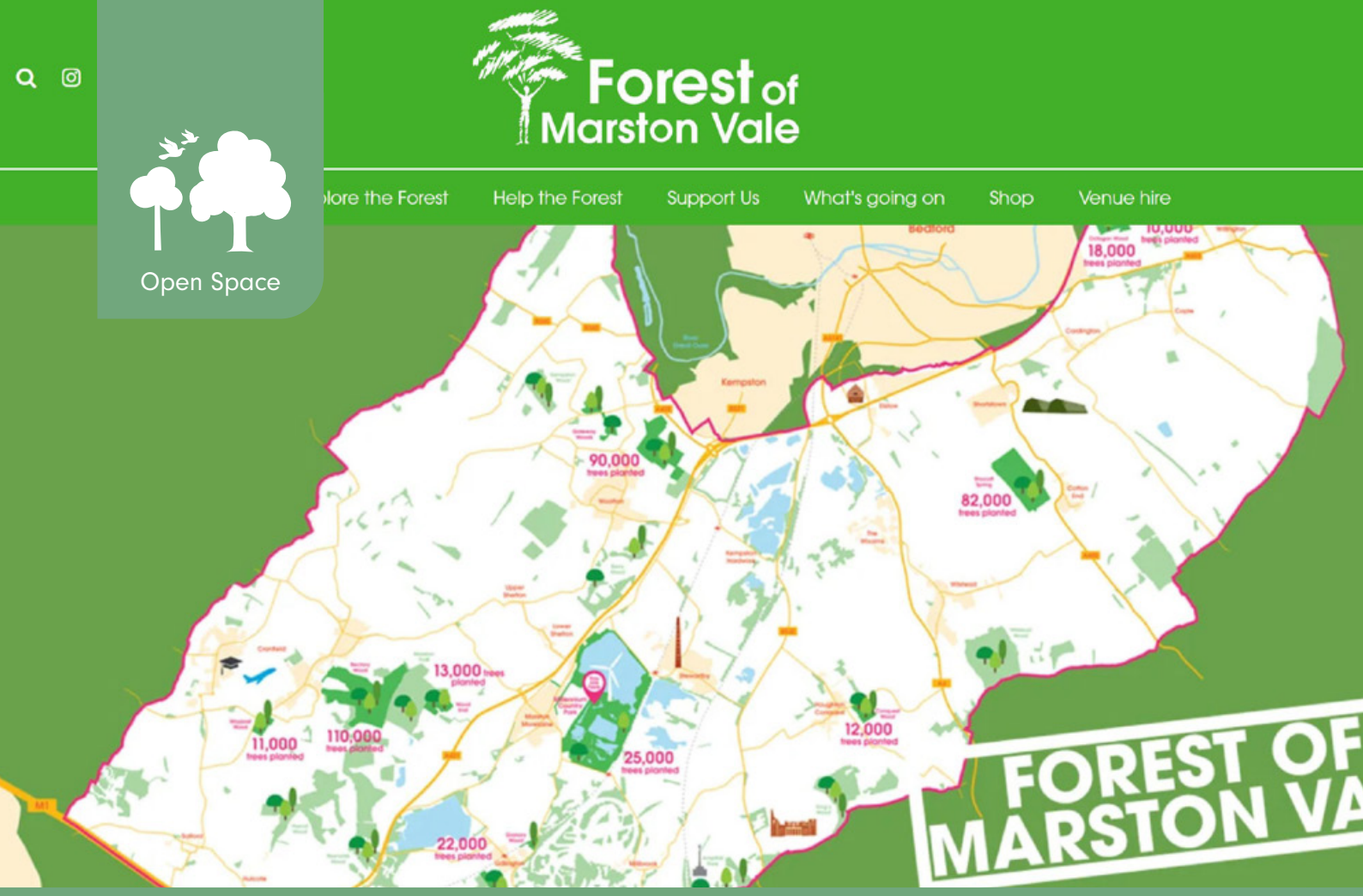
Providing new connectivity

- Connections will be made to the existing network of footways in Shortstown via the Spine Road to A600 and into New Cardington, and via a new 'green corridor' to Jackson's Gate. This combined route for pedestrians and cyclists would then link with the existing footway/ cycleway along A600 and provide access further afield to New Cardington and Cotton End.
- The proposed masterplan will focus on 'placemaking' to accommodate either extended or new viable bus services into the site via land to the rear of the listed airship Sheds to serve a central bus hub that would be accessible by future residents within a 400m walking distance of dwellings and other facilities.
- The proposed development would be accessed from A600 via the Spine Road to the north of the listed airship Sheds and through the consented development to the east of the Sheds





- Site Boundary
- Residential Development
- Main Infrastructure
- Main Access
- Potential Route to Site
- Potential Emergency Route to Site
- Pedestrian / Cycle Entrance
- Proposed Bus Route
- Pedestrian / Cycle Corridor
- Public Access to Ecological Mitigation Area
- Ecological Mitigation Area
- Land controlled by the applicant



Green Infrastructure and Health and Wellbeing

The green infrastructure strategy has been driven by the need to deliver natural green spaces, tree planting, play spaces and biodiversity net gain.

