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22/04/2022

Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Planning Policy
VIA EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir/Madam

Bishop's Itchington Neighbourhood Development Plan: Regulation 16 Consultation

McLoughlin Planning has been instructed by Mactaggart & Mickel (The Respondent) to prepare and submit representations to the Regulation 16 Submission Draft of the Bishop's Itchington Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031 (BINDP), which is subject to public consultation until Friday 22nd April 2022.

As the District Council will already be aware, Mactaggart & Mickel has land interests on the western edge of the village, at land off Station Road. Attached to this letter is a Vision Document prepared in respect of this land for information.

In respect of the BINDP, the Respondent wishes to raise several concerns regarding the Submission Draft. Of particular note are the Respondent's objections to Policy BINDP1 & Policy BINDP5, which the Respondent considers should, at the very least, be modified to ensure compliance with the basic conditions set out under Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Detailed comments are provided below.

Policy BINDP1 (New development within Bishop's Itchington)

The Respondent considers it disappointing that the BINDP does not take the opportunity to plan positively for new housing, via the allocation of additional housing sites, despite the housing requirement enshrined in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy (Policy CS.16) being presented as a minimum figure.

The Respondent acknowledges that while the District Council can currently demonstrate a housing land supply (HLS) of 8.42 years that this can only be achieved if 'surplus' completions, delivered early in the plan period, are included in the calculation. It has been established in Case Law that there is no automatic right to include surplus completions in the calculation of 5YHLS. The decision to do so is a matter of planning judgement, depending on the specific circumstances of each case.

While the elimination of the surplus from the District's most up-to-date HLS calculation does not reduce the District's HLS below 5 years, it is clear from the Schedule of Housing Sites (dated 31st March 2021) that housing supply/completions are projected to fall quite notably from 2023/24 onwards, suggesting a more vulnerable land supply position in upcoming years.

The BINDP is not proactive in this regard and does not seek to identify or allocate land that could, at the very least, come forward as a reserve site. It is also not lost on the Respondent that the effect of

the adoption of the BINDP, in light of the provisions of Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, will be an effective moratorium on housing delivery in the Parish for at least the first two years post adoption.

For these reasons, the Respondent cannot agree that the BINDP has been positively prepared in accordance with Paragraph 16 of the NPPF and considers it likely to unnecessarily constrain development, contrary to the Government's objective to boost significantly the supply of homes (NPPF, Paragraph 60).

To remedy this, it is recommended that further consideration is given to the allocation of land for housing and, at the very least, reserve housing sites in the Parish. To this end, the Respondent proposes the allocation of the aforementioned land off Station Road for such purpose.

BINDP5 (Landscape Character and Views)

Turning to Policy BINDP5, it is currently unclear what this policy seeks to achieve. While it lists several views that it intends to 'protect' it is unclear what this means in practice given there is no suggestion in Policy BINDP5 that development affecting the views listed will not be permitted. The only 'penalty' for affecting such views being the potential requirement to provide additional information (i.e. a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment).

Paragraph 16 d) of the NPPF requires policies to be clearly written and unambiguous. It is therefore recommended that Policy BINDP5 is either delated in its entirety (and the policies contained in the adopted Core Strategy relied on) or, at the very least, modified as follows:

"New development must have regard to the landscape character and historic landscape character of the designated neighbourhood area. Where impacts are identified new development should identify and seek to retain key features such as historic field and other boundaries, key features in the landscape (e.g. hedgerows, trees), particularly those of high medium sensitivity adjoining the BUAB (Appendix 2).

