



**ES LANDSCAPE  
PLANNING**

Part of the ES Group

LAND NORTH OF TEMPLARS WAY,  
SHARNBROOK

## Landscape Advice Note

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

1.1.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by Glenalmond Developments Ltd to undertake an objective assessment as to the potential effects of the proposed development at land north of Templars Way, Sharnbrook upon the Village Open Space – Site I as identified within the Bedford Borough Council Allocations & Designations Local Plan (July 2013).

1.1.2. Glenalmond's site is illustrated within its local context, including the Village Open Space allocation, on Plan SCP.001.

### 1.2. Approach

1.2.1. The purpose of this advice note is to objectively assess the potential effects of developing the site at Templars Way for residential uses upon the Village Open Space designation that lies to the south west. The Village Open Space designation, referred to as Site I, is illustrated on the Policies Map Inset which is included at Appendix 1 of this note. Details of the related policy and assessment, undertaken by Bedford Borough, are included for reference within Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

1.2.2. This note does not represent a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and does not assess the potential effects of the proposed development on the wider landscape character or visual environment. It is anticipated that such an assessment would accompany a formal planning application on the site.

1.2.3. This Landscape Advice Note will take the following format:

- Introduce the Glenalmond site and the emerging masterplan for the site;
- Introduce Village Open Space Site I and its policy context;
- Undertake an assessment of the potential effects of developing the site at Templars Way upon the Village Open Space designation; and
- Conclusions will be drawn.

- 1.2.4. This Landscape Advice Note forms part of the suite of documents submitted by Cerda Planning, in relation to the site at Templars Way, to the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan Consultation, and should be reviewed alongside the other submissions made by Cerda in relation to this site.

## **2. REVIEW OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS UPON VILLAGE OPEN SPACE DESIGNATION: SITE I**

### **2.1. The Glenalmond Site**

- 2.1.1. The site comprises an area of semi-improved grassland currently used for the grazing of cattle that lies just to the east of Sharnbrook. The site extends to the north west of Templars Way, with the railway defining the north eastern boundary. The south western and north western boundaries are characterised by tall, mature hedgerows with scattered hedgerow trees which create a degree of visual enclosure from the adjoining fields and village beyond (refer Plan SCP.001).
- 2.1.2. The Glenalmond site is not subject to any qualitative landscape designations and is not identified as a Village Open Space.
- 2.1.3. An area of residential development lies to the south of Templars Way, opposite the site. This appears to be late 20<sup>th</sup> century and extends south, running between Mill Road, to the west, and the railway line, to the east.
- 2.1.4. The Fordham Arms lies to the south west of the site, located at the junction of Templars Way and Mill Road. The former public house, now restaurant, has a garden to the south west of the property, which lies within the Village Open Space designation. A car park lies to the north east, separating the restaurant from the southern corner of the Glenalmond site.
- 2.1.5. The Glenalmond site is separated from the field to the south west, which is partially covered by the Site I Village Open Space designation, by a tall hedgerow which follows a ditch along the field boundaries. The hedgerow spans either side of the ditch and comprises a dense mix of hawthorn and other native species. The hedgerow does not reflect other more managed field boundary hedges, extending over 4m in height for much of its length. A footpath runs along the inside of the hedgerow, within the Glenalmond site, extending north west from Templars Way.
- 2.1.6. The field in which Site I is set separates the Glenalmond site from the wider village of Sharnbrook, with the Conservation Area boundary following the

garden boundaries of Hill Side, which lies just to the south west (refer Policies Map Inset 30 within Appendix 1).

### The Proposals

- 2.1.7. While the proposals for the Glenalmond site are by no means fixed, the emerging masterplan for the site is included within Appendix 4. The plan currently indicated up to 66 dwellings accessed from Templars Way in the southern part of the site. The proposed layout has been sensitively designed to achieve areas of landscaped public open space to the north east, north west and south west, setting the development back from the railway and adjoining fields. Of particular relevance to this assessment is the inclusion of the 20 – 25m wide public open space along the south western boundary, which sets development back from the Village Open Space designation to the south.

