

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

# Land at Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton

Prepared on behalf of Richborough Estates

JULY 2020



**Turley**  
Design





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### Date of issue

July 2020

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# 01 Introduction



# 01. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Turley on behalf of Richborough Estates. It supports an outline application for up to 69 dwellings, with associated access, landscaping, open space, and drainage infrastructure (all matters reserved other than access) on land at Blakesley Hill, Greens Norton.

1.1 This application is submitted in outline form with approval sought for use and means of access only. All other matters including layout, scale, appearance and landscape are reserved for subsequent approval. This approach has been informed by and has followed a full contextual appraisal of the site, identification of constraints and opportunities and thorough pre-application consultation with representatives from the local planning authority and community.

## Purpose of document

1.2 This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part Three of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance. It is in response to the recognised need to deliver high quality, locally responsive and sustainable developments through the UK planning system.

1.3 The role of this DAS is to illustrate the processes which have led to the proposed development, and to justify the proposals in relation to their context in a transparent, legible and structured way. This approach is embedded and endorsed by the NPPF.

1.4 The purpose of this DAS is to demonstrate that the proposed development is responsive to its surrounding context and in accordance with relevant design policies. It should be read in conjunction with the full set of documentation submitted as part of the application.

## Scope and structure

1.5 The structure of this document is as follows:

- **Chapter 2 - Planning and Design Policy:** A review of relevant national and local planning and design policy and guidance which relate to the design and development of the site proposals.
- **Chapter 3 - Site Context:** Describes the context of the site in terms of townscape, landscape and movement. This section also focuses on the immediate site context, setting out how the site's constraints and opportunities will shape the development area.
- **Chapter 4 - Design Evolution:** Identifies how the initial design responds to identified constraints and provides a summary of engagement undertaken.
- **Chapter 5 - Outline Parameters:** Sets out the parameters of the outline development proposal in respect of use, quantum of development and means of access.
- **Chapter 6 - Illustrative Proposals:** Describes design principles of the proposed illustrative masterplan and how the outline design responds to the requirements of the South Northamptonshire Design Guide.
- **Chapter 7 - Summary and Conclusions:** A review of the key findings established through the Design and Access Statement, summarising the key elements which make up the proposed development.



## The site

1.6 The site covers an area of approximately 2.87 hectares (Ha) and occupies a previously undeveloped site to the west of Greens Norton. The site is defined by Blakesley Hill to the north; Bury Hill to the west; an established field boundary to the south; and the rear of residential properties fronting Benham Road to the east. The site is currently used for the purposes of arable farming and is accessed through a small gateway entrances off both Blakesley Hill and Bury Hill.

1.7 The edges of the site are defined by established hedgerows along its periphery with a number of trees of varying quality also being located around its edges. Its use for arable farming means a majority of the site has been cleared of any notable landscape or ecological features of value.

1.8 The site is relatively flat with a gentle slope from the north to the south with a level difference of approximately 5m across the site.



Fig. 1: Site location plan



**1.9** Richborough Estates is a responsible and specialist strategic land promotion business founded with the aim of working in partnership with landowners. Our projects are located throughout the country, ranging from residential schemes of around 100 dwellings to large urban extensions and new settlements, including sites in the Green Belt.

**1.10** Richborough oversee the entire planning process from start to finish and seek to work closely with local communities, planning officers and councils to create the most mutually beneficial schemes before appointing a development partner. Richborough is seeking to apply this approach to here on land at Blakesley Hill.

### Our vision for Greens Norton

**1.11** The overall vision is founded upon the following principles:

- To produce a new community designed to the highest design standards, with a clear and recognisable identity which reflects the vernacular and character of Greens Norton, creating a strong 'sense of place' and a new enduring legacy for the village
- To provide the right ingredients for a balanced and sustainable new development, providing a range of high quality homes and open space and
- To establish a safe, attractive, and secure neighbourhood, streets and spaces which promote social interaction, affording access and movement priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

### Technical project team

**1.12** This application has been prepared in collaboration with an experienced range of specialist consultants to ensure the outline proposals respond positively to characteristics of the site and its environment.

**1.13** The consultant team instructed to advise as part of this project include the following:

- **Turley Design** (Masterplanning and Design Consultant)
- **Fisher German LLP** (Planning Consultant)
- **Hub Transport Planning** (Highways Consultant)
- **Tyler Grange** (Landscape, Arboriculture and Ecology Consultant)
- **BWB Consulting** (Flood Risk and Drainage Consultant)

### Summary of proposals

**1.14** Proposals comprises up to 69 dwellings and associated landscape, Public Open Space including children's play

**1.15** The indicative proposals seek to encourage sustainable modes of travel, using a permeable hierarchy of streets to open up the recreational benefits of the site.

**1.16** The vision includes the provision of character areas, a range of housing types and landscaped public open space to create locally inspired identity, distinctiveness and a sense of place.





## Key

1. Proposed access
2. Primary street
3. Primary street (shared surface)
4. Lane
5. Private driveway/mews
6. Footpath
7. Local Area of Play (LAP)
8. Public Open Space (POS) including natural play
9. Attenuation basin
10. Attenuation swale
11. Indicative location of pumping station
12. Existing trees, landscaped and Public Open Space



Fig. 2: Illustrative masterplan









# 02 Planning and Design Policy



## 02. Planning and Design Policy Review

Richborough Estates are committed to providing high quality and locally responsive development which not only meets and exceeds the expectation of national and local planning policy, but which benefits the community of Greens Norton.

### National design policy and guidance

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

**2.1** National Planning Policy is contained within the NPPF. The Government published the updated NPPF on 20th February 2019.

**2.2** The NPPF includes the Government's planning policies for England, highlighting the economic, social and environmental roles of planning, and its contribution to meeting the mutually dependent objectives of a strong, responsive and competitive economy; strong vibrant and healthy communities; and the protection of the natural, built and historic environment.

**2.3** At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be applied both through the plan-making and decision-making process.

**2.4** The policies set out in Section 12 seek to achieve well-designed places, highlighting that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental for the planning and development process (para 124). Paragraph 124 goes onto to state that "...good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities...".

**2.5** Paragraph 127 states that decisions should ensure that developments:

- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping
- Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)
- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangements of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks
- Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.



## National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

**2.6** Further to the publication of the NPPF, the over-arching policies have now been supplemented by further guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which provides enhanced clarity on the interpretation of policies in the NPPF.

**2.7** The PPG also deals with design and reiterates the position set out in the NPPF, identifying that good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development.

**2.8** Paragraph 001 states that ‘...Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations’.

## National Design Guide (2019)

**2.9** The NPPF makes clear that creating high quality places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The National Design Guide, published in September 2019 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, seeks to illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

**2.10** The guidance sets out 10 key characteristics of well-designed places which all work together to create character; help nurture and sustain a sense of community; and address environmental issues affecting climate. These 10 characteristics are sets out as follows:

### **1. Context - enhances the surroundings**

- Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
- Value heritage, local history and culture.

