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AXIOM GREAT BARFORD LIMITED

VISION DOCUMENT

LAND OFF BEDFORD ROAD, GREAT BARFORD



Quality Assurance

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CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

1.1	Introduction	4
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2.0 Site Context

2.1	Planning Context	5
2.2	Site Context	7
2.3	The Proposed Site	8
2.4	Understanding the Site	10
2.5	Opportunities and Constraints of the Site	12

3.0 Technical Assessment

3.1	Highways Assessment	14
3.2	Drainage Assessment	15

4.0 The Proposals

4.1	Concept Master Plan	16
4.2	Access and Circulation	18
4.3	Local Vernacular	19
4.4	Design Principles	20
4.5	Conclusion	21

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Axiom Great Barford Limited to demonstrate the development potential for land off Bedford Road and support the promotion of the site through the emerging Great Barford Neighbourhood Plan process.

This Vision follows an assessment and evaluation process to identify the opportunities and constraints to inform an outline concept master plan and design framework that will deliver an exemplar development with a range of community benefits.

- A landscape led development of approximately 350 dwellings that is respectful of the character and vernacular of the village
- A mix of styles and tenures to appeal to all generations
- A new doctor's surgery and local centre accessible to the whole community
- Multifunctional open spaces, play areas, allotments and community gardens interlinked by footpaths and cycleways
- A gateway entrance into the development from a proposed new roundabout on the Bedford Road which will also act as a traffic calming measure into the village
- A fully sustainable location with access to services and facilities in Great Barford and Bedford to the west
- No construction traffic through the village due to the sites village edge location and direct access to the A421

The document is comprised of the following sections.

PLANNING AND SITE CONTEXT

A description of the site in its local and wider context including a summary of local and national policy. A study of local amenities, including schools, medical facilities and transport connections and a photographic study of the local vernacular.

The section includes an assessment of the site's mapping data including a visual study, designations, topography, flood risk and historical mapping to determine the key opportunities and constraints of the site.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section provides a summary of the initial assessment work undertaken for highways and drainage including the proposed new vehicular access.

THE PROPOSAL

A concept master plan demonstrating the potential of the site and the design principles underpinning the concept.

CONCLUSION

A summary of the proposals and conclusion.

AXIOM DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED

Axiom Developments Limited is a land promotion company with a strong regional focus on the Oxford to Cambridge growth area.

Axiom have particular expertise in the promotion of land through Local and Neighbourhood planning processes and work collaboratively with Local and Parish Councils to ensure proposed developments meet the needs and aspirations of local communities.

2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

BEDFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2030

Bedford Borough Council is in the process of preparing their Local Plan 2030. Following approval by the Executive and Full Council in December 2018, the Local Plan 2030 was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination.

Following the hearing sessions in May and June 2019, a number of main modifications were suggested which were consulted on between 19 August and 1 October 2019.

The Local Plan 2030 aims to establish the level of growth and development within the Bedford Borough. Great Barford is identified as a Key Service Centre with a good range of services and connections to larger town centres via public transport. Policy 3S currently states that of the 3,636 new dwellings allocated for the Borough, 2,000 dwellings will be in Key Service Centres, of which 500 will be within Great Barford. All sites within the Key Service Centres will be allocated through Neighbourhood Plans.

GREAT BARFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A committee formed by residents of Great Barford are currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan will establish the principles for development and land use in the defined neighbourhood area and allocate the most suitable sites for development.

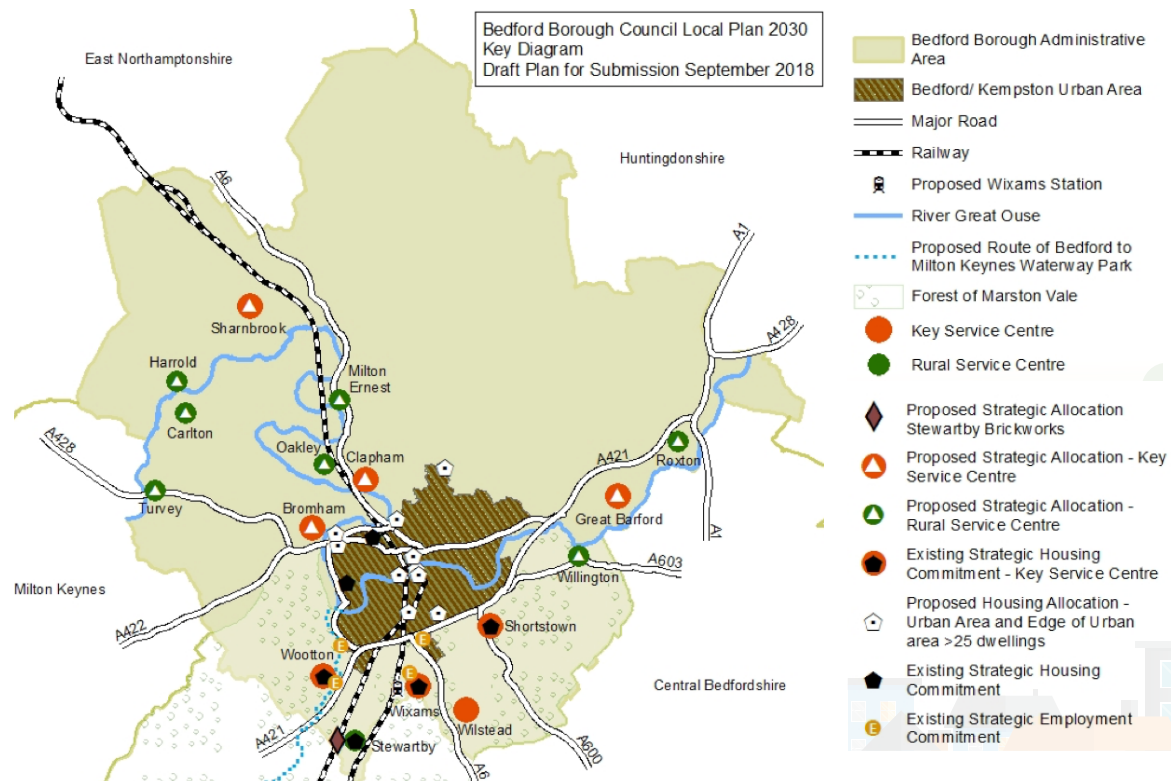


Figure 1: Local Plan 2030 Key Diagram

2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

AECOM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT, MAY 2019

As part of the neighbourhood planning process, AECOM have prepared a report which assesses how best to accommodate the proposed allocation of 500 new homes in Great Barford.

