



Buckinghamshire Urban Potential Study

Final Report

July 2025

LDÄDESIGN



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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1. Buckinghamshire Council engaged LDA Design Ltd to conduct an urban potential study on seven sites across the county. These sites, which include vacant, underutilized, and brownfield land within built-up areas, were selected to represent a diverse range of urban contexts within Buckinghamshire. The primary goal of the study was to explore the optimal development potential of these sites, considering both national and local policy contexts, physical characteristics, and the need to optimise housing density.
- 1.1.2. Each site was analysed for its physical attributes, constraints, and proximity to community services. The study involved a thorough examination of on-site features, surrounding context, and prevailing local character. Bespoke design responses were created for each site, aiming to align with local character and conditions while maximising development potential. These design responses were informed by the need to optimise housing density in line with national policy and local needs.
- 1.1.3. The study identified several policy constraints that hinder optimal development, which is contrary to the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) that encourage making effective use of land and increasing densities where appropriate to deliver a sufficient supply of homes.
- 1.1.4. Recommendations were made to amend existing policies to better support urban density optimisation. These recommendations were derived from a comparison of the design responses with current policy requirements. The findings suggest that Buckinghamshire's urban sites have significant potential for higher density development, which can contribute to meeting housing needs and making effective use of land.

- 1.1.5. By addressing policy constraints and leveraging the study's insights, Buckinghamshire Council can enhance sustainable urban growth and development. The study's conclusions highlight the importance of revising policies related to housing mix, open space, car parking, and privacy to better support the objective of optimising urban density. This approach will not only help in delivering a sufficient supply of dwellings in urban areas but also in creating vibrant, sustainable urban environments.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1.1. Buckinghamshire Council commissioned LDA Design Ltd to conduct an urban potential study of seven urban sites across the authority area. For the purposes of the study, urban sites relate to vacant, underutilised and/or brownfield sites within built-up areas. The study seeks to:
- Explore what the optimal development potential of the sites in terms of density and scale across a diverse range of urban sites in Buckinghamshire.
 - Inform the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) process by being able to apply more accurate density assumptions to urban HELAA sites (as opposed to relying on standard, typical suburban densities).
 - To demonstrate to developers and other key stakeholders how urban sites could be developed (and the densities that could be achieved) in a positive and optimal way.
 - Compare the resultant optimised 'design led' outcomes against relevant policy requirements to assist in understanding how current policy requirements support or hinder the optimal development of urban sites, which may inform the preparation of new policy requirements in the new Local Plan.
- 2.1.2. This study forms part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan to demonstrate that Buckinghamshire Council have investigated all options to deliver the area's housing needs and has considered the capacity of previously developed land first, in compliance with the NPPF.
- 2.1.3. The evidence base of the new Local Plan will be subject to significant scrutiny throughout the development and consultation stages of the Local Plan process, including at Public Examination. The methodology developed in this study has been designed to stand up to this scrutiny to ensure that the outcomes and recommendations are robust and defensible. This is particularly so, as it is understood that the

methodology prepared could also be used in future to assess a wider selection of potential urban sites across Buckinghamshire.

- 2.1.4. In preparing this study, a review of the current local and national policy context has been undertaken for each of the sites (which is discussed in more detail in Section 2). Particularly at a national level, it is acknowledged that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, is a crucial factor in shaping the emerging Local Plan. This study has been prepared with an awareness of the recent changes to national policy and the potential implications. It also considers the working paper on brownfield passports, which seeks to strengthen support for the principle of development of brownfield land and provide greater clarity on the scale and form of development that would be acceptable.
- 2.1.5. In appraising the suitability and capacity of the seven sites, a comprehensive approach to optimisation linked to wider spatial and contextual considerations and sustainable growth opportunities has been adopted, with a view that this approach can inform further evidence bases and policy development. The approach seeks to balance good placemaking outcomes with optimising the density of development, to contribute to delivering Buckinghamshire's housing requirements. Current national policy supports the optimisation of land for development, and particularly the prioritisation of underutilised brownfield sites.
- 2.1.6. It is important to note that the scale and density of the proposals within this study do not imply an acceptable form of development, in planning terms, and the principle and design parameters for development can only be established through consideration of all planning matters through the planning process.

3.0 Strategic Context

3.1. The National Context

- 3.1.1. It is important to outline the national planning policy context for the identification of underutilised or vacant brownfield land, as this sets the requirement for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to consider previously developed land in sustainable locations when preparing their growth strategies during plan-making.
- 3.1.2. National policy is supportive of the redevelopment of previously developed land. This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It is also important to consider the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) July 2024 'Building the homes we need', as this sets the Government's national policy position for house building and plan-making in England.
- 3.1.3. In November 2024, the Government published a Planning Reform Working Paper on Brownfield Passports with the aim of collecting views on proposals to speed up the granting of planning permission and the delivery of development on brownfield land in urban areas. The proposals relate to setting the principle, scale and form of development that would be acceptable on brownfield land. In relation to scale the proposals set out that many urban areas within England have been developed at relatively low density and there is scope to increase density as long as it takes account of local character. This study considers where sites within the urban area could be developed at higher density and scale while considering local character.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 3.1.4. In December 2024, the Labour Government published an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (as amended in February 2025)¹.
- 3.1.5. The updated NPPF included new mandatory housing requirements across the country with the aim of significantly boosting housing supply. Under the new requirements, Buckinghamshire is required to plan for a housing target of approx. 95,000 homes or 4,300 per year (this includes a 5% buffer) by 2045.
- 3.1.6. Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that “To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.”
- 3.1.7. Paragraph 72 goes on to state that “Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, considering their availability, suitability, and likely economic viability.”
- 3.1.8. Paragraph 73 adds that “Small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area,

¹ [*National Planning Policy Framework](#)

are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes and are often built out relatively quickly”. To promote the development of a good mix of sites, the NPPF recommends that local planning authorities:

- 1) “Identify through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare (except where it can be demonstrated that this would not be achievable)
- 2) Seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom build housing;
- 3) Use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- 4) Support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
- 5) Collaborate with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.”

3.1.9. Paragraph 124 in Chapter 11 stipulates that “Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”

3.1.10. Paragraph 125d of the Framework goes on to stipulate that “planning policies and decisions should [...] give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other

identified needs..., and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land”.

- 3.1.11. Paragraph 126 advises that “Local planning authorities, and other plan-making bodies, should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership, using the full range of powers available to them. This should include identifying opportunities to facilitate land assembly, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, where this can help to bring more land forward for meeting development needs and/or secure better development outcomes.”
- 3.1.12. Paragraph 129 identifies that “planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account:
 - 1) The identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
 - 2) local market conditions and viability;
 - 3) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services - both existing and proposed - as well as their potential for further improvements and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
 - 4) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive, and healthy places;
 - 5) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive, and healthy places”.
- 3.1.13. When achieving appropriate densities Paragraph 130 sets out that “where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting

identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- 1) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;
- 2) the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and
- 3) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards)".

3.1.14. Paragraph 135 states that "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- 1) 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;
- 2) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout, and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- 3) 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);

- 4) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- 5) 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; and
- 6) 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."

3.1.15. Revisions (December 2024) to Chapter 13 introduce a requirement on Local Planning Authorities to undertake a review of Green Belt boundaries where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means (Paragraph 146).

3.1.16. However, Paragraph 147 states that "Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development" [i.e. local housing needs]. This includes:

- 1) making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
- 2) optimising the density of development in line with Chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport.

- 3.1.17. The NPPF therefore sets out a clear requirement for Local Planning Authorities to make the most effective use of land, prioritise brownfield and underutilised land and to consider increasing the density of development to meet identified housing need.
- 3.1.18. This Urban Potential Study has been prepared to demonstrate that Buckinghamshire Council has identified and thoroughly considered suitable previously developed land, 'brownfield' and underutilised sites, and densification in its proposed spatial strategy as part of the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.1.19. PPG provides a range of guidance that should be considered when planning to deliver housing need and establishing appropriate densities, this includes guidance on making effective use of land, including planning for higher densities (most recently updated on 27 February 2025)².
- 3.1.20. It advises that when identifying appropriate densities for development, a range of considerations should be taken into account when establishing appropriate densities on a site or in a particular area. These tools include:
- accessibility measures,
 - characterisation studies and design strategies,
 - environmental and infrastructure assessments, and
 - assessments of market or site viability.

² [Effective use of land - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90121/effective-use-of-land.pdf)

- 3.1.21. The tools used to identify the appropriate densities on each site in this study have been set out in the methodology, contained within Section 3.
- 3.1.22. Dwellings per hectare has been determined to be the appropriate measure of density in this study. Consideration has been given to housing needs, local character, and appropriate building forms, when determining the appropriate measure of density.
- 3.1.23. PPG guidance on Brownfield Land Registers was last updated in July 2017, however, the previous Conservative Government undertook a consultation exercise on strengthening planning policy for brownfield development (published 13 February 2024) and a Planning Reform Working Paper on Brownfield Passports aimed at unlocking more brownfield development in urban areas to meet the Government's house building targets was published on 22 September 2024 (most recently updated on 13 February 2025)³. This signals strong support from the Government for the development of brownfield land and sets out the Government's proposals for unlocking the potential of previously developed land.
- 3.1.24. PPG also provides guidance on promoting Health and Safe Communities (7 August 2022)⁴. The guidance notes that positive planning contributes to healthier communities as the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure are major determinants of health and well-being. It notes that planning and health need to be considered together in two ways; in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for care.

³ [Planning Reform Working Paper: Brownfield Passport - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ [Healthy and safe communities - GOV.UK](#)

- 3.1.25. PPG also provides some (albeit older) guidance on open space, sports, and recreation facilities (March 2014)⁵. The guidance explains how open space should be considered in planning for new development, noting how it can provide health, recreation, and ecological benefits, contribute to the Green Infrastructure Network as well as being an important component in the achievement of sustainable development.

Written Ministerial Statement – Building the homes we need.

- 3.1.26. On 12 December 2024, Matthew Pennycook, Minister for State for Housing and Planning, published a Written Ministerial Statement which makes clear the Government's position on building homes in the right places⁶. The statement outlines the changes that the Government has made to ensure the full and efficient use of previously developed land and the 'sequential approach' to Green Belt land release which looks of consider brownfield land first before the release of high performing Green Belt land.

3.2. The Buckinghamshire Context

- 3.2.1. Buckinghamshire Council ('the Council') was constituted on 1st April 2020 from four former District Councils of Wycombe, Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and South Bucks, and Buckinghamshire County Council.

⁵ [Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space - GOV.UK](#)

⁶ [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

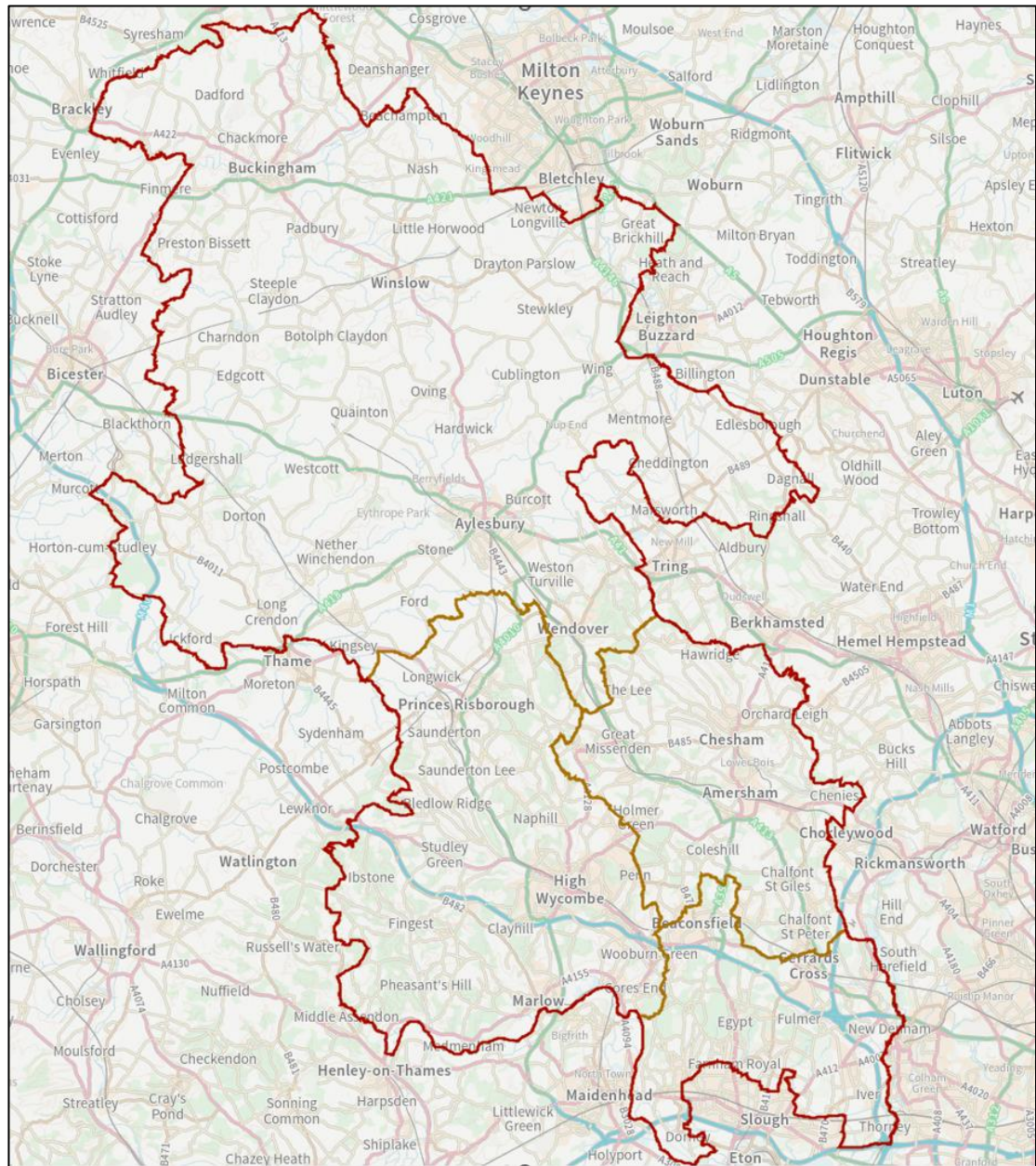


Figure 1 - Map showing the four former district council areas merged to form Buckinghamshire Council in 2020 (Source: Buckinghamshire Council, 2023).

Current Local Plan

- 3.2.2. Buckinghamshire Council consists of the four former district councils, including Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe. The development plan for Buckinghamshire currently consists of the

Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016-2033, 'made' neighbourhood plans and the most recently adopted local plans from the former district councils, which include:

Aylesbury Vale

- Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013 – 2033 (Adopted 2021)

Chilterns

- Chiltern District Local Plan (Consolidated November 2011)
- Core Strategy for Chiltern (Adopted 2011)

South Bucks

- South Bucks District Local Plan (Consolidated February 2011)
- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2011)

Wycombe

- Wycombe District Local Plan 2019-2033 (Adopted 2019)
- Delivery and Site Allocations Local Plan (Adopted 2013)

3.2.3. The local planning policy context for each former district council area is detailed in Section 4 under the relevant area headings. This includes an overview of the strategic policies from the respective former district local plans that are supportive of the redevelopment of previously developed land and densification, as well as relevant 'made' neighbourhood planning policies and local planning guidance.

3.2.4. Where they are available and relevant, details of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are also detailed in Section 4 under the relevant area headings.

Emerging Local Plan

- 3.2.5. Buckinghamshire Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, which will set out the strategy for meeting Buckinghamshire's future development needs through to 2045, including where the required new approximately 95,000 homes will be located. The new Local Plan will be the primary consideration when determining planning applications unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2.6. The Council to date has conducted multiple 'Call for Sites' exercises relating to all sites and specifically focusing on previously developed land (brownfield). Other consultations have also been undertaken including early engagement questionnaire in 2021 and a vision and objectives consultation, which was a joint consultation with the Local Transport Plan for Buckinghamshire in 2023.
- 3.2.7. From the vision and objectives consultation, a vision for Buckinghamshire up to 2045 and objectives to achieve this vision are emerging. Objectives relevant to the study include:
- Planning for mitigating and adapting to Climate Change - To ensure the delivery of sustainable development, mitigating climate change and adapting to the impacts on Buckinghamshire's environment.
 - Planning for new Housing - To meet housing needs for all of the different groups in the community, including affordable housing, and to provide increased tenure choice throughout Buckinghamshire, prioritising the efficient use of land.
 - Quality of Place - Create great places to live and work that function well, and are welcoming, safe, and accessible to all.
 - Infrastructure - To ensure the right infrastructure required to support communities is provided in the right place and at the right time and make best use of existing infrastructure.

- 3.2.8. As part of the evidence base, a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), and New and Expanded Settlement Study (NESS) are currently being prepared. Their purpose is to identify suitable sites and areas to accommodate the future housing need within Buckinghamshire. They will apply density assumptions to suitable sites and areas to calculate the number of houses that can be delivered on each site or area.

4.0 Methodology

4.1.1. This section outlines the study methodology.

Step 1: Consideration of Overarching Policy

4.1.2. Overarching national and local policy sets the context for the study and the requirement for LPAs to identify underutilised land and brownfield land when preparing a growth strategy during plan-making.

4.1.3. The Written Ministerial Statement (2024) 'Building the homes we need', and the recently published Planning Reform Working Paper on Brownfield Passports has also been considered to ensure that the study aligns with the most up to date national policy position on house building, the development of previously developed land, and plan-making.

4.1.4. The local plans for the four former district councils were adopted some time ago and are now, in some instances, out of step with more recent national policy guidance, principally the NPPF and relevant sections of the PPG.

4.1.5. To ensure that the development potential of the sites examined in this report are not unduly constrained, the design response for each site has not been bound by standards and thresholds stipulated in current local policy documents. In some instances, these standards restrict the ability for sites to be developed in an optimal manner, contrary to objectives of the NPPF and PPG for LPAs to make effective use of land and to consider increasing densities where appropriate to deliver a sufficient supply of homes.

4.1.6. The Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (December 2016) informed housing mix and

tenure within each site appraisal as this is the latest information available.

- 4.1.7. Other Local Plan policies in relation to design, placemaking, community and accessibility informed design outcomes.

Step 2: Site Selection

- 4.1.8. Seven sites have been selected for the study from different areas throughout Buckinghamshire covering a range of town centre locations.