### **2. Identity - attractive and distinctive**

- Respond to existing local character and identity
- Well-designed, high quality and attractive
- Create character and identity.

### **3. Built form - a coherent pattern of development**

- Compact form of development
- Appropriate building types and forms
- Destinations.

### **4. Movement - accessible and easy to move around**

- An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport
- A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets
- Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users.

### **5. Nature - enhanced and optimised**

- Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play
- Improve and enhance water management
- Support rich and varied biodiversity.

### **6. Public spaces - safe, social and inclusive**

- Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces
- Provide well-designed spaces that are safe
- Make sure public spaces support social interactions.

### **7. Uses - mixed and integrated**

- A mix of uses
- A mix of home tenures, types and sizes
- Socially inclusive.



#### **8. Homes and buildings - functional, healthy and sustainable**

- Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
- Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
- Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities.

#### **9. Resources - efficient and resilient**

- Following the energy hierarchy
- Selection of materials and construction techniques
- Maximise resilience.

#### **10. Lifespan - made to last**

- Well-managed and maintained
- Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies
- A sense of ownership.

### **Building for a Healthy Life (2020)**

**2.11** Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) was published in July 2020 and is an update to Building for Life 12 (BfL12). Endorsed by Government, it is the industry standard for well-design homes and neighbourhoods.

**2.12** BHL is a design tool created for local communities, local authorities and developers to use it to stimulate conversations about creating good places to live.

**2.13** Twelve considerations, with clear written and visual prompts, are set out over three key headings: Integrated Neighbourhoods; Distinctive Places; and Streets for All. They are created to help those involved in new developments to think about the qualities of successful places and how these can be best applied to the individual characteristics of a site and its wider context, and reflect our vision of what new housing developments should be: attractive, functional and sustainable places.

**2.14** BHL is also designed to help local planning authorities assess the quality of proposed and completed developments; and as a point of reference in the preparation of local design policies. The proposals set out in this DAS have been guided by the principles of BHL.



## Local Design Policy

2.15 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

*“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.*

2.16 In this instance, the Development Plan comprises the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (2014) and the saved policies of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (1997)

## West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) (2014)

2.17 The WNJCS was adopted as the core planning document for the Council, in conjunction with Northampton Borough Council and Daventry District Council (the WNJPU), on 15th December 2014.

2.18 The following design policies contained in the Local Plan are particularly relevant:

**Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles:** ensures that the economic, social and environmental needs of the area are delivered in a balanced way to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and local environment, protecting valued landscapes, minimising impacts on biodiversity, and enhancing green networks.

**Policy C2: New Developments:** This relates to highways matters advising that the design, density and location of services within new developments should maximise the opportunity for trips by non-car modes and be able mitigate its effects on the highway network.

**Policy RC2: Community Needs:** seeks the provision of appropriate community facilities and open space alongside residential development.

**Policy H1: Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings:** seeks to ensure that an appropriate mix of housing is provided.

**Policy H2: Affordable Housing:** sets out the percentage requirements and site size thresholds for the on-site provision of affordable housing. For the Rural Areas the percentage requirement is 50%.

**Policy H4: Sustainable Housing:** sets out that residential development must be designed to provide accommodation that meets the requirements of the Lifetime Homes Standard, subject to the assessment of viability on a site by site basis.

**Policy BN7: Flood Risk:** requires developers to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment for all development proposals over 1 hectare in line with national guidance.



## South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (2020)

**2.19** The Local Plan Part 2 was adopted in July 2020 and covers the period to 2029. The following design policies contained in the Local Plan are particularly relevant:

**Policy SS2 General Development and Design Principles:** sets out that planning permission will be granted where the development meets a number of criteria such as its compatibility in terms of type, scale, massing, siting, form, design, materials and design.

**Policy LH8: Affordable Housing:** requires proposals that comprise 10 or more dwellings to deliver 50% affordable housing in rural areas and that the Council will seek a tenure split of 70% affordable rent and 30% affordable home ownership.

**Policy LH10: Housing Mix and Type:** requires developments to provide a mixture of types, tenure, size and costs of homes to contribute to the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities, with developments of over 20 dwellings providing at least 5% bungalows.

**Policy SDP3: Health Facilities and Wellbeing:** requires developments to contribute to creating healthy and equitable living environments through locating development in sustainable locations with a mixture of housing types and tenures.

**Policy INF4: Electric Vehicle Charging Points:** requires residential developments to make provision for electric vehicle charging.

**Policy GS1: Open Space, Sport and Recreation** requires proposals to ensure that the necessary provision is made.

**Policy NE4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows:** outlines that developments should seek to integrate existing vegetation and where loss of existing trees, woodland or hedgerows is unavoidable, suitable replacement planting will be required.

**Policy NE5: Biodiversity and Geodiversity:** expects proposals to incorporate measures to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within or around a development site, and to contribute to the consolidation and development of local ecological networks.

## South Northamptonshire Design Guide

**2.20** This Design Guide was adopted in July 2017 in order to establish a benchmark for high quality design standards for new development in the district. It sets out a detailed appraisal of the specific character of South Northamptonshire and provides guiding design principles to shape new development which is responsive to the surrounding landscape and built environment. The key vision for the district, set out in the Design Guide, is to:

- Ensure the special character of the district is preserved and that all new development is of high quality
- Protect the built heritage of the district through effective development management, planning enforcement and conservation
- Work to preserve and enhance the natural landscape character and environmental qualities of the district
- Work with local communities to help develop and sustain access to local services and facilities.

**2.21** Within the document, ten fundamental design considerations are set out as follows:

1. At the outset, an analysis of the vernacular and character of the local area should be undertaken.
2. The proposal should be in compliance with local planning policy.
3. Proposed architectural detailing should draw upon design cues from the local context and reinforce the local character.
4. Where possible, all development should be as energy efficient as possible and utilise renewable energy generation.
5. Buildings should positively contribute to the public realm, adding enclosure, surveillance and activity to the streetscene.
6. Neighbourhoods should be walkable, ensuring services and facilities, including schools, bus stops and play areas are within walking distance of homes.
7. Developments should be legible, with a clear movement hierarchy and network of spaces.
8. Parking should be considered as an integral part of the design process to ensure that parked vehicles do not dominate the streetscene.
9. The materials used should be locally sourced and reflective of the historical building materials in the locality.
10. All development proposals should be contextually appropriate and responsive to their local environment.

**2.22** We have used these criteria to guide the design process and provide an assessment of the proposals. A summary of this assessment is set out later in this DAS.



## **Parking: Standards and Design SPD (2017)**

**2.23** This supplementary planning document (SPD) sets the parking standards and design expectations that South Northamptonshire Council will use when assessing development proposals. The parking standards are set as a minimum, and encourages well designed parking in all new development.