The report builds on the research that has already been undertaken by Bedford Borough Council. It identifies a total of 25 potential sites and provides a comprehensive site appraisal of each one. The sites are then ranked in order of suitability from Tier 1 – Tier 3, Figure 2 illustrates the Tier 1 and 2 sites.

The report concludes that there are three options for growth within Great Barford. Option 1 considers growth to the north and east of Great Barford. This option is considered to have the greatest impact on the Conservation Area, medieval bridge and church spire as well as significantly increasing the congestion on Barford Bridge. Option 2 considers development to the east of the village and like Option 1, this option has a number of constraints, particularly relating to heritage, the sewage farm and traffic. Option 3 considers growth to the south west. This option would have less of an impact on the heritage and transport of Great Barford, but the report notes that the site levels would need to be carefully considered within any proposed design.

This site is included in part within Option 1 and in its entirety within Option 3.

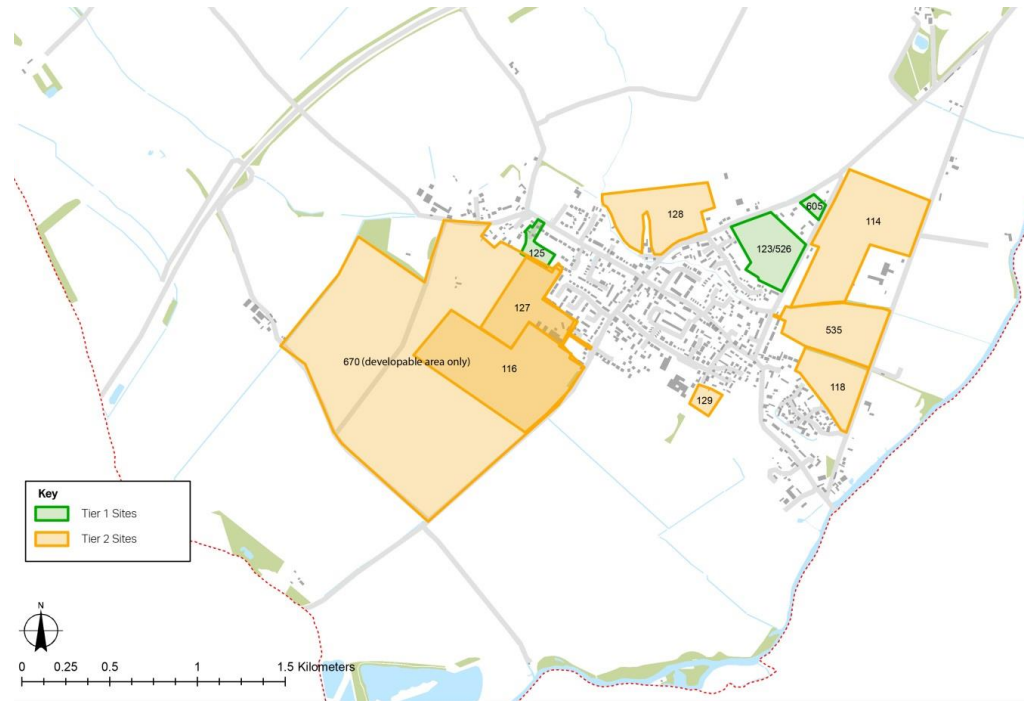


Figure 2: Sites suitable for allocation in the Great Barford Neighbourhood Plan, Site Assessment Support Final Report, May 2019

The AECOM report suggests that The Parish Council consults with the local community over the preferred options to meet the housing requirement.

2.2 SITE CONTEXT



Figure 3: Site Context

The historic settlement pattern of Great Barford shows development concentrated along the High Street and Green End Road, creating a linear built form.

This form has evolved during recent years with housing developments located further east along Roxton Road and west along Bedford Road, moving the settlement pattern away from a linear form to a more nucleated settlement pattern.

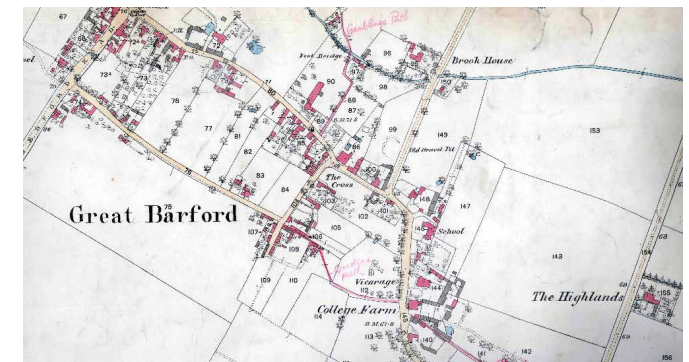






Figure 4: 1884 Mapping, Bedford Borough Council

-  Proposed Site Boundary
-  Recent Housing Development
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building

2.3 THE PROPOSED SITE



Figure 5: Site Location

The proposed site is located to the south-west of Great Barford, a village with a population of approximately 2,000 people (2011 census) located between Bedford and St Neots in Bedfordshire.