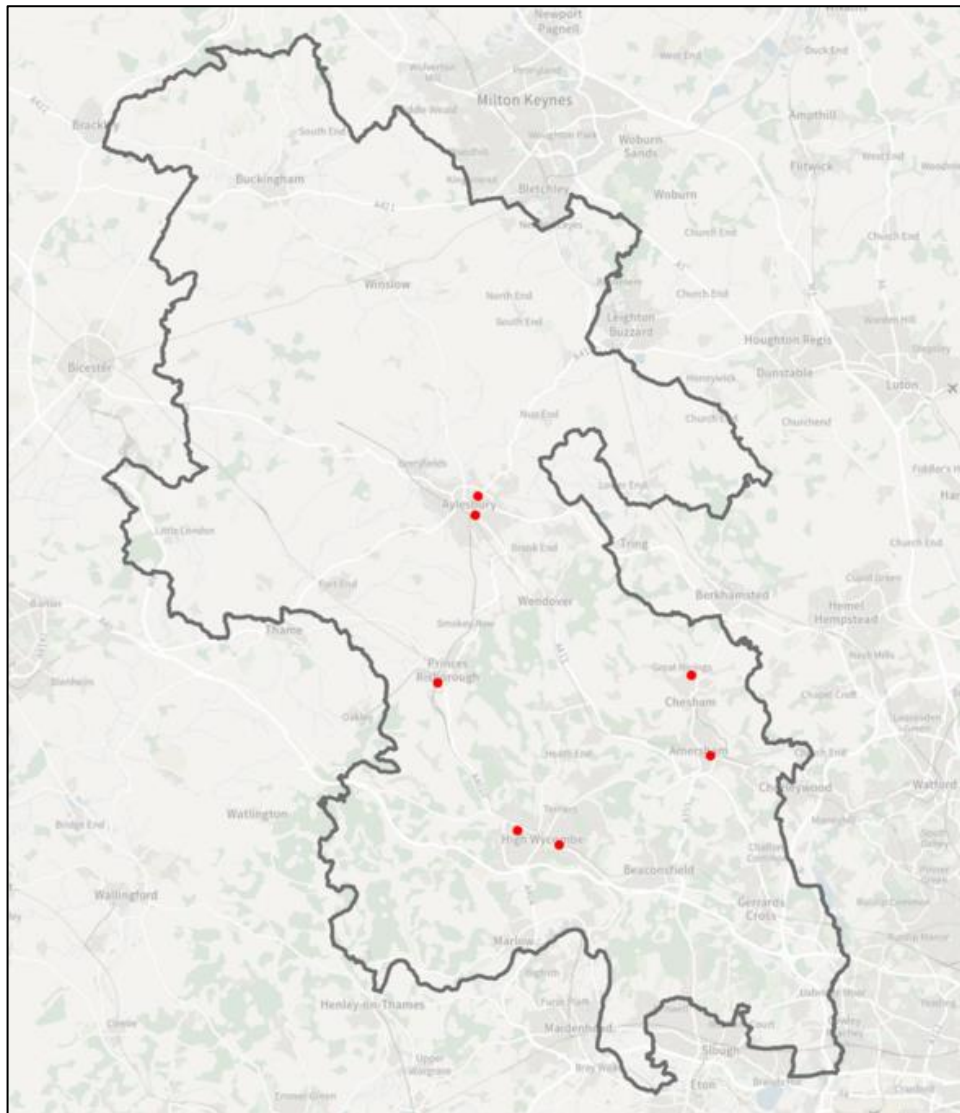


Figure 2 - Map showing site locations.

- 4.1.9. The sites are in areas that have an established sustainable level of infrastructure that can easily accommodate higher levels of density and where higher levels of density will be beneficial in improving the viability of local infrastructure and services, such as local shops, services and facilities, and public transport.
- 4.1.10. The seven sites have been selected based on their variety in terms of location, size, context, and character. A good diversity of sites has been selected to maximise the quality of the study's findings and for the findings to be applied to a wide range of potential redevelopment sites across Buckinghamshire in the future.

Step 3: Site Research and Analysis

- 4.1.11. Each site was assessed with a focus on its individual constraints and opportunities, informed by the relevant planning history of the site and adjacent sites (where relevant) as well as a broad understanding of their surrounding context.
- 4.1.12. Each site includes a physical description of the study area and surrounding context, including site features, buildings to be retained or otherwise, proximity to community services and facilities, transportation links, prevailing character, surrounding uses, building setbacks and pattern, and building scale and height.
- 4.1.13. Consideration of Paragraph 135 of the NPPF was central to the analysis, ensuring potential conflicts with existing uses were anticipated and mitigated. This approach is particularly relevant for infill and brownfield sites, where sensitive integration into the existing urban fabric is essential.

4.1.14. Desktop analysis provided a baseline understanding of site constraints and opportunities and development potential. This involved overlaying a wide range of relevant known information over the sites including:

- Local Landscape Areas
- Conservation Areas
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Areas of Attractive Landscape
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)
- Village Greens
- High Speed 2 and East West Rail Routes
- Listed Buildings
- Minerals Safeguarding Areas
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Public Rights of Way
- Local Plan Allocations
- Neighbourhood Plan Sites
- Brownfield Register Sites
- Local Green Spaces and Access Points
- Flood Zone 2
- Flood Zone 3
- Surface Water Flooding
- Chilterns National Landscape
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Nature Reserves
- Ancient Woodlands
- Green Belt
- Local Nature Reserves

- Utilities (identifying underground and overground services, easements, and other constraints)
- 4.1.15. Site visits were undertaken to complement the desktop study, providing a first-hand understanding of the constraints, opportunities and surrounding urban context and character. This allowed for the verification of desktop findings and the identification of site-specific features. Observations of on-the-ground conditions, prevailing character on-site, and surrounding context assisted with the refinement of development parameters to ensure design responses are contextually responsive and appropriate.
- 4.1.16. The site analysis and research resulted in a comprehensive set of site conditions to inform the optimisation of each site. All notable site features and relevant designations are spatially represented and labelled to provide a visual representation of the site constraints and opportunities.

Step 4: Design Response and Capacity Assessment

- 4.1.17. Based on the site research and analysis, a robust design response was created for each site, informed by local context and character, local opportunities, and constraints, as well as the need to optimise housing density.
- 4.1.18. It should be noted that the design responses are primarily based on providing good design outcomes and optimising density and are not restricted by relevant current policy requirements where this might restrict land efficient outcomes (a comparison with extant policy is considered in step 5 below). Furthermore, the site responses are not intended to be a detailed design solution. It would only be possible to create a detailed design solution once a wide range of planning factors have been considered, which are outside the scope of this study.

- 4.1.19. The design responses are presented as a Typology Plan accompanied by a Massing Diagram that details how the buildings, typologies, vehicle and pedestrian access, car parking, and open space are arranged in relation to the site's context, character, constraints, and opportunities. More information on the diagrams is provided in Part 4.
- 4.1.20. Justification for the design response is also provided. The justification is split into three interrelated categories: Environment and landscape; Access and car parking; and Design and built form. The categories allow a degree of consistency of outcome between study sites and allow subsequent recommendations to be drawn.

Step 5: Current Policy Comparison

- 4.1.21. Each design response was compared to key relevant current policy requirements to identify where they might be impacting the ability for urban sites to be developed in an optimal manner. Key relevant current policy requirements include design elements such as density, housing mix, open space, and car parking.

Step 6: Conclusions and recommendations

- 4.1.22. Conclusions were then drawn from the design responses and current policy comparison. The conclusion informed a range of suggested recommendations to improve current policy (by amending existing or introducing new policy) to better support the objective of optimising the density of urban areas.

Residential Typologies

- 4.1.23. For the purposes of the design responses, three residential typologies were used to reflect both local character and opportunities for enhanced density:

- **3-Storey (4-Bedroom Town House)**
A vertical extension of the traditional terrace form, increasing density without significant footprint expansion.
- **1-Bedroom Apartments (Single and Dual aspect)**
Designed for individuals or small households, this typology addresses growing demand for smaller, affordable units in urban and suburban contexts.
- **2-Bedroom Apartments (Single and Dual aspect)**
A flexible apartment model catering to young families and professionals, often integrated into mixed-use schemes.

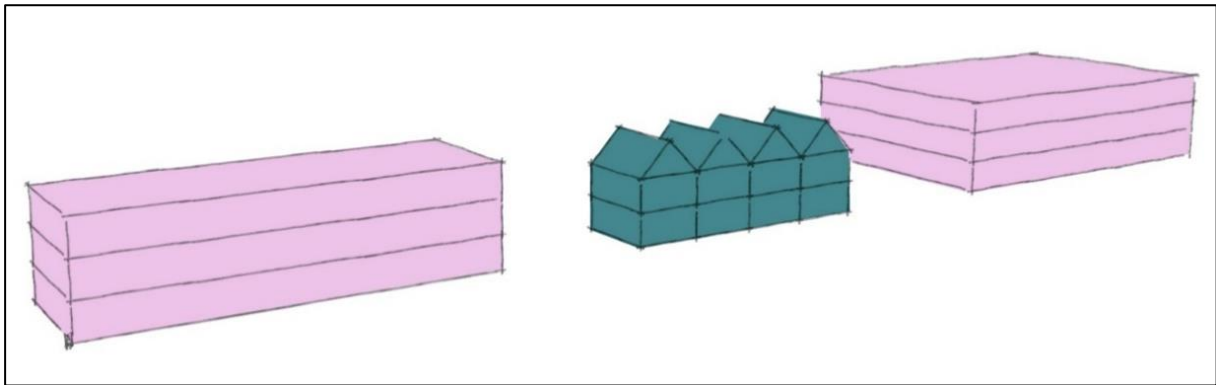


Figure 3 – Typologies diagram.

Selected Typologies:

- Pink = 1 and 2 Bed Apartment Blocks (various storeys and various layouts)
- Blue = 3 Bed Townhouse (3 Storey)

4.1.24. Detached homes are common in the district but have been excluded from this study for their inefficiency in land use. The focus remains on typologies that optimise density while ensuring compatibility with established context and character.

4.1.25. All typologies have been based on the Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (March 2015). Widths and lengths are not specified

within the Standards and therefore have not been included in this study. The Standards do provide the total square meterage for each apartment type (see below table of selected typologies).

- 4.1.26. The selected typologies aim to provide a well-balanced housing mix that responds to the needs of this study, which will be broadly suitable for all sites considered in this study. While layouts and configurations could be adapted in the future, for example to amend the housing mix or accommodate higher-storey formats (such as increasing the selected three-storey townhouse to four-storeys where this would be appropriate in the context), the focus of this study is to deliver good design outcomes with a focus on overall density and site capacity, rather than developing fully resolved architectural solutions at this stage.

Table of selected typologies

House Type	Number of Bedrooms	Number of People	Storey	Minimum gross internal floor area (Nationally Described Space Standard) m²	Gross internal floor area m²
Townhouse	4b	5p	3	112	112
Apartment	1b	2p	1	50	50
Apartment	2b	3p	1	61	64

5.0 Site Appraisals

Aylesbury Vale Area Local Context

- 5.1.1. The adopted development plan for the Aylesbury Vale area consists of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013 - 2033 (adopted September 2021), the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016 - 2036 (adopted July 2019).
- 5.1.2. The development of urban areas in the former Aylesbury Vale is supported by several strategic policies in the VALP and is in line with the overall spatial strategy for the area.
 - Policy S1 - Sustainable development for Aylesbury Vale stipulates that when "assessing development proposals, consideration will be given to [...] giving priority to the reuse of vacant or underused brownfield land".
 - Policy S2 - Spatial strategy for growth identifies the growth strategy for the area and states that the "primary focus of strategic levels of growth and investment will be at Aylesbury" and that "development that does not fit with the scale, distribution or requirements of this policy will not be permitted unless brought forward through neighbourhood planning".
 - Policy S3 - Settlement hierarchy and cohesive development outlines that "the scale and distribution of development should accord with the settlement hierarchy set out in Table 2". Aylesbury is categorised as a Strategic Settlement and therefore one of the most sustainable towns in Aylesbury Vale and the focus for the majority of development.
 - Policy S7 - Previously Developed Land specifies that "development in Aylesbury Vale will be expected to make efficient and effective use of land. We will encourage the reuse of previously development (brownfield) land in sustainable locations, subject to site-specific considerations including

environmental value and the impact on local character, and subject to other policies in the Local Plan".

- 5.1.3. The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (June 2023) puts forward principles and standards for new development that aim to inform and guide the quality of design for all development across the area and create safe and attractive places that are sensitive to, and maintain or enhance, Aylesbury Vale's special character, while also allowing creative and innovative design solutions. Relevant design principles identified in the SPD have been considered for each site. For sites in Aylesbury Vale this includes Major development (10-300 homes), Minor development (1-9 homes) and brownfield and urban infill.
- 5.1.4. The relevant development management policies from the VALP and the Design SPD have been considered when determining an appropriate design response and density for each site in the Aylesbury Vale area. The relevant policies considered have been listed in the site appraisals contained within Section 4.1.
- 5.1.5. At the present time, the sites considered in this study within the former Aylesbury Vale area are not in designated neighbourhood plan areas or subject to 'made' or emerging neighbourhood plans.

5.2. Site 1 – Aylesbury

2 Walton Road and 4 Wendover Road, Aylesbury



Figure 4 - Aerial view of Site 1

- 1) Aylesbury High School
- 2) Aylesbury Music School
- 3) Aylesbury Police Station

The Site

- 5.2.1. The site is 0.43ha (encompassing 2 Walton Road and 4 Wendover Road) and is located on a prominent corner with frontage onto Walton Road, Wendover Road, and Walton Grove. There is a two-storey brick building on the site, including an extensive dedicated car park to the

rear, which is directly accessible from Walton Grove. The site is currently vacant, previously used as a bank.

- 5.2.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies Aylesbury as 'Tier 1: Major Urban Areas'. Two towns in Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury and High Wycombe) are considerably larger and better provisioned with services and facilities than others and are therefore placed in a category of their own to reflect their importance. Aylesbury has an urban area population of 88,165 (Census 2021) across the built-up area and has large-scale residential allocations on its edge which will mean it will grow significantly over the next decade.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.2.3. The site is approx. 800m (10-minute walk) to Aylesbury Town Centre and Aylesbury Train Station. Aylesbury Town Centre provides an extensive range of shops, services, and facilities. Aylesbury Train Station provides regular train services to London, High Wycombe, and other areas. Bus stops are located adjacent to the site on Wendover Road, providing frequent bus services towards Aylesbury and other designations further afield.
- 5.2.4. The surrounding area exhibits a mixed-use character, featuring a blend of commercial uses, including retail and office, alongside housing. The scale of development consists of 2 and 3-storey residential terraced houses along Wendover Road and Walton Grove with 2 and 3-story residential terraced houses with ground floor commercial uses along Walton Road. The Aylesbury Police Station is adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, which is 4 storeys in height. This diverse urban fabric contributes to a vibrant local environment. Active travel is facilitated by pedestrian and cycling routes connecting the site to Aylesbury Town Centre and nearby amenities.

Site Photo:



Figure 5 - View from Walton Road - former Bank building.

Planning History:

- 5.2.5. An application for the demolition of the former office building and underground car park (14/02773/ADM) on 4 Wendover Road was granted on 21 October 2014 and the building was subsequently demolished.
- 5.2.6. Applications to remove Condition 2 (22/00933/APP) and vary Conditions 5 & 4 (22/00932/APP) relating to the original application (AB/620/67 - granted in 1967) for the erection of a bank on 2 Walton Road was granted approval on 17 June 2022. It is highlighted in both applications that access to the site off Walton Grove would need to demonstrate adequate visibility, and that the narrowness of the road limits two-way traffic flow.

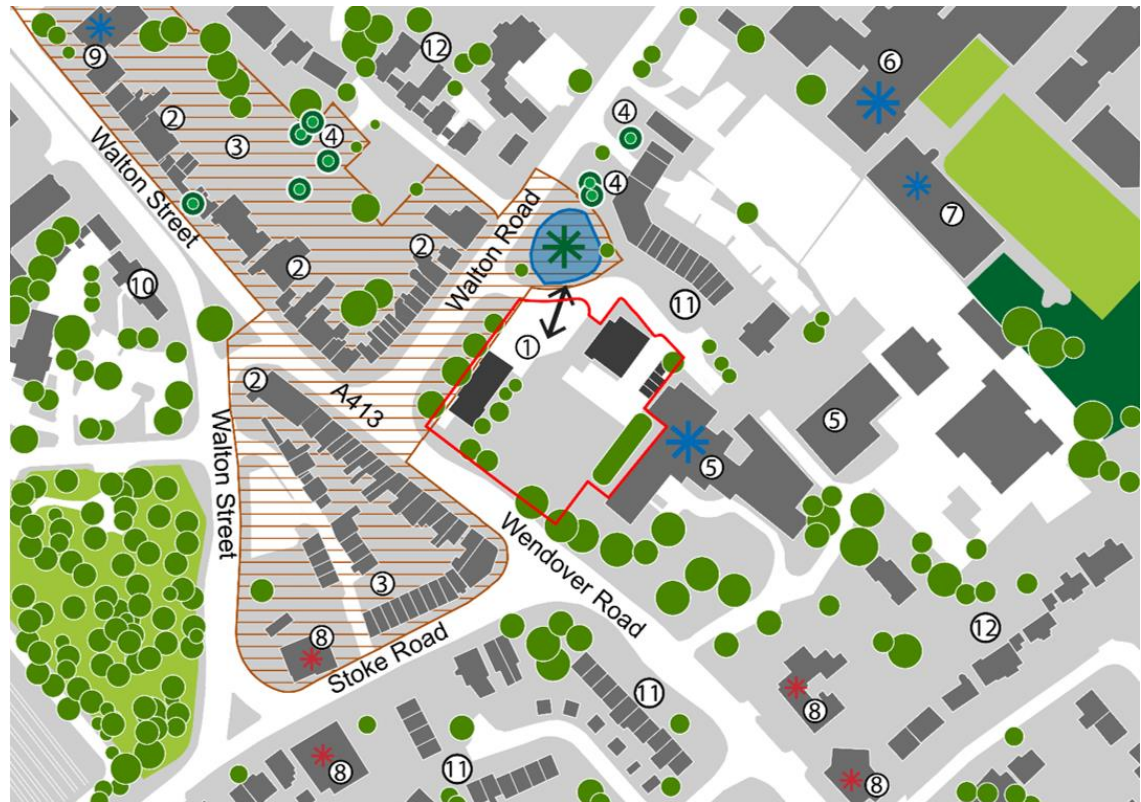
- 5.2.7. There is currently a live application for prior notification for demolition of the building known as 'The Cottage' (25/0229/ADM) which is located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.
- 5.2.8. The site was not assessed as part of the Aylesbury Vale HELAA Report 2017.