**2.24** Key design criteria and requirements in the SPD are as follows:

- Parking for each dwelling is best located on plot, at the side of the dwelling
- Avoid on-plot parking to the front where possible
- Small parking courts of up to 10 spaces may be acceptable
- Minimum number of spaces for 1-3 bedroom dwellings is 2; the minimum number of spaces for 4+ bedroom houses is 3.





# 03 Site Context





## 03. Site Context

This chapter sets out the urban design analysis which has been carried out relating to the site and surrounding context to inform a series of locally responsive, specific and sustainable design principles.

3.1 The three scales of context are set out as follows:

- **Strategic context** – The location of the site within the district and regional setting including key transport connections
- **Local context** – The wider setting of the site, the area's historic growth and character, and the current relationship between the site and the surrounding built form, urban grain, and its key connections to the surrounding urban area
- **Site context** – A more detailed appraisal of the site and its immediate surroundings, including topography, landscape, ecology, access and drainage.

3.2 At each of the above scales, a number of initial conclusions will be drawn in the form of 'Initial design thoughts.....'. These will form the basis for a number of early design principles which will be refined through the later stages of this statement and influence the final illustrative proposals included within this application.





## Strategic context

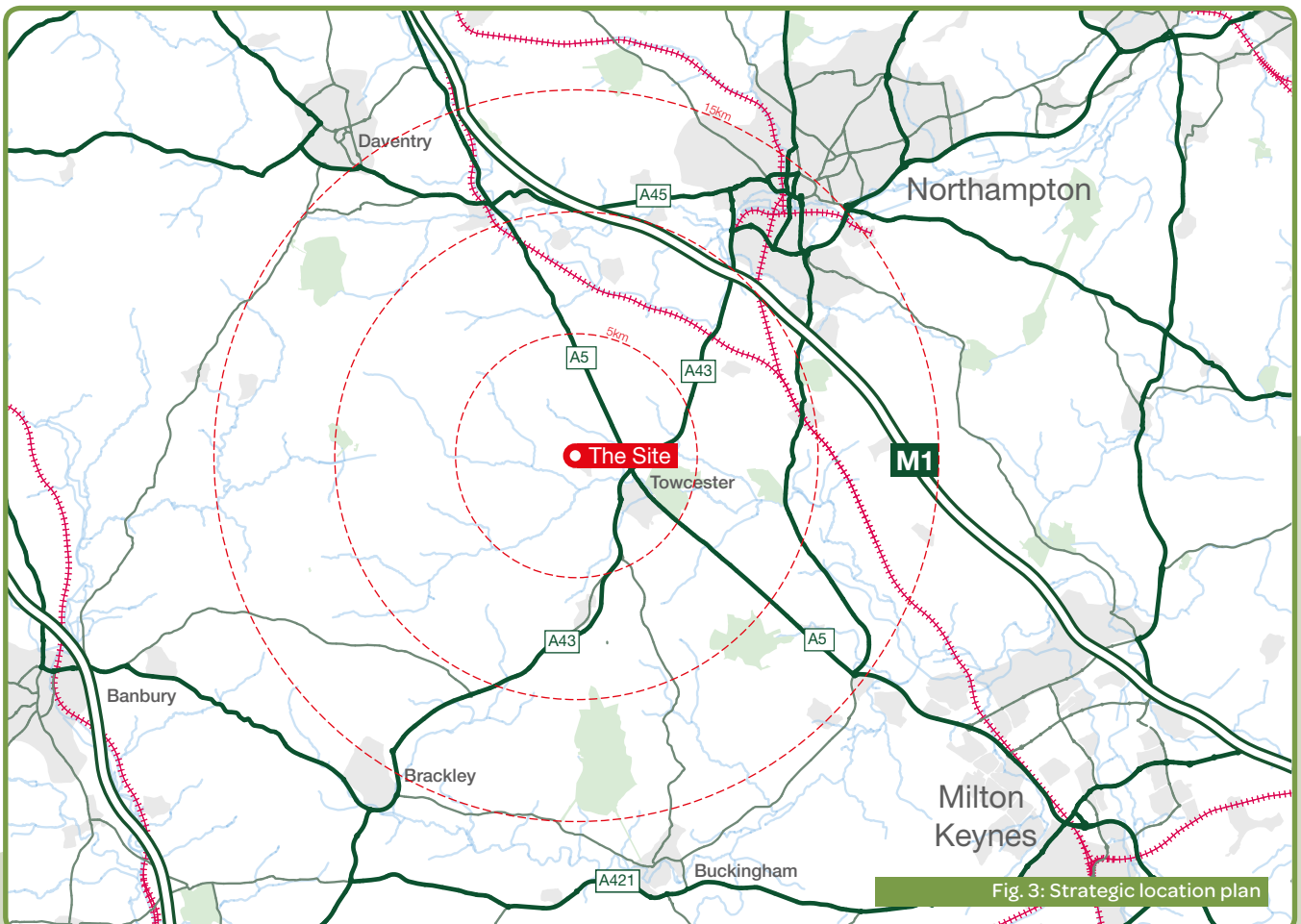
3.3 The site is located on the western edge of Greens Norton, a settlement located approximately 3-4km northwest of Towcester in Northamptonshire. Northampton is located approximately 15km northeast of Greens Norton and is the primary economic driver in the region offering access to a wide offer of employment, cultural, retail and leisure facilities. Milton Keynes and Banbury are also easily accessible from Greens Norton and located within a 25km drive from the site.

3.4 Due to its proximity to the A43 and the A5, the site benefits from easy access onto the strategic road network with the closest junction of the M1 located 10km away on the edge of Northampton.

3.5 Access to the strategic public transport network is also readily available a short distance away from the site. Towcester is the primary node for local, regional and nation bus connections, whilst Northampton and Banbury provide access to both the West Coast Mainline and Chiltern Mainline services respectively providing fast and easy rail connections between London and the West Midlands.

### Initial design thoughts...

3.6 Greens Norton is a highly accessible and sustainable location for those wishing to live outside the main towns within Northamptonshire. Development needs to be of a scale that supports the critical mass of Greens Norton to ensure the village is able to retain and promote key services and transport links.



## Local context

### Access and movement

#### Road and public transport

**3.7** The site is enclosed by public highway on two sides with Blakesley Hill to the north and Bury Hill to the west.

**3.8** Both roads are rural in character with green verges and hedgerows on both sides. Blakesley Hill, however, is the main route leading from Blakesley and beyond through Greens Norton to Towcester. The road verges comprise a single-sided pavement, which runs along the northern site boundary.

**3.9** Bury Hill as well as Bradden Road, are narrower in width and without pedestrian routes alongside. Bus services, accessible from the centre of Greens Norton a short walk from the site run from Greens Norton to Towcester and Northampton, running five times a day. The journey to Northampton takes 40 minutes.

#### Public Right of Way

**3.10** Residents of Greens Norton benefit from an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, which extends from the village core through different neighbourhoods into the surrounding countryside.

**3.11** Public footpaths lead into the countryside from all parts of the village, connecting to the wider network as well as providing links to assets such as the pocket park south of Greens Norton. Some of these paths are long distance routes, such as Knightley Way and Grafton Way.