The village currently has a small number of local amenities including the village hall, doctor's surgery, local shops and Great Barford Primary School.

The village is located approximately 8.8km to the north-east of Bedford and 12km to the south-west of St Neots. Bedford is the largest settlement in close proximity and an employment centre which can be reached by car (20 mins), by bicycle (35 minutes along Sustrans Route 51) and by bus. This makes Bedford a commutable distance from the village and where a larger number of additional amenities and further education facilities are located.

-  View Direction
-  Great Barford Primary Academy
-  School playing fields
-  Great Barford Surgery
-  Great Barford Village Hall
-  Playing fields
-  Chapel Play Area
-  Bus Stops with routes to Bedford, Cambridge Biggleswade

PROPOSED SITE

The proposed site is 45 acres of mixed agricultural land located to the south west of Great Barford adjacent to the settlement edge. The proposed site is split across two landowners with 13 acres owned by the Southall family at Home Farm and the remaining 32 acres at Coalville Farm owned by Bedford Borough Council.

Axiom Great Barford Limited have agreements in place with both the landowners to promote the site through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Home Farm is located at the end of Home Farm Drive and comprises a residential dwelling, farm business, associated yard and agricultural buildings. The remainder of the site is arable and pastoral land currently used for crops and sheep grazing. To the east the field boundaries are defined by fencing and hedgerow vegetation whilst to the west the fields of Coalville Farm are more open in nature.

The existing points of access into the site are via Home Farm Drive and from two farm access tracks off the Bedford Road.