Development affecting the following views may need to provide a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, this should identify any mitigation considered necessary to make the development acceptable (see Figure 7 overleaf and Appendix 1). Views):

- ***View from Station Road looking west (Fig 12)***
- ***View from Hambridge Road looking south east (Fig 13)***
- ***View from Mount Pleasant looking west (Fig 14)***
- ***View from Knightcote Road looking south east (Fig 15)***
- ***View from playing field towards railway and Burton Dasset Hills (Fig 16)"***

I would be grateful if we could please be notified regarding the District Council's final decision in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Yours sincerely

Nathan McLoughlin BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI
Managing Director





MACTAGGART
& MICKEL

Land off Station Road Bishop's Itchington

Vision Document

JUNE 2021

Consultant Team

	Masterplanning, Landscape, Heritage, Ecology and Arboriculture
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	Engineering
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	Planning
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	Transport
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001a	RA	JTF	-	CR 21/06/21

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Figure 1. Wider Context Plan

I. Overview

Introduction

This vision document has been prepared on behalf of Mactaggart & Mickel (Mac & Mic) and the landowner in relation to Land off Station Road (the Site), located in Bishop's Itchington.

This document provides further information in relation to the Site and its relationship to nearby settlements, facilities and infrastructure. This document illustrates the emerging vision for development on the Site as a component of the South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP).

Executive Summary

This document illustrates the opportunity to deliver a cohesive extension to the community of Bishop's Itchington.

Proposals contained within this document illustrate how development at Land off Station Road, Bishop's Itchington could deliver a high-quality and sustainable addition to the existing community; delivering much needed new homes, including affordable homes, as well as attractive open space and play provision; whilst enhancing local biodiversity and providing quality habitats.

Land off Station Road, Bishop's Itchington is deliverable with no impediments to the availability of the land for development. It is well positioned to the west of Bishop's Itchington - an existing sustainable settlement - with good access to the M40, Leamington Spa, Warwick, Banbury and beyond to deliver desirable new homes and infrastructure.

Benefits Delivered

- **200 high quality new homes** with private **outdoor space** at a range of sizes;
- An equipped **play space** for children of all ages;
- **Enhanced landscaping** for the enjoyment of new and existing residents;
- **Attractive walking connections** to the wider countryside; and
- **Biodiversity improvements** and new native species planting.

2. Introducing Mactaggart & Mickel

Luxury Homes Since 1925

Mactaggart & Mickel is an award-winning, fourth-generation family-owned company that has been delivering new homes and sustainable communities throughout England and Scotland since 1925. The core values that guide the company's actions are care, integrity, passion and excellence.

We have an exemplary reputation of establishing long-term partnerships with local authorities and stakeholders in addition to engaging with local communities.

We have retained a prestigious Five Star Rating for customer satisfaction from the Home Builders Federation (HBF) for eight years consecutively since joining the scheme. The Five Star rating is based on the direct feedback from homebuyers who would be happy to 'recommend us to a friend'.

We have a platinum award for Investors in People, which is the highest accolade awarded by the organisation and only 2% of IIP-accredited organisations in the UK have attained this standard.

All Mactaggart & Mickel homes undergo a final quality check from a company director or senior manager (known as the Seal of Approval), to ensure stringent construction standards are always met.

Mactaggart & Mickel have a happy history of supporting good causes. In 2016, they launched the Building Communities Fund to continue the company's efforts to help organisations and projects which enhance the lives of people within their local communities.





Examples of Mactaggart & Mickel's high quality family homes

3. The Site

Site Description

The Site comprises two agricultural fields totalling approximately 18.7 hectares (ha), and is contained by Station Road (B4451), existing dwellings on Mount Pleasant and Manor Farm buildings to the east. Plough Lane forms the Site's southern boundary, and hedges form the Site's western and northern boundaries. To the north are 'old workings' (presumed to be gravel extraction); beyond Plough Lane lies Elms Farm with a solar farm and allotments further west. Beyond the western boundary is agricultural land while beyond the northern boundary is a cemetery with Bishops Bowl Lakes beyond.

- 18.7ha of arable land located to the west of the settlement of Bishop's Itchington;
- Bounded by residential development to the east;
- Is not within the Green Belt;
- Is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations;
- Lies just 2 miles from Junction 12 of the M40; and
- Can reach Leamington Spa in 15 minutes by car or 25 minutes by bus.