**3.12** The built structure of the village is interspersed with a well-defined network of pedestrian routes, which helps to provide safe routes within the village and provides attractive routes for informal recreation.





## Local amenities

**3.13** The village features a reasonable number of amenities, which are predominantly located along High Street which meet the day to day needs of the local community. All of these amenities can be accessed on bike and foot with walking times of a maximum of 10-15 minutes.

**3.14** Greens Norton Church of England School is located approximately 800 metres east of the site with a number of nurseries and pre schools located close by.

1. Greens Norton Village Hall, High Street
2. Mansfield Court Bus Stop, Greens Norton
3. Hedgehog Hill Nursey, High Street
4. Greens Norton Village Store, High Street

## Initial design thoughts...

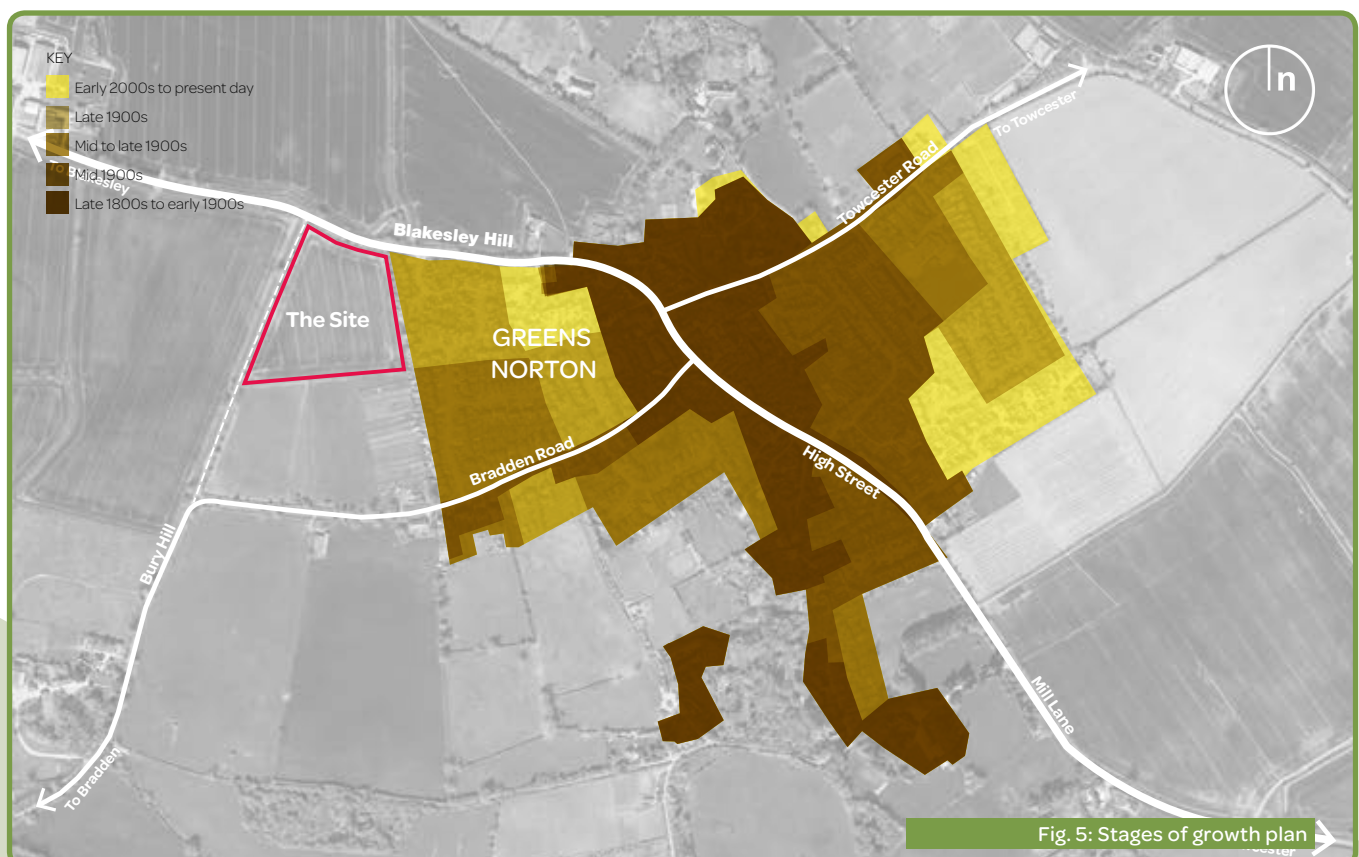
- Access to the site by car, foot or by cycle can be gained by the adopted street network.
- New development should link to existing routes and create a permeable network of streets and open spaces that promote the public wider footpath network.
- New streets should draw upon the character of existing streets, encourage sustainable modes of travel and enhance connections local facilities within the village.
- Opportunity to provide new children's play facility in the western area of the village.



## Local character

**3.15** The morphology and streetscape of Greens Norton developed over time with parts of the village dating back to the Middle Ages. The village features a relatively densely built up historic core, located predominantly along High Street, and distinctly different additions to the village that were built after the First and Second World Wars, when the village grew predominantly to the east and west. The site is located away from the historic core of the village, contained by Bury Hill and late 1900s development along the western edge of Greens Norton, where existing housing forms an abrupt, inward facing edge to the village.

**3.16** The church of St Bartholomew and the graveyard are located immediately north of the elongated core, while two manor houses are located at the northern and southern extent of the village.





## Block pattern

3.17 Main characteristics for Greens Norton are:

- Denser village core between the junctions of High Street with Blakesley Hill, Towcester Road and Bradden Road
- Irregular block shapes and a haphazard arrangement of dwellings, which mostly face the street, but do not necessarily line it
- Residential buildings are varied in the style with a strong mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings.
- Buildings commonly range in height from between 1.5 and 3.0 storeys
- Some of the village plots feature very long gardens, while others are clustered around drives
- Some dwellings are built inside the blocks and are accessed from communal courts and lanes
- Widenings in the road where main roads meet, with buildings responding to this, stepping back and creating a more generous streetscape
- Later post war additions follow a more regular block pattern
- The majority of development is organised in a back to back arrangement with buildings facing the streets, giving the blocks a clear front and back
- More historic buildings respond to corners, commonly being dual-aspect and having a gable aspect on at least one side.
- Gables fronting onto street are a key feature in both historic and contemporary parts.