Policy relevant to the site:

- 5.2.9. Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2021
- H1 - Affordable housing
 - H6a - Housing mix
 - H6c - Accessibility
 - T6 - Vehicle parking
 - T8 - Electric Vehicle Parking
 - BE1 - Heritage Assets
 - BE2 - Design of new development
 - BE3 - Protection of the amenity of residents
 - BE4 - Density of new development
 - NE1 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
 - NE8 - Trees, hedgerows, and woodland
 - I1 - Green Infrastructure
- 5.2.10. Aylesbury Vale Area Design Supplementary Planning Document (2023)
- DES4: Settlement and Site Context
 - DES6: Responding to local vernacular and distinctiveness.
 - DES7: Character Study
 - DES8: Site Appraisal
 - DES9: Work with the natural features and resources of the site
 - DES10: Respond to topography and strategic views.

- DES14: Establish a clear movement network that connects with the surrounding area.
- DES15: Reduce reliance on the private car.
- DES17: Respond to the existing townscape, heritage assets historic landscapes and archaeology.
- DES20: Provide enclosure and positive frontage to streets.
- DES23: Ensure that development density and the scale and massing of proposed buildings responds to the existing and emerging character of an area.

Constraints and Opportunities



KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Learning & Non-residential |  Greenspace |
|  Retail |  Tree Protection Order |
|  Conservation Area | |

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Site entrance and car park | 7. Aylesbury Music Centre (2 Storey) |
| 2. Grade II listed building (2 to 3 Storey) | 8. Retail (2 to 3 Storey) |
| 3. Conservation Area | 9. Walton House and Bucks Scout Council (4 Storey) |
| 4. Tree Preservation Order | 10. Political Party Office (1 Storey) |
| 5. Aylesbury Police Station (4 Storey) | 11. Residential – Terraced Homes (2-3 Storey) |
| 6. Aylesbury High School (3 Storey) | 12. Residential – Detached/Semi Detached homes (2-3 Storey) |

Figure 6 - Site 1 Context Plan



Figure 7 - Site 1 Typology Plan



Figure 8 - Site 1 Massing Diagram

5.2.11. Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.43ha
- Net developable area = 0.37ha
- Density = 162dph
- Total number of units = 70 (36 x 1 Bed Apartment, 30 x 2 Bed Apartment, 4 x 3 Bed Townhouse)
- Parking spaces = 56

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping:

- The gateway into the site, from Walton Grove adjacent to Walton Pond, is designed to retain the existing sense of openness and reinforce the mature, green character of the area.
- The mature hedgerow along the eastern boundary is retained and reinforced to provide an effective green buffer between the proposed development and the adjoining Aylesbury Police Station. This will provide visual separation, enclosure, privacy, and transition between land uses, whilst anchoring the scheme within its wider landscape and townscape context.
- Several existing trees and hedgerows located on-site and along the site boundaries are retained to maintain the established green character of the site, providing natural screening, and contributing to residential amenity by providing separation between residential properties and Wendover Road.
- The green buffers along Walton Road and Wendover Road are preserved and reinforced where appropriate, contributing positively to the character of the site's edges and respecting the wider landscape setting.
- The site lies adjacent to a conservation area, which includes several listed buildings. To respond to the established pattern of development in the conservation area, which consists of a consistent line of buildings fronting Walton and Wendover Road, a

consistent building line fronts the site's western and southern boundaries.

Access and Carparking:

- The site is accessed via the existing vehicular access point, located off Walton Grove via Walton Road. As noted in planning applications 22/00932/APP and 22/00933/APP, the existing access road is narrow and therefore would need to be widened and enhanced to provide adequate visibility and enable two-way traffic.
- A pedestrian link is provided to Walton Road to enhance pedestrian connectivity and encourage walking.
- As the access point sits opposite Walton Pond, which is within the Conservation Area, there is an opportunity for the access point to become a site feature to enhance the amenity of the pond. Sightlines will be maintained and views towards the conservation area carefully considered to respect the historic setting and enhance the sense of arrival into the site.
- The layout prioritises pedestrian movement and accessibility to surrounding footpaths, delivering a walkable and safe environment that integrates seamlessly with surrounding streets and public transport links. This will reflect the location of the site's proximity to the town centre and reduces reliance on the use of private cars.
- To maintain the established character and residential quality of Walton Grove, townhouse parking is located to the rear of plots, reducing visual clutter along the street frontage and reinforcing a strong, continuous building line. This approach mirrors the layout of the existing terraces opposite, which also features a shared rear parking court, contributing to a cohesive and contextually responsive design.
- The overall parking strategy balances accessibility with placemaking, ensuring that parking is well-located for residents while supporting a walkable, people-focused environment.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Aylesbury Town Centre, fewer car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form

- The local character of the site has directly informed the proposals, especially the direct relationship with the conservation area, guiding a contextually responsive layout and sense of place.
- The surrounding building heights fronting Walton and Wendover Roads (within the conservation area), are predominantly two to three storeys, while the apartments proposed are four storeys. The potential impact of the height difference is justified given the building separation resulting from the wide road reserves and the retention of existing vegetation along the street frontages.
- Design detailing, material choices, and architectural language will need to be carefully considered to compliment the established built form character in the area, especially within the conservation area.
- The four-storey apartment building proposed along the eastern boundary compliments the four-storey scale of the adjoining police headquarters building.
- The perimeter site layout responds to site edges and enables a centralised internal layout that accommodates shared amenity space and parking.
- Three storey terrace housing proposed along the norther boundary responds to the established two storey terrace housing on the opposite side of Walton Grove, which is a smaller-scale, quieter street relative to the others surrounding the site.
- The use of height in these buildings support the delivery of a higher density scheme without compromising daylight, amenity, or overshadowing, and ensures efficient use of the site. The configuration also allows the development to maintain generous internal separation, contributing to a sense of openness and quality within the built environment.
- The pond setting to the north, which forms part of the Conservation Area, has been considered through sensitive layout and landscaping decisions, protecting views, and enhancing the ecological function of this natural asset.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.2.12. The design process has identified that certain current local planning policy maybe constraining the ability of the site to maximise the opportunities provided by its location in proximity to Aylesbury Town Centre and its surrounding context, to make the most of effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and a good design outcome.
- 5.2.13. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit conclusions and recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this urban site, to deliver local housing need within the Aylesbury urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Current Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	70
Density	NA	162dph
Housing Mix	VALP Policy H6a: New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The housing mix will be negotiated having	<p>36 x 1 Bed Apartment (51%)</p> <p>30 x 2 Bed Apartment (42%)</p> <p>4 x 3 Bed Townhouse (7%)</p>

	<p>regard to the council's most up-to-date evidence.</p> <p>Most up-to-date evidence 2016 HEDNA: 1 bed flat = 4% 2 bed flat = 4% 2 bed house = 13% 3 bed house = 52% 4 bed house = 21% 5+ bed house = 6.5%</p>	
Parking	<p>VALP Policy T6 and Appendix B Parking Standards:</p> <p>124 (optimum)</p>	56

Scale and Density

- 5.2.14. The scale of the design ranges from three to four storeys in height. The resultant density is 162dph. The scale of the design sits comfortably within the site's established context and optimises capacity through a considered layout and recognition of the opportunities presented by the surrounding context to explore increased building heights, as well as the site's location in proximity to the town centre and sustainable transport and walking opportunities.
- 5.2.15. Town houses along the northern boundary of the site and apartment blocks around the southern perimeter allow an appropriate transition in scale, respecting the lower development heights along Walton Grove but addressing the larger buildings (namely, the Aylesbury Police Headquarters) adjoining the southern part of the site, and delivers an increased unit density.

Housing Mix

- 5.2.16. VALP Policy H6a requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The housing mix will be negotiated having regard to the council's most up-to-date evidence, which is provided in the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2016 (HEDNA).
- 5.2.17. The design includes a mix of one and two-bedroom apartments and three-bedroom townhouses. While this represents a departure from the housing need identified in the HEDNA, it is considered that the housing adds variety to the established housing stock in the local area, which generally consists of two-bed and three-bed terraced houses. It is also considered that the housing mix is appropriate, given the urban location of the site and the need to optimise density in urban areas.

Public Open Space

- 5.2.18. VALP Policy I1 and associated Appendix C includes a quantitative requirement that no person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of natural green space.
- 5.2.19. These spaces are required to be accessible, meaning it must be available to the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some spaces may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle).
- 5.2.20. The site is not within 300m of a 2ha area of natural green space. While there is green space associated with Aylesbury High School nearby, these areas are not available for use by the general public and therefore

not accessible. It is unclear how this requirement could be met, which creates uncertainty and risk to developers.

- 5.2.21. Public open space policy could be clarified to reduce uncertainty to developers wanting to develop urban sites that are not able to meet these policy requirements.

Parking

- 5.2.22. The design achieves 56 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 124 spaces.
- 5.2.23. The site is close to Aylesbury Town Centre (circa 800m / 10-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and Aylesbury Train station within a 10-minute walk.
- 5.2.24. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.
- 5.2.25. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

5.3. Site 2 - Aylesbury

Land North of Manor Hospital, Bierton Road, Aylesbury

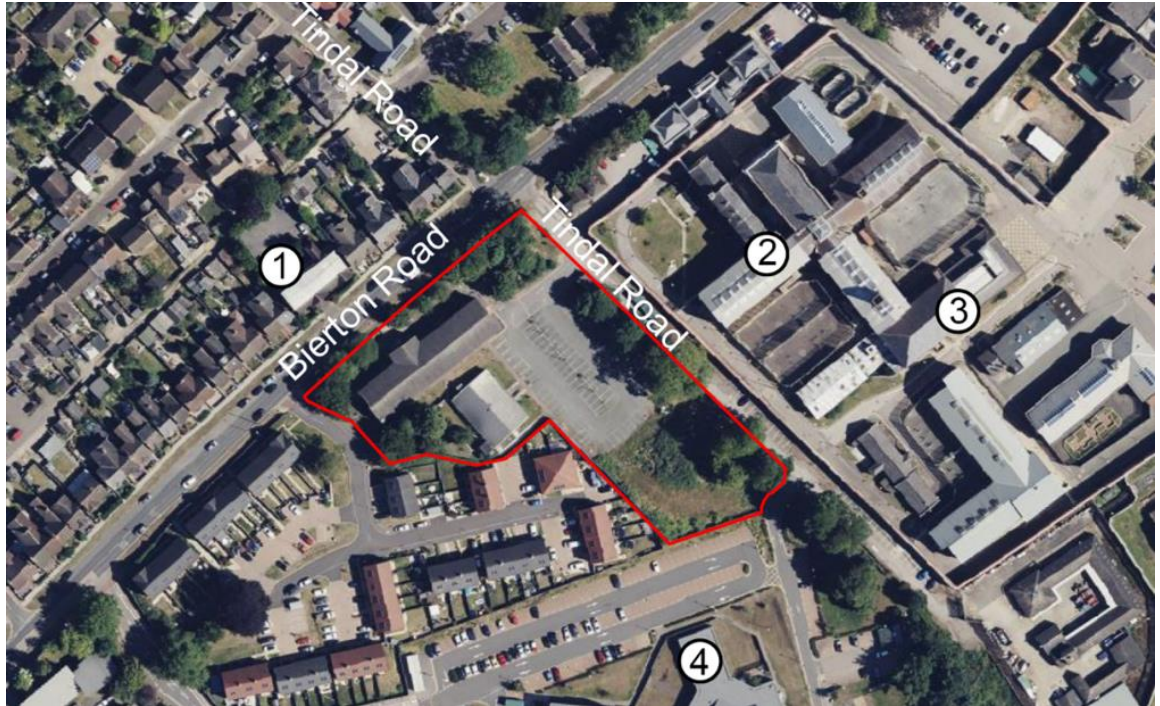


Figure 8 - Aerial view of Site 2

1. Residential area (terraced)
2. Youth Offenders Institution Aylesbury
3. His Majesty Prison Aylesbury
4. The Whiteleaf Centre

The Site

- 5.3.1. The site (0.84ha) currently accommodates the NHS Sue Nicholls Centre (a two-storey, c1980/1990s brick building) which forms part of Buckinghamshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), associated car parking and scrub land. The north-western

and north-eastern boundaries of the site are lined by various mature trees which provide screening.

- 5.3.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies Aylesbury as 'Tier 1: Major Urban Areas'. Two towns in Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury and High Wycombe) are considerably larger and better provisioned with services and facilities than others and are therefore placed in a category of their own to reflect their importance. Aylesbury has an urban area population of 88,165 (Census 2021) across the built-up area and has large-scale residential allocations on its edge which will mean it will grow significantly over the next decade.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.3.3. The site is located approx. 800m (c.10-minute walk) north-east of the Aylesbury Town Centre, which provides an extensive range of shops, services, facilities, employment opportunities, public transport services, and other amenities.
- 5.3.4. The site is bounded by Bierton Road to the north and Tindal Road to the north-east. Land north-west of Bierton Road is characterised by residential development (primarily Victorian two and two-and-a-half-storey terraced housing). To the south is a new primarily two storey residential development and the two-storey Whiteleaf Centre (NHS Mental Health Facility) and associated car parking. His Majesty's Prison (HMP) Aylesbury (Category C) and Young Offenders' Institution adjoins the north-eastern side of Tindal Road and fronts onto Bierton Road.
- 5.3.5. The site's main access is along the northern boundary via Tindal Road. There is also an existing pedestrian access via Bierton Road through a gap in the boundary brick wall.

- 5.3.6. There are several bus stops within a walking distance (approx. 100m) of the site along Bierton Road, with the closest in front of HMP Aylesbury. Key routes provide access into the town centre and surrounding areas. Aylesbury Train and Bus Station are located approximately 1.6km to the west and is around a 20-minute walk. Local amenities including supermarkets, healthcare facilities and schools are located within short driving or walking distances from the site.
- 5.3.7. The surrounding area comprises a variety of architectural styles, with a mix of older residential areas and newer residential developments. Bierton Road is typically characterised by two-storey terraced and semi-detached housing typologies with a three-storey apartment building (Bowerbank Court) adjoining the site to the north. There are three Grade II listed buildings along Bierton Road. Two are within the Prison complex to the north-east (the Prison Gate, former governor's house and chaplain's house and the former administrative block and flanking screening walls at HMP Young Offenders' Institute), and the other (gate lodges and gate piers at Tindal hospital, the former Aylesbury Union Workhouse) lies to the north-east, opposite the prison entrance.

Site Photos



Figure 10 - View of site on Tindal Road looking south.



Figure 9 - View looking North-West showing the Sue Nicholls Centre



Figure 12 - View looking south on Bierton Road



Figure 10 - Bierton Road looking West.

Planning History:

- 5.3.8. An outline planning application (11/02282/AOP) was submitted for this site, including additional land to the south, for the demolition of the Sue Nicholls centre and existing housing at 1-6 Manor House Close and construction of residential development up to 83 dwellings together with amenity space, parking, landscaping and creation of a new vehicle access point. The application was refused on 19 August 2014 as no Section 106 agreement was reached in relation to developer contributions.

- 5.3.9. A subsequent outline application (14/02689/AOP) was approved on 27 May 2015 for land to the south-west of the Site (previously included in application 11/02282/AOP). The application site extended from the Site's western boundary to Manor House Close. A reserved matters application for the same quantum of development was approved on 4th January 2017.

- 5.3.10. An application (15/03142/APP) for the removal of a section of the existing old stone wall along Brierton Road was approved on 17 November 2015 to facilitate a new pedestrian entrance.

- 5.3.11. The site is an allocation in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2021, Policy D-AYL068 Land North of Manor Hospital, Bierton Road, Aylesbury for at least 39 dwellings taking account of the adjacent settlement character. The allocation required the retention of part of the site for hospital services and parking.

- 5.3.12. As part of the site selection process for the VALP, the site was assessed within the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) 2017, as part of a larger site with a total area of

1.7ha. The assessment concluded the site was suitable for housing development with a potential capacity of 83no. dwellings.

- 5.3.13. The site is in an area allocated for residential development in the Aylesbury Garden Town Masterplan 2020.

Policy relevant to the site:

- 5.3.14. The most relevant planning policy within the VALP 2021 that will influence development of the site is site allocation D-AYL068 Land north of Manor Hospital, Berton Rd, Aylesbury.
- 5.3.15. As noted above, the site is allocated for at least 39no. dwellings and proposals should have regard to the criteria set out within the policy.
- 1) The site will make provision for at least 39 dwellings at a density that takes account of the adjacent settlement character. The allocation states that part of the site should be retained for hospital services.
 - 2) This site falls within the Aylesbury Garden Town designation and as such any proposals will need to accord with the design and delivery principles identified in Policy D1 Delivering Aylesbury Garden Town.
 - 3) The site allocation should be accessed via Berton Road and be accompanied by a design and access statement.
 - 4) Any scheme would need to retain car parking and promote cycle route opportunities to the town centre.
 - 5) The Old Manor House wall fronting Berton Road should be retained to preserve local distinctiveness and provide visual enclosure.

Other relevant planning policies:

- 5.3.16. Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2021
- D1 - Delivering Aylesbury Garden Town

- H1 - Affordable housing
- H6a - Housing mix
- H6c - Accessibility
- T6 - Vehicle parking
- T7 - Footpaths and cycle routes
- T8 - Electric Vehicle Parking
- BE2 - Design of new development
- BE3 - Protection of the amenity of residents
- BE4 - Density of new development
- NE1 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
- NE8 - Trees, hedgerows, and woodland
- I1 - Green Infrastructure

5.3.17. Aylesbury Vale Area Design Supplementary Planning Document (2023)

- Principle DES4: Settlement and Site Context
- Principle DES6: Responding to local vernacular and distinctiveness.
- Principle DES7: Character Study
- Principle DES8: Site Appraisal
- Principle DES9: Work with the natural features and resources of the site
- Principle DES10: Respond to topography and strategic views.
- Principle DES14: Establish a clear movement network that connects with the surrounding area.
- Principle DES15: Reduce reliance on the private car.
- Principle DES17: Respond to the existing townscape, heritage assets historic landscapes and archaeology.
- Principle DES20: Provide enclosure and positive frontage to streets.

- Principle DES23: Ensure that development density and the scale and massing of proposed buildings responds to the existing and emerging character of an area.
- Principle DES27: Integrate parking to meet needs and support attractive streets and spaces.