Figure 6; Facing east towards the rear gardens of Chapel Field



Figure 7; Existing access to farm along Home Farm Drive



Figure 8; View west between existing agricultural barns



Figure 9; Facing north-east from the north-western corner of the site



Figure 10; Facing north-east towards the village from within the site boundary

2.4 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

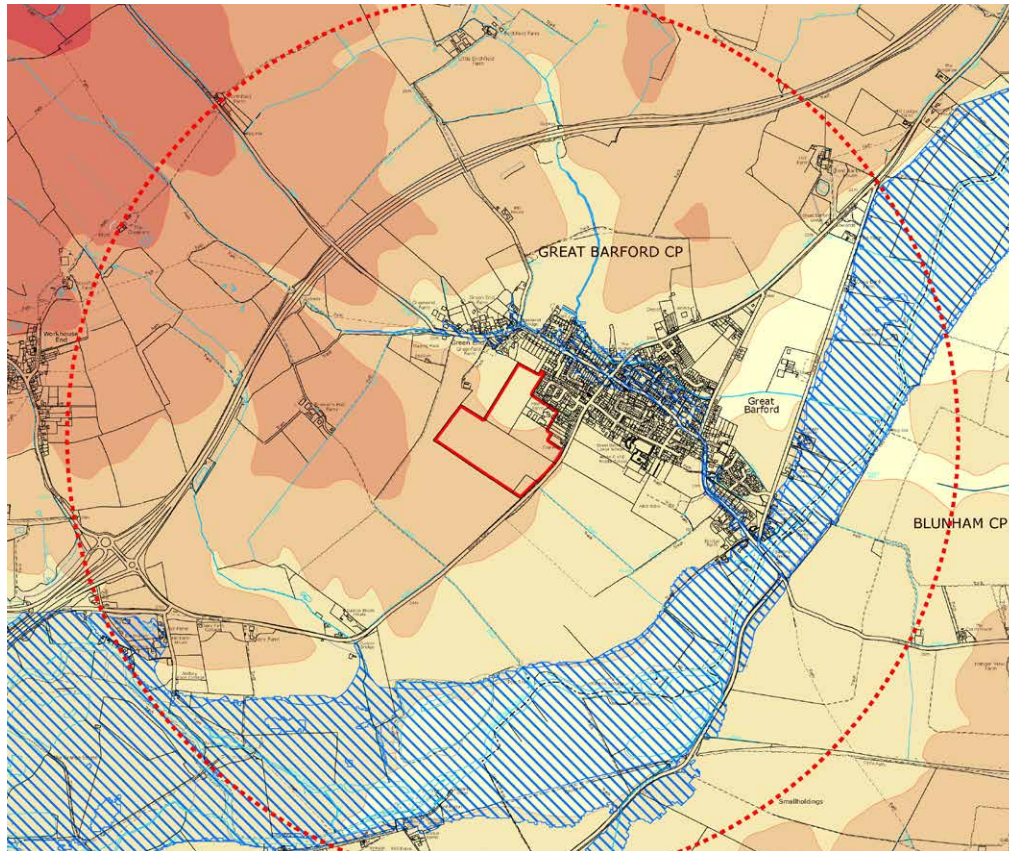


Figure 11: Topographical and Flood Risk Mapping

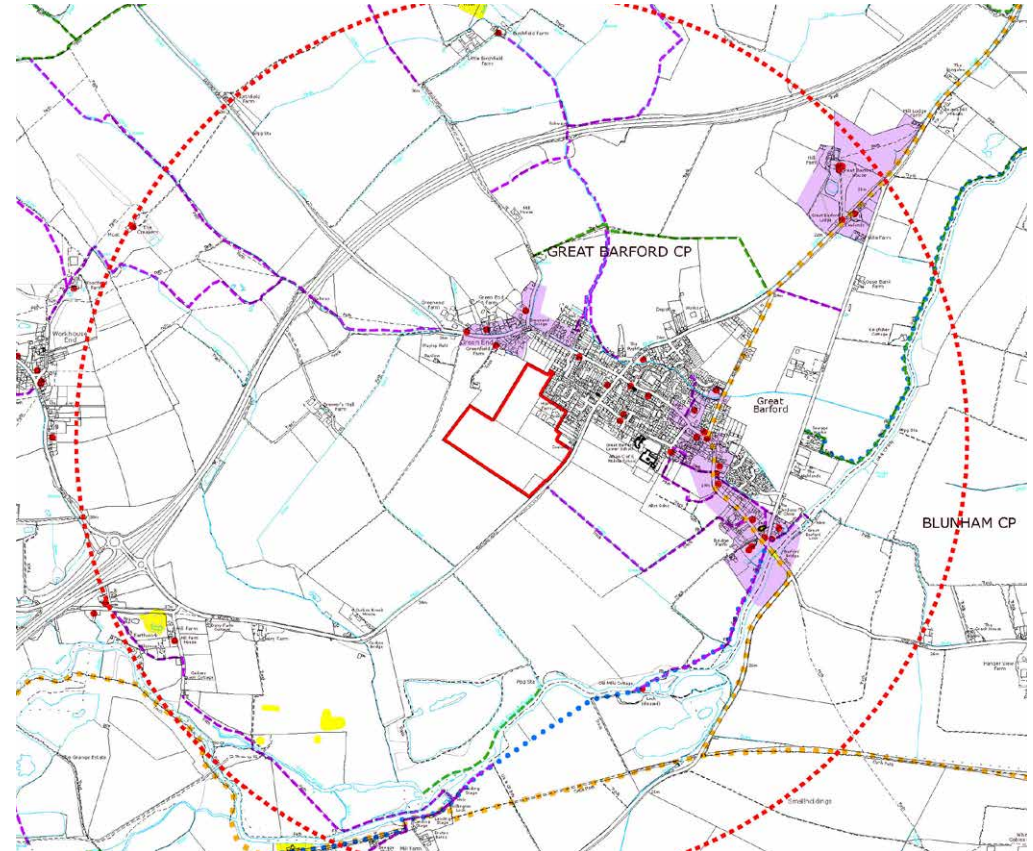
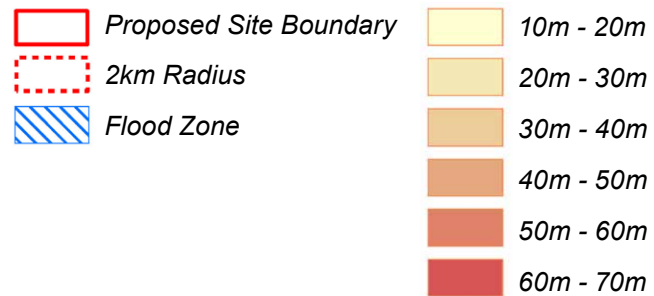
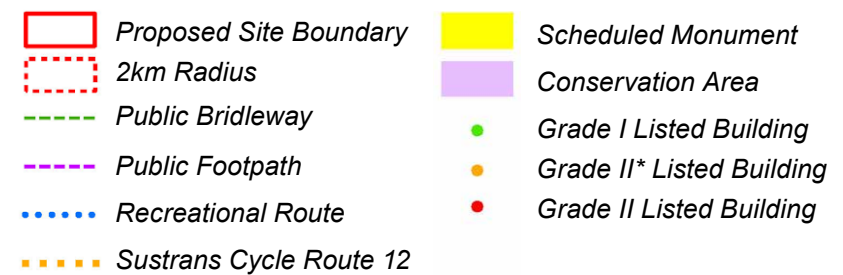


Figure 12: Designations Mapping



The topographical mapping highlights the built form of Great Barford being situated within the lower lying plateau associated with the River Great Ouse.

The topography surrounding Great Barford rises to the north and west, including the proposed site, which is therefore located outside of the flood zone associated with the River Great Ouse and in an area determined as very low probability of flooding.

Within the site there is a level change between 20m - 40m AOD, rising from the east to west. The highest elevations are located towards the north-western corner where there are longer views afforded across the surrounding landscape.

There are three Conservation Areas within the village, the closest of which is located along Green End Road to the north of the proposed site boundary.

There are a number of listed buildings concentrated along Green End Road and the High Street. All Saints Church is Grade II* Listed and Barford Bridge which crosses the River Great Ouse is a Scheduled Monument.

There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the proposed site although there is a network of PRoWs surrounding Great Barford, the closest of which aligns opposite the proposed site entrance. Sustrans routes 51 and 12 which link Bedford, St Neots, Huntingdon and Cambridge are within easy access distance of the site.



Figure 13: All Saints Church



Figure 14: River Great Ouse



Figure 15: Barford Bridge Scheduled Monument



Figure 16: Views from the north-west corner of the proposed site

2.5 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE SITE

Through the baseline mapping and assessment of the site, a number of opportunities and constraints have been identified which provide a framework within which the proposed development will be brought forward.

SITE BOUNDARIES

- The north eastern edge of the site shares a boundary with the western extent of Great Barford, adjacent to the rear gardens of Coopers Close and Chapel Field. This creates sensitive edges to the site which will require careful consideration to ensure overlooking is minimised
- To the north and west, the site is formed by existing field boundaries which provides an opportunity to enhance existing vegetation patterns and corridors to create a sensitive village edge
- Bedford Road forms the south eastern boundary which provides an opportunity to create a new roundabout access to the site at the entrance to the village and pedestrian/cycle points of access from the existing farm access along Home Farm Drive

LEVELS & DRAINAGE

- The landform gradually rises from Green End Road in a north-westerly direction with the highest part of the site in the north-west corner
- There is an opportunity to create soft edges to the proposed site, particularly upon higher ground
- The desktop study does not show any evidence of

drainage channels within the site

- The site lies outside the Great Barford flood zone

ACCESS & CIRCULATION

- There is an existing vehicular access from Bedford Road providing a private access to dwellings in Coopers Close off Home Farm Drive
- There is an opportunity to create a new roundabout access to the site from the Bedford Road at the entrance to the village
- An existing farm access track from the Bedford Road provides an opportunity to provide additional pedestrian and cycle access points
- There is a potential opportunity to create a pedestrian and cycle link to Great Barford Primary School through Hare Meadow