**1-2.** Semi-detached and terraced cottages are common throughout local vernacular (Blakesley Hill/Benham Road)

**3.** Building heights increase to between 2.5-3.0 storeys at key nodal points and around primary spaces to help improve legibility (High Street)

**4.** Properties located within larger building blocks access small lanes (New Road)

**5.** Scale becomes much more regular as 2.0 storeys in contemporary developments nearer the application site (Benham Road)



## Streetscape

**3.18** Main characteristics of the streetscapes of Greens Norton are:

- The spire of St Bartholomew acts as a landmark in the distance with casual views occurring from many locations throughout the village
- Some of the historic streets have single sided pavements on one and green verges on the other side, creating low key streets with a more informal character, many of which follow shared surface principles
- Frequently buildings front directly onto the public realm
- Large front gardens are not common within the local vernacular
- Some properties feature small front gardens, the majority of which are enclosed with low boundary walls, hedgerows and boundary vegetation
- Gates to access communal courts are frequently set back from the street with rounded walls along the drive
- Higher boundary walls occur where plots abut the street side on
- The width of the historic streets changes over their length, opening up on forks in the way and widening in central areas where buildings are set back to accommodate a wide green strip with tree planting
- The streetscape in the post-war neighbourhoods is defined by a more regular shape and building layout; boundary treatments are frequently formed by vegetation
- Frequently buildings face the street with their eaves, occasionally featuring dormer windows that structure the streetscape.

**1.** Many streets have single-sided pavements, buildings located either immediately behind the footway or behind small gardens/planted defensible strips. (Blakesley Hill)

**2.** Contemporary developments are defined by less formal planted boundary treatments instead of walls and railings. (Benham Road)

**3.** Streets are irregular in style and commonly vary in width, incorporating tree planting and verges which helps to soften/green the environment. (Blakesley Hill)

**4-5.** Larger properties are defined by more regular boundary treatments including low walls, railings/gates and formal hedges. (Blakesley Hill/ Bradden Road)





## Materials and detailing

**3.19** Greens Norton features a wide range of building materials, reflecting the village's geographical location and its iterative development over centuries.

**3.20** Most prominent material features include:

- Natural stone
- Brick, buff, red and orange
- Painted render
- Timber and brick detailing
- Plain and profile roof tiles of varying colours
- Duo pitched roofs
- Barge boards, oversailing eaves and exposed rafter feet
- Dormer windows and gables
- Brick and stone dentil courses
- Quoins
- Chimneys

### Initial design thoughts...

**3.21** Positively respond to the local vernacular of Greens Norton by:

- Varying density
- Providing a range of building sizes
- Facing buildings onto the street
- Including some taller buildings as landmarks
- Basing street patterns on traditional block structure layouts
- Varying road widths and the levels of enclosure buildings achieve across them
- Incorporating church views into green spaces
- Relate to existing contemporary edge.
- Be of a scale consistent with other residential additions to the village

**1.** Local stone is evident in many buildings, with traditional or modern versions being used to reflect local vernacular. (Blakesley Hill)

**2-3.** Red and buff brick are commonly found in both traditional and new properties. (Blakesley Hill/Benham Road)

**4.** Contemporary developments are defined by darker red brick and plain façades with limited detailing and decorative features. (Benham Road)

**5.** A varied roofscape featuring stepping rooflines and chimney stacks is evident across the skyline of the village. (Bradden Road)



## Landscape and visual impact

3.22 Tyler Grange have assessed the landscape and visual amenity of the site and its capacity to accommodate residential development.

### Landscape character

3.23 At a county level, the site is located in the 'Undulating Claylands' LCT, and within the 'Tove Catchment' LCA. Its key characteristics are:

- A distinctive undulating landform which forms the catchment of the River Tove
- A section of the Grand Union Canal also passes through the area (including the Blisworth Tunnel)
- The River Tove is a significant landscape feature to the east of Towcester
- Land cover is typically a combination of both arable and pasture farming with improved pasture largely located around village settlements border the River Tove and its tributaries, and on valley sides
- Woodland is not a prominent feature; although, there are a number of moderately sized woodland blocks that create a more localised wooded character in places
- Many woodlands are also ancient woodland and significant woodlands are generally associated with estate parklands
- Well-settled landscape, with numerous villages scattered throughout. These are generally small in size although there are larger villages (e.g. Blisworth, Roade and Greens Norton)
- Village morphology varies greatly
- Church spires are prominent within many villages and provide local landmarks throughout the area
- A notable wooded horizon in many views to the south
- Various heritage features are scattered across the area
- A diverse range of recreational opportunities.

3.24 The site contains some of the features that are representative of the 'The Tove Catchment' LCA, with arable land cover, views towards village church spires and a notable wooded horizon to the south in the wider landscape. The site sits within a well settled landscape and is influenced by the existing settlement edge at its eastern boundary.

3.25 It does not contain any notable, rare or unique features and is not designated as a valued landscape.

### Initial design thoughts...

3.26 In response to the assessment of the site, the proposed development should:

- Conserve the wide panoramic views across the landscape from elevated areas
- Conserve and enhancing hedgerows by management
- Gap up existing hedgerows with new hedgerow planting
- Conserve the predominately unwooded character – by discouraging the planting of large scale woodland
- Conserve and enhancing small scale woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees
- Conserve the diversity of the landscape's settlement morphologies







## Visual context

**3.27** Views of the site are limited and localised, with visibility mostly restricted to the site and its immediate surroundings. Direct views from the adjacent residential development can be seen, and the site is visible from Blakesley Hill to the north and Bury Hill to the west.

**3.28** Middle-distance views are predominately obscured and screened by the undulating landscape, the wider landscape framework and the site's mature field boundary vegetation; however, partially screened views are available from the sloping farmland and residential development to the west of the site.

**3.29** Some long-distance views are available from the rising ground to the south and south-west of the site, but; from these locations the site is seen as part of much wider view and against the existing settlement backdrop of Greens Norton.

**3.30** Receptors who are likely to experience a change in their view as a result of the development will be the following:

- Recreational users of the nearby public rights of way and permissive path network (including Knightley Way)
- Private residents located on the eastern edge of Greens Norton (off Bradden Road, Benham Road and Falcon View)
- Recreational users of the nearby Local Nature Reserve (Greens Norton Pocket Park)
- Residents of scattered rural development to the south and west of the site
- Residents, visitors and workers of a number of nearby and distant farmsteads located in the surrounding landscape
- Transient users of the adjoining road network (including Blakesley Hill, Bradden Road, Bury Hill)
- Transient users of the wider transport network to the south and south-west of the site
- Owners and workers of the nearby agricultural development to the south east.