Constraints and Opportunities



KEY

- * Learning & Non-residential ▲ Grade II listed building

1. Existing vehicular access to the Site
2. Existing pedestrian access to the Site
3. NHS Sue Nicholls Centre (3 Storey)
4. Existing car park on Site
5. Brick wall along Bierton Road to be retained.
6. Existing vegetation
7. Existing predominantly Victorian residential development Terraced and Semi-Detached (3 Storey)
8. Existing new-build residential developments (2-3 Storey)
9. Part of original site allocation (Reference Number.D-AYL068) now developed under application number 16/02851/ADP (2 Storey)
10. Grade II listed buildings.
11. Whiteleaf Centre Mental Health Facility (1-2 Storey)
12. Bus Stop on Bierton Road
13. Prison wall to east of Tindall Road
14. Existing mature trees on north-eastern boundary

Figure 14 - Site Consideration Plan

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping

- The layout retains existing mature trees along the western and eastern boundaries of the site to provide visual and physical screening and enclosure to the site, maintain a sense of place and maturity of setting, and contribute to site character and green space. The trees also function as a physical and visual separation to HMP Aylesbury, which will aid residential amenity and privacy.
- The retention of landscape features and the use of standard root protection offsets (approx. 10m to avoid likely extent of Root Protection Areas) enables the provision of public open space. This will provide valuable amenity space for residents, which is rare on many brownfield sites, and offers the opportunity to potentially achieve Biodiversity Net Gain onsite through management of understory planting.
- The northern historic boundary wall (not heritage listed) has been retained as a feature of local interest.

Access and Carparking:

- Existing pedestrian access (approved as part of planning application 15/03142/APP) from Bierton Road has been retained to maintain established character.
- Vehicle access is provided from Dennis Street. The existing access point from Tindal Road is narrow and constrained; it would likely require widening to bring this to an adoptable standard. Although providing access from Dennis Street would likely result in the loss of trees, providing widened access from Tindal Road would also likely result in the loss of mature trees to achieve the required visibility splays. Taking access from Dennis Street also avoids the creation of another access point onto Bierton Road between Dennis Street and Tindal Road which could create a highway safety issue.

- The site is well connected to Aylesbury Town Centre via walking, cycling and public transport, which offers a wide range of shops, services, and facilities.
- The site is close to Aylesbury Town centre, which has a broad range of community services, retail and employment opportunities are accessible within short walking distance (c. 800m/ 10-minute walk) or via good public transport links.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Aylesbury Town Centre, fewer car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form:

- The NHS Sue Nicholls Centre is not a heritage listed building and is not considered to provide amenity value. The layout removes the Centre and associated car parking, which provides a less constrained site allowing for a more optimal design outcome.
- The design assumes current uses associated with the NHS Sue Nicholls Centre will be accommodated in other NHS facilities offsite. This avoids the need to separate multiple land uses onsite, which makes more efficient use of the site, removes land use conflict, and produces a better design outcome.
- The built form is positioned to avoid mature trees and respect existing site edges, preserving the prevailing development pattern along Berton Road and local distinctiveness.
- Due to the presence of HMP Aylesbury adjacent to the site, a well-defined buffer has been provided along the north-eastern edge of the site (Tindal Road) to protect the amenity and privacy of new residents. This is achieved through setbacks and retaining trees and vegetation to provide visual and physical separation.
- Buildings front streets to the north-west and north-east to maintain the established pattern of development in the area, reinforce street presence, provide enclosure, and integrate with the wider townscape.
- The layout aligns with the adjacent residential development to the west, with access taken from Dennis Street. This will extend the

established road structure from Dennis Street and enable the site to make the most of the existing natural resources on the site by enabling the mature trees along Tindal Road to be retained.

- Building heights are limited to 3 storeys adjacent to existing dwellings to the south and west, to balance the need to optimise density while respecting the local townscape character and responding to local context.
- Larger 4-storey apartments buildings front Bierton Road to optimise density. The increased height is justified given the width of Bierton Road, which creates separation to buildings across the road, and the retention of landscaping along Bierton Road.
- The layout provides clear legibility and wayfinding, with primary orientations supporting natural movement routes and aiding pedestrian navigation. Retention of the existing pedestrian access along Bierton Road will also facilitate connection with the surrounding area.



Figure 15 - Site 2 Typology Plan



Figure 16 - Site 2 Massing Diagram

5.3.18. Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.84ha
- Net developable area = 0.64ha
- Density = 80dph
- Total number of units = 68 (32 x 1 Bed Apartment, 22 x 2 Bed Apartment, 14 x 3 Bed Townhouse)
- Parking spaces = 62

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.3.19. The design response removes the NHS Sue Nicholls Centre, which forms part of Buckinghamshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), associated car parking and scrub land.
- 5.3.20. The policies of the VALP and design principles set out in the Vale of Aylesbury Design SPD were considered during the design approach to this site, but the massing study was not bound by existing policy

requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site could be explored.

- 5.3.21. The design process has identified that current local planning policy maybe constraining the ability of this site to maximise the opportunities provided by its location in proximity to Aylesbury Town Centre and its surrounding context, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and a good design outcome.
- 5.3.22. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this urban site, to deliver local housing need within the Aylesbury urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units Allocation D-AYL068*	At least 39 – as per policy D-AYL068 Land north of Manor Hospital	68
Density	NA	80dph
Housing Mix	Policy H6a 1 bed flat = 4% 2 bed flat = 4% 2 bed house = 13% 3 bed house = 52% 4 bed house = 21% 5+ bed house = 6.5%	32 x 1 Bed Apartment 22 x 2 Bed Apartment 14 x 3 Bed Townhouse
Parking	Policy T6 and Appendix B parking	62

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*Allocation requirement for D-AYL068 is for at least 39 dwellings based on a 1.7ha site. The appraisal site in this study is for 0.84ha, as part of the original allocation has been developed.

Scale and Density

- 5.3.23. The scale of the design is three and four storeys in height and the resultant density is 80dph. The design responds sensitively to the constraints and opportunities of the site as well as the surrounding context, while optimising capacity through a considered layout and recognition of the site's location in proximity to Aylesbury Town Centre and sustainable transport and walking opportunities. The introduction of apartment blocks alongside terraces allows for a meaningful increase in unit numbers while respecting local character and surrounding context. The number of units achieved in the study is an increase on those specified within Policy AYL068 of the VALP (at least 39 units based on a site area of 1.7ha).

Housing Mix

- 5.3.24. VALP Policy H6a requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The housing mix will be negotiated having regard to the council's most up-to-date evidence, which is provided in the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2016 (HEDNA).
- 5.3.25. The design includes a mix of one and two-bedroom apartments and three-bedroom townhouses. While this represents a departure from the

housing need identified in the HEDNA, it is considered that the housing adds variety to the established housing stock in the local area, which generally consists of two-bed or 3-bed terraced houses. It is also considered that the housing mix is appropriate, given the urban location of the site and the need to optimise density in urban areas.

Public Open Space

- 5.3.26. VALP Policy I1 and associated Appendix C includes a quantitative requirement that no person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of natural green space.
- 5.3.27. These spaces are required to be accessible, meaning it must be available to the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some spaces may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle).
- 5.3.28. The site is approx. 290m from Rose Memorial Park, which is over 2ha and accessible, and therefore meets the requirement. As part of a development application for housing, contributions would be sought to mitigate the impact that additional people living in the area would have on this and other nearby areas of green space.

Parking

- 5.3.29. The design achieves 62 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 127 bays.
- 5.3.30. The site is close to Aylesbury Town Centre (circa 800m / 10-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and Aylesbury Train station slightly further away through Aylesbury Town Centre.

- 5.3.31. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.
- 5.3.32. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

Allocation Requirements

- 5.3.33. Criteria within VALP allocation D-AYL068 requires the retention of part of the site for hospital services and associated car parking. These requirements have the potential to hinder the ability of the site to be developed to optimise density.
- 5.3.34. It is therefore recommended that discussions be undertaken with the relevant landowners and the service provider for the NHS Sue Nicholls Centre to establish whether the current services provided on this site are still required, and if so, whether they could be provided elsewhere.
- 5.3.35. If the Sue Nicholls Centre and associated infrastructure were removed, the site could be redeveloped in a more comprehensive and optimal way, maximising density and making best use of the land.

Wycombe Area Local Context

- 5.3.36. The development plan for the Wycombe area constitutes the Wycombe District Local Plan 2016 - 2033 (Adopted in 2019), the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for Town centres and Managing Development 2013 (Adopted in 2013), the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016 - 2036 (adopted July 2019), and 'made' Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.3.37. The redevelopment of underused brownfield land is supported by the strategic policies of the development plan, these include:

Wycombe District Local Plan 2033

- **Policy CP1 - Sustainable Development** requires all new development to contribute towards delivering sustainable development by contributing to achieving both the objectives of the Plan and the principles for the main places in the District.
- **Policy CP2 - Overall Spatial Strategy** sets out that through the allocations and policies within the Plan the Council will meet as much of the District's need for housing and employment land as is sustainable to do so, this includes directing broadly 85% of the housing requirement and most new employment to the four larger settlements of the District.
- **Policy CP3 - Settlement Strategy** outlines that the prime focus of development, including housing and new economic development will be the urban area of High Wycombe through [...] the redevelopment of suitable previously developed sites for both housing and employment purposes.
- **Policy CP4 - Delivering Homes** sets the distributions of homes across the District, which includes 6,350 new homes at the urban area of High Wycombe across the plan period 2013 -2033.
- **Policy CP9 - Sense of Place** stipulates that the Council will deliver a high-quality sense of place within the District through optimising the development of previously development land and

optimising the density of development to make best use of land whilst respecting the distinctive character of the area.

- **Policy CP10 - Green Infrastructure and the natural environment** sets out how the Council will promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and green infrastructure of the District through, ensuring there is a net gain in biodiversity within individual development proposals and across the District as a whole over the plan period.
- **Policy CP12 - Climate Change** outlines how the Council will promote mitigation and adaptation to climate change through, a development strategy that minimises the need to travel by allocating sites and generally directing development to locations with better services and facilities, or where they are capable of being improved.

Delivery and Site Allocations Plan

- **Policy DM1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** sets a presumption in favour of planning permissions that accord with the policies of the Local Plan and other Local Plan documents, and where there are no policies relevant or relevant policies are out of date, applications will be assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework.
- **Policy DM11 - Green Networks and Infrastructure** sets a requirement for all new development (where appropriate) to contribute towards improvements of the Green Infrastructure Network, Corridor Opportunity Areas, and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.
- **Policy DM16 - Open Space in New Development** requires new development to make provision for public open space to a set of specified standards, which includes the provision of strategic open space, local open space, and onsite provision of private or communal open space.

5.3.38. The relevant development management policies from the Wycombe District Local Plan Delivery and Site Allocations Plan, the Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD (June 2017) and the Housing

Intensification SPD (October 2011) that have been considered when determining the appropriate densities for each site in the High Wycombe area have been listed in the site appraisals contained within Section 4.2.

- 5.3.39. Sites considered in the Wycombe area are not subject to made or emerging neighbourhood plans.
- 5.3.40. The Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments, apply to sites in the Wycombe area.

5.4. Site 3 – High Wycombe

111-121 London Road, High Wycombe HP11 1BH



Figure 17 - Aerial view of Site 3

The Site

- 5.4.1. The site is approximately 0.45ha and currently operates as a car dealership. The facility includes a showroom, service areas, and associated customer parking. The building is a modern, single-story structure with a functional design typical of car retail establishment.
- 5.4.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies High Wycombe as 'Tier 1: Major Urban Areas'. Two towns in Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury and High Wycombe) are considerably larger and better provisioned with services and facilities than others and

are therefore placed in a category of their own to reflect their importance. High Wycombe has a built-up urban area of 83,731 (Census 2021). It is home to several secondary schools, a large library, university buildings and a hospital, as well as a wide employment offer and extensive shopping and leisure facilities. It has a mainline train station and an extensive bus network.

Site Location and Context

- 5.4.3. Situated along London Road (A40), a primary road leading into High Wycombe from the east, the site is approximately 900m (c.10 to 15-minute walk) from the town centre. High Wycombe town centre includes a range of shops, service, and facilities.
- 5.4.4. High Wycombe Train Station is situated around 800m away (c.10-minute walk) with services to London, Oxford, Birmingham, and Aylesbury.
- 5.4.5. London Road (A40) provides strategic east-west connectivity between High Wycombe town centre and Loudwater, supporting the site's accessibility for both local and through traffic.
- 5.4.6. The area contains diverse architectural character, with buildings ranging from late 19th-century structures to contemporary developments. Notably, the nearby Pheasant Public House at 99 London Road, which dates to 1888 sits at two-storys in height and showcases red brick and slate construction in the Arts & Crafts style featuring terracotta and red brick dressings. Additionally, 127 London Road is a three-story detached building with decorative red brickwork and a clay-tiled roof, reflecting that of the early 20th-century architectural trends. The Old Toll House, approximately 30m south of the site, on the southern side of London Road, is a Grade II Listed Building, comprising a single storey

building with red brick castellated walls with stone copings and a central chimney stack with grouped octagonal shafts.

- 5.4.7. The immediate context of the site comprises of commercial properties, retail units and service-related businesses. These structures vary in form and style, with a mix of single and multi-story buildings reflecting the area's incremental development over time.
- 5.4.8. The site is set within a mixed-use context, with varying architectural styles, ages, and scales:
- To the east, large Victorian semi-detached houses, three-storeys in height on elevated ground;
 - To the west, a two-storey retail unit and an adjacent three-storey residential apartment block front Gordon Road;
 - To the south, the Grade II listed Old Toll House and open green spaces including High Wycombe Cricket Club and The Rye;
 - To the north and north-east, steeply rising topography with a new apartment development (currently under construction) at Princes Gate overlooking the site. The effective height of this development will be seven storeys relative to the subject site, given the elevated nature of the ground at this location.
- 5.4.9. Primary access to the site is from London Road, which has multiple bus stops the nearest located on the periphery of the site along London Road around 50m from the entrance, providing connections to High Wycombe town centre and surrounding areas. Local amenities, including shops, eateries, and the town centre, are within convenient reach by foot (around a 15-minute walk c-1.2km), and public transport.

Site Photos



Figure 1811 - View from the Site looking west toward the A40 roundabout.



Figure 19 - View looking west toward the A40 roundabout.



Figure 2012 - View north-east from the A40 toward site entrance.



Figure 13 - View looking east from the A40 Roundabout

Planning History:

- 5.4.10. The current car dealership, workshop and body shop gained outline permission on 7 April 1993 for the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a new car dealership showroom, workshop, and body shop (93/05045/OUT).

- 5.4.11. An application for a petrol filling station with sales control building, car, and jet wash facilities (93/05009/FUL) was refused on 2 March 1993, due to the intensification of the existing access onto A40 London Road giving rise to potential conditions of danger, obstruction, and inconvenience to road users. It was referenced that the visibility from the site is sub-standard and any increase in movements would lead to further conditions of danger and inconvenience to both people and road users in general. It was also considered that the subdivision of the site would lead to inadequate servicing and parking arrangements for land at the rear of the site.

- 5.4.12. Permission was then granted for the erection of a covered car sales area (93/05964/FUL) on 3 August 1993.

- 5.4.13. Reserved matters permission was granted on the site for the erection of car dealership, showroom, workshops, bodyshops and parking (94/05909/REM) on 28 July 1994.

- 5.4.14. The site was not assessed as part of the Wycombe HELAA (2017).

- 5.4.15. A full planning application for the erection of a five storey development comprising 1x3 bed, 21 x 2 ed and 12 x 1-bed self-contained apartments (35 in total), with lower ground area comprising 36 parking spaces, bin stores and cycle storage and associated landscaping (19/06144/FUL) on the Site Of J C And M P Smith Factory, Princes Gate, High Wycombe was granted permission in September 2021. The

development is approximately four-storeys in high fronting Princes Gate, as it is on elevated ground, it appears higher from the subject site. The development is currently under construction.

Policy relevant to the site:

- 5.4.16. Wycombe District Local Plan (WDLP) policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:
- Policy DM22 - Housing Mix
 - Policy DM24 - Affordable Housing
 - Policy DM21 - Development affecting the Historic Environment
 - Policy DM32 - Landscape Character and Settlement Patterns
 - Policy DM34 - Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development
 - Policy DM35 - Placemaking and design quality
 - Policy DM39 - Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems
 - Policy DM40 - Internal Space Standards
- 5.4.17. Delivery and Site Allocations Plan (DSAP) policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:
- Policy DM11 - Green Networks and Infrastructure
 - Policy DM16 - Open Space in New Development
- 5.4.18. Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments.
- 5.4.19. Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD
- Section 1 - Character
 - Section 2 - Connections and Movement
 - Section 3 - Green Infrastructure

- Section 4 - Parking Design
- Section 5 - Building Relationships
- Section 6 - Flat Design

5.4.20. Housing Intensification SPD

- Level three - site design.

Constraints and Opportunities

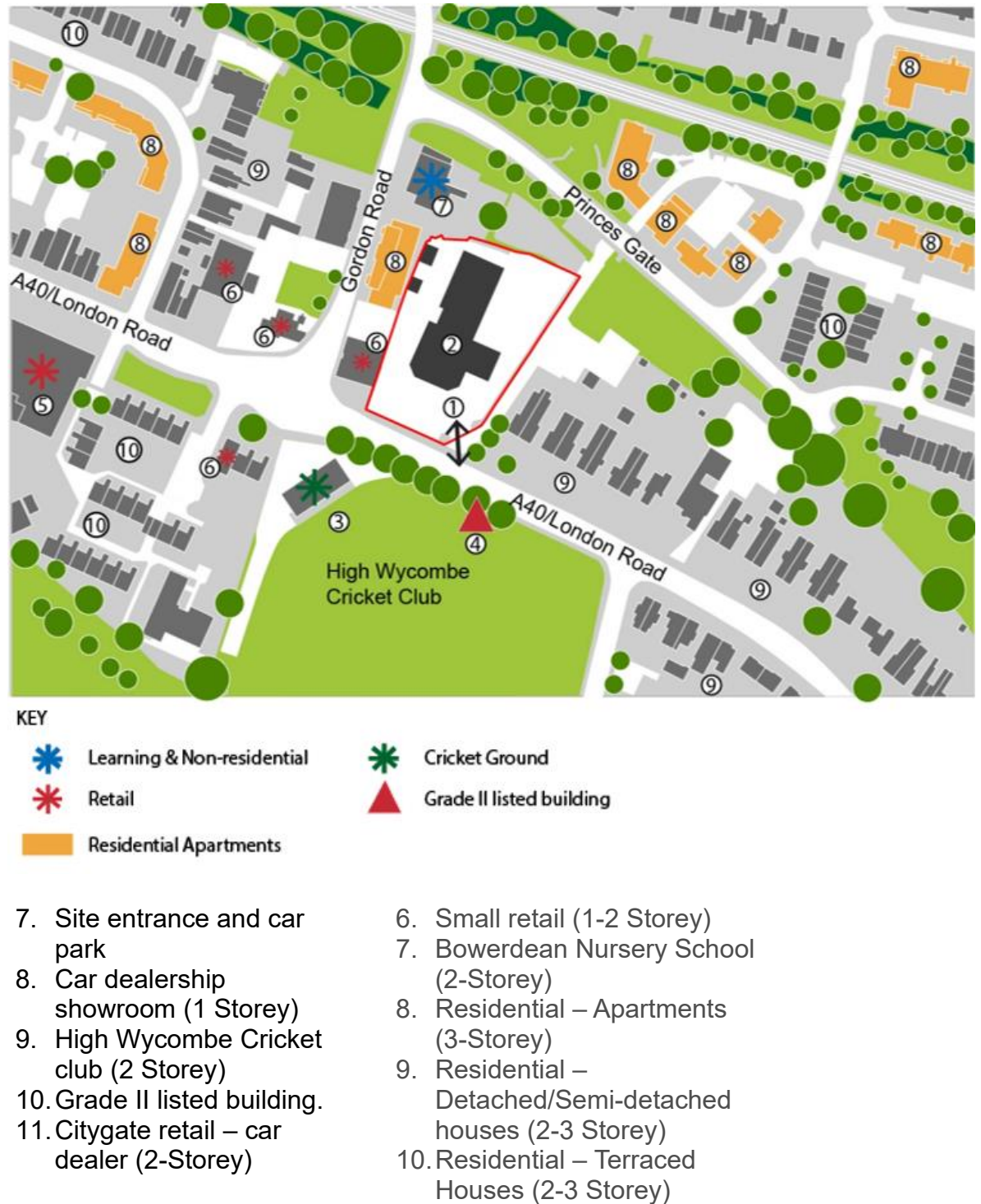


Figure 142 - Site 3 context plan.