LAND USE

- The site consists of Home Farm which is located at the end of Home Farm Drive, alongside two residential dwellings and associated farm buildings
- The remaining site is made up of the arable and pastoral fields of Coalville Farm with intermittent tree and hedge boundary vegetation
- There is an opportunity to respond to the existing farmyard context within the proposed built form to ensure any development brought forward is contextually appropriate
- There is an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity across the proposed site which currently has limited opportunities for habitat and ecological diversity

VEGETATION

- There is an opportunity to create a landscape led development, in particular to soften the edges of the site by introducing open space and vegetation along the boundaries
- There is an opportunity to introduce vegetation and planting throughout the site, including within public open space and along movement corridors to enhance future residents connection with nature

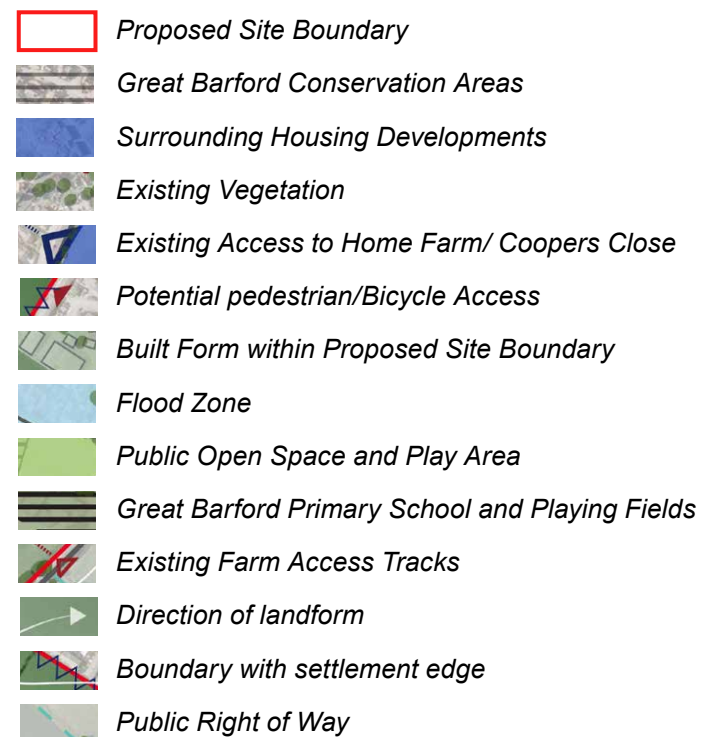




Figure 17: Opportunities and Constraints of the Site

3.1 ACCESS APPRAISAL

An initial access appraisal has been undertaken by Transport Planning Associates in October 2019.

- The proposed site access has been designed as a 3-arm roundabout to aid in the reduction of vehicle speed on Bedford Road by creating a physical deflection of vehicles as they enter the junction
- The review of guidance within the DMRB suggests that a priority junction with a ghost island right turn lane is appropriate based upon the forecast traffic flows along Bedford Road
- These site access arrangements are therefore considered appropriate to the scale of the proposed development
- The site is considered to be in a sustainable location, with good links to the local services and facilities within Great Barford
- A forecast of the number and likely distribution of vehicle trips from the site has been evaluated and the resulting traffic is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the local highway network
- The proposed development will ensure that no construction traffic would be required to travel through Great Barford to access the site