- A park located on the western edge of the site will accommodate an interpretation kiosk that explains the heritage importance of the setting of the site.
- There is potential to provide natural planting areas and to utilise the proposed attenuation basin to the north of the site for water-based activities.
- New play areas will also feature within the public open spaces and green links passing through the site.
- The development at Shorts Park has focused on the creation of a robust network of green spaces. The site provides circular walks that connect existing and future residents to nature and the surrounding countryside. This will promote health and wellbeing.
- The site provides green links to the Ecological Mitigation Area (EMA) to the south, improving biodiversity for the area.
- The EMA offers footpaths that can be access directly from Shorts Park enhancing the health and wellbeing of residents.

Forest of Marston Vale

The Forest of Marston Vale Trust is working towards helping the area recover from the effects of the clay industry after extensive excavations took place throughout the surrounding countryside. As a result, tree coverage reduced significantly.

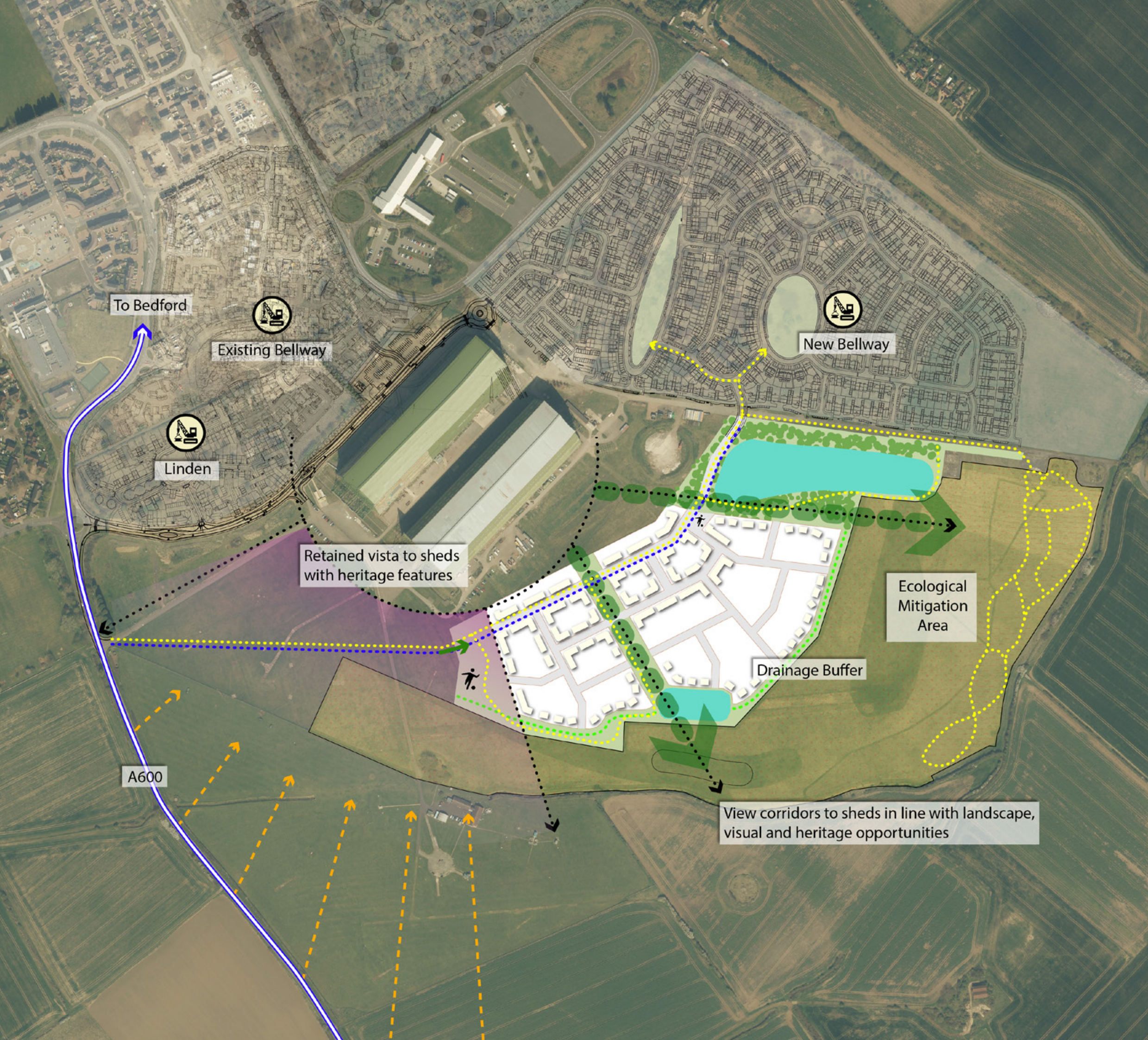
Forest of Marston Vale's 'Forest Plan', sets out its main objectives to plant trees and use woodlands to create a better life for people, and wildlife by increasing woodland cover to 30% to facilitate the regeneration of the Vale.