	Site Boundary (18.7ha)
	Public Rights of Way
	5m Contours



Cemetery

Station Road B4451

Mount Pleasant

Manor Farm

Plough Lane

St Michael's Church

126m

123m

Figure 2. Site Location Plan

4. The Local Context

Planning Context

This document has been prepared to support the promotion of the Site through the SWLP. At this stage, it sets out a high level masterplan and demonstrates an initial technical understanding of how the Site can be developed and to show that the Site is not subject to any significant planning constraints, which would render it undeliverable.

As matters with the SWLP become more advanced in terms of specific policy requirements, the proposals and the Vision Document will be refined further, showing how the Site can be developed in a way which is compatible with planning policy in the SWLP.

Village Character

The village of Bishop's Itchington is a nucleated settlement to the west of the River Itchen. Historically, the quarry and cement works to the north of the village provided employment. Now closed, the former quarry has been allowed to flood naturally to form an attractive collection of lakes and pools. Bishop's Hill Nature Reserve to the north of the village was formed from waste lime from the quarry and cement works and is now an important Local Wildlife Site.

Built form varies across the village with a diverse range of building styles and materials. Built form is closely knit and abuts the public realm on some of the more historic streets, whilst many other streets enjoy a more generous, often verdant, setback. There are vernacular buildings in Blue and White Lias stone, which was historically extracted from the former quarry to the north of the village.

Connectivity and Facilities

Bishop's Itchington offers the perfect example of a rural village character, yet benefiting from shops and services within walking distance. The nearby employment centre and facilities provided within Leamington Spa can be easily reached by bus. Buses depart Station Road daily for a 25 minute trip to Leamington Spa. Rail links to London Marylebone run from Leamington Spa and London Euston can be reached from Coventry station.

Bishop's Itchington itself contains a good range of facilities and services that complement the proposed settlement including:

- Community facilities;
- Primary school;
- Food and drink establishments;
- An attractive network of local walks; and
- A frequent bus service to nearby Leamington Spa, which offers a wide range of services and facilities.

	Local Green Space
	Existing Woodland
	Public Rights of Way
	Bus Route 665
	Bus Stop
	St Michael's Church
	GP Surgery
	Pub
	Post Office
	Primary School
	Allotments
	Community Hall
	Food Establishment
	Grocery Shop
	Sports Provisions
	400m Isochrone

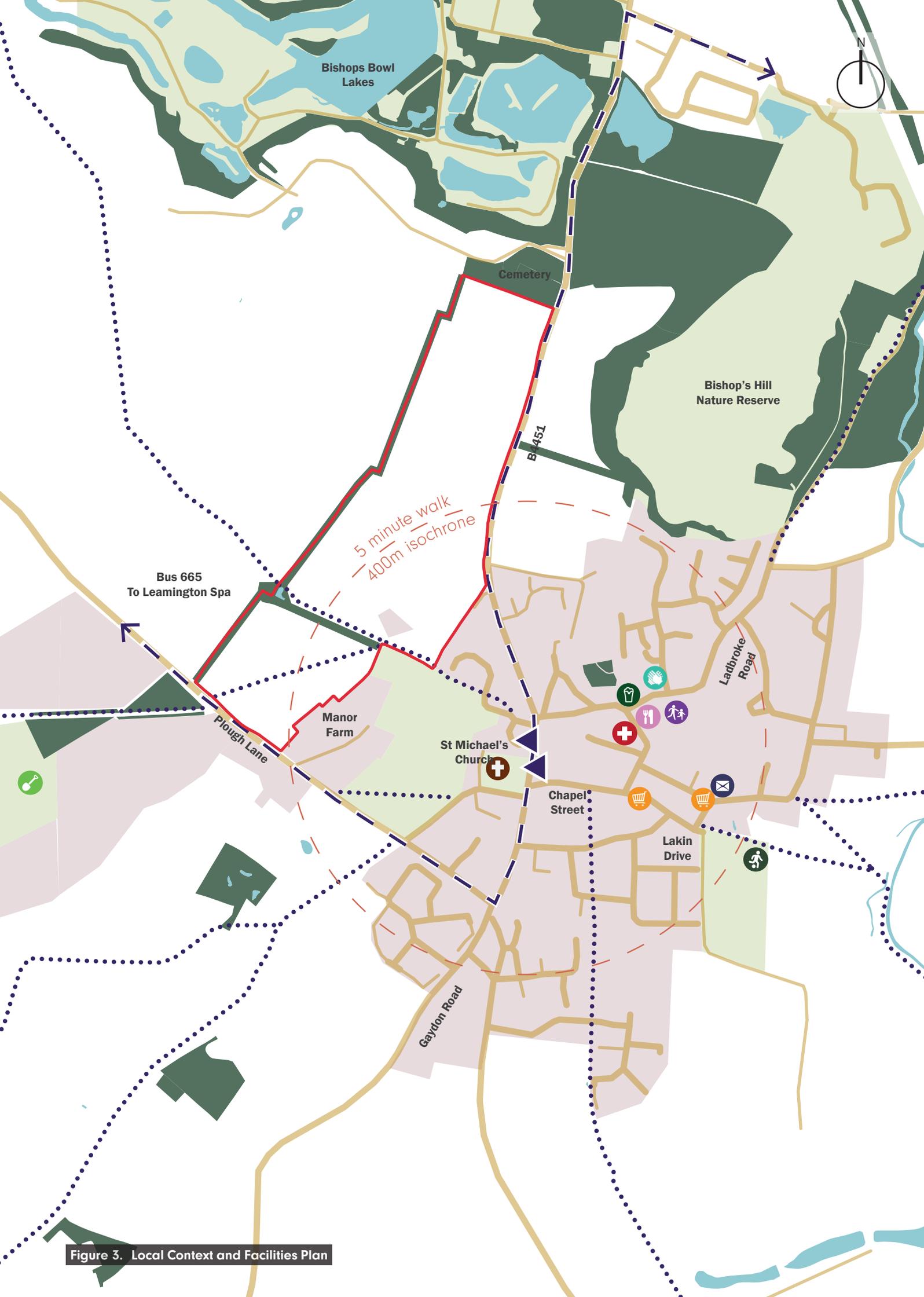


Figure 3. Local Context and Facilities Plan

5. Technical Evaluation

Ecology and Biodiversity

The Site is not constrained by any non-statutory ecological designations, although there are a number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and potential Local Wildlife Sites (pLWS) within the vicinity. Parts of Harbury Quarry LWS, also form part of the statutory designation, Harbury Quarries Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 0.5km to the north-west and 0.2km east. These sites are potentially of national value, however, impacts upon these adjacent designations will be minimal and avoided through appropriate buffering of development.

The Site largely comprises two agricultural fields, which are considered to be of little ecological value. Habitats of higher ecological value, including mature trees, hedgerows, a pond and woodland surrounding the pond, are predominantly confined to the peripheries of the Site. It is expected that these habitats will support nesting birds and have potential for roosting and commuting bats. There is potential for great crested newts to be present within the individual pond to the west of the Site as local records for great crested newts show several ponds within 500m of the Site to have the species present.

The network of scattered trees, hedgerows, woodland belts and watercourses are considered of intrinsic ecological value in the local context and should all be retained and strengthened where feasible. The boundary hedgerow to the west should be afforded a green buffer to maintain its suitability as commuting and foraging routes for a range of wildlife commuting between the offsite woodland to the north and south of the Site and a 30m buffer surrounding the badger sett.

Opportunities exist for habitat creation within green buffers around the Site peripheries, including planting species-rich wildflower grassland, hedgerows and trees, as well as the potential to design any surface water attenuation basins or additional wildlife ponds to benefit biodiversity.