## 2.2. The Village Open Space Designation

- 2.2.1. Site I is illustrated on the Policies Map Inset (within Appendix 1) that accompanies the Bedford Borough Allocations and Designations Local Plan, and is identified as View I. The designation covers the southern half of the field to the south west of the Glenalmond site, extending north from the Kennel Hill streetscene up to a notional east-west line which runs between the boundary of Hill Side and the northern extent of The Fordham Arms site. The northern edge of the designation is not defined on the ground. The tall hedgerow that forms the south western boundary of the Glenalmond site separates the designation from the site to the north and forms a backdrop to views from Kennel Hill.
- 2.2.2. The Village Open Space designation relates to Policy AD40 of the adopted Local Plan. The policy wording is included within Appendix 2 for reference. The policy identifies five criteria which form the reasoning for designating areas within or around the existing settlements in the Borough and states that:

**“Development will not be permitted on land designated as a village open space or view unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for**

**designation are not compromised or that other material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space or View undeveloped.”**

2.2.3. As part of the supporting documentation for the Local Plan, a detailed assessment of the identified Village Open Spaces in the various settlements was undertaken. An extract from the Sharnbrook assessment is included within Appendix 3.

2.2.4. The Borough assessment identifies that Criteria C, D and E of Policy AD40 form the basis for designation and notes that the site comprises natural green space plus view and that there is no public access.

### **2.3. Potential Effects of the Proposed Development upon the Village Open Space Designation**

2.3.1. The proposed development at Templars Way will not directly affect the Village Open Space designation, being located in the field to the north and the masterplan indicating that the proposed built form would be set back over 40m from the northern boundary of Site I, at its closest point.

2.3.2. Given that the proposals will not take place on land designated as a Village Open Space or view, it is considered appropriate to assess the potential effect of the proposals upon the three criteria set out in Policy AD40 and applied to Site I within the Sharnbrook Open Spaces Assessment (criteria C, D and E, refer Appendix 2).

*Criteria C: They provide a gap or break in the frontage which contributes to the character of a settlement for example by providing a view into a village which forms part of the village setting, or a view into open countryside establishing the relationship between the form of the village and the countryside beyond.*

2.3.3. As illustrated on Plan SCP.001, Site I forms a break between the property known as Hill Side, which lies at the eastern extent of the Sharnbrook Conservation Area, and The Fordham Arms, beyond which lies a late 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development. The designation includes the beer garden of The Fordham Arms, creating a green gap between Hill Side and the



junction of Mill Road, Kennel Hill and Templars Way. Site I, together with the field to the south of Kennel Hill, create a break between the more established parts of the village, which lie in a localised dip associated with Sharn Brook, to the west, and the newer residential area that has developed between Mill Road, Templars Way and the railway, to the east. The development of the Glenalmond site would not compromise this perceived gap, with an area of proposed public open space running along the south western boundary of the scheme reinforcing the separation between residential development, Site I and Kennel Hill to the south.

- 2.3.4. Criteria C also makes reference to the provision of views into open countryside and the site is identified as View I on the Policies Map Inset. A series of views have been taken from the footway which runs along the northern side of Kennel Hill which illustrate Site I within its localised context (refer Appendix 5).
- 2.3.5. The views within Appendix 5 are taken from the footway as these represent the most sensitive receptors, i.e. walkers / pedestrians. Motorists are considered less sensitive as they tend to be focussed on driving rather than appreciating the wider setting and will be passing through the landscape at speed, affording them less time to appreciate features or views. The views are taken from publicly accessible locations and, while not exhaustive, are considered representative of views along Kennel Hill / Mill Road and into Site I.
- 2.3.6. Viewpoints A and B illustrate the views from Kennel Hill as one leaves Sharnbrook, heading east. The vegetated nature of the southern boundary of Site I is evident and it is clear that the site provides some relief in the built frontage between Hill Side and the more recent residential development to the east. From these locations, the intervening boundary treatments associated with Hill Side will contain views of the proposed development to the north of Templars Way ensuring that they do not affect the contribution the site makes to the break in the frontage.
- 2.3.7. It is noted that the detailed assessment of the Sharnbrook Village Open Spaces includes two photographs of Site I (refer Appendix 3). One taken from the southern side of Kennel Hill, showing the southern boundary of the designation, and one looking over the field access gate at the western end of the southern boundary. It is noted that the field gate is set back from the