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping

- The site presents limited existing landscape or ecological features. However, existing mature trees and cricket club located on the southern side of the A40 provide a strong visual and physical connection to trees and open space.
- The development is set back from the A40, broadly consistent with the existing residential units along London Road, to provide for greenery to connect the site with the area's wider green infrastructure network, which includes The Rye Park, High Wycombe Cricket Club, and the Wycombe Rye Lido.
- A green buffer is introduced along the southern edge of the site to provide separation from the busy London Road (A40), soften the interface with the road, improve visual amenity, and provide a more appropriate setting for the adjacent Grade II listed Old Toll House.
- The surrounding topography, particularly the significant level change to the north and east, has informed a sensitive approach to the siting and massing of built form and open space, aiming to reduce visual dominance and overshadowing while responding to the site's enclosed setting.

Access and Carparking

- The primary vehicular access is retained in its existing, well-established location off London Road (A40), benefitting from good visibility due to the site's flat topography and open frontage. Positioned away from the nearby roundabout, the access arrangement supports safe and efficient entry and exit movements.
- Pedestrian connectivity is supported by nearby controlled crossings on London Road, facilitating safe movement to and from High Wycombe Town Centre, Rye Park and Gardens and the wider green infrastructure network, and nearby bus stops along London Road.

- The site layout has been designed to optimise parking convenience while promoting a pedestrian-friendly environment, ensuring safe internal circulation and a clear distinction between vehicle and footpath zones.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Wycombe Town Centre, only slightly more car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form

- The design response consists of two apartment blocks.
- The first is 4 storeys and fronts London Road. The building's setback and scale reflect the character of built form along London Road and provides an appropriate setting to the nearby heritage listed 'Toll House.'
- The second is 5 storeys and sites centrally in the site. The building is well setback from the western site boundary to sensitively respond to the existing apartment building to the west. The building is also well setback from the eastern site boundary to sensitively respond to the elevated ground levels and new development under construction at Princes Gate.
- The design establishes a strong and active frontage to London Road, enhancing street presence and improving on the existing condition, which consists of a low-rise car dealership and forecourt dominated by hard surfacing and vehicle display areas.



Figure 23 - Site 3 Typology Plan



Figure 24 - Site 3 Massing Diagram

5.4.21. Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.45ha
- Net developable area = 0.35ha
- Density = 126dph
- Total number of units = 57 (25 x 1 Bed Apartment, 32 x 2 Bed Apartment)
- Parking spaces = 60

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.4.22. The design response includes the removal of the existing car dealership, comprising a showroom, service areas, and associated customer parking, typical of car retail establishment.
- 5.4.23. The policies set out in the Wycombe District Local Plan, the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan and the High Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD were considered during the design approach to this site, but

the massing study was not bound by existing policy requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site has been explored.

5.4.24. This design process identified that current local planning policy may have the potential to constrain the ability of the site to maximise opportunities provided by its location, particularly the proximity to High Wycombe Town Centre, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and good design outcomes.

5.4.25. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this urban site, to delivery local housing need within the Wycombe urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	57
Density	NA	126dph
Housing Mix	WDLP Policy DM22 1 bed flat = 4% 2 bed flat = 4% 2 bed house = 13% 3 bed house = 52% 4 bed house = 21% 5+ bed house = 6.5%	25 x 1 Bed Apartment (44%) 32 x 2 Bed Apartment (56%)
Parking	Parking Guidance for New Developments (September 2022).	60

	Residential car parking standards (above 10 dwellings) – Zone A Total spaces = 73	
Privacy	Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 Achieving Privacy: Achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats.	The buildings designed onsite provide gaps of: - 21m to the neighbouring apartments/houses to the east; - 25m to the neighbouring apartments/houses to the west.

Scale and Density

- 5.4.26. The scale of the design is four and five storeys in height and the resultant density is 126dph. The design responds positively to the constraints and opportunities of the site as well as the surrounding context, while optimising capacity through a considered layout and recognition of the location of the site in proximity to High Wycombe's town centre, and sustainable transport and walking opportunities. The site sits within a mixed-use context, with varying land uses, built form and scale, coupled with the difference in topography between the site and the surrounding development. This provides an opportunity to introduce larger scale apartment blocks that enable a meaningful increase in unit numbers, while remaining coherent and reinforcing the mixed character of the local area.

Housing Mix

- 5.4.27. WDLP Policy DM22 requires new residential development to consider the most up-to-date evidence on housing need, which is provided in the HEDNA (2016). The table above sets out the housing mix included in the HEDNA.
- 5.4.28. The design includes a mix of one and two-bedroom apartments. While this represents a departure from the housing mix need identified in the HEDNA, it is considered that the housing adds variety to the established housing stock in the local area, which generally consists of a mix of housing typologies or different sizes. It is also considered that the housing mix is appropriate, given the urban location of the site and need to optimise density in these areas.

Parking

- 5.4.29. The design achieves 60 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 73 spaces (excluding visitor parking).
- 5.4.30. The site is close to Wycombe Town Centre (circa 900m / 10 to 15-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and High Wycombe Train station within a 10-minute walk.
- 5.4.31. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.
- 5.4.32. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for

residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

Privacy

5.4.33. The Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 ‘Achieving Privacy’ requires development to “achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats. The 25m back-to-back gap can be reduced:

- within existing more traditional layouts where lesser back-to-back distances are needed to maintain the existing character of the area and the layout retains the residential privacy of existing residents.
- in dwellings arranged at an angle of more than 30 degrees that avoid direct window to window views.
- where there are no principle habitable windows from the adjacent properties that overlook the space.

5.4.34. The gap is to be increased where:

- the particular defining character of the area demands it.
- there are unequal relationships between the dwellings due to: level differences or storey heights; active rooms being located above the ground floor (for example flatted development); balconies at the first-floor level or above overlook the rear space.”

5.4.35. The design response achieves the required 25m gap to all existing neighbouring residential development, except for the apartment development at Princes Gate currently under construction to the east.

Despite this, the gaps (building separation) provided provides a strong degree of privacy and together with further measures to enhance privacy that could be included at detailed design stage, such as off-setting windows and balconies to avoid direct sightlines, and the use of trees and landscaping to screen sightlines, it is considered that the design response provides an adequate level of privacy.

- 5.4.36. It is considered that this requirement has the potential to impact higher density development from occurring in urban areas and should be reviewed considering other objectives, in particular a need to optimise residential development and make best use of land.

5.5. Site 4 – High Wycombe

Corner of Desborough Park Road and Dashwood Avenue, High Wycombe

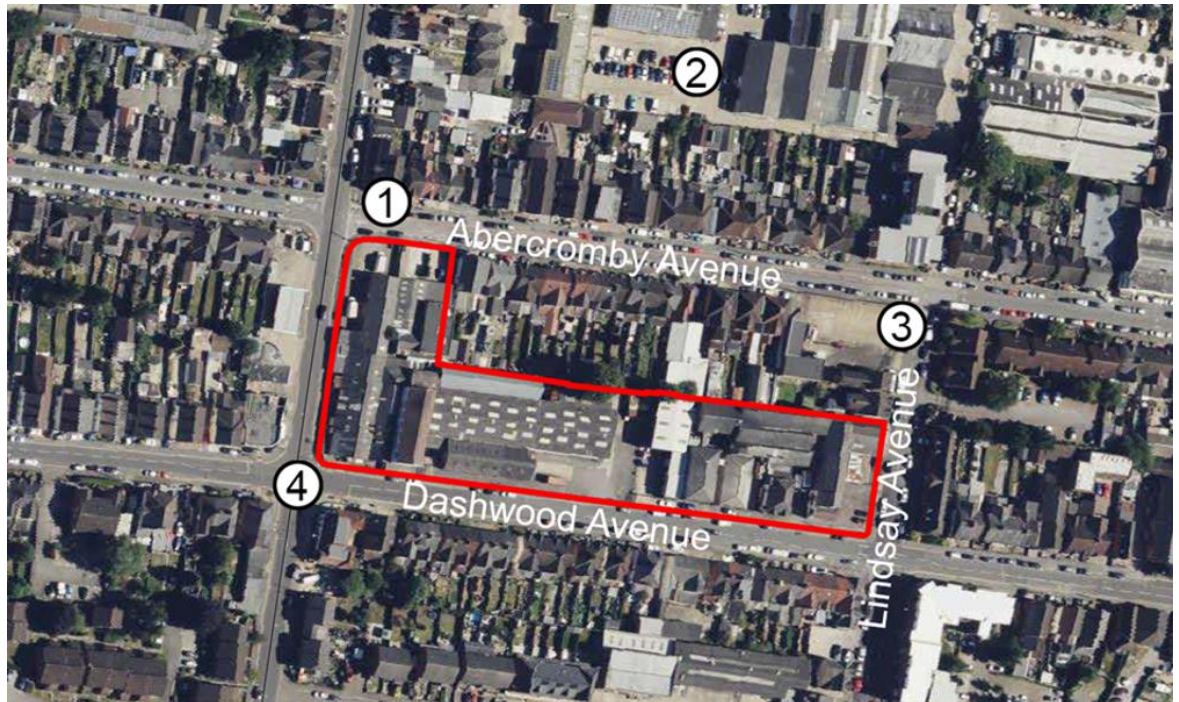


Figure 2515 - Aerial view of site 5

1. The High Wycombe East-West Cycle Route (1730022)
2. Park House Business Centre
3. Site 7 – Part of site selection and wider site allocation Site Reference Number SHW0020
4. Desborough Park Road and Dashwood Avenue signalised crossroad junction

The Site:

- 5.5.1. The site is 0.81ha, has an approx. 'L' shape. The site has frontage along Dashwood Avenue to the south and a narrow arm extending along Desborough Park Road to Abercromby Avenue to the west. All site boundaries adjoining the highway are secured by palisade fencing

to the south and close board timber fencing to the west. Vehicular access to the site is via Dashwood Avenue and Abercromby Avenue.

- 5.5.2. Most of the Site is occupied by small-scale light industrial buildings (B1, e.g. Foam Engineers Ltd and B8, e.g. manufacturers and warehouse storage), between one and two-storeys in height, constructed from red brick and many have pitched roofs. The site contains one three-storey brick building. Areas of the site that are not occupied by buildings are largely covered in hardstanding to accommodate access and the logistics for collections and deliveries. The site levels fall from Dashwood Avenue down to Abercromby Avenue create a level change of approx. 2 to 3m.
- 5.5.3. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies High Wycombe as 'Tier 1: Major Urban Areas'. Two towns in Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury and High Wycombe) are considerably larger and better provisioned with services and facilities than others and are therefore placed in a category of their own to reflect their importance. High Wycombe has a built-up urban area of 83,731 (Census 2021). It is home to several secondary schools, a large library, university buildings and a hospital, as well as a wide employment offer and extensive shopping and leisure facilities. It has a mainline train station and an extensive bus network.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.5.4. The site is within the 'Desborough' area of High Wycombe, which has a limited range of amenities including several convenience stores, schools, and community venues.
- 5.5.5. The site is approx. 800m (circa 10-minute walk) from High Wycombe Town Centre, which includes a range of shops, service, and facilities.

- 5.5.6. High Wycombe Train Station is situated around 2km away (circa 30-minute walk) with services to London, Oxford, and Birmingham. A bus stop is located within a minutes' walk of the site on Dashwood Avenue that provides bus services to High Wycombe Town Centre. High Wycombe Bridge Street Bus Station is 800m away (circa 10-minute walk), which offers services to destinations such as Reading, Aylesbury, Marlow, and Oxford.
- 5.5.7. The High Wycombe East-West Cycle Route (1730022) runs along Abercromby Avenue to the north of the site linking it to High Wycombe Town Centre to the east.
- 5.5.8. The surrounding area has a varied urban character. Dashwood Avenue and Abercromby Avenue are predominantly residential, featuring a fine grain of Victorian semi-detached and terraced homes, extending to two-storeys in height, while Desborough Park Road presents a more diverse mix of uses, including a funeral home, petrol station, and a small convenience store directly opposite, all of which extend to one-storey in height.
- 5.5.9. Dashwood Avenue and Desborough Park Road are both through roads with high volumes of traffic. Abercromby Avenue has less traffic and is more residential in amenity. The Desborough Park Road and Dashwood Avenue intersection is signalised.

Site photos



Figure 2616 - View on Dashwood Avenue looking west.



Figure 17 - View at entrance from Dashwood Avenue on site.



Figure 2818 - View looking North-East on Dashwood Ave



Figure 19 - View looking North-East on Desborough Park Road toward Abercromby Avenue

Planning History:

- 5.5.10. Outline planning permission was approved on 5 April 2006 for the demolition of the existing three-storey derelict factory office building in the south-eastern corner of the site and erection of four one-bed flats

with parking at 34 Dashwood Avenue (05/07793/OUT). It should be noted that when coming to a decision on the subsequent reserved matters application (07/08136/REM), approved on 8 July 2008, the proximity to the adjacent warehouses was considered to pose an intrusion into domestic amenity, however it did not constitute a reason for refusal of the application.

- 5.5.11. The site is allocated for housing in the Wycombe District Local Plan (2019) - Policy DM21 'Dashwood Avenue, High Wycombe' for 70 dwellings.
- 5.5.12. The most recent HELAA review suggests that safe access could be achieved onto the site under certain circumstances, stating that "access would be acceptable on the proviso that the redevelopment of this site did not have additional vehicular access points over the historical use of the site. The Highway Authority would expect the development to avoid direct access private vehicle accesses due to proximity to the Dashwood Avenue/Desborough Park Road signalised junction, local bus routes and stops and on-site waiting restrictions."

Policy relevant to the site:

- 5.5.13. The site is allocated in the Wycombe District Local Plan (2019) for 70 dwellings as 'Dashwood Avenue, High Wycombe', and is located within the 'Desborough Area' as defined in the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan (2013). The Desborough area is covered by Policy HW1 which sets a delivery and design framework for the area. The criteria that have influenced the capacity testing on the site are set out below.
- 5.5.14. Policy HW1 Desborough Delivery and Design Framework:
 - 1) "Developments should:

- a) Where possible provide new or improve existing links to existing/new open spaces
 - b) Improve integration of Desborough with the expanded town centre and the wider area through the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes.
 - c) Where possible retain existing industrial buildings that are part of the area's industrial heritage.
 - d) Be designed to complement Desborough's industrial heritage through use of traditional building materials and improve the areas legibility and create better connectivity for pedestrians. Active frontages should be retained or created where this will contribute to these aims.
- 2) Social and economic regeneration will be achieved through the retention, and where appropriate, redevelopment of employment and mixed-use sites within Desborough. Between them, these sites should provide a mix of employment, residential uses, community facilities and open space. The specific uses appropriate on each site will be identified in a subsequent local plan document where appropriate."

5.5.15. Wycombe District Local Plan policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:

- Policy DM22 – Housing Mix
- Policy DM24 – Affordable Housing
- Policy DM32 – Landscape Character and Settlement Patterns
- Policy DM34 – Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development
- Policy DM35 – Placemaking and design quality
- Policy DN39 – Managing Flood Risk and sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy DM40 – Internal Space Standards

5.5.16. The Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments, applies to development in the Wycombe area.

5.5.17. Delivery and Site Allocations Plan policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:

- Policy DM11 – Green Networks and Infrastructure
- Policy DM16 - Open Space in New Development

5.5.18. Relevant Local Planning Guidance:

- Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD
 - Section 1 – Character
 - Section 2 – Connections and Movement
 - Section 3 - Green Infrastructure
 - Section 4 - Parking Design
 - Section 5 - Building Relationships
 - Section 6 – Flat Design
- Housing Intensification SPD
 - Level three – site design.

Constraints and Opportunities



- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existing primary vehicular access 2. Existing secondary access 3. Existing retail/business centre/café (1-2 Storey) 4. Foam Engineers Limited (1-2 Storey) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Existing Apartments and Mews (2-3 Storey) 6. Existing residential Terraced and Semi-detached (2-3 Storey) 7. KMS services – Car garage (2 Storey) 8. Wider site allocation (Site Reference Number SHW0020) |
|--|--|

Figure 3020 - Site 4 context plan

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping:

- Site topography of the site slopes slightly from the south (high point) to the north (low point) along Desborough Park Road, and from the west (high point) to the east (low point) along Dashwood Avenue.
- An internal green space is provided to provide private amenity for residents and separation between the typologies.
- The two trees on-site have been retained.
- The internal green space connects with the existing east-west cycle route along Abercromby Avenue.

Access and Carparking:

- Main vehicular access aligns with the most recent HELAA review that suggests avoiding direct access and private vehicle accesses in proximity of Dashwood Avenue/ Desborough Park Road signalised junction. The proposed vehicular access point is therefore off Lindsay Avenue as this is a quieter more accessible street, allowing a continuous frontage along Dashwood Avenue.
- Due to the high traffic nature of Desborough Park Road and Dashwood Avenue only one access with a turning head has been proposed on site.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Wycombe Town Centre, fewer car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form:

- All buildings are three storeys in height to sensitively respect the established context and character of the area.
- The buildings front all streets to provide active frontages, casual surveillance, and consistency with the established pattern of development.