### Initial design thoughts...

**3.31** In response to the landscape and visual characterisation work undertaken, the proposed development should

- Retain and enhance existing hedgerows and trees
- Retain and incorporate church views into green spaces
- Reserve perimeter edges for landscape and filtering of views
- Provide a central play space to act as a community focus
- Create circular walks with areas of natural play







Fig. 6: View point 1 location



Fig. 7: View point 4 location

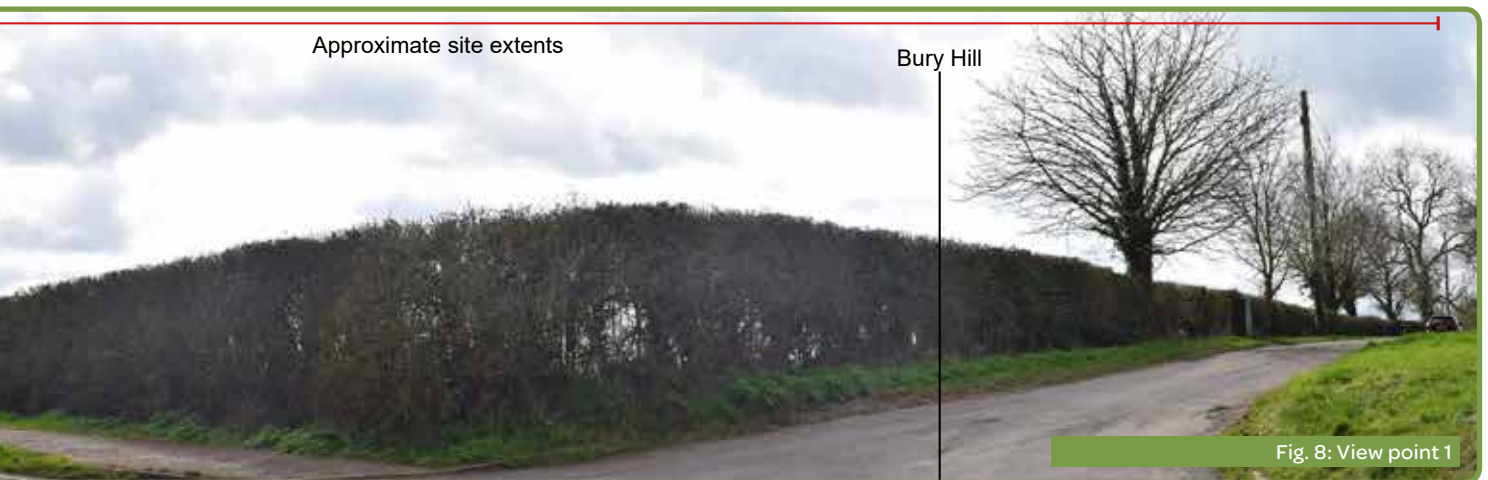


Fig. 8: View point 1



Fig. 9: View point 4

## Site context

3.32 Having assessed the character and nature of the site within its wider and local context, a detailed assessment of the site itself is required to determine key constraints and opportunities which require consideration in the design of the development.

3.33 This analysis informs parameters which need to be accommodated within the development proposal or addressed as part of the scheme's design through mitigation or substitution.

3.34 The key factors of the site which are deemed to be most relevant to the development are as follows:

- Arboriculture
- Ecology
- Flood risk
- Site infrastructure.

3.35 Along with this DAS, a full suite of documents have been produced as part of this planning application covering the above topics. A summary of the key findings of these reports are documented on the following pages. For further technical detail on these matters, please refer to the specific report in question. This chapter concludes with a summary of opportunities and constraints for the development of the site.







## Arboriculture

### Methodology

**3.36** A tree survey of the site has been completed by Tyler Grange Group Limited in accordance with the BS5837 (2012). An Arboricultural Report accompanies the planning application which details the findings of the survey and provides an assessment of the outline scheme in relation to the existing trees.

### Statutory and non-statutory designations

**3.37** A background check of available online mapping confirms that no Tree Preservation Orders are currently administered to trees on the site and none of the trees are located within a Conservation Area. No Ancient Woodlands are present within the influence of the site and no ancient or veteran trees were identified.

### Findings of the survey

**3.38** A total of 25 individual trees (trees T1 – T25), 1 groups of trees (G1) and 2 hedgerows (H1 and H2) were identified during the tree survey of the site and its immediate vicinity. The majority of trees are semi to early mature, which have been planted at fairly even spacing across the northern and western hedgerows. Dominant species includes horse chestnut, with fewer lime, ash, field maple and apple. A prevailing wind from the south-west has impacted canopy development in many trees, particularly the horse chestnut which appeared stunted compared to a normal growth scenario. Many of the ash trees surveyed exhibited sparse crowns which is likely to be early development of ash die-back. The hedgerows are well-established, cohesive, and have been previously maintained by a flail cutter.

**3.39** The trees and hedgerows surveyed have been categorised using the 'cascade chart for tree quality assessment' recommended by the BS5837 as shown in table 1 below. No trees of high arboricultural value were identified. Moderate value trees are present which include those that remain unremarkable, however have a degree of maturity and exhibit generally good condition. Trees of lower value include those with limited maturity and / or those with defects that reduce their future potential. The hedgerows to the north and west are considered to be moderate in value due to their collective merit, however individual sections will comprise lower value stock. Ash trees T23 and T24 are the most mature and largest specimens which have moderate value in their current state, however, sparsity in the canopy indicates that their value may reduce significantly in the near future as a result of ash die-back.

#### Initial design thoughts...

- Retain and safeguard the long term retention and maintenance of existing trees and hedgerows by locating them within new public open spaces
- Mitigate for any tree and hedgerow loss by planting replacement trees of similar/ native species
- Augment existing hedgerows to filter contextual views of new development and create soft edges



	Category U	Category A	Category B	Category C
<b>Individual Trees</b>	None	None	T3, T4, T7, T9, T10, T11, T13, T15, T17 and T19 - T25	T1, T2, T5, T6, T8, T12, T14, T16 and T18
<b>Groups of Trees</b>	None	None	G1	None
<b>Hedgerows</b>	None	None	H1 and H2	None
<b>Woodlands</b>	None	None	None	None

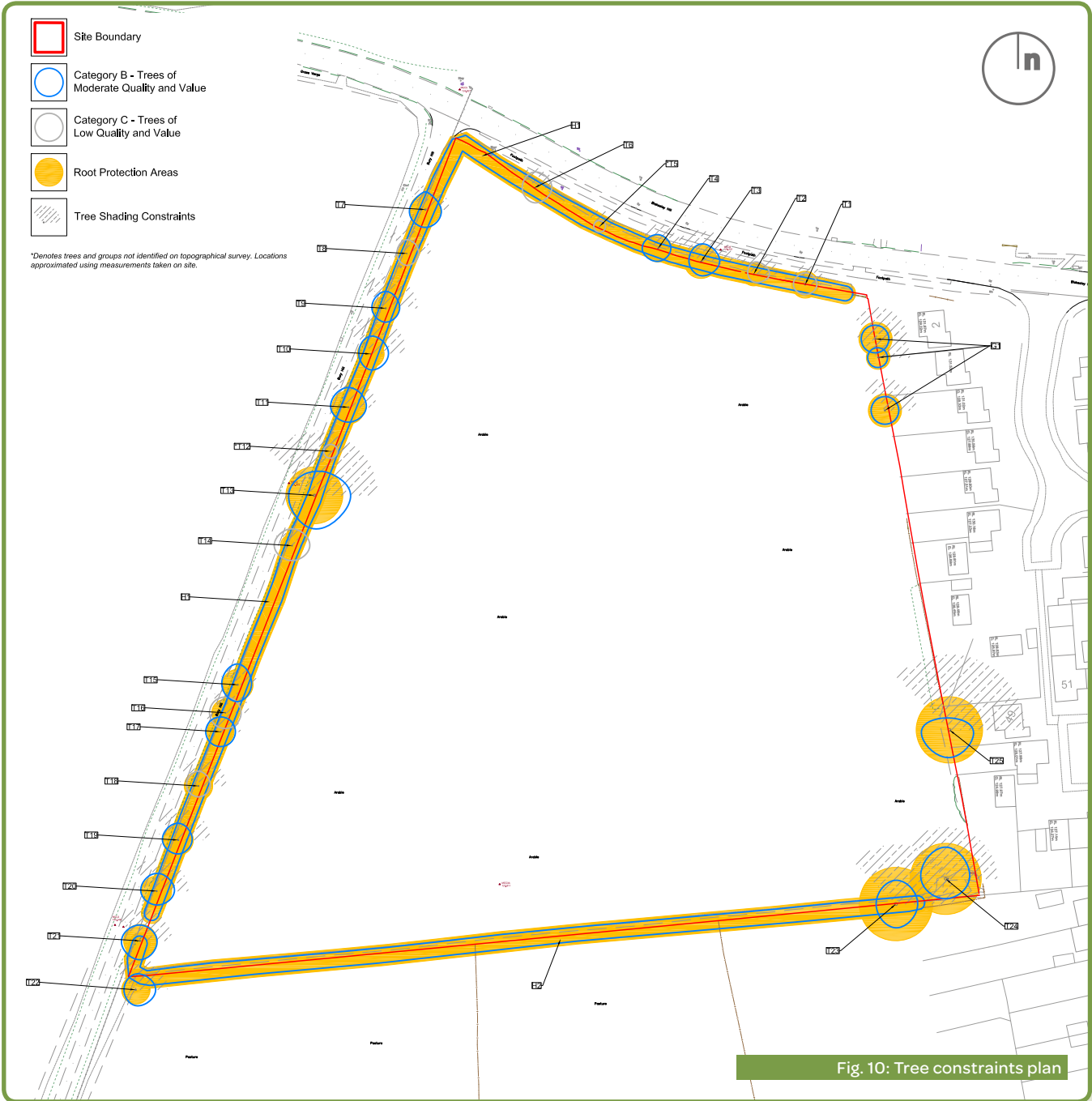


Fig. 10: Tree constraints plan

## Ecology

3.40 Ecological appraisals of the site were conducted in 2014 and 2016 by Just Ecology. These were updated in 2019/2020 by Tyler Grange including an update Phase I survey, badger survey, eDNA survey of a nearby pond to the north and bat activity surveys. An Ecological Assessment accompanies the application and details the results of these surveys which concluded the presence of arable habitat of negligible ecological importance and boundary hedgerows and trees of site ecological importance. Great crested newts have been confirmed in the off-site waterbody to the north of the site and bat activity surveys have confirmed an assemblage of no more than local importance given the low levels of activity by common species recorded. No badger setts are present however evidence of mammal foraging and movement through the site (which could be attributed to badger) were recorded. The habitats are likely to support common assemblages of farmland bird species and invertebrates of no more than site importance. A single protected site (local nature reserve) is located in the vicinity. No ecological issues that would affect the principle of development of the site for residential housing were identified.

### Initial design thoughts...

- Offset development from hedgerows and trees
- Create sustainable drainage ponds with features suitable for wildlife
- Create linked landscape corridors to assist habitat creation and promote biodiversity
- Retain and safeguard existing trees in Public Open Space



1. Existing hedgerow running along the northern boundary of the site (Blakesley Hill)
2. Category B Tree located along the western boundary of the site (Bury Hill)
3. Existing Hedgerow and drainage ditch along the southern boundary.



## Flood risk and drainage

**3.41** A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and associated Planning Practice Guidance. The report has included a desk-based assessment of risk, supplemented by a site walkover survey to identify key hydrological features.

**3.42** According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, the application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability), which is land defined as having less than a 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding.

**3.43** There is a ditch along the southern site boundary which was observed to be densely vegetated during the site visit. The ditch is not captured on the Environment Agency's surface water risk mapping and the vegetation cover implied limited flow conveyance therefore risk is considered low.

**3.44** The proposed development has also been assessed against a further range of potential flood risk sources including canals, groundwater, reservoirs and sewers. These flood sources are not found to represent a potential barrier to development.

**3.45** The site is currently entirely greenfield in nature, naturally falling to the ditch along the site boundary. The site is expected to drain through a combination of natural infiltration into the underlying ground, supplemented by runoff to the ditch along the site boundary when the infiltration potential of the underlying ground is exceeded.



Fig. 11: Flood map extract

## Site infrastructure

### Clean water

**3.46** Anglian Water has confirmed that there is sufficient capacity to supply the proposed development with clean water. The suitable connection point is located an existing main located within Blakesley Hill to the north of the site.

**3.47** Furthermore, Anglian Water have confirmed that a contribution will be required for their Strategic Water Mains scheme which is calculated by the anticipated flows required for the development.

### Gas

**3.48** National Grid has confirmed that the nearest connection point with sufficient capacity to serve the site is a Low Pressure main located approximately 40m east of the site.

### Electricity

**3.49** Western Power Distribution has provided a budget estimate to supply the proposed development with electricity.

#### Initial design thoughts...

- The southern area of the site encompasses lower lying ground and should be reserved as green space to accommodate sustainable drainage
- Sustainable drainage could take form as a swale and ponds incorporating features of benefit to wildlife
- A new development will be required to provide a foul pumping station in the southern area of the site

## Opportunities and constraints

**3.50** Having made a full assessment of the physical characteristics of the site and immediate surroundings, a number of spatial constraints and technical considerations have been identified which will need to be addressed in the design of any forthcoming proposals for the site. Having assessed these constraints, the key opportunities which present themselves can be summarised as follows:

### A development opportunity

- The site's location and characteristics offer an excellent opportunity to deliver a new high quality residential community of a scale appropriate to meet the needs of Greens Norton and the surrounding area.
- The site is contiguous with existing built up edge and contains no known constraints which would inhibit its future delivery as a development site. The site is therefore sustainable, suitable and deliverable and is an ideal location for much needed family homes.

### A landscape driven solution

- Containing a number of natural assets including established hedgerows and trees around its periphery, the site offers an opportunity to retain, enhance and protect the ecological and landscape values of the site through a robust green network of quality public space and habitat planting.
- The site's topography and gentle fall to the south allows the opportunity to provide a sustainable drainage solution and wetland habitat capable of draining the site in a way which limits impacts on surrounding drainage systems whilst increasing the ecological value of the site.
- Allowing for the provision of a meaningful landscape buffer along the southern and western boundary of the site will create greater containment of the site, provide suitable landscape mitigation and provide a more positive interface between the Greens Norton and the surrounding countryside than which currently exists.

### High quality and site specific response

- Located adjoining the settlement boundary of Greens Norton close to key facilities, but removed from the village's historic core and listed assets, the site's development will not impact on the historic nature and character of the village.
- Using design precedents evident within the village, building on local vernacular, and utilising local design policies, development should be designed in a way which is specific to the local context and which creates a "place" which responds to the attributes and vernacular of Greens Norton.



















	Site boundary
	Arable land
	Improved grassland
	Surrounding fields
	Existing residential edge
	Land used in association with adjacent properties
	Topography
	Drainage channel
	Land drain
	Ephemeral standing water
	Area suitable for sustainable drainage
	Tree (CAT B)
	Tree (CAT C)
	Hedgerow (CAT B)
	Indicative tree shading
	Root protection area (RPA)
	Scrub
	Residential amenity considerations





Fig. 12: Constraints plan





# 04 Design Evolution



## 04. Design Evolution

This section will discuss our spatial arrangement for the site through a sequence of guiding design principles identifying how the opportunities and constraints have been addressed.

### Masterplan principles

4.1 Design principles for the development are expressed as a series of 'placemaking steps', which together inform a spatial vision for the site. They describe how the design was evolved to respond to identified constraints and characteristics of the site and establish a series of guiding principles which underpin the illustrative masterplan in chapter 6.





## Step 1 - Understanding the site conditions

- Analysing the site constraints and opportunities and understanding how they impact upon the design process.

### Benefits

- Allows for utilisation of the full extent of the site within the land ownership boundaries, ensuring any design approach is responsive in how it addresses the site's opportunities and constraints as well as responding positively to its context.
- Ensures a design response is both pragmatic and creative, ensuring a considered approach towards addressing site conditions and constraints.



## Step 2 - Enhancing natural site assets

- Retaining natural green assets which currently exist around the site

### Benefits

- Safeguards long term retention and management of existing trees and hedgerows
- Contributes to development character areas
- Filters contextual views of development
- Retains and protects existing habitats and ecologic assets.



### Step 3 - A green network

- Enhance natural assets through the creation of a network of green corridors and spaces

#### Benefits

- Allows for future residents to have access to green open space throughout the development
- Protects existing green assets by placing them within the public realm or Public Open Space
- Provides an opportunity to break-up the form of the development when viewed from a distance
- Allows for the creation of landscape buffers along the periphery of the site, providing visual screening and new ecological habitats
- Allows for the retention of views of the church spire along northern and southern edges of the site.



### Step 4 - Utilisation of topography

- Integrating a design approach with the topography of the site, with the inclusion of SUDs in areas of public open space.

#### Benefits

- Ensuring drainage is managed within the site, with minimal impact on the surrounding drainage networks
- Allows the opportunity to develop enriched habitats around SUDs attenuation areas with native planting to support local ecology.





## Step 5 - A connected place

- Providing a legible route network which responds positively to the proposed development components.

### Benefits

- Creates a permeable layout, with fewer cul-de-sacs and a more continuous movement network of residential scaled streets
- The creation of pedestrian friendly streets, pedestrian / cycle routes and shared surfaces provides high quality legible connections through the development
- Promotes sustainable modes of transport, placing an emphasis on walking and cycling over vehicle movement through connections to local pedestrian and cycle routes.



## Step 6 - Delivering a robust block form

- Creating locally inspired patterns of development using best-practice block structure principles

### Benefits

- Makes efficient use of space
- Positively integrates existing built up edge into new block structure.
- Knits the development into the existing village edge
- Pattern and form complements street hierarchy
- Provides active frontages which overlook streets and open spaces.

## Engagement

**4.2** The Richborough Estates Team have engaged with the local community previously, having undertaken a public exhibition on a larger scheme. Having responded to feedback from those development proposals, the site has been reduced to only the parcel of land directly south of Blakesley Hill. By reducing the size of the development site this also reduces the scale of the proposed development by approximately half.

**4.3** To inform the local community about the new development proposals a consultation leaflet was distributed to residents within Greens Norton inviting them to submit feedback between 1st - 15th July 2020.

**4.4** The leaflet provided information on the following:

- Details of the proposal, including possible dwelling numbers and affordable housing provision;
- Benefits that the delivery of the development will provide;
- The Illustrative Masterplan;
- Information on how the resident can input into the planning process; and
- Details of the process under which the application will undertake

**4.5** The consultation was also advertised on the Richborough Estates website.

**4.6** A total of 57 consultation responses were received from the 715 residential addresses in Greens Norton. representing approximately 8% of the village.

**4.7** In terms of what types of housing would be most suitable for the site, whilst a number of respondents considered no housing to be suitable, over a quarter of respondents were supportive of bungalow/retirement homes, larger family homes and much needed social/starter/affordable homes.

**4.8** The proposals seek to deliver a range of homes, including bungalows, providing housing options for some of the elderly population who may wish to downsize as well as much needed social/affordable housing in Greens Norton.

**4.9** In terms of the Illustrative Masterplan, respondents' main concerns seemed to relate to site access, parking and development density. The proposed vehicular access provides a safe and suitable access off Blakesley Hill with the existing 30mph speed limit proposed for relocation beyond the western boundary of the site. The Local Highway Authority found the previous proposals acceptable in terms of a Blakesley Hill access, at a stage when up to 128 dwellings were proposed. It is considered that the smaller scheme will be more than adequately served by the proposed access.

**4.10** Parking provision is in accordance with design guidance and is fully integrated into the layout to mitigate the impact parking has on the character of the proposal and to reduce impacts of poorly managed on street parking and associated congestion.

**4.11** In terms of general responses, a number of concerns were raised in respect of local highway capacity, however the highway capacity surveys undertaken demonstrate that the site access and the High Street/Towcester Road junctions will operate well within capacity under existing conditions and will continue to do so in the 2030 design year. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that the development will have negligible impact on the local highway network through Greens Norton.

**4.12** With regards to potential impact of local services, census data has outlined that a reduction of school and pre-school aged children between 2001-2011. The development provides the opportunity to bring more families and children into the village, helping to sustain the Primary School and the services and villages the village current benefits from.

**4.13** It has been demonstrated that Richborough Estates has made considerable efforts to engage the community in the formulation of the revised development proposals; and that these efforts have helped to shape and influence elements of the scheme in order to address issues and concerns raised by respondents.



# Land South of Blakesley Hill Greens Norton



Richborough Estates and Fisher German LLP are preparing an outline planning application for new homes on land to the south of Blakesley Hill, to the west of Greens Norton.

## We Want Your Feedback

This leaflet has been prepared to illustrate the vision for the site and to seek residents feedback on the development proposals.

The communities response on the finalised proposals that will be submitted to Northamptonshire Council.



## Consultation Feedback



Freepost GREENS NORTON

Please submit comments by:  
15th July 2020

1. Consultation leaflet sent to local residents inviting opinions on the proposals
2. Consultation Feedback Form sent to local residents.