footway so to appreciate the view within the published assessment one would need to divert off the footway to look over the gate. Viewpoint C within Appendix 5 is taken from the footway looking north east like the one in the published assessment and is considered representative of the public view from the streetscene. The view illustrates that, in reality, the break in the frontage planting, to look from the streetscene across the landscape to the north, is limited.

- 2.3.8. Within the context of View C, the field in the foreground and mature hedgerow that forms a backdrop will be unaffected by the proposed development to the north east. Furthermore, the proposals are set back 20 – 25m from the boundary hedgerow beyond an area of landscaped public open space. While some glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape may be possible it will not appear overbearing or prominent and the rural setting of Kennel Hill will be maintained. Opportunities for new planting within the proposed public open space will help reinforce the landscaped boundary between the proposed development and Site I and ensure that the relationship between the village and the countryside beyond is not compromised.
- 2.3.9. Viewpoints D & E are taken from the footway looking north through the southern boundary of Site I. The photographs illustrate that views through the southern boundary vegetation are heavily filtered and it is the field immediately beyond, which forms Site I, that creates the landscape setting for these views. As one moves east along the footway, the vegetated boundaries of the pub garden reinforce the separation between the proposed development site and the streetscene. It is considered that the proposed development to the north east could be integrated without compromising the character or amenities of these views.
- 2.3.10. Viewpoint F is taken with a wider angle lens and is included within the Photographic Record as a context view to illustrate the southern boundary of Site I. It is clear that the vegetated nature of this boundary is key to the contribution Site I makes to the localised streetscene and townscape setting, creating a green break in the built frontage. It is acknowledged that the views were taken in late summer, with the foliage on the trees, and that intervisibility will increase during the winter. However, there is a notable presence of ivy within the hedge and on the trunks of the trees that will

ensure a degree of year-round cover and screening, which together with the dense branch structure of the trees and hedge ensures a degree of visual separation. This means that even during the winter the southern boundary of Site I maintains a green break in the built up frontage but also ensures that extensive views north east, across the site from Kennel Hill, remain limited.

2.3.11. Viewpoints G & H are taken from Mill Road, to the east of Site I and show the designation within the context of approaches to Sharnbrook from the east. The views illustrate the green break that Site I provides between the more recent development to the north east of Mill Road and south of Templars Way, and the more established parts of the village to the west. The Fordham Arms bookends Site I and forms the western extent of the built environment that lies to the east of the designation. Within the context of these views, the proposals are located to the far right, with the intervening built form and vegetation creating visual containment and separation. The proposed development would not be seen within the context of Site I on approaches to Sharnbrook from the east.

2.3.12. As set out above, it is considered that the proposals can be integrated on the site to the north of Templars Way without compromising the perceived break in the frontage or the views of the landscape to the north which provide an appreciation of the countryside setting of Sharnbrook. It is concluded that the proposals would not compromise the aims and objectives of Criteria C.

*Criteria D: The gap provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene.*

2.3.13. Viewpoints A, B, F, G and H, within Appendix 5, illustrate how the vegetated southern boundary of Site I provides relief between the built up areas of the Conservation Area to the west and the late 20<sup>th</sup> century development to the north of Mill Road. Plan SCP.001 also illustrates how Site I forms a break between the more established parts of the village and the residential development north of Mill Road, east of The Fordham Arms.