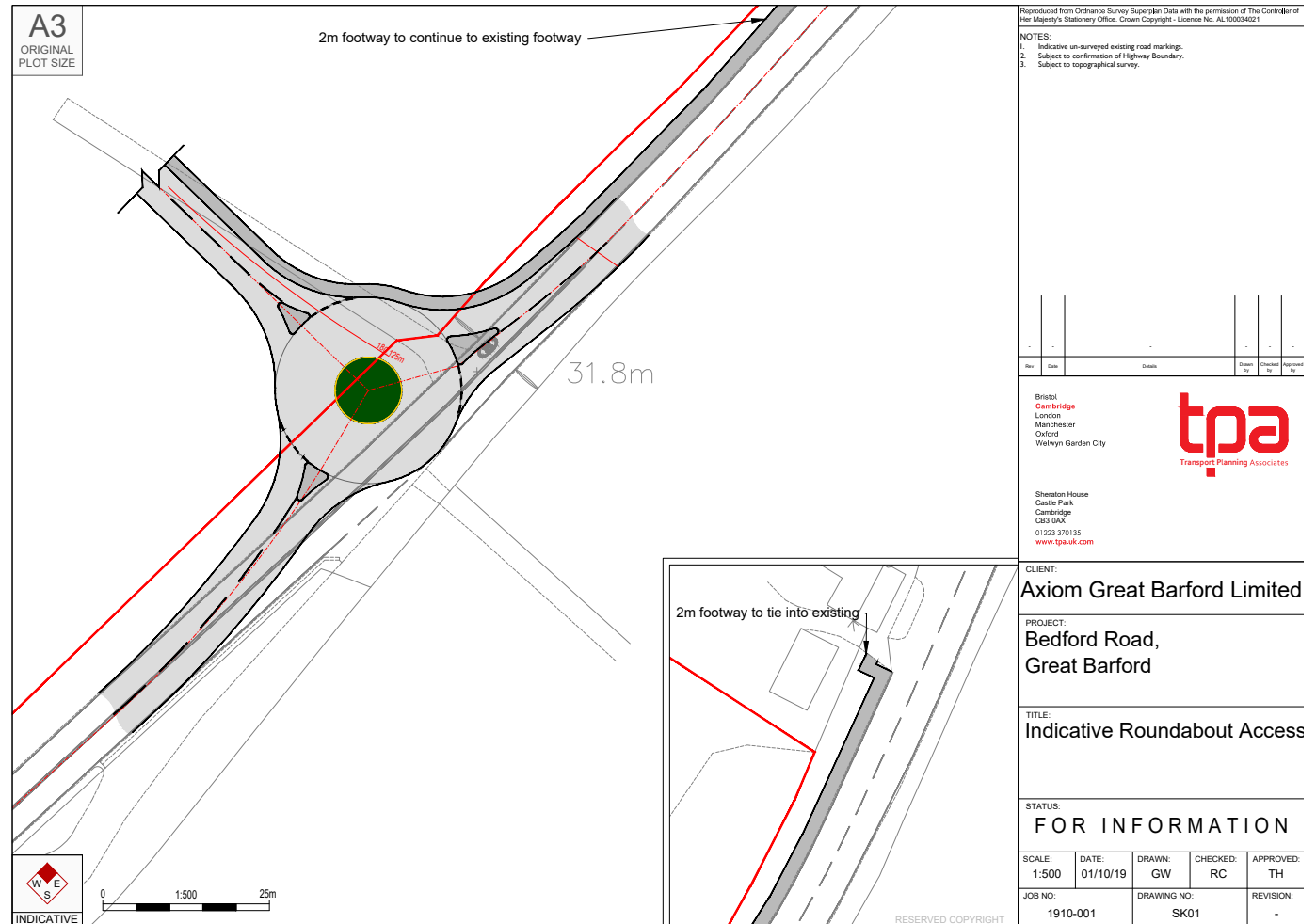


Figure 18; Indicative Roundabout Access, TPA

3.2 DRAINAGE ASSESSMENT

A Drainage Assessment has been prepared by Hydrock in October 2019.

- The site does not appear to be served by any formal existing drainage systems and therefore new outfall points will need to be provided for both foul and surface water drainage
- An initial review of available geological information indicates that there may be some scope for infiltration into the ground
- It is envisaged that two attenuation ponds will be included in the overall development
- There are very limited public surface water sewers recorded within Great Barford as a whole which may be indicative of the widespread use of soakaways. However it is noted that a relatively new development immediately to the north of the site (The Brambles) has employed a positive drainage system
- The majority of the site drains naturally to the north but is enclosed by private, third party land. One option may be to lay a new outfall sewer along Chapel Field following the public highway until a suitable discharge point is encountered
- Public foul drainage is located in both Bedford Road and Chapel Field. It is anticipated that connections can be made to these systems although some off-site sewer works will be required to reach the nearest manholes. The size of the development will give rise to additional foul flows and it should be expected that off-site reinforcement works will be required by Anglian Water