- The design compliments the established building grain and scale of the area by providing variation in typology, scale, and massing.
- Corner plots feature apartment typologies at higher densities to provide additional presence to the street corner.



Figure 3121 - Site 4 Typology Plan

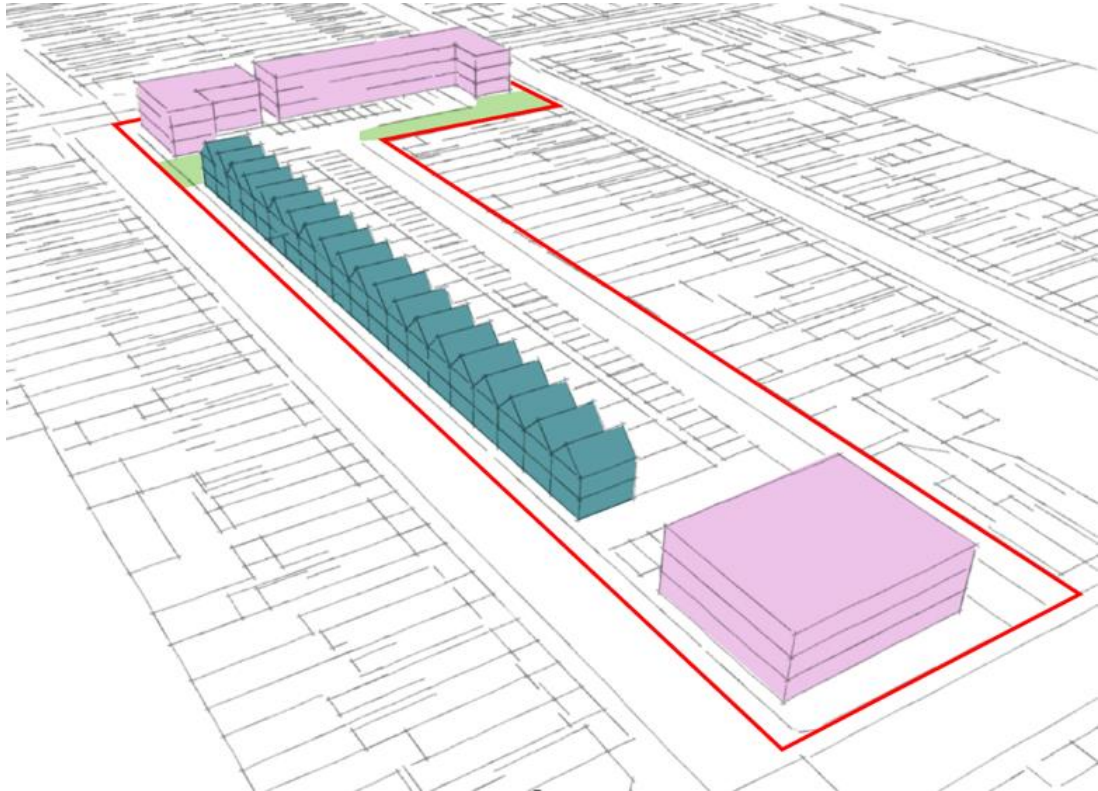


Figure 32 – Site 4 Massing Diagram

5.5.19. Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.81ha
- Net developable area = 0.75ha
- Density = 87dph
- Total number of units = 71 (31 x 1 Bed Apartment, 21 x 2 Bed Apartment, 20 x 3 Bed Townhouse)
- Parking spaces = 68

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.5.20. The site is 0.81ha and is approx. 'L-shaped' consisting of various industrial and office units, which currently houses an engineering consultancy and furniture makers.

- 5.5.21. The policies of the Wycombe Local Plan and design principles set out in the Residential Design Guidance SPD and Housing Intensification SDP have been considered during this design approach to this site, but the massing study has not been bound by existing policy requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site has been explored.
- 5.5.22. The study has identified that current local planning policy has the potential to constrain the ability of this site to maximise the opportunities provided by its location in proximity to High Wycombe Town Centre and its surrounding context, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and good design outcomes.
- 5.5.23. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this brownfield site to deliver local housing need within the High Wycombe urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	71
Density	NA	87dph
Housing Mix	WDLP Policy DM22: All residential development of 10 or more dwellings is required to include a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure taking account of current evidence in relation to priority housing need in the district, and to support a sense of	30 x 1 Bed Apartment (42%) 21 x 2 Bed Apartment (30%) 20 x 3 Bed Townhouse (28%)

	<p>place and mixed communities.</p> <p>Current evidence from 2016 HEDNA:</p> <p>1 bed flat = 4% 2 bed flat = 4% 2 bed house = 13% 3 bed house = 52% 4 bed house = 21% 5+ bed house = 6.5%</p>	
Parking	<p>Parking Guidance for New Developments (September 2022). Residential car parking standards (above 10 dwellings) – Zone A</p> <p>Total spaces = 101.5 (102)</p>	68
Achieving Privacy	<p>Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 Achieving Privacy: Achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats.</p>	<p>The buildings designed onsite provide gaps of 45m to the neighbouring apartments/houses to the north, which is the only applicable back-to-back distance.</p>

Scale and Density

- 5.5.24. The scale of the design is three storeys in height and the resultant density is 87dph. The design response is a well-considered and contextually responsive. It addresses the site's key constraints while integrating with the existing urban fabric, reinforcing active frontages.

Housing Mix

- 5.5.25. WDLP Policy DM22 requires new residential development to consider the most up-to-date evidence on housing need, which is provided in the HEDNA (2016). The table above sets out the housing mix included in the HEDNA.
- 5.5.26. The design includes a mix of one and two-bedroom apartments and three-bedroom townhouses. While this represents a departure from the housing mix need identified in the HEDNA, it is considered that the housing adds variety to the established housing stock in the local area, which generally consists of medium to large terrace housing. It is also considered that the housing mix is appropriate, given the urban location of the site and need to optimise density in these areas.

Parking

- 5.5.27. The design achieves 68 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 102 spaces.
- 5.5.28. The site is close to Wycombe Town Centre (circa 800m / 10-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and High Wycombe Bus station within a 10-minute walk.
- 5.5.29. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.
- 5.5.30. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

Privacy

- 5.5.31. The Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 ‘Achieving Privacy’ requires development to achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats. The 25m back-to-back gap can be reduced:
- within existing more traditional layouts where lesser back-to-back distances are needed to maintain the existing character of the area and the layout retains the residential privacy of existing residents.
 - in dwellings arranged at an angle of more than 30 degrees that avoid direct window to window views.
 - where there are no principle habitable windows from the adjacent properties that overlook the space.
- 5.5.32. The gap is to be increased where:
- the particular defining character of the area demands it.
 - there are unequal relationships between the dwellings due to: level differences or storey heights; active rooms being located above the ground floor (for example flatted development); balconies at the first-floor level or above overlook the rear space.
- 5.5.33. The design response achieves the required 25m gap to all existing neighbouring residential development. Measures to enhance privacy can also be included at detailed design stage, such as off-setting windows and balconies to avoid direct sightlines, and the use of trees and landscaping to screen sightlines.
- 5.5.34. Despite compliance in this case, it is considered that this requirement has the potential to impact higher density development from occurring in

urban areas and should be reviewed considering other objectives, in particular a need to optimise residential development and make best use of land.

5.6. Site 5 – Princes Risborough

14 Picts Lane, Princes Risborough



1. Princes Risborough Train Station
2. Building supplies company
3. Princes Risborough Nursery
4. Station Road bus stop
5. Picts Lane bus stop

Figure 3322 - Aerial view of site 5

The Site:

- 5.6.1. The site (14 Picts Lane) is approx. 0.42ha and is currently operating as a trading yard for building materials - Blanchford Building Supplies.

- 5.6.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies Princes Risborough as 'Tier 2: Large Market/ Other Town'. Tier 2 settlements contain all the services and facilities expected in any main centre, including shops, secondary and primary schools, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, a range of employment opportunities and good public transport provision.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.6.3. Picts Lane runs along the site's eastern boundary, providing direct access, there is also a secondary access to the north from Station Road that is currently used as exit only.
- 5.6.4. Princes Risborough Town Centre is to the northeast of the site around 1km away (circa 10 to 15-minute walk) offering a mix of leisure facilities, supermarkets, pubs, restaurants, cafes, and independent shops, including Market House. The site is approximately 300m (circa. 5-minute walk) from Princes Risborough Train Station. The proximity to the station offers convenient public transport options, with regular train services to Aylesbury, High Wycombe, and Bicester, and larger places further afield such as Oxford, Birmingham, and London.
- 5.6.5. Several bus stops are situated within a 5-minute walk of the site providing frequent bus services to a range of local and regional destinations.
- 5.6.6. The surrounding area has a diverse architectural character. Historically, the site was occupied by the Whiteleaf Furniture factory, reflecting the industrial heritage of Princes Risborough. In recent years, there has been a shift towards residential redevelopment, with modern housing developments emerging in the vicinity. These new constructions typically feature contemporary designs that complement the traditional

vernacular architecture of the town, characterised by brick facades and pitched roofs.

Site photos



Figure 3423 - View on site looking North toward Station Road



Figure 3524 - View on Station Road looking North-West.



Figure 25 - View on Picts Lane looking west.



Figure 37 - View on Station Road looking south.

Planning History:

- 5.6.7. The land adjacent to the site's western boundary is allocated in the Wycombe District Local Plan 2019 as Land at Princes Risborough Station (Policy PR16). The allocation includes a mixed-use development (retail and residential use) and a new relief road which connects Picts Lane with Station Road.
- 5.6.8. Policy PR8 of the Wycombe District Local Plan safeguards land adjacent to the site's western boundary for the construction of a new relief road which connects Picts Lane and Summerleys Road. An application for the relief road (22/06910/R9FULE) was submitted 12

July 2022 and is yet to be determined. The application boundary abuts the western and northern boundary of the site.

5.6.9. The site was not assessed as part of the Wycombe HELAA 2017.

Policy relevant to the site:

5.6.10. Wycombe District Local Plan policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:

- Policy PR3 – Princes Risborough Area of Comprehensive Development including Relief Road
- Policy PR16 – Land at Princes Risborough Station
- Policy DM22 – Housing Mix
- Policy DM24 – Affordable Housing
- Policy DM32 – Landscape Character and Settlement Patterns
- Policy DM34 – Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development
- Policy DM35 – Placemaking and design quality
- Policy DM39 – Managing Flood Risk and sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy DM40 – Internal Space Standards

5.6.11. Delivery and Site Allocations Plan policies that have influenced capacity testing of the site include:

- Policy DM11 – Green Networks and Infrastructure
- Policy DM16 - Open Space in New Development

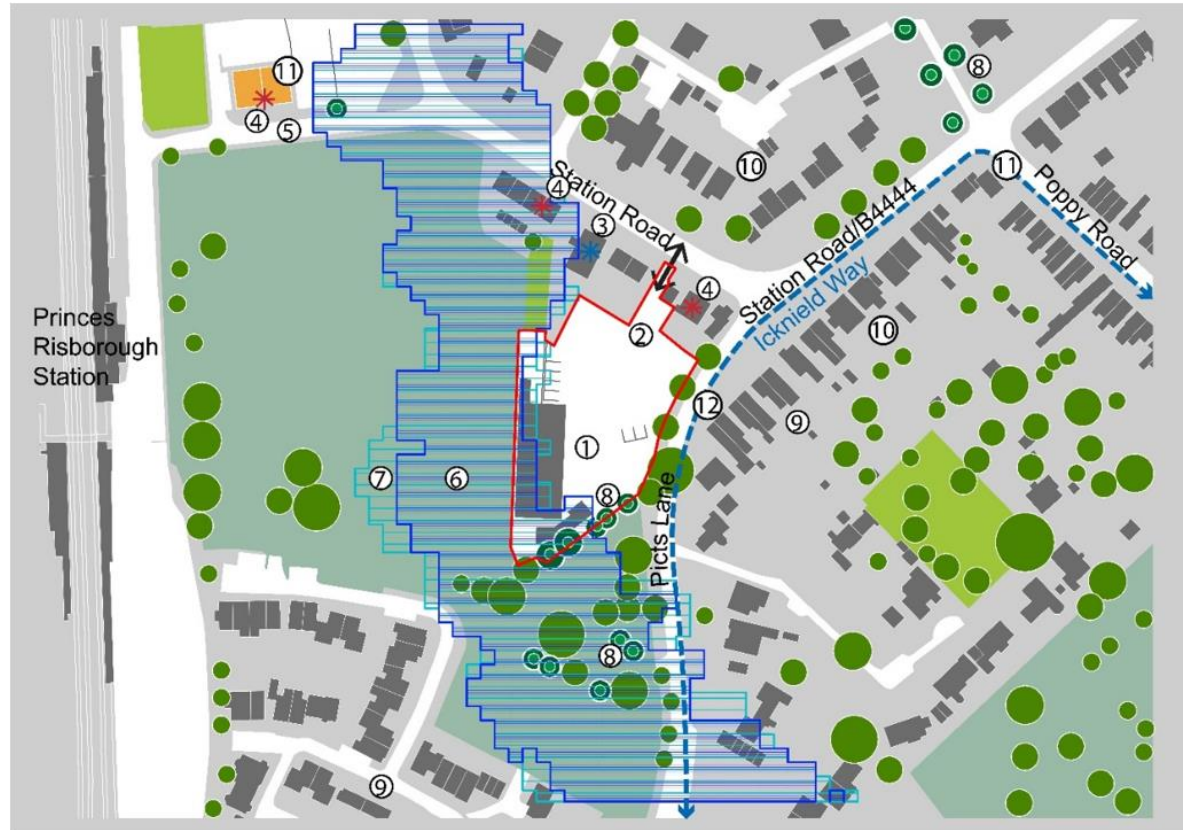
5.6.12. The Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments, applies to this area.

5.6.13. Relevant Local Planning Guidance:

- Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD

- Section 1 – Character
 - Section 2 – Connections and Movement
 - Section 3 - Green Infrastructure
 - Section 4 - Parking Design
 - Section 5 - Building Relationships
 - Section 6 – Flat Design
 - Housing Intensification SPD
 - Level Three – Site Design
 - Picts Lane and the Station Area, Princes Risborough – A non-statutory Brief for Redevelopment (November 2007)
- 5.6.14. The relevant development management policies of the Wycombe District Local Plan Delivery and Site Allocations Plan, the Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD (June 2017), the Housing Intensification SPD (October 2011) (see Section 4.2) and the Picts Lane and the Station Area, Princes Risborough – A non-statutory Brief for Redevelopment (2007) have been considered when determining the appropriate densities for this site.
- 5.6.15. There are Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) associated with 5 trees along the southern boundary of the site.
- 5.6.16. Parts of the western and southern most extents of the site are located within flood zones 2 and 3.

Constraints and Opportunities



KEY

-  Retail
-  Flood Risk Zone 3
-  Flood Risk Zone 2

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Blanchford Building Supplies (2 Storey) | 7. Flood Risk Zone 2 |
| 2. Exit from the Site | 8. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) |
| 3. Princes Risborough Nursery (2 Storey) | 9. Goodearl Place contemporary residential development (2-3 Storey) |
| 4. Supply Shop (2 Storey) | 10. Older Victorian and Edwardian terraced and semi-detached houses (2-3 storey) |
| 5. Road Link proposal | |
| 6. Flood Risk Zone 3 | |

Figure 3826 – Site 5 context plan

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping:

- Car parking and landscaping are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 to maximise land efficiency and mitigate flood risk. Future development will require an appropriate flood risk assessment and incorporation of sustainable drainage and resilience measures.
- Several existing trees onsite, particularly along the southern boundary, are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), and their retention has been a key consideration in shaping the layout and built form.

Access and Carparking:

- Primary vehicular access will be taken from the existing access point on Picts Lane, slightly repositioned southwards to improve visibility splays and optimise internal circulation.
- A secondary access onto Station Road will be retained for emergency and servicing needs only and will also provide a pedestrian connection, improving permeability and walkability through the site and surrounding area.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Princes Risborough Town Centre and Princes Risborough Train Station, only slightly more car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form:

- Buildings are located to avoid established trees and Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- The building layout provides separation to maximise privacy and access to daylight and support effective vehicle circulation and pedestrian movement.
- A four-storey apartment block is positioned to the south, as this part of the site is well-separated from surrounding houses and well-screened by established trees and landscaping.

- Three-storey apartment blocks and terrace houses are positioned to the north to provide a respectful height and typology transition to the adjacent two-storey houses on Station Road.



Figure 3927 – Site 5 Typology Plan



Figure 4028 – Site 9 Massing Diagram

Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.42ha
- Net developable area = 0.39ha
- Density = 90dph
- Total number of units = 38 (16 x 1 Bed Apartment, 16 x 2 Bed Apartment, 6 x 3 Bed Townhouse)
- Parking spaces = 41

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.6.17. The design response includes the removal of existing buildings onsite.
- 5.6.18. The policies and objectives set out in the Wycombe District Local Plan, Delivery and Site Allocations Plan, and relevant SPDs, and the Development Brief for the Picts Lane and Station Area, were considered during the design approach to this site, but the massing study was not bound by existing policy requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site has been explored.
- 5.6.19. This design process identified that current planning policy may have the potential to constrain the ability of the site to maximise opportunities provided by its context and location, in particular the proximity to Princes Risborough Train Station and Town Centre, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and good design outcomes.
- 5.6.20. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in

the future to make the most effective use of this urban site, to deliver local housing need within the wider Princes Risborough urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	38
Density	NA	90dph
Housing Mix	WDLP Policy DM22 1 bed flat = 4% 2 bed flat = 4% 2 bed house = 13% 3 bed house = 52% 4 bed house = 21% 5+ bed house = 6.5%	16 x 1 Bed Apartment (42%) 16 x 2 Bed Apartment (42%) 6 x 3 Bed Townhouse (16%)
Parking	Parking Guidance for New Developments (September 2022). Residential car parking standards (above 10 dwellings) – Zone B Total spaces = 68	41
Privacy	Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 Achieving Privacy: Achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats.	The buildings designed onsite provide a gap of 16m to the neighbouring apartments/houses to the north.

Scale and Density

- 5.6.21. The scale of the design ranges from three to four storeys in height and the resultant density is 90dph. The design responds positively to the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and surrounding

context, and seeks to optimise capacity through considered scale, massing, and layout, which recognises the constraints posed by flood risk and existing residential development.

Housing Mix

- 5.6.22. WDLP Policy DM22 requires new residential development to consider the most up-to-date evidence on housing need, which is provided in the HEDNA (2016). The table above sets out the housing mix included in the HEDNA.
- 5.6.23. The design includes a mix of one and two-bedroom apartments and three-bedroom townhouses. While this represents a departure from the housing mix need identified in the HEDNA, it is considered that the housing adds variety to the established housing stock in the local area, which generally consists of larger lower density housing. It is also considered that the housing mix is appropriate, given the urban location of the site and need to optimise density in these areas.

Parking

- 5.6.24. The design achieves 41 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 68 spaces.
- 5.6.25. The site is close to Princes Risborough Town Centre (circa 1km / 10 to 15-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and Princes Risborough Train Station within a 5-minute walk.
- 5.6.26. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed

more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.

- 5.6.27. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

Privacy

- 5.6.28. The Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 ‘Achieving Privacy’ requires development to “achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats.
- 5.6.29. The layout achieves the minimum 25m separation both into properties adjacent to, and within the site.

Chiltern District Area Local Context

5.6.30. The development plan for the Chilterns area comprises the saved policies of the Chiltern District Local Plan (adopted 1 September 1997, including alterations adopted 29 May 2001 and consolidated in September 2007 and November 2011) and the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (adopted 15 November 2011) the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016 – 2036 (adopted July 2019), and ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans. The redevelopment of underutilised land and previously developed land is supported by the following policies of the development plan:

5.6.31. Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (as updated and consolidated):

- Policy GC1 – Design of Development Throughout the District
- Policy GC2 – Sunlighting and Daylighting Throughout the District
- Policy GC3 – Protection of Amenities Throughout the District
- Policy GC4 – Landscaping Throughout the District
- Policy GC8 – Residential and Other Noise Sensitive Development in Areas of High Noise Level Throughout the District
- Policy GC9 – Prevention of Pollution Throughout the District
- Policy GC10 – Protection from Flooding in the Areas as Defined on the Proposals Map and Throughout the District
- Policy H3 – Provision of New Dwellings in the Built-Up Areas Excluded from the Green Belt (other than in accordance with policies H2, H4 & H7)
- Policy H11 – Distance Between Flank Elevation(s) of a Proposed Multi-storey Dwelling and Boundary of Dwelling’s Curtilage Throughout the District
- Policy H16 – Distance Between Multi-Storey or Upper Floor Side And / Or Rear Extensions and Boundary of Dwelling

Curtilage Throughout the District Policy H17 – Distance Between Single Storey Side Extensions and Boundary of Dwelling Curtilage Throughout the District

- Policy TR2 – Highway Aspects of Planning Applications Throughout the District
- Policy TR3 – Access and Road Layout Throughout the District
- Policy TR11 – Provision of Off-Street Parking for Developments Throughout the District
- Policy TR12 – Relaxation of Parking Standards Throughout the District
- Policy TR15 – Design of Parking Areas Throughout the District
- TR16 – Parking and Manoeuvring Standards Throughout the District

5.6.32. Core Strategy for Chiltern District (November 2011):

- Policy CS1 – The Spatial Strategy
- Policy CS2 – Amount and Distribution of Residential Development 2006-2026
- Policy CS4 – Ensuring that Development is Sustainable
- Policy CS20 – Design and Environmental Quality
- Policy CS25 – Dealing with the Impact of New Development on the Transport Network
- Policy CS26 – Requirements of New Development
- Policy CS29 – Community
- Policy CS30 – Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime
- Policy CS32 – Green Infrastructure

5.6.33. Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments.

5.6.34. At the present time, it is understood that the sites considered in the former Chiltern District are not subject to 'made' neighbourhood plans

however the Belmont Club site is located within the designated neighbourhood area for the emerging Chesham Neighbourhood Plan and future proposals on the site should consider the policies of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.6.35. The Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study 2017 and Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments have been considered when determining the appropriate densities for each site in the former Chilterns District area and have been listed in the site appraisals section.

5.7. Site 6 - Amersham

Former Amersham Hill Cricket Club, Amersham



Figure 4129 - Aerial view of site 6

The site

- 5.7.1. The site comprises the former Amersham Hill Cricket Club, including an unkept and now overgrown playing field, and small single-storey clubhouse. The site is located to the east of Amersham Town Centre. It is approx. 1.18ha and is predominantly flat. Mature hedgerows and trees line parts of the boundary.

- 5.7.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies Amersham as 'Tier 2: Large Market/ Other Town'. Tier 2 settlements contain all the services and facilities expected in any main centre, including shops, secondary and primary schools, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, a range of employment opportunities and good public transport provision.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.7.3. Access to the site is from Peter Dwight Drive to the north. Woodside Road allotments adjoin the site to the east. A train line borders the site to the south. A mixture of two to three-storey detached and semi-detached houses adjoin the site to the north and east.
- 5.7.4. The site is situated approx. 1km (10 to 15-minute walk) from Amersham Town Centre, which includes a variety of amenities, such as independent retailers, cafes, pubs, supermarkets, high street shops and leisure facilities.
- 5.7.5. A bus stop is located on Woodside Road to the north of the site (within a 5-minute walk) providing bus services to Amersham Town Centre, High Wycombe, Chesham, and the Chalfonts. Amersham Train Station is situated approx. 1km (10 to 15-minute walk) from the site providing services to London and Aylesbury.
- 5.7.6. The area surrounding the site comprises a varied residential mix, including predominantly detached family homes and purpose-built flats, reflecting a diverse housing typology.

Site Photos



Figure 4230 - View on Peter Dwight Drive looking south.



Figure 4331 - View on Peter Dwight Drive looking north-west.



Figure 4432 - View on Peter Dwight Drive looking north-east.

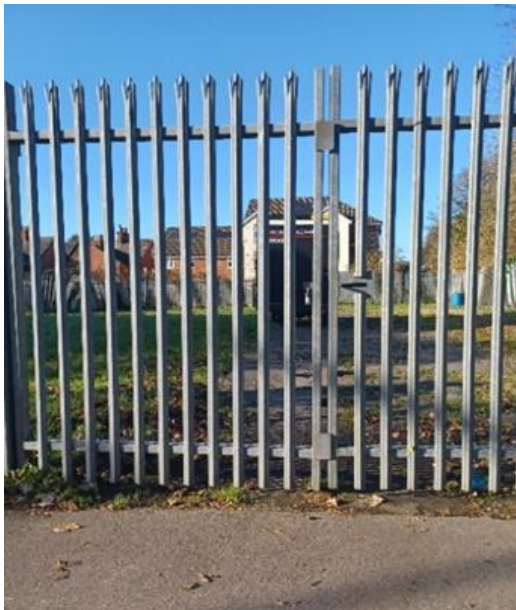


Figure 33 - View on Peter Dwight Drive looking south into the site.

Planning History:

- 5.7.7. Planning permission for the replacement of the clubhouse, widening of pedestrian accessway and installation of three bollard lights (1997/0870/FA) was refused on 7 August 1997 due to the carriageway for access to the cricket club not meeting the County Councils layout

standards. The road could therefore not be adopted, and the access arrangements conflicted with Policy TR2 of the Chilterns District Local Plan.

- 5.7.8. The site was assessed as part of the Chiltern and South Bucks HELAA Update Report 2020 (site ref. CD0172). The site was deemed acceptable at Stage 1 as the site is within the existing built-up area and is currently used as recreation grounds. Its development implications on sports and open space will be considered at Stage 2. The site was then deemed unsuitable for development at Stage 2 as the site is currently used by the Amersham Hill Cricket Club but is not designated as open space. Although the cricket ground has existing access to Woodside Road, it would require significant improvement and widening to support residential development. The site was identified for development in a Reg 18 consultation rep, however a replacement site for the cricket club would need to be found before this site would be suitable for development. Since the HELAA assessment was undertaken, the cricket club no longer exists, and no cricket has been played at the site since September 2018.

Policy relevant to the site:

- 5.7.9. Core Strategy for Chiltern District (November 2011):
- Policy CS1 – The Spatial Strategy
 - Policy CS2 – Amount and Distribution of Residential Development 2006-2026
 - Policy CS4 – Ensuring that Development is Sustainable
 - Policy CS20 – Design and Environmental Quality
 - Policy CS25 – Dealing with the Impact of New Development on the Transport Network
 - Policy CS26 – Requirements of New Development

- Policy CS29 – Community
- Policy CS30 – Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime
- Policy CS32 – Green Infrastructure

5.7.10. Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (as updated and consolidated)

- Policy GC1 – Design of Development Throughout the District
- Policy H3 – Provision of New Dwellings in the built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map.
- Policy TR11 – Provision of Off-Street Parking for Developments throughout the District
- Policy TR12 – Relaxation of Parking Standards Throughout the District
- Policy TR15 – Design of Parking Standards Throughout the District
- Policy TR16 – Parking and Manoeuvring Standards Throughout the District

5.7.11. Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Assessment, Chiltern Settlements (2017)

5.7.12. The Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments, applies to development in this area.

Constraints and Opportunities



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Existing primary vehicular access | 4. Existing residential Semi-Detached (2-3 Storey) |
| 2. Former Amersham Hill Cricket Club (1 Storey) | 5. Existing residential Detached (2-3 Storey) |
| 3. Allotments Or Community Growing Spaces | 6. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) |

Figure 4634 - Site 6 context plan

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping:

- The site is surrounded by mature vegetation and trees. Green allotments abut the site to the east, mature trees and vegetation aligning the railway line abuts the site to the south and large green rear yards to houses abuts the site to the west and north.
- The site responds to its green surrounding by retaining mature trees and vegetation along the site's boundary and positioning buildings in a way that would provide green amenity and outlook to residents, especially in the apartment blocks overlooking the adjoining allotments.

Access and Carparking:

- Primary vehicular and pedestrian access is retained from Peter Dwight Drive to the north. The suitability of Peter Dwight Drive to provide vehicular and pedestrian access would need to be investigated in detail as part of a future planning application, however for the purposes of this study, it is considered suitable.
- The site includes a potential alternative access point via Orchard Lane, which would only be available if an existing dwelling were to be demolished. The design does not respond to this alternative, as detailed investigations would need to occur to understand the suitability of the access point for vehicular and/or pedestrian access. Given its location, however, it is advantageous as it would provide more direct quicker access to Amersham Town Centre and the railway station.
- Given the site is within a reasonable walking distance to Amersham Town Centre, fewer car bays have been provided than dwellings.

Design and Built Form:

- The existing clubhouse provides no amenity value or character and is removed to enable full site development.

- Three-storey townhouses are positioned near the northern and western site boundaries to provide a gentle transition in scale and typology to the established neighbouring two-storey dwellings.
- A three-storey apartment block is located in the southwestern corner of the site to provide a gentle transition in scale to the established neighbouring two-storey dwellings, while also increasing density to respond to the need to make the best use of land.
- Higher density four-storey apartment blocks are positioned along the eastern boundary as this area is well-separated from existing neighbouring development to the north and east.
- These blocks include a central circulation corridor with apartments positioned to face east and west.



Figure 4735 - Site 6 Typology Plan

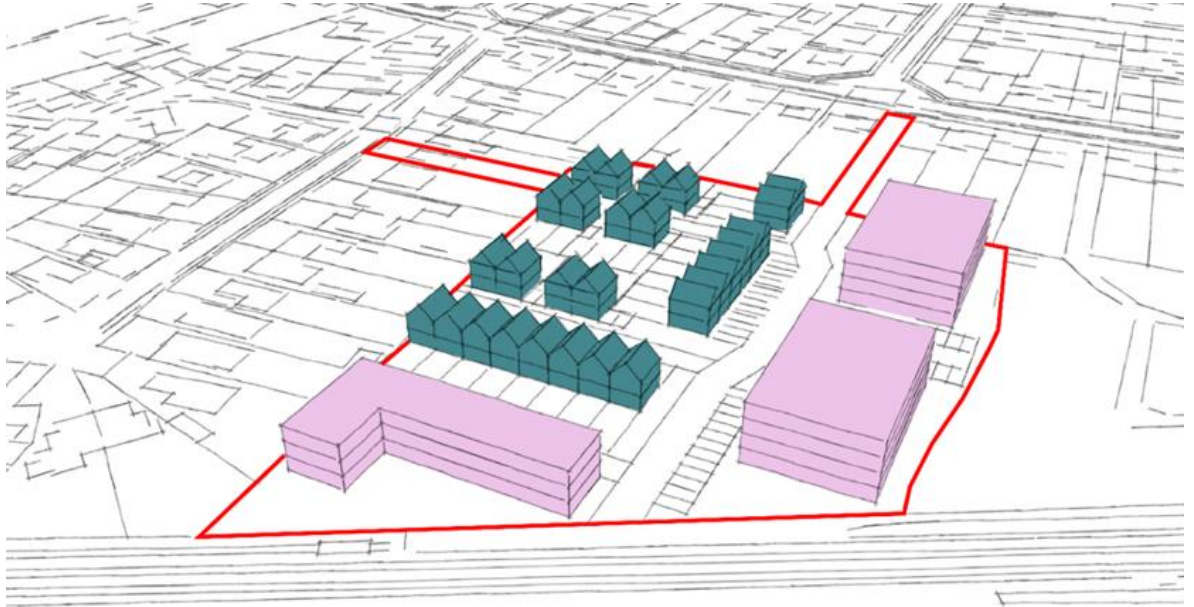


Figure 48 - Site 6 Massing Diagram

5.7.13. Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 1.18ha
- Net developable area = 1.18ha
- Density = 95dph
- Total number of units = 113 (47 x 1 Bed Apartment, 38 x 2 Bed Apartment, 28 x 3 Bed Townhouse)
- Parking spaces = 102

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.7.14. The site comprises flat open unkept grassland, previously used as the Amersham Hill Cricket Club.
- 5.7.15. The policies set out in the Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (as updated and consolidated) and Core Strategy have been considered during the design approach to this site, but the design response was not bound by existing policy requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site has been explored. This study has identified that current local planning policy may have the potential to constrain the ability of the site to maximise opportunities provided by its location, particularly the proximity to Amersham Town Centre and Train Station, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and good design outcomes.
- 5.7.16. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this urban site, to deliver local housing need within the Amersham urban area.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	113
Density	NA	95dph
Public Open Space	Fields in Trust Standard: No person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of accessible natural green space.	The site is not within 300m of a 2ha area of accessible natural green space.

Parking	Parking Guidance for New Developments (September 2022). Residential car parking standards (above 10 dwellings) – Zone B Total spaces = 202.5 (203)	102
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Scale and Density

- 5.7.17. The scale of the design ranges from three to four storeys in height and the resultant density is 95dph. The design is contextually appropriate, maximising the potential of the site to make effective use of the land available while respecting the prevailing character and scale of adjoining existing residential development.

Public Open space

- 5.7.18. In the absence of local policy, public open space is required to be provided in accordance with the Fields in Trust guidance, which requires that no person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of natural green space.
- 5.7.19. These spaces are required to be accessible, meaning it must be available to the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some spaces may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle).
- 5.7.20. The site is slightly further away than 300m (approx. 350m) from King George's Field, which is area of natural green space over 2ha. In this situation, it is unclear how this requirement could be met, which creates uncertainty and risk to developers.

- 5.7.21. Public open space policy could be clarified to reduce uncertainty to developers wanting to develop urban sites that are not able to meet these policy requirements.

Parking

- 5.7.22. The design achieves 102 car parking spaces, while current policy would require 203 spaces.
- 5.7.23. The site is close to Amersham Town Centre (circa 1km / 10 to 15-minute walk), with access to a range of services. It is well connected in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent to the site and Amersham Train Station within a 10 to 15-minute walk.
- 5.7.24. The transport choices available based on the site's location, enables practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.
- 5.7.25. While the consideration of all factors affecting car parking is beyond the scope of this report, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development in urban areas such as this that are well connected to existing services and facilities are reviewed.

5.8. Site 7 - Chesham

Belmont Club, Windsor Road, Chesham



Figure 4936 - Aerial view of site 7

The Site:

- 5.8.1. The site area is approx. 0.1ha and currently accommodates the Belmont Club, a social and sports club established in 1891, located at the eastern end of Windsor Road, Chesham. The site contains a single storey building and a small carpark.
- 5.8.2. The draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review classifies Chesham as 'Tier 2: Large Market/ Other Town'. Tier 2 settlements contain all the services and facilities expected in any main centre, including shops,

secondary and primary schools, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, a range of employment opportunities and good public transport provision.

Site Location and Context:

- 5.8.3. The site is nestled within a predominantly residential neighbourhood. The surrounding area is characterised by semi-detached houses (two to three-storeys). Playing fields and a children's playground are situated to the north of the site on the opposite side of Windsor Road.
- 5.8.4. The site is accessed from Windsor Road. The nearest bus stop to the site is approximately 300m to the west (circa. 5-minute walk) on Upper Belmont Road, providing services (approximately every 30 minutes) to Chesham Town Centre.
- 5.8.5. Chesham Town Centre includes a range of services and amenities. Chesham Underground Station is approximately 1.9km away (30-minute walk) offering regular services to London and other destinations.

Site Photo:

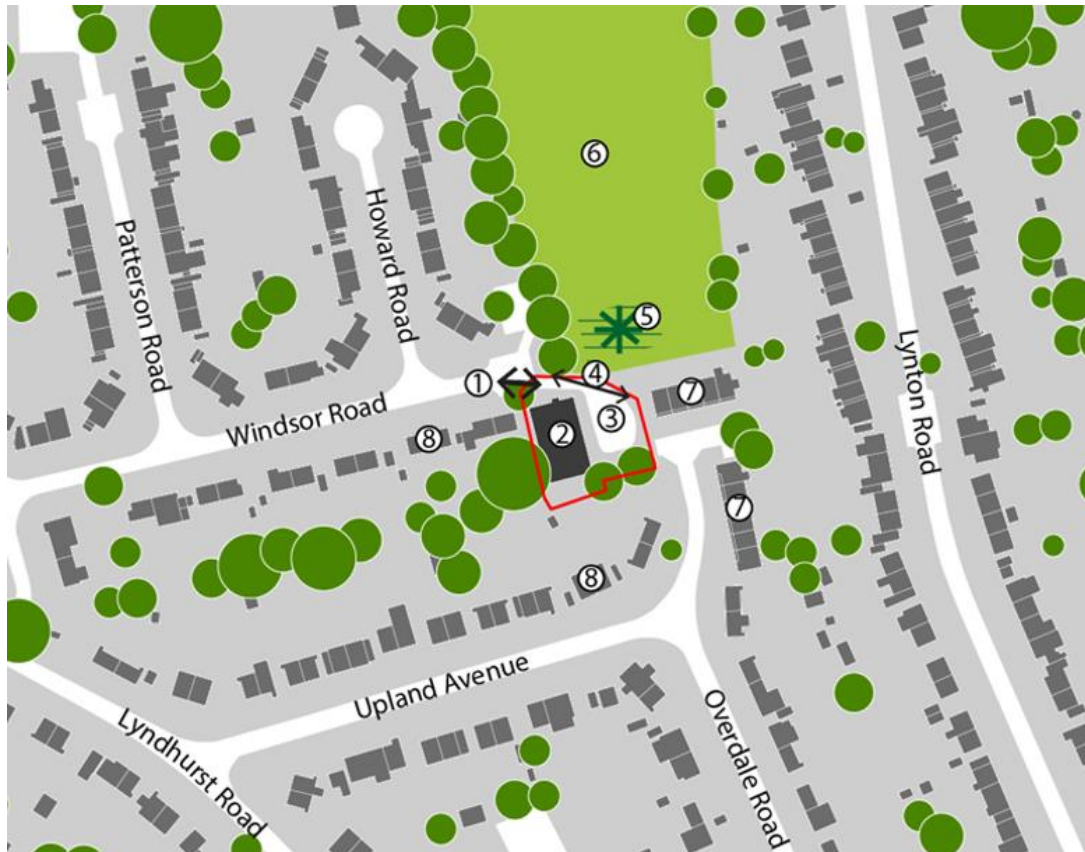


Figure 5037 - View from Windsor Road

Planning History:

5.8.6. There is no relevant planning history for this site.

Constraints and Opportunities



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Existing vehicular and pedestrian access to the Site | 5. Playground |
| 2. The Belmont Community Club (1 Storey) | 6. Recreation ground |
| 3. Existing car park on the Site | 7. Terraced residential (2-3 Storey) |
| 4. Pedestrian lane | 8. Semi-detached residential (2-3 Storey) |

Figure 51 - Site 7 context plan

Policy relevant to the site:

5.8.7. Core Strategy for Chiltern District (2011):

- Policy CS1 – The Spatial Strategy
- Policy CS4 – Ensuring that Development is Sustainable
- Policy CS20 – Design and Environmental Quality
- Policy CS26 – Requirements of New Development
- Policy CS29 – Community
- Policy CS30 – Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime
- Policy CS32 – Green Infrastructure

5.8.8. Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (as updated and consolidated)

- Policy GC1 – Design of Development Throughout the District
- Policy H3 – Provision of New Dwellings in the built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map.
- Policy TR11 – Provision of Off-Street Parking for Developments throughout the District
- Policy TR12 – Relaxation of Parking Standards Throughout the District
- Policy TR15 – Design of Parking Standards Throughout the District
- Policy TR16 – Parking and Manoeuvring Standards Throughout the District

5.8.9. Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Assessment, Chiltern Settlements (2017)

5.8.10. The Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments, applies to this area.

Design Response

Environment and Landscaping

- The layout allows for green landscaping to be provided at the front of dwellings, provided a direct visual connection to the open space across the road to the north of the site.
- Buildings are positioned to allow established neighbouring trees along the southern and western boundaries space to remain healthy.

Access and Carparking

- The primary vehicular access is retained from the existing entrance on Windsor Road, which benefits from an established and wide frontage with good visibility and accessibility.
- The site is located within walking distance to a local bus stop providing services to Chesham Town Centre and Underground Station.
- Given the site is not within a reasonable walking distance to Chesham Town Centre, two car bays have been provided per dwelling.

Design and Built Form

- The scale compliments the established building scale in the area (two to three-storey homes).
- Dwelling are setback in line with neighbouring dwelling to create a continuous frontage along Windsor Road to complement the existing pattern of development.
- A lower-density townhouse typology is considered suitable in this location, as it reflects the sites distance (not within a walkable distance) from local shops, facilities, and services.
- The proposed building is three storeys in height, aligning with the scale of neighbouring residential development and supporting a sensitive yet efficient intensification of the site.



Figure 5238 - Typology Plan Site 7

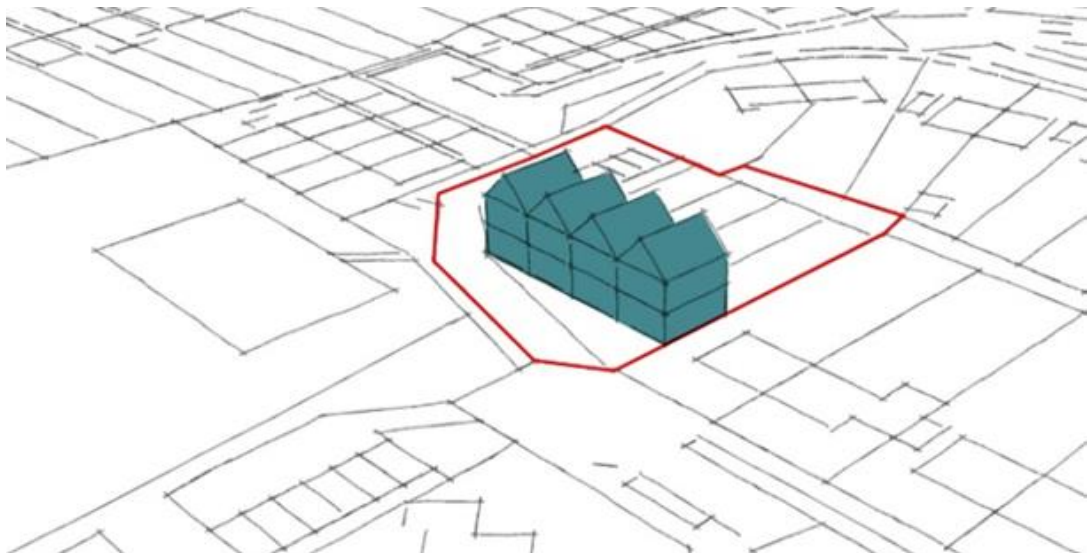


Figure 5339 - Massing Diagram Site 7

Summary of proposal:

- Site area = 0.1ha
- Net developable area = 0.1ha
- Density = 40dph
- Total number of units = 4 (4x 3 bed houses)
- Parking spaces = 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.8.11. The design response includes the removal of the existing onsite social and sports club building.
- 5.8.12. The policies in the Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (as updated and consolidated) and Core Strategy (2011) were considered during the design approach to this site, but the massing study was not bound by existing policy requirements to ensure that the full potential of the site has been explored.
- 5.8.13. The study identifies that current local planning policy may have the potential to constrain the ability of the site to maximise opportunities provided by its location in proximity to Chesham Town Centre and its surrounding context, to make the most effective use of land to deliver identified local housing need and good design outcomes.
- 5.8.14. The table and section below provide a comparison of what this site could achieve under current policy requirements, against the potential of the site responding to context and surrounding character. Alongside this analysis sit recommendations as to how local policy could be shaped in the future to make the most effective use of this urban site to deliver local housing need within the urban areas of the Chiltern district.

Comparison with Relevant Current Policy Requirements

Design Element	Current Policy Requirement	Design Response
Total Units	NA	4
Density	NA	40dph
Housing Mix	<p>Buckinghamshire HEDNA housing mix requirement:</p> <p>1 bed flat = 4%</p> <p>2 bed flat = 4%</p> <p>2 bed house = 13%</p> <p>3 bed house = 52%</p> <p>4 bed house = 21%</p> <p>5+ bed house = 6.5%</p>	4x 3-bed houses (100%)
Parking	<p>Parking Guidance for New Developments (September 2022). Residential car parking standards (below 10 dwellings) – Zone B</p> <p>Total spaces = 8</p>	8

Density

- 5.8.15. The scale of the design is three storeys in height and the resultant density is 40dph. The design response is well-considered and contextually appropriate scheme that contributes to the established pattern of development in the neighbourhood. It responds positively to the scale and massing of the area, while also making effective use of the land available to meet local housing need.

Open Space

- 5.8.16. In the absence of local policy, public open space is required to be provided in accordance with the Fields in Trust guidance, which

requires that no person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of natural green space.

- 5.8.17. These spaces are required to be accessible, meaning it must be available to the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some spaces may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle).
- 5.8.18. An area of natural green space over 2ha is located across the road from the subject site.

Parking

- 5.8.19. The design achieves 8 car parking spaces, consistent with the applicable policy requirements.
- 5.8.20. The site is not within a reasonable walking distance to Chesham Town Centre, which justifies the design providing two car spaces per dwellings. The site's location does not enable practical and convenient alternatives to private car use.

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.1.1. This urban potential evidence study has been undertaken to understand the optimal urban development potential of seven diverse brownfield sites across Buckinghamshire. It considers potential density and scale of development alongside placemaking outcomes to demonstrate to developers and other key stakeholders how brownfield sites could be developed (and the densities that could be achieved) in a positive and optimal way.
- 6.1.2. The design response for each site is bespoke and has been guided by good design principles. A context-led approach, which responds positively to local character and conditions has informed the proposals. Where local policy or supplementary planning documents include design guidance, the principles, and intentions of this has been considered in the formulation of the response.
- 6.1.3. Comparison tables have been provided to illustrate the levels of development that could be achieved for each site under current policy requirements, compared to the proposed design response. This has illustrated where current policy requirements may constrain development potential. The results of this have then been used to generate a series of recommendations in relation to each individual site.
- 6.1.4. Notwithstanding the diversity of sites considered in the study, common themes have been identified which could constrain the potential of each to be developed in a positive and optimal way. These themes relate to current policy requirements relating to residential density, housing mix, public open space, car parking, and privacy.
- 6.1.5. Recommendations resulting from the design response and capacity assessment have been made in relation to each individual site. These

have been reviewed and collated to identify recommendations which go beyond the individual sites of this study to highlight where policy changes could be introduced to maximise the potential of urban sites across the Buckinghamshire area more broadly.

Density and Scale

- 6.1.6. The design responses provide a broad understanding of what optimal development looks like in terms of scale and density across diverse urban sites and will be able to demonstrate to developers how urban sites could be developed, and the densities that could be achieved, in a positive and optimal way.
- 6.1.7. Generally, the building heights in the design responses were conservative (ranging from three to five storeys) in response to the surrounding context and character of each site. The typologies used in the study (townhouses and apartments) lent themselves to producing higher densities, therefore despite the conservative building heights, the densities achieved are relatively high - ranging from approx. 40dph to 160dph, with an overall average of approx. 100dph. The design responses yielded a total of 421 dwellings across the seven sites.
- 6.1.8. The densities derived from the study can be used to inform the HELAA by applying more accurate higher density assumptions to urban sites (as opposed to relying on standard, typical suburban densities). This will enable the council to better estimate the number of homes that multiple sites in urban areas could yield and the timeframe within which this might occur.
- 6.1.9. The development of multiple sites in an urban area could produce density at scale and unlock strategic opportunities for urban areas, such as justification for investment in localised community infrastructure

improvements. The co-ordinated development of multiple sites may also unlock potential benefits in relation to climate resilience, nature recovery, and community health and well-being.

- 6.1.10. Recommendation: Use the densities derived from the study to inform the Housing and Economic Land availability Assessment (HELAA) by applying more accurate higher density assumptions to urban sites.**

Public Open Space

- 6.1.11. The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Policy I1 and associated Appendix C includes a quantitative requirement that no person should live more than 300m from a 2ha area of natural green space.
- 6.1.12. These spaces are required to be accessible, meaning it must be available to the general public to use free of charge and without time restrictions (although some spaces may be closed to the public overnight and there may be fees for parking a vehicle).
- 6.1.13. For small urban sites that are not within 300m of an existing 2ha area of national green space or would not be able to accommodate 2ha of national green space onsite, it is unclear how this requirement could be met, which creates uncertainty and risk to developers.
- 6.1.14. Public open space policy could be clarified to reduce uncertainty to developers wanting to develop urban sites that are not able to meet these policy requirements, such as simply requiring a suitable contribution to be made that could be used to enhance a nearby area of natural green space.
- 6.1.15. Recommendation: Ensure public open space policy clarifies requirements for smaller urban sites, which are not within 300m of**

an existing 2ha area of national green space or would not be able to accommodate 2ha of national green space onsite.

Car Parking

- 6.1.16. Local planning policy and guidance within Buckinghamshire, like most authorities in the UK seeks to prioritise more active and sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling, and public transport, and conversely seeks to reduce reliance on the use of private cars, particularly for local journeys.
- 6.1.17. Parking has emerged as a principal theme, which can constrain the ability to develop urban sites in an optimal way. The provision of onsite car parking consumes a significant amount of land area, which in turn generally restricts the amount of land that can be used for buildings and amenity space. As a result, the ability to optimise residential density is impacted to various degrees. Car parking can in some situations be provided underground at a basement level, however this is often very expensive and unviable, and can create other issues such as flooding.
- 6.1.18. All the sites considered within this report, except for the site in Chesham, happened to be located within what is considered a reasonable walking distance (generally within 10 to 15 minutes) to good quality urban centres, which provide a wide range of various amenities and facilities, and services, as well as public transport services that provide onward travel to destinations further afield.
- 6.1.19. The transport choices available in these locations, enable practical and convenient alternatives to facilitating private car ownership onsite, and in turn provides an opportunity for the site to be developed more effectively to optimise density by making more effective use of land.

- 6.1.20. The designs in the study responded to these locational advantages by providing an average of 56 car bays per site, as opposed to an average of 101 car bays per site that would be required under current policy requirements, therefore generally half the provision of the current policy requirement. The reduced provision of car parking is considered reasonable as it reflects the choice of transport options available in these urban areas.
- 6.1.21. The reduced provision of physical onsite car parking spaces also served to optimise density as more space could be accommodated by buildings.
- 6.1.22. It should be highlighted that over 13% of Buckinghamshire households do not have access to a car (Buckinghamshire's Local Transport Plan 2016 to 2036). This highlights a significant portion of the population in Buckinghamshire who rely on alternative transport methods, such as walking and public transport. It is important that a good quantity and variety of housing is made available in locations where alternative transport methods can best be facilitated, such as urban areas, so that people without access to a car are able to access local services and facilities easily and avoid becoming isolated.
- 6.1.23. Given the above, it is recommended that the parking standards for residential development within urban areas, which are within what is considered a reasonable walking distance (generally within 10 to 15 minutes) to good quality urban centres, which provide a wide range of various amenities and facilities, and services, as well as good quality public transport services are reviewed in order to make it easier for sites in these areas to accommodate higher density development. In general terms Tier 1 and 2 settlements (and potentially some Tier 3 settlements) as classified in the draft Buckinghamshire Settlement Review could be used to identify these settlements with good quality urban centres.

- 6.1.24. It should be noted that the current Buckinghamshire County-wide Planning Guidance: Parking guidance for new developments (September 2022) uses a zoning approach to apply different parking standards to different areas within Buckinghamshire, based on their locational attributes.
- 6.1.25. The Guidance states that... “in urban areas, residents have more opportunity to walk, cycle, and use public transport to move around. Consequently, car ownership tends to be lower in urban areas than in rural areas. Hence, it is not always necessary to provide as many car parking spaces for residential developments in urban areas. This is particularly important given the limited availability of land in urban areas and the importance of ensuring land is developed in the most efficient way... In contrast, residents in rural areas are likely to be more dependent on cars for their day-to-day trips due to limited access to public transport; fewer designated cycle and footpaths; and more widely dispersed services. This must be reflected within the standards.”
- 6.1.26. Recommendation: Use the findings of the study relating to car parking to inform revised car parking standards for urban areas, particularly in areas that are within a reasonable walking distance (generally within 10 to 15 minutes) to good quality urban centres, which provide a wide range of various amenities and facilities, and services, as well as good quality public transport services.**

Housing Mix

- 6.1.27. The design responses in general focused on optimising density while responding to local context and character. As a result, housing mix provided on individual sites was fairly limited to a general mix of one and two-bedroom apartments, and three-bedroom townhouses, of various quantities. Despite the relatively limited mix, it is likely that the

design responses would add a rich mix to the housing mix within local areas generally.

6.1.28. Current policy requires new development to provide a mix of houses, with consideration to the most recent evidence, which is provided in the 2016 Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). The HEDNA sets out the housing mix needed throughout Buckinghamshire as a whole, as follows:

- 1 bed flat = 4%
- 2 bed flat = 4%
- 2 bed house = 13%
- 3 bed house = 52%
- 4 bed house = 21%
- 5+ bed house = 6.5%

6.1.29. Although current policy does not necessarily require housing mix to align with the percentages set out in the HEDNA, it is unclear how much consideration needs to be given to the mix, which creates uncertainty and risk to developers.

6.1.30. Different areas lend themselves differently to different forms of housing, due to the different locational attributes and opportunities they provide. Urban will tend to be more appropriate for smaller dwellings and apartments, which generally allows for more people to be close to urban centres and all the services and facilities they provide, while suburban and rural areas tend to be more appropriate for larger houses. Current policy does not address this nuance.

6.1.31. There is also a need to balance the need for a mix of housing types with the need to optimise residential densities, especially in urban areas. Again, current policy does not recognise this need.

- 6.1.32. Providing a mix of house typologies and sizes is important to allow for variety and choice for different households in a local area. It allows people to upsize and downsize over a lifetime without having to move to a different area and loose local connections. While it is important that a mix of housing is provided in all different areas throughout Buckinghamshire, it is important to recognise this and balance it with other considerations, and therefore it is recommended that current policy is reviewed to address the issues detailed above.
- 6.1.33. Recommendation: Ensure housing mix policy requirements do not impact the ability of urban areas to optimise density through the delivery of a higher mix of smaller dwellings and apartments.**

Privacy

- 6.1.34. Ensuring privacy between dwellings is important to provide good residential amenity. Ideally good design should employ a combination of methods to maximise privacy, including providing a gap between dwellings, off-setting windows, and balconies from direct sightlines, and using trees and landscaping to screen sightlines in between dwellings.
- 6.1.35. Importantly, gaps between dwellings are also needed to ensure dwellings have good levels of access to natural light and ventilation and therefore will always to some degree need to be applied as part of a well-considered design response.
- 6.1.36. The Wycombe Residential Design Guide SPD – Section 5.3 ‘Achieving Privacy’ requires development to “achieve privacy by maintaining a minimum gap of 25 metres between the backs of houses and flats. Other areas in Buckinghamshire are not explicitly subject to quantitative gap requirements to manage privacy impacts.

- 6.1.37. It should be noted that the 25m gap requirement applies equally to different areas, including urban, suburban, and rural areas. Urban sites tend to be smaller and more appropriate for higher, denser forms of development, as opposed to other areas. The qualitative nature of the requirement makes achieving optimal high densities in urban areas more challenging.
- 6.1.38. It is considered that where quantitative requirements, such as the 25m gap requirement, present challenges to optimising density or yield qualitative privacy measures should be considered in combination with a context appropriate setback or offset.
- 6.1.39. **Recommendation: Develop privacy policy requirements for urban sites are qualitative as opposed to quantitative.**