Overall, desk-based studies to date have confirmed that there are no 'in principle' ecological constraints to the proposed development, and the Site offers sufficient flexibility to ensure compliance with planning policy at all levels and to avoid detrimental impacts to biodiversity. Furthermore, a sensitively designed development incorporating appropriate mitigation and enhancement, particularly to the north and the west of the Site, has the potential to deliver a significant net gain in biodiversity.



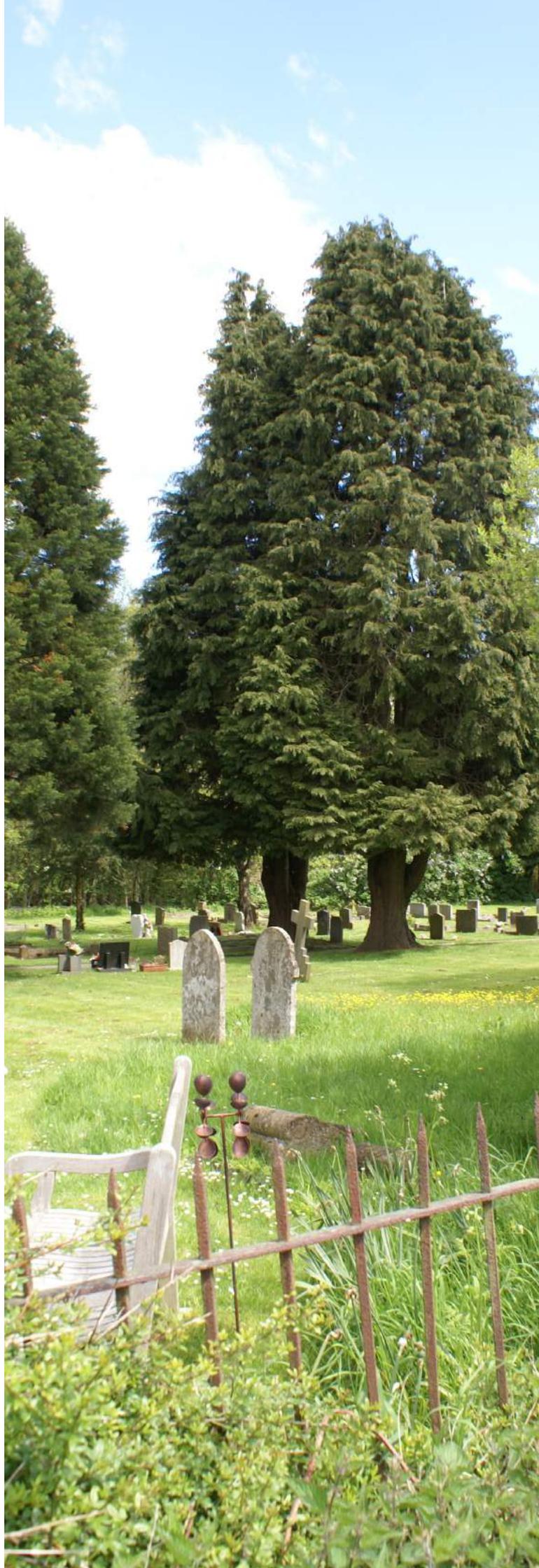
Landscape and Green Infrastructure

The Site does not lie within or adjacent to any locally or nationally designated landscape. The Site is well located abutting development to the south and with enclosing vegetation to the west and east. The character of the Site is already influenced by the settlement edge and associated land uses so reducing its sensitivity to the proposed development. Furthermore, the Site is visually well contained so that any changes to landscape character and visual amenity will be limited. In essence, in landscape and visual terms, it is a logical and easily assimilated infill to the existing settlement.

The baseline study has identified that development should be restricted to the more enclosed southern field parcel and the south-western extent of the larger field to ensure built form follows the existing grain of the village. Opportunities exist to strengthen and reinforce the northern and western boundaries, which will provide additional habitat connectivity and biodiversity as well as helping to provide additional screening alongside the existing landscape structure. The eastern extent of the Site can therefore retain the visual connection with the landscape to the north and east, while providing additional biodiversity and recreational benefits to the Site and wider village.