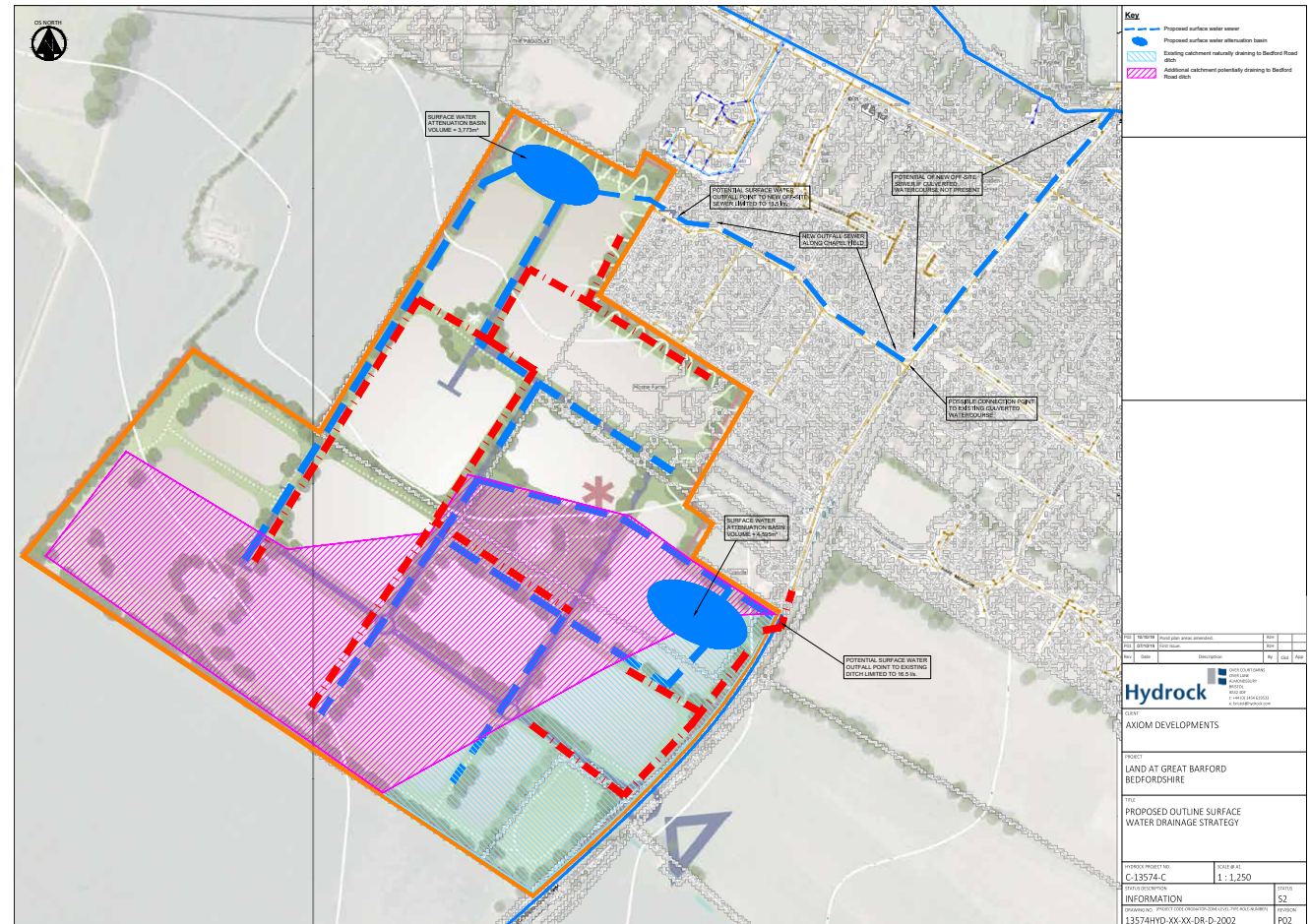


Figure 19; Outline Drainage Strategy, Hydrock

4.1 CONCEPT MASTER PLAN

The concept master plan proposes a landscape led development of approximately 350 homes with extensive public open space and community uses. The proposals will form a sensitive and contextually appropriate addition to the south western edge of Great Barford.

LANDSCAPE LED DEVELOPMENT

A central community park forms the focal point to the proposals with a local centre and doctors surgery located next to the park. The centre would provide a meeting point for the local community and help to create an active frontage with outdoor seating during the summer months. The park would provide places for formal and informal play along with a series of other play spaces located at strategic points within the development. The scheme can comfortably accommodate 350 dwellings at a density of 8 per gross acre (20 dwellings per ha). This compares with a density of 10 per gross acre at the Hare Meadow development and 10 per gross acre at Woodpecker Close.

Extensive areas of multi- functional public open space are inter-connected by green corridors to enhance and build upon existing field boundaries. These corridors provide permeability across the site with integrated footpaths and cycle-ways to enable ease of movement for the local community whilst also enhancing local biodiversity and habitat creation.

Development is proposed to be located away from the existing built form through the use of landscape buffers which form part of the network of green corridors. This will help to reduce any overlooking between dwellings

and help to soften the edges of the development into the local landscape.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

A primary vehicular access is proposed from a new roundabout on the Bedford Road and will act as a traffic calming measure when entering the village.

The proposed point of access will be designed to create green frontages to the development and provide a strong sense of arrival to Great Barford.

Home Farm Drive will also provide additional pedestrian/cycle access alongside that proposed through Chapel Field.

PROVIDING FOR THE COMMUNITY

The concept master plan proposes a mix of tenures across a varied built form to provide for a wide range of potential occupiers and will draw from the local context and current housing need.

Allotment provision and interlinked community gardens will provide many well-being benefits and opportunities for informal and formalised socialising.

The proposed local centre and doctors surgery could provide many opportunities for health and well-being, organised community events and a place to get-together and socialise. Formal play areas for all years could allow young children and teenagers the space to play and/or socialise in safe, well designed locations. Involving the community in the design and feel of these spaces will be key to successful place-making.



Figure 20: Example of Allotments















-  Proposed Site Boundary
-  Great Barford Conservation Areas
-  Primary Vehicular Access
-  Existing Vegetation
-  Existing Access
-  Pedestrian/Bicycle Access
-  Primary Green Corridor providing separate vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle routes
-  Secondary Vehicular Access Roads
-  Developable Areas
-  Allotments and Community Gardens
-  Formal Play Areas
-  Proposed Footpaths and Bicycle routes
-  Proposed Vegetation
-  Local Centre / Doctors Surgery



Figure 21: Concept Master Plan

4.2 ACCESS AND CIRCULATION



Figure 22: Access and Circulation

Primary vehicular access is proposed from the Bedford Road, utilising the existing farm track access and therefore minimising the need to remove the existing roadside vegetation.

The primary point of access will create green frontages to the development and provide a strong sense of arrival in Great Barford.

A potential emergency vehicle only access is proposed from Home Farm Drive, which would provide pedestrian/cycle access and an additional pedestrian/cycle access is proposed from Chapel Field.

Local buses provide routes to Bedford, Biggleswade and Cambridge including the Ivel Sprinter (a volunteer community bus). Bedford train station provides direct routes to London (44 mins), Brighton (2.5 hrs) and Leeds (3 hrs).

- Proposed Site Boundary
- ▶ Primary Vehicular Access
- ▶ Existing Access
- ▶ Pedestrian / Bicycle Access
- ||||| Chapel Field Road
- Primary Green Corridor providing separate vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle routes
- Proposed Footpaths and Bicycle routes
-▶ Secondary Vehicular Access Roads
-▶ Existing Public Right of Way
- Bus Stops with routes to Bedford, Cambridge Biggleswade

4.3 LOCAL VERNACULAR

The historic settlement pattern of Great Barford shows development concentrated along the High Street and Green End Road, creating a linear built form.

The local vernacular within the village highlights the range of house building styles used during the growth of the village. This includes the use of red brick with symmetrical sash windows, white render and thatched roofs and the later addition of buff brick and bay windows. Dotted through the village are black timber barns.

A recent development to the south of Great Barford is Woodpecker Close, accessed from New Road. The built form draws from the existing local vernacular including red brick and coloured render. The development includes public open space, particularly upon entering the close and integrated sustainable drainage.

New housing developments within the village also include the recently completed Hare Meadow which is located off Bedford Road. The development includes a mixed vernacular including detached and semi-detached houses alongside terraced townhouses. There is a small playground and pedestrian links into the village and primary school access.

The design proposals will take cues from the positive elements of these schemes and the historic local vernacular to form an exemplar new development.



Figure 23: Dwellings along the High Street



Figure 24: Woodpecker Close Housing Development



Figure 25: Housing on High Street



Figure 26: House Located within the Conservation Area



Figure 27: Hare Meadow Housing Development

4.4 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The concept master plan is underpinned by a series of design principles which ensure the proposals respond sensitively to the local context, whilst providing numerous benefits for the community and future generations.

- To complement and enhance the established rural setting through the enhancement of the existing vegetation patterns and development of sensitive, landscaped boundaries
- To be sympathetic to and respectful of the heritage and character of the local vernacular by proposing contextually appropriate densities and built form
- To propose open space upon the higher elevations and wide landscape corridors preserving openness and long views across rising slopes
- To provide sensitive landscape buffers at the boundaries of the development creating a soft transition into the village and conserving the tranquil setting of a rural community
- To create a contextually appropriate development which aims to retain rural character and not adversely affect the open farmland
- To provide a separate access into the development, avoiding traffic through the village with an emphasis on permeable walking and cycling paths

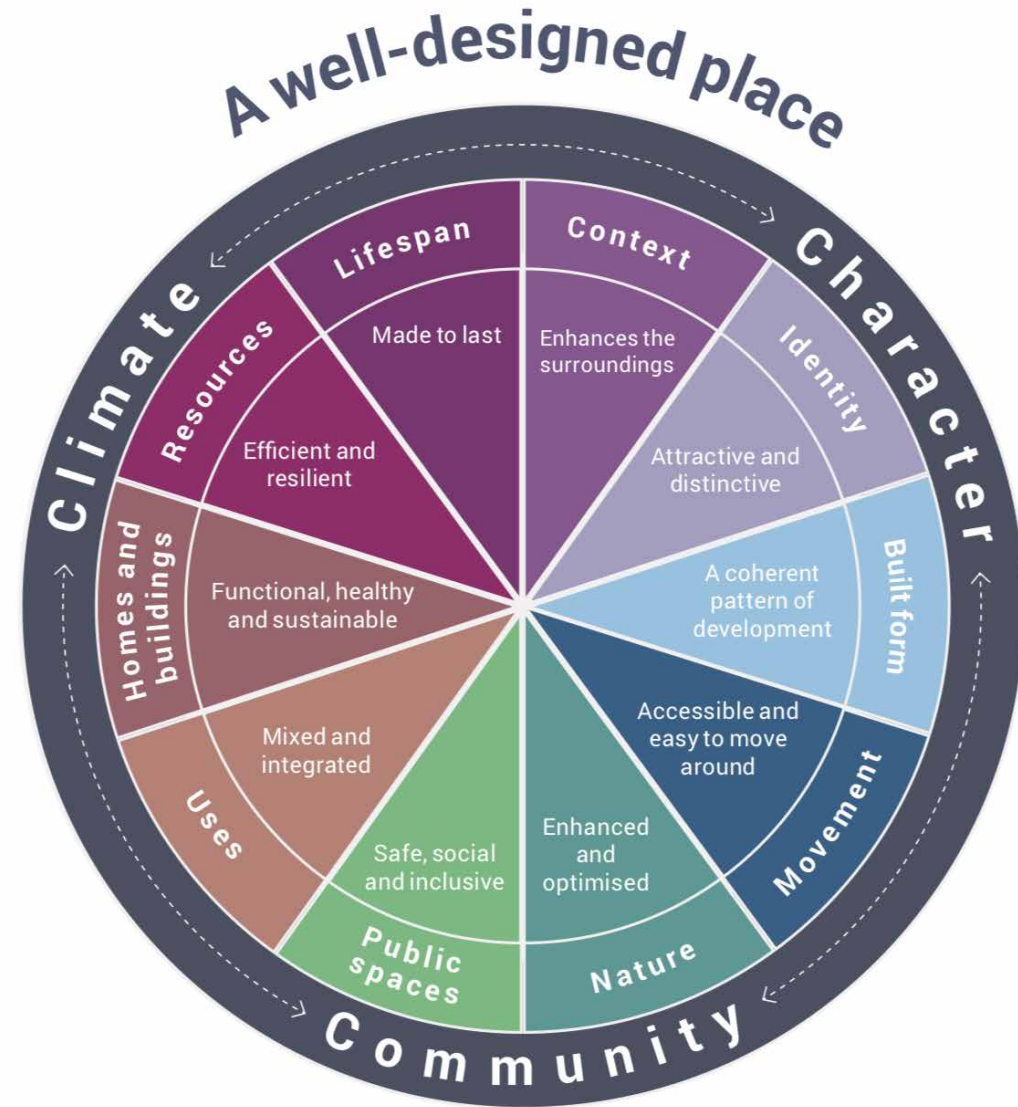


Figure 28: 10 characteristics of a well-designed place, National Design Guide

4.5 CONCLUSION

This document brings forward a vision for land south west of Great Barford and is informed by the site's village edge location. The proposal represents a range of benefits.

- A sensitive and contextually appropriate development on the south western edge of the village
- A landscape led proposal for approximately 350 new homes at a density of 8 per gross acre (20 per gross ha)
- The site will provide a mix of tenures and types of built form to appeal to occupiers from all generations
- A new gateway entrance to the village from the proposed new roundabout will act as a traffic calming measure
- The village edge location negates the need for construction traffic to enter Great Barford during the construction phase
- A new doctor's surgery and local centre to serve the existing and future community
- Interlinking community gardens, allotments and multifunctional open spaces will create a sense of place with well-being at its core
- A sustainable location with access to facilities and services in Great Barford and Bedford further to the west

The proposal represents a logical extension to the existing settlement and would deliver a large proportion of the required 500 new homes to be allocated in the Great Barford Neighbourhood Plan.



Figure 29: Encouraging Sustainable Modes of Travel



Figure 30: Organised Community Events



Figure 31: Community Growing and Events



Figure 32: Example of Natural Play



Figure 33: Example of Central Public Open Space

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