Development at Shorts Park can help towards the goal of increasing tree coverage in the area. New tree planting in the site, will make a positive contribution that can deliver environmental gains for the community.

Canopy cover will extend across most parts of the development through:

- Street tree planting
- Trees in private gardens
- Trees in informal open space
- Planting to add character to areas of park and recreation

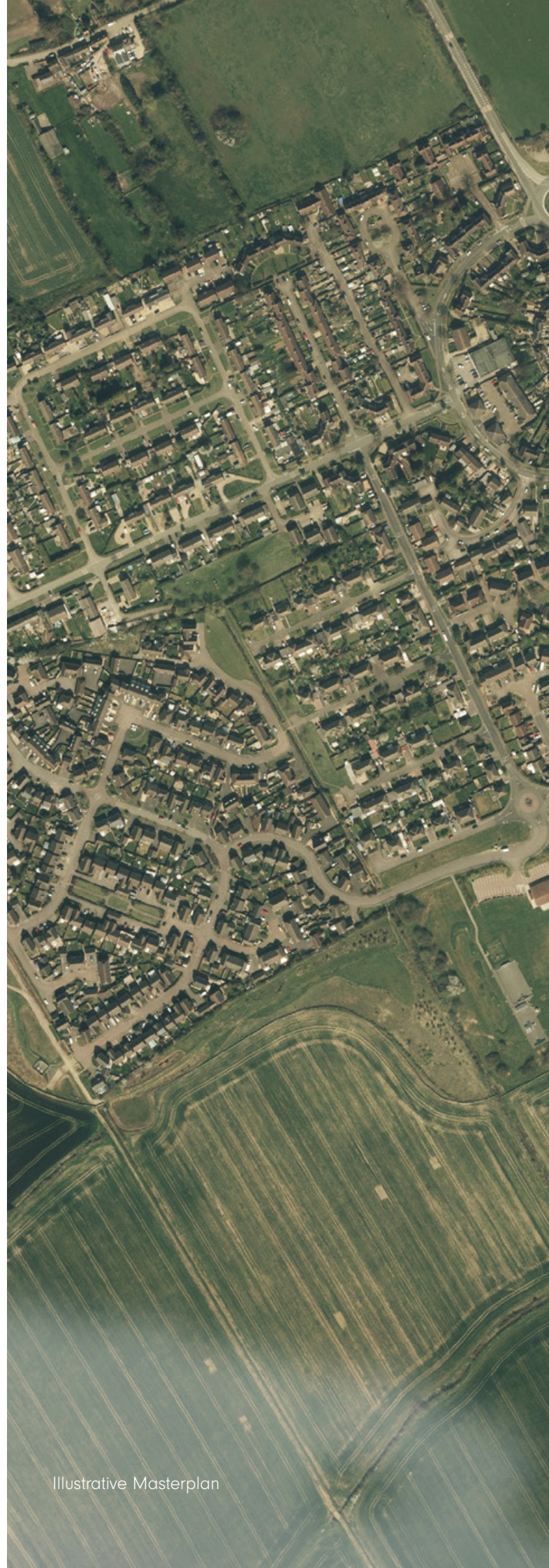
There is also potential to include off-site contributions towards woodland planting.



- Residential Development
- Key Views In
- Pedestrian / Cycle Entrance
- Pedestrian / Cycle Corridor
- Public Open Space
- Equipped / Natural Play Area
- Long Distance Views
- Green Links
- Wet Land
- Swale
- Proposed Planting
- Cycle / Pedestrian routes
- Ecological Mitigation Area

The illustrative masterplan has been informed by the analysis and the principles established in the vision for Shorts Park.

- 1 Play areas
- 2 Attenuation features
- 3 Proposed tree planting
- 4 Built form responding to the character of the airfield
- 5 Lower density edges
- 6 Main route with continuous frontages
- 7 Swales
- 8 Ped/cycle paths
- 9 Main access
- 10 Ecological mitigation area





GALLAGHER

DEVELOPMENTS

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