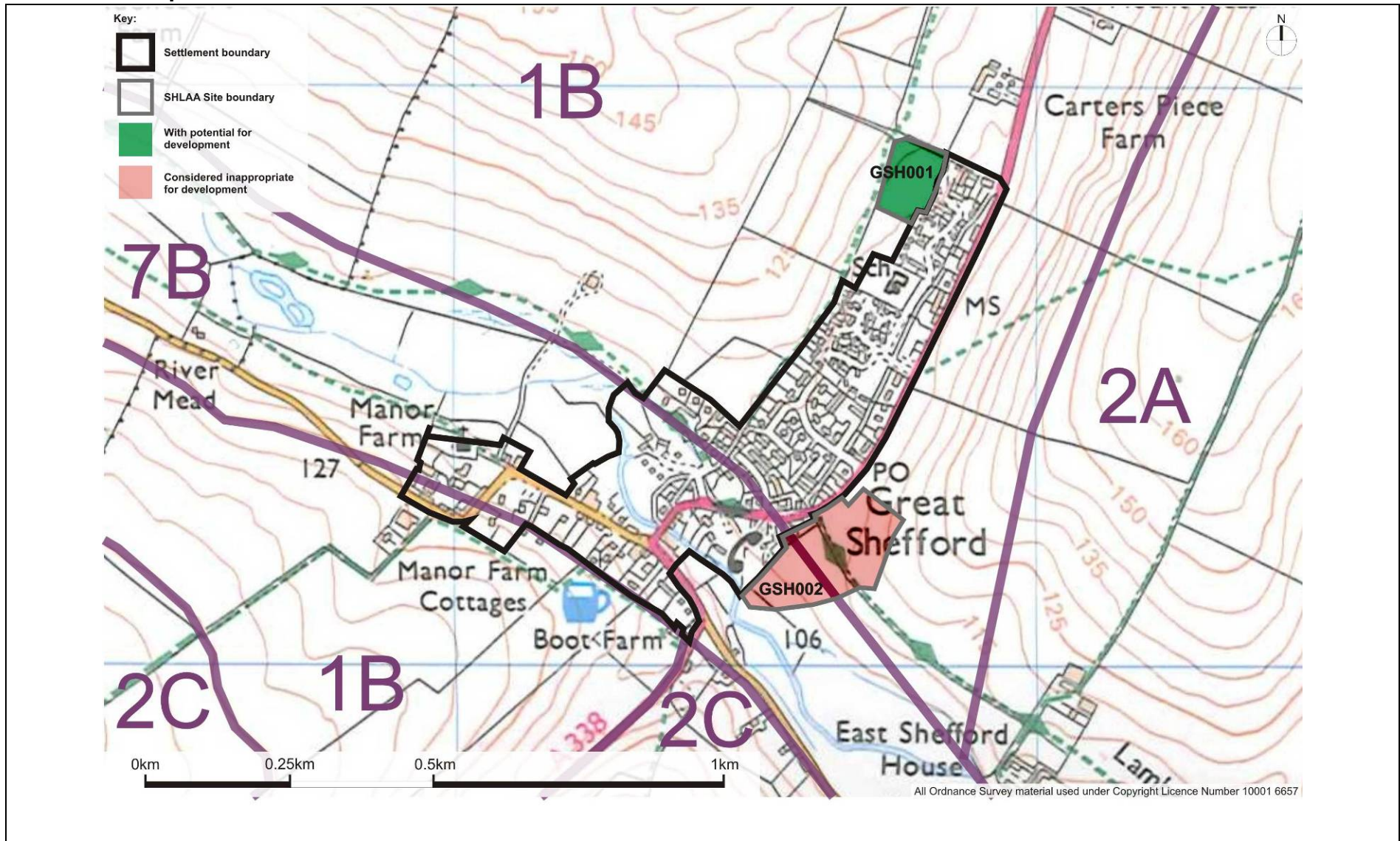


**2.8. Service Village: Great Shefford – GSH 001, GSH 002**

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**SITE GSH 002** ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.  
**Conclusion** ..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

Settlement map:



## Assessment of Settlement

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Great Shefford</b>
<b>North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas</b>	LCA 1B: Lambourn Downs LCA 7B: Lambourn Valley
<b>Date of site surveys</b>	15 December 2010
<b>Surveyors</b>	AG/TJ