2.3.14. The proposed development to the north of Templars Way will be located over 100m from this frontage, to the north east of The Fordham Arms. The

proposals will not affect the vegetated frontage of Site I, nor will they affect the open character of the wider Site I beyond this boundary. The proposed development of the Glenalmond site would be perceived within the context of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century development on the opposite side of Templars Way and will not compromise the visual relief afforded by Site I within the Kennel Hill streetscene. It is considered that the proposals will not compromise the aims and objectives of Criteria D.

*Criteria E: The open space assists the transition between village and countryside providing a soft edge to the village which is pleasing visually.*

- 2.3.15. As illustrated on Plan SCP.001, Site I forms a break between the established townscape of the Sharnbrook Conservation Area and the more recent residential development to the north of Mill Road, rather than being located on the edge of the village and forming a parcel of land between built form and the wider rural setting, as the Policies Map Inset (Appendix 1) might infer. Certainly, Site I forms a break in the built frontage (as acknowledged above) and complements the open landscape on the opposite side of Kennel Hill, to the south. It is considered that it is the vegetated frontage of Site I that contributes to the feeling of moving from one part of the village to another and the open nature of Site I, beyond this frontage, also ensures that there is a perception of a wider rural setting.
- 2.3.16. As discussed above, in relation to the various viewpoints within Appendix 5, it is considered that sensitively designed residential development could be integrated into the site north of Templars Way without compromising the vegetated character of the Kennel Hill streetscene or the open nature of Site I. The proposals will not compromise the perceived soft edge to the village that Site I contributes to. It is concluded that the proposed development of the Glenalmond site would not compromise the aims and objectives of Criteria E of Policy AD40.

### 3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by Glenalmond Developments Ltd to undertake an objective assessment as to the potential effects of the proposed development at land north of Templars Way, Sharnbrook upon the Village Open Space – Site I as identified within the Bedford Borough Council Allocations & Designations Local Plan (July 2013).
- 3.2. As set out above, it is considered that the proposed development of the site at Templars Way, as illustrated on the emerging masterplan (Appendix 4), can be integrated without compromising the aims and objectives of Policy AD40. The proposed development of the Glenalmond site:
- Will not compromise the perception of a gap or break in the frontage;
  - Will not result in the loss of a view out from Kennel Hill of the wider countryside setting;
  - Will not affect the visual relief afforded to the Kennel Hill streetscene by Site I; and
  - Will not compromise the perception of a soft transition between the Conservation Area, the development to the south of Templars Way, east of Mill Road, and the wider countryside setting.
- 3.3. Based on the assessment within Section 2 of this note, it is considered that the importance of Site I lies in the break it provides between the Conservation Area and The Fordham Arms / late 20<sup>th</sup> century residential estate to the east. The vegetated character of the southern boundary means that extensive views north, across Site I from Kennel Hill, are limited, and it is this existing hedgerow and treescape that contribute to the perceived break in the built frontage and sense of transition between the townscape of Sharnbrook and the wider landscape to the east.
- 3.4. It is considered that Site I differs from Sites H and N, which are also identified as views on the Policies Map Inset (Appendix 1). The boundaries of these sites are more open in character affording views out from the streetscene across the fields to the south of the village. The elevated nature of Odell Road, with Site N falling to the south, in particular contributes to the perception of the wider open countryside, whereas Site I has a more enclosed southern boundary with views

to the north foreshortened by the localised topography (gently rising) and mature field boundaries which lie beyond the designation.

- 3.5. The proposals within the Glenalmond site are set back from Site I, beyond a mature hedgerow and area of proposed landscaped public open space. It is considered that the proposed development of the site to the north of Templars Way would not adversely affect the positive contribution Site I makes to the townscape setting of Sharnbrook.
  
- 3.6. It is concluded that the proposed development north of Templars Way complies with Policy AD40 of the Bedford Borough Allocations and Designations Local Plan and can be integrated without compromising the aims and objectives of the Village Open Space designation to the south. It is considered that the proposed development of the Glenalmond site is supportable from a landscape and visual perspective in relation to Policy AD40.

**PLANS**



Key



Site Boundary



Village Open Space – Site I



Public Right of Way



Not to Scale

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**Templars Way, Sharnbrook  
Site Context Plan**

Genalmond Developments Ltd

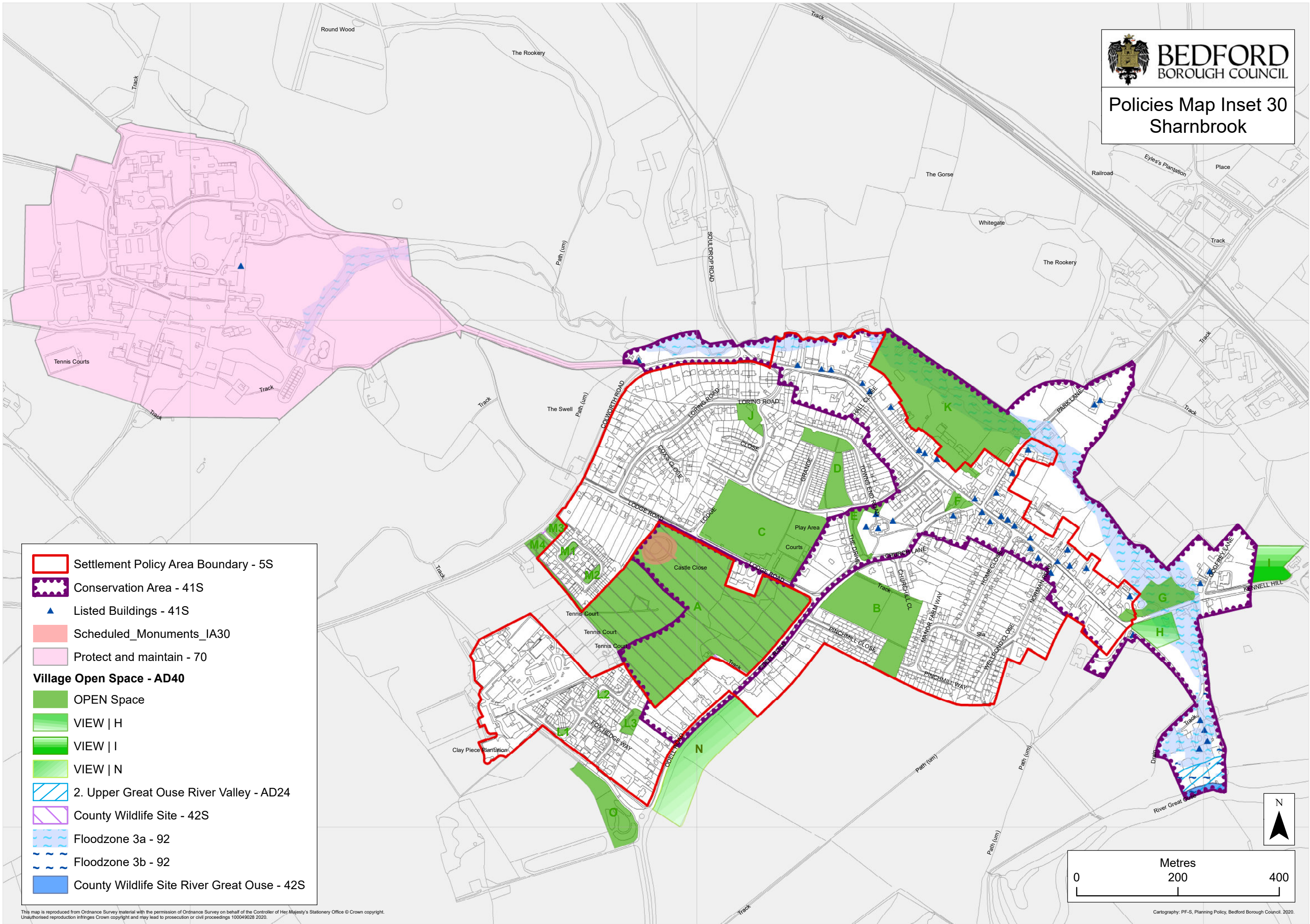
Drawing Ref: 9317L.SCP.001















Date: Sept 2020 Drawn: AM Checked: AM

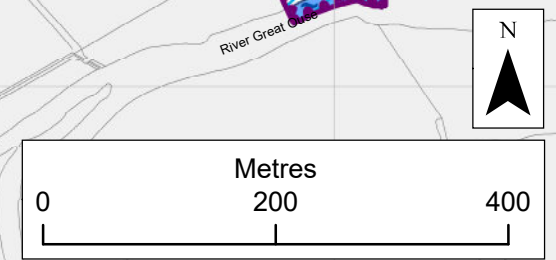


## **APPENDIX 1**

Bedford Borough Council Allocations & Designations Local Plan –  
Policies Map Inset: Sharnbrook



-  Settlement Policy Area Boundary - 5S
-  Conservation Area - 41S
-  Listed Buildings - 41S
-  Scheduled\_Monuments\_IA30
-  Protect and maintain - 70
- Village Open Space - AD40**
-  OPEN Space
-  VIEW | H
-  VIEW | I
-  VIEW | N
-  2. Upper Great Ouse River Valley - AD24
-  County Wildlife Site - 42S
-  Floodzone 3a - 92
-  Floodzone 3b - 92
-  County Wildlife Site River Great Ouse - 42S



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## **APPENDIX 2**

Extract from Bedford Borough Council Allocations & Designations Local Plan –  
Village Open Space Review Background Paper (July 2013): Policy AD40



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# **Allocations and Designations Local Plan**

# **VILLAGE OPEN SPACE REVIEW**

**BACKGROUND PAPER  
JULY 2013**

### **Policy AD40 Village Open Spaces and Views**

Open spaces which have particular importance in maintaining the function, character and identity of villages are identified on the Policies Map as Village Open Spaces. Open spaces have been identified as Village Open Spaces / Views where they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A. They are publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.
- B. They give identity to a settlement or village by helping to retain its form and reflect past history (examples include village greens).
- C. They provide a gap or break in the frontage which contributes to the character of a settlement for example by providing a view into a village which forms part of the village setting, or a view into open countryside establishing the relationship between the form of the village and the countryside beyond.
- D. The gap provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene.
- E. The open space assists the transition between village and countryside providing a soft edge to the village which is pleasing visually.

Development will not be permitted on land designated as a village open space or view unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for designation are not compromised or that other material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space or View undeveloped.

### **APPENDIX 3**

Extract from Extract from Bedford Borough Council Allocations & Designations Local Plan –  
Village Open Spaces & Views Maps: Sharnbrook

## Village Open Spaces Sharnbrook

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Sharnbrook is designated as a rural key service centre in the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan and accordingly has many services including churches, shops, schools and a post office. Although large, the village has a rural character partly aided by the many open spaces within the village plus views out to the open countryside. To the west of the village is Colworth House where Unilever has a research centre.

There are twenty village open spaces in Sharnbrook. Five of the new sites have been designated for their recreational value as children's play areas (L1, L2, L3, M1 and M2) and two link the housing development with the surrounding countryside (M3 and M4). Site A has been extended to include land between Castle Close and Sharnbrook Upper School. Site B has been extended to include the track running along its northern boundary. The village view designation of site G has been removed although it remains designated as a village open space. Site N provides views from the village into the countryside and Site O provides a soft edge to the village.



## Village Open Spaces Sharnbrook

<b>Village open space</b>	Sharnbrook Site H view
<b>Reason for designation</b>	C D E
<b>Comments</b>	Natural green space plus view. No public access.
<b>Site visited 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>	



View south from Kennell Hill

<b>Village open space</b>	Sharnbrook Site I view
<b>Reason for designation</b>	C D E
<b>Comments</b>	Natural green space and pub garden. No public access.
<b>Site visited 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>	



Views from Kennell Hill





## **APPENDIX 4**

Ophir Architecture Illustrative Proposed Layout



ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE	
Type A - 2 bed house	8no
Type B - 2 bed house	8no
Type C - 3 bed house	13no
Type D - 3 bed house	3no
Type E - 3 bed house	8no
Type F - 3 bed house	3no
Type G - 3 bed house	2no
Type H - 3 bed house	5no
Type I - 4 bed house	4no
Type J - 4 bed house	7no
Type K - 4 bed house	2no
Type L - 4 bed house	3no
<b>Total</b>	<b>66no units</b>

**The Fordham Arms  
(PH)**

**ophir architecture ltd**

Suite 3  
Aspley House  
36 Hylton Street, Birmingham, B18 6HN  
Tel: 0121 439 1151 Email: admin@ophirarchitecture.com  
Registered in England and Wales, Company No. 11534477

Client: Glanlmond Developments  
Project: Sharnbrook  
Drawing: Indicative Site layout

Scale: 1:500  
Drawing Size: @ A1  
Project No: GD403  
Drawing No: SK001  
Date: Nov 2019

Preliminary  
 Design  
 Planning  
 Construction

All written/drawn dimensions and floor areas are subject to verification by Contractor(s) on site.  
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NORTH

**APPENDIX 5**

Photographic Record



Not to Scale

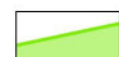
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Key



Site Boundary



Village Open Space - Site I



Viewpoint Locations



Templars Way, Sharnbrook  
Viewpoint Location Plan

Genalmond Developments Ltd

Drawing Ref: 9317L.VLP.002

Date: Sept 2020 Drawn: AM Checked: AM



**Viewpoint A**



**Viewpoint B**

NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY AND SHOULD NOT REPLACE VISITING THE VIEWPOINTS IN PERSON TO ENSURE AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs which are stitched together in Adobe Photoshop. The photographs are taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera in line with best practice and current guidance. The camera is a cropped sensor model and, as such, the photographs are taken at a 35mm focal length which most closely reflects a 50mm focal length on a full sensor DSLR. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and, when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 260mm curved through the same radius in order to most closely reflect the existing landscape context.



**Viewpoint C**



**Viewpoint D**

NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY AND SHOULD NOT REPLACE VISITING THE VIEWPOINTS IN PERSON TO ENSURE AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs which are stitched together in Adobe Photoshop. The photographs are taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera in line with best practice and current guidance. The camera is a cropped sensor model and, as such, the photographs are taken at a 35mm focal length which most closely reflects a 50mm focal length on a full sensor DSLR. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and, when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 260mm curved through the same radius in order to most closely reflect the existing landscape context.



Glenalmond site beyond Site I  
and intervening hedgerow

Southern boundary  
of Site I

The Fordham Arms

**Viewpoint E**



Approximate extent of Site I

**Context Viewpoint F**

NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY AND SHOULD NOT REPLACE VISITING THE VIEWPOINTS IN PERSON TO ENSURE AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs which are stitched together in Adobe Photoshop. The photographs are taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera in line with best practice and current guidance. The camera is a cropped sensor model and, as such, the photographs are taken at a 35mm focal length which most closely reflects a 50mm focal length on a full sensor DSLR. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and, when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 260mm curved through the same radius in order to most closely reflect the existing landscape context.



**Viewpoint G**



**Viewpoint H**

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**ES LANDSCAPE  
PLANNING**  
Part of the ES Group

ES Landscape Planning Limited | Beckett House | 14 Billing Road | Northampton | Northamptonshire | NN1 5AW

+ 44 (0) 1604 265075 | [info@eslandscapeplanning.co.uk](mailto:info@eslandscapeplanning.co.uk) | [www.eslandscapeplanning.co.uk](http://www.eslandscapeplanning.co.uk)