Overall, it is considered that there are no 'in-principal' landscape constraints to the proposed development. A sensitively designed masterplan incorporating appropriate mitigation and enhancement, particularly to the north of the Site, has the potential to successfully assimilate the Site into the receiving landscape. It is concluded that development of the Site in accordance with these recommendations will be acceptable in this landscape to the west of Bishop's Itchington.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan includes a 'protected view' from Station Road looking westwards across the Site. The masterplan will need to consider a sensitive response in this area.



Access and Transport

Access Arrangements

The Site benefits from frontage onto both Plough Lane and Station Road. Safe and suitable vehicular access to the Site is proposed off both in the form of two separate priority junctions. Pedestrian and cycle connections will be provided from these access points to tie into the existing network.

Road Network and Connectivity

Plough Lane routes in the direction of Warwick whilst Station Road (B4451) provides access to Harbury and Southam in the north and junction 12 of the M40 to the south.

The internal site layout will provide a network of internal streets that are well connected and will encourage access by walking and cycling, providing access to the existing public rights of way (PRoW) network.

Public Transport

The nearest operational bus stops serving both directions are the 'Church' bus stops, located on Station Road, approximately 200m from the Site. These stops provide access to the 78 and 665 bus routes, which together serve Kineton and Leamington Spa daily.

Public Rights of Way

Two PRoW currently route through the Site; Footpaths 130/SM84/1 and 130/SM84a/1. These footpaths originate at Mount Pleasant, off Station Road, with the former routing north-westbound and the latter connecting to Plough Lane. These routes will be suitably incorporated within the internal site layout to maintain and enhance the right of way across the Site.

In the wider vicinity of the Site, there is a complex network of PRoW providing access in all directions to the wider countryside surrounding Bishop's Itchington.

Archaeology and Heritage

The Site does not include any designated heritage assets which would represent a constraint to development because of a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. The Grade II listed Church of St Michael is located approximately 200m to the south-east of the Site, and development within the Site may result in a change to the wider setting of the church. However, it is considered that changes to the significance of the church can be avoided and that this listed building will not pose a constraint to development. The settings of the Grade II listed Rambler Cottage and the Grade II* listed The Cottage will be unaffected by development.

As far as archaeology is concerned no archaeological sites or artefact findspots are recorded within the Site on the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record. However, archaeological investigations carried out just to the east of the Site have identified Iron Age, Roman and later features, and further such archaeology may be present within the Site. However, based on the results of these investigations, any such remains are likely to be of local interest only and as such unlikely to form a constraint to development.



Flooding and Drainage

The Site is greenfield land and the topography falls from south to north. The Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest probability for fluvial flooding. The proposed development has also been assessed against a further range of potential flood risk sources including canals, groundwater, and reservoirs. None of which were found to represent a potential barrier to development.

The majority of the Site is shown to be at very low susceptibility to surface water flooding, according to Environment Agency mapping. There is an Ordinary Watercourse located approximately 350m to the north-west of the site, which would provide a suitable outfall for surface water.

The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will provide attenuation within the Site to contain the surface water prior to discharge. The use of SuDS will provide multiple stages of treatment to guarantee that the water quality in the wider watercourse and the drainage network is protected. Wherever possible the attenuation features will be above ground to provide additional ecological, amenity and aesthetic benefits and will be appropriately sized to include an allowance for climate change.

The nearest sewer is a foul sewer located within the B4451, to the east of the Site. A review of levels would allow a gravity connection to be made to this existing infrastructure.

Utilities

The only service crossing the Site is a 9-inch water main. There are services (33kv below ground cables) in the verge on the eastern boundary, localised diversion or protection of which would be required to facilitate an access. There are two substations adjacent to the Site.

The existing networks appear to be reasonably well established and the indication is that utility capacity can be provided by the existing infrastructure or through further localised network reinforcement.



6. A Sustainable And Deliverable Site

Land off Station Road, Bishop’s Itchington offers a sustainable and suitable location to deliver new homes for Warwickshire.

The Site is free of significant constraints and is well positioned in respect of existing transport infrastructure, providing a desirable blend of rural village living with the connectivity and services of larger centres nearby.

Access

- Two vehicular access points taken from Plough Lane and Station Road;
- Three additional pedestrian access points via the existing PRow network; and
- Potential for a new pedestrian route to provide a safer and more attractive route to the cemetery.

Ecology

- There are no constraints that would be significantly affected by the proposed development;
- There is the potential to mitigate any effects arising upon protected species that may be present;
- Much of the Site is currently in agricultural land use and has significant potential for biodiversity enhancement; and
- Enhancement and extension of existing boundary planting to improve connectivity between areas of ecological value to the south and north of the site.

Heritage

- An initial assessment reveals no significant impediments to development on grounds of impact to heritage assets and their settings.

Drainage

- The entire Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore an area of low probability of flooding; and
- Proposed attenuation features should be above ground to provide additional ecological, amenity and aesthetic benefits and should be appropriately sized to include an allowance for climate change.

Landscape

- Provide a 30-50m buffer along north-western boundary to ensure built form does not appear intrusive to wider landscape;
- Existing boundary planting to be generally retained and enhanced; and
- There are no ‘in-principle’ constraints to development of the Site, with an appropriate landscape and Green Infrastructure strategy assimilating the proposals into the receiving landscape.

	Site Boundary (18.7ha)
	Potential Vehicular Access
	Public Rights of Way
	5m Contours
	Existing Vegetation
	Water Bodies
	SSSI
	Nature Reserve
	Water Main
	Grade II Listed Building
	Grade II* Listed Building
	Key Views
	Area of Higher Landscape Sensitivity

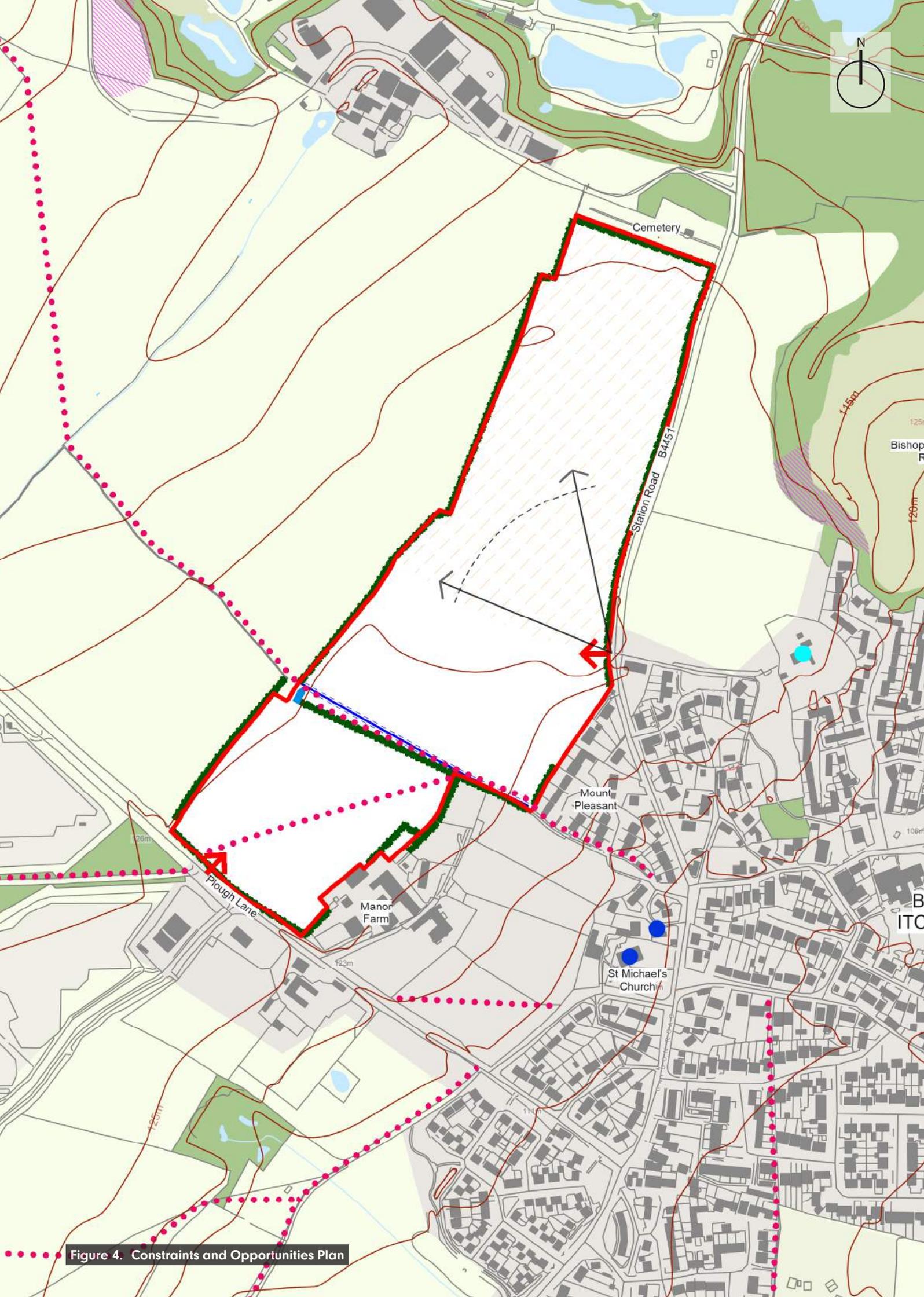


Figure 4. Constraints and Opportunities Plan

7. An Opportunity for Bishop's Itchington

VISION STATEMENT

Up to 200 new homes within easy reach of transport links and local facilities, set within an enhanced landscape setting which provides recreational amenity and ecological value.

The concept masterplan opposite illustrates the immediate opportunity offered by development of the Site, demonstrating the benefits to the wider community of this sustainable development.

Key Design Opportunities

An Integrated Development

Desirable, high quality homes will be provided with a design that reflects local rural Warwickshire character using traditional materials with a mix of house types that is appropriate for the village's needs.

New Green Open Areas and a Place to Play

A generous network of new parkland is proposed, incorporating the existing PRoW that cross the Site and providing for sustainable drainage features, circular walking routes and a children's play area. A safe, more attractive route to the cemetery to the north will be provided.

Complimenting its Surroundings

Development will be sensitively integrated within its context with a reduction in density and scale on the Site's outer edges to create a porous development edge and positive landscape/village interface at the western edge of Bishop's Itchington.

Enhanced Biodiversity

New habitats will be created, including wildflower meadows, native parkland and small areas of woodland planting. Existing Green Infrastructure assets will be strengthened and enhanced to create a well-connected landscape network supporting native flora and fauna. A net biodiversity gain will be sought.

1. Generous back gardens and planting.	7. The existing water main is retained within public realm.	 Site Boundary (18.7ha)
2. New bungalows backing onto existing Mount Pleasant bungalows.	8. Generous back gardens and planting.	 Potential Vehicular Access
3. Landscape buffer along north-western boundary.	9. Attenuation basin.	 Public Rights of Way
4. View from Station Road looking west is retained.	10. Equipped play area.	 5m Contours
5. Pedestrian connection to the cemetery.	11. Areas of new deciduous woodland planting.	 Proposed Recreational Route
6. Additional planting along boundary to strengthen ecological connectivity.	12. Existing PRoW retained within green corridor.	 Proposed Development Blocks
		 Proposed Route Structure
		 Proposed Open Space



Figure 5. Concept Masterplan



The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd

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