**Key landscape characteristics****AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**IB Lambourn Downs** (GSH001, 002)

- A strong, structural landform with a series of flat topped or gently rounded hills and ridgelines forming successive horizons, intersected by wide, dry valleys
- Large scale arable fields dominate with tiny fragments of surviving unimproved pasture on steep slopes
- Hedgerows tend to be gappy and poorly maintained with occasional mature hedgerow trees
- Thin linear skyline shelterbelts, hill top beech clumps and small, isolated mixed woodland blocks, are a distinctive feature of the area;
- Limited road access with minor tracks connecting farms. By contrast there is an extensive network of public rights of way, gallops and rides.
- Historic features include prominent hilltop barrows, prehistoric field systems, trackways and settlements
- Remote and open with sparse population outside the larger valley settlement of Lambourn
- Agricultural zone on northern slope of Lambourn valley historically covered with a mix of downland and open fields with a few small ancient woods. Fields largely enclosed in the early 19th century. (HECZ Lambourn Valley – agricultural with extensive cropmarks – GSH001 and 002, north eastern part)
- Fields often amalgamated into larger holdings through boundary removal or reorganisation, leading to the removal of historic features such as hedgerows, so that now the dominant character is of large, regular arable expanses. (HECZ Lambourn Valley – agricultural with cropmarks – GSH001 and 002, north eastern part)
- New shelterbelts, hedgerows and woodlands should be indigenous species, not conifers, and woodland should respond to topography (NDLCA)
- When planting new woodlands, long views should be considered the open character should be retained where important (NDLCA)
- Encourage scrubland and native woodland regeneration to relieve the monotony of arable farming (NDLCA)

**7B Lambourn Valley** (GSH 002)

- The river flows through a narrow corridor
- Varied field pattern including small fields with sinuous boundaries that may date to the Saxon period plus informal and later formal enclosures
- Large manor houses and manor farms with ornamental parkland are a feature
- The Lambourn is a clear, fast flowing lowland chalk river with valuable wetland habitats including flood pastures and water meadows
- Medieval mills and weirs survive along the river e.g. at Weston. Remnant floated meadows are also a feature
- Regular spacing of attractive linear settlements along the valley with detached houses
- Long narrow zone along valley floor, with areas outside settlements largely consisting of water meadows until early 20th century, now arable or pasture (HECZ Lambourn Valley Floor – GSH002, south western part)
- Replant valley woodlands and willows, and hedgerows and hedgerow oaks (NDLCA)

**Key visual characteristics****AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**IB Lambourn Downs** (GSH001, 002)

- Mainly open with strong horizons formed by ridgelines
- Scale and structure of the landscape is emphasised by a lack of strong field boundaries
- Exposed, bleak character created by uniform arable cover and lack of trees
- Open aspect is part of the area's historic character (HECZ Lambourn Valley – agricultural with cropmarks – GSH001 and 002, north eastern part)
- The village's rural setting, wide open spaces and peacefulness are some of the most important features according to local residents (VDS)

**7B Lambourn Valley** (GSH 002)

- The valley sides form a close horizon, a contained visual setting and a strong sense of enclosure
- The valley itself forms a small scale landscape of great interest, intimacy and detail compared to surrounding downs

**Key settlement characteristics****AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**IB Lambourn Downs** (GSH001, 002)

- Since the late 20th century, settlement has expanded from the valley floor onto the valley side and there is further pressure for this to continue. (HECZ Lambourn Valley – agricultural with cropmarks – GSH001 and 002, north eastern part)
- Presumption against large scale development or change of land use (NDLCA)
- The cumulative effect of many small developments should be controlled (NDLCA)
- Settlements should remain small and contained within discreet valley settings, with carefully designed tree planting (NDLCA)

**7B Lambourn Valley** (GSH 002)

- Settlement growth has been modest and has consisted of infill or growth around existing settlements and little redevelopment has occurred in the historic cores. Most housing was built in the late 20th century. (HECZ Lambourn Valley Floor – GSH002, south western part)
- Infill or no new development are the favoured options for residents (VDS)
- New development should be severely restricted to conserve character of existing settlements, and large scale development is not appropriate in this narrow river valley (NDLCA)
- The amalgamation of settlements to form a continuous ribbon along the valley bottom road should be prevented (NDLCA)

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**Summary of the key characteristics of the settlement and landscape constraints on the extent and location of development**

The village of Great Shefford is centred in the valley of the river Lambourn and extends up a dry valley to the north east. The settlement is contained within two AONB landscape character areas: LCA 1B Lambourn Downs and 7B Lambourn Valley. The older, less dense part of the settlement is located around the river, with newer and denser development located on the higher ground and along the dry valley. Development along the dry valley is contained within a discrete area to the west of the main Wantage Road which runs along the valley floor, with the western settlement edge running for the most part along the 115m AOD contour line. The exception is a small area of the village on the lower valley slopes which has expanded out from the centre at the junction. The Wantage Road thus creates a strong edge to the settlement, with the Downs beyond, which would be eroded, adversely affecting the character of the settlement and its hinterland, if further development were to extend up the Wantage Road. Housing within this dry valley consists of low density single homes along the road, with small estates behind. Within the valley, the settlement pattern is less well defined, of lower density individual houses and not strongly related to the roads.

The development of large and homogeneous estates would detract from the special qualities of this area. Great care will also be needed to minimise the impact on the landscape character of the surrounding AONB, through limitations on development and generous provision of Green Infrastructure.

**Sources:**

North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2002;

Additional information from:

- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2003 (BLCA)
- Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment 1993 (NDLCA)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)
- Historic Environment Character Zoning (HECZ)
- Great Shefford Parish Plan (VDS)



**SITE GSH 001****Photographs:***View west from housing to east**View north from housing to east***Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- Adjacent to straight settlement edge on eastern boundary
- Site relates well to the settlement pattern in scale
- Existing housing forms a straight but stark edge to the settlement
- Development is kept below the 115m AOD contour
- Potential access through existing housing

**Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**

- Part of the open field pattern of reorganised fields at the north west tip of the settlement, with the school playing field to the south
- Part of the lower valley slopes extending northwards

**Impact on key landscape characteristics**

- Small site that is well contained by landform and housing, with hedges along the western and northern boundaries. Development could be accommodated and retain small scale pattern and not intrude into the wider AONB
- No woodlands are affected
- Site lies on the lower valley side, mostly below 115m AOD, with just the north corner rising slightly above

**Impact on key visual characteristics**

- Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent properties and from a short section of a PROW along the western side of site which then extends along the western edge of the settlement to the south of the site

**Impact on key settlement characteristics**

- Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern
- Development would offer the opportunity to soften the 'raw' settlement edge

**Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21**

- This site could be developed without detriment to the AONB, subject to the following recommendations

**Recommendations**

- Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Retention of the existing boundary vegetation
- Buildings to be kept off of the northern-most corner of the site which is slightly above the 115m AOD contour
- New planting would be required to integrate buildings into the landscape and soften the settlement edge



**SITE GSH 002****Photographs:**

*View south west from driveway and PROW on north west side of site*



*View north from driveway and PROW on north west side of site*

**Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- Located at the southern edge of the village, straddling two landscape character areas, the site abuts settlement on its north western boundary (across the A338), the site is split by a driveway and PROW which forms the boundary between LCA 1B and 7B
- The site is large in scale in comparison to typical housing groups in either LCA
- Located on the east side of the road, and extends up the valley side east of the road which is out of character - the road otherwise forms the eastern edge of settlement

**Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**

- Eastern part of site is strongly linked with open fields on 3 sides along valley sides to north east and east
- The northern section is part of a continuation of a large field.
- Western part of site links well with the valley bottom to south
- The south-western tip forms part of the setting to the river Lambourn

<p><b>Impact on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site extends from the valley bottom up the lower valley sides, straddling the 105-120m AOD contours</li> <li>• No woodland is affected</li> <li>• Native hedge to south side of driveway, line of trees to the north side of the driveway</li> <li>• Impact on river landscape corridor?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development would result in the loss of predominantly rural views from the village, and would be prominent in views from the bridleway, road and countryside in and across the valley to the south west</li> <li>• Western part of site partly visible through tree line from approach to village from south-west – settlement currently not visible</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the site would disrupt the strong, straight eastern edge of the village and extend obtrusively up the valley side and on the east side of the road</li> <li>• Loss of wide open space forming setting of the village</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development over this whole site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. It would not be possible to develop the site without harming the countryside setting of the east side of the village and important views to the landscape setting of Great Shefford</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

It is concluded that some limited development can be accommodated adjoining the settlement of Great Shefford only within GSH001 without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations.