

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE SCALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTH WESSEX DOWNS AONB



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to study

This Report is in response to the EIP Inspector's requirement in Hearing Note 2 to further assess the potential landscape impact of the scale, distribution and location of housing assigned to the AONB in the Core Strategy and to explicitly demonstrate that sufficient weight has been given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside.

1.2. Study context

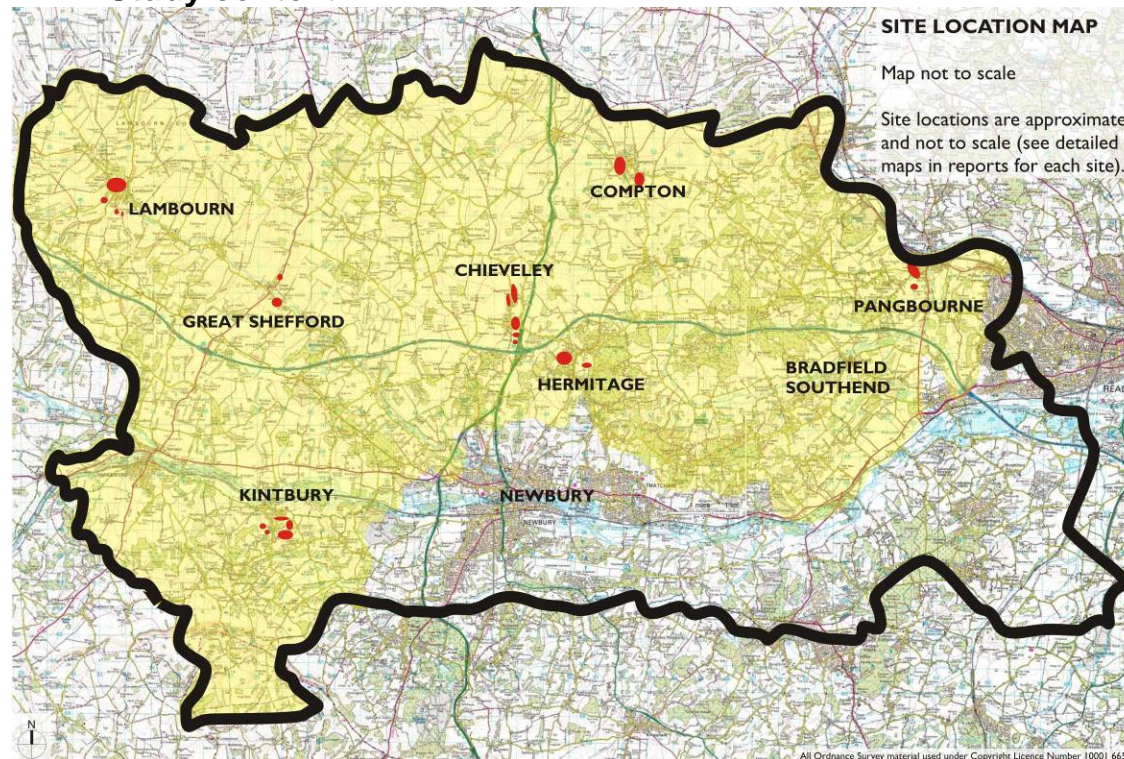


Figure 1 - Assessment area and SHLAA site locations

The settlement hierarchy developed as part of the Core Strategy directs most new development to the existing urban areas of Newbury, Thatcham and the settlements in the east of the District close to Reading. Rural Service Centres have also been identified which contain a range of facilities which can provide services to a wider area and where some development could potentially enhance or strengthen their role. Below that a series of Service Villages have also been identified, which offer a more limited range of services and limited development potential. The Core Strategy identifies three Rural Service Areas and six Service Villages within the AONB. These settlements are:

Rural Service Areas

1. Hungerford
2. Lambourn
3. Pangbourne

Service Villages

4. Hermitage
5. Compton
6. Kintbury
7. Chieveley
8. Great Shefford
9. Bradfield Southend

A detailed strategic assessment of the landscape sensitivity around Hungerford has already been undertaken within the Landscape Sensitivity Study (An Integrated Landscape Sensitivity Approach to Settlement Expansion within West Berkshire 2009 (CD09/38)). This Report examines the nine settlements and their landscape setting in greater detail, specifically concentrating on the special qualities and key characteristics which contribute to the natural beauty of the AONB.

The Report draws on the following source documents:

- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2010
- North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2002
- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2003
- Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment 1993
- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Historic Environment Character Zoning
- An Integrated Landscape Sensitivity Approach to Settlement Expansion within West Berkshire 2009
- Quality Design SPD- Part 3
- Lambourn Parish Plan
- Pangbourne Village Plan
- Hermitage Village Design Statement
- Compton Village Design Statement
- Compton Parish Plan (CPP)

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- Chieveley Village Design Statement
 - Great Shefford Parish Plan
 - Hungerford 2010+
 - Kintbury Parish Plan

As part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (CD09/51) a number of sites have been put forward by developers within or adjacent to these settlements. This Report examines a short list of these sites following the exclusion of some sites by West Berkshire Council for other non-landscape reasons.

1.3. Methodology

Stage 1: Introduction and summary of policy and AONB context.

Stage 2: An overall assessment of each settlement and its setting to determine the over-riding landscape constraints on development:

- Identification of key landscape characteristics of the relevant landscape character areas and their settlements within AONB.
- Desk top assessment using published sources
- Identification of key characteristics of each settlement and its landscape and visual context;
- Identification of key development constraints.

Stage 3: Assessment of individual SHLAA sites:

- Sites tested against findings in Stage 2;
- Site visit to SHLAA sites;
- Brief summary of landscape impact of each SHLAA;
- Brief summary of visual impact of each SHLAA;
- Brief summary of impact of each SHLAA on settlement pattern;
- Review of potential cumulative effect;
- Compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21;
- Recommendations for each settlement: location; scale of development; and design implications.

Stage 4: Summary conclusion.

1.4. Policy context

PPS7 paragraph 21 states that AONBs have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty and sets out the requirement to give great weight in planning policies to the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside.

The West Berkshire Core Strategy Area Delivery Plan Policy ADP5 reflects this guidance and states:

- *The North Wessex Downs AONB will have appropriate and sensitive growth that conserves and enhances its special landscape qualities.*
- *Recognising the area as a national landscape designation, development will conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the AONB whilst preserving the strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark night skies, particularly on the open downland. Development will respect identified landscape features and components of natural beauty.*

1.5. Potential for the AONB to accommodate future housing development

It is an over-riding principle that any development within the North Wessex Downs should not result in harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. Major development should not take place in the AONB, except in exceptional circumstances.

The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2010 (CD10/18) sets out the defining special features of the AONB:

Vast, dramatic, undeveloped and locally distinct chalk downlands with extensive areas of semi-natural chalk grassland, contrasting with well-wooded plateaux, arable lands and intimate and secluded valleys, all rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage; a national landscape that stands apart from the increasing urban pressures that surround it; where people live, work and relax; and where visitors are welcomed and contribute to a vibrant rural economy.

The North Wessex Downs is a visibly ancient landscape of great diversity. The area is divided into eight landscape types which reflect this diversity. The settlements in this study fall within the following landscape character types:

Open Downland	Lambourn (part); Compton; Great Shefford (part)
River Valley	Lambourn (part); Pangbourne (part); Kintbury; Great Shefford (part)
Downland with Woodland	Pangbourne (part); Chieveley;

	Bradfield Southend
Lowland Mosaic	Hermitage

Each of these landscape types is subdivided into landscape character areas to reflect local distinctiveness and each has its own special landscape qualities. These are examined in greater detail in the rest of this Report. The North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan however sets out the key qualities and issues which relate to development around these settlements (NWD AONB Management Plan pages 62/63).

Special qualities

- *The sense of remoteness and tranquillity.*
- *All landscapes sensitive to change.*
- *Distinctive and ancient settlement patterns.*
- *Architectural styles vary throughout the AONB, dependent on availability of building materials.*
- *The built environment forms an integral part of local character and distinctiveness and adds to the diversity of the AONB landscape as a whole.*

Key Issues

- *Unsympathetic incremental expansion of the settlements of and adjacent to the AONB, detracting from the surrounding countryside.*
- *Potential for major development to intrude onto open downland, including masts, pylons, major wind turbine developments, and mineral extraction and waste management, threatening the senses of remoteness and tranquillity.*
- *The future use of redundant 'brown field' sites within the AONB, especially redundant airfields and military sites (as at Wroughton), and the impact upon landscape.*
- *Lack of knowledge about the boundaries of the current pools of tranquillity and dark night skies within the AONB and the implications of light spillage from development in and around the AONB.*

Using currently available information and site visits to the SHLAA sites, this Report analyses the extent to which each potential SHLAA site conserves the special qualities and addresses the key issues.

It is not anticipated that any of the SHLAA sites in themselves individually would constitute major development but the cumulative effect of two or more sites in one settlement may be significant. This will affect the distribution of SHLAA sites within the AONB.

1.6. Overall Summary

The Study has shown that there is some potential for residential development within the AONB without causing unacceptable harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the area, providing that development is limited to the areas shown on the plans and incorporates the landscape mitigation measures included under the Recommendations.

The Study also found that each and every settlement has the potential to accommodate some of this development. The amount of development is however limited by the need to protect the existing settlement pattern, usually in small estates developed sequentially over time. In some cases there is also a need to mitigate the impact of existing large areas of housing and the visual impact of exposed and intrusive built form.

Whole or parts of sites have been ruled out where they will have an adverse impact on areas of tranquillity, distinctive settlement patterns, the character of adjoining and wider AONB landscape, and the special features such as topography, woodland, or open fields. Sites were also ruled out where the development would be unacceptably intrusive visually.

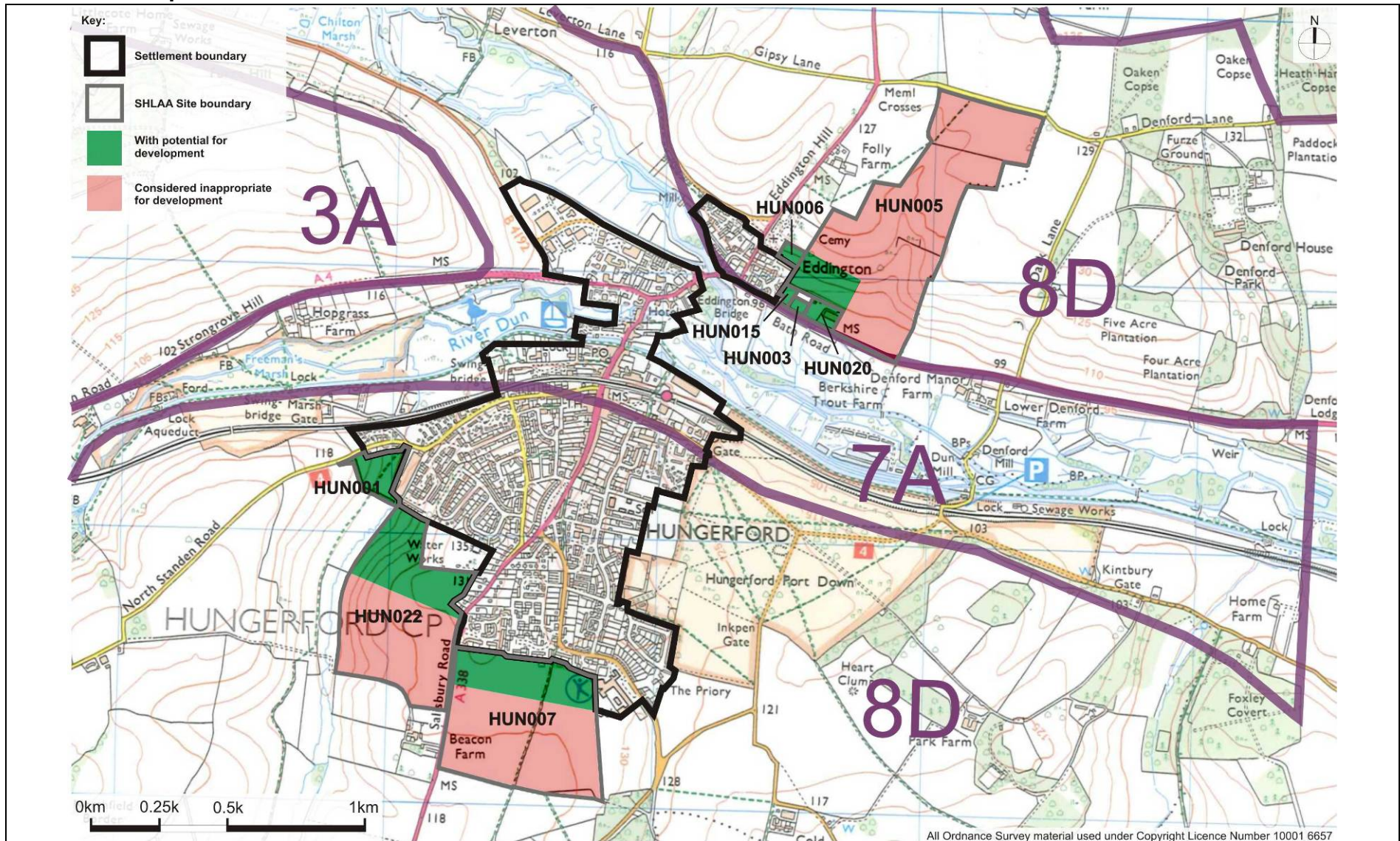
In all cases any development will need to be of the highest standard and in keeping with the character of the settlement in accordance with PPS1, PPS3 and PPS7.

2. SITE REPORTS

2.1. Rural Service Area: Hungerford – HUN 001, HUN 003, HUN 005, HUN 006, HUN 007, HUN 015, HUN 020, HUN 022

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement	Hungerford
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland lowland mosaic: all SHLAA sites LCA 7A Kennet Valley river valley (separating Hungerford from Eddington) LCA3A Savanake Plateau Wooded plateau (west of the settlement)	
Date of site survey	16 December 2010
Surveyor	BK

Key landscape characteristics (SHLAA sites)**AONB LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Medium landscape sensitivity (LSS LLCAs 2C and 2D)
- Exposed plateau (LSS LLCA 2C)
- Good sense of tranquillity (LSS LLCA 2C)
- Strong boundary features (LSS LLCA 2C)
- Open undulating landform rising above the Kennet valley
- Mainly arable land use
- Transitional lowland landscape between the higher chalk downland and lower valley bottoms
- Large rectangular fields with lack of good hedge boundaries
- Woodland blocks, with narrow coniferous shelterbelts south of the settlement
- Strips of arable fields between river valleys and upland chalk (NDLCA LCT 2)
- Banks and grass verges to roads (NDLCA LCT 2)
- Some shallowly incised dry valleys (NDLCA LCT 2)
- Significant common grazing land and important earthworks crossed by roads lined with avenues of trees at Hungerford Common – Port Down, with parkland character (NDLCA LCT 2 and HECZ Hungerford Common – Port Down)
- Grander residences with parkland on gentle spurs taking advantage of views over the valley, as at Denford Park (BLCA G3)
- Linear shelter belts north of the valley (BLCA G1)
- Little settlement growth and historic character largely intact (HECZ Kennet Valley North-West)
- Some relatively unaltered areas of early enclosure fields between Hungerford Newtown and Avington (HECZ Kennet Valley North-West)
- Areas of relatively unaltered historic fields south of Standen Manor and Farm (HECZ Kennet Valley South-West)
- Earthworks of watermeadow channel system survive in pasture fields of Dun valley sides (HECZ Kennet Valley South-West)
- Quiet open rural character

Key landscape characteristics cont:**AONB LCA 7A Kennet Valley** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Medium to high landscape sensitivity (LSS LLCAs 2C, 8A, and 8B)
- Narrow valley floor with a strong sense of enclosure, widening east of Hungerford
- Dominated by pasture, with some arable use east of Hungerford
- Diverse vegetation including lush pasture, marsh, reedbeds, lines of pollarded willow and poplars
- Varied field pattern with hedgerow boundaries
- Historic parkland
- Sinuous belts of woodland and blocks on the valley floor
- Important chalk river and several streams (often braided); numerous ditches
- Kennet and Avon canal
- Freeman's Marsh is an area of common grazing and only surviving area of common meadow in the district. (HECZ Hungerford Common – Freeman's Marsh)
- An intimate, small-scale and tranquil pastoral rural valley
- Series of roads cross the valley (NDLCA LCT 8)
- Transport corridor (NDLCA LCT 8)
- Contrast with the adjoining built up areas (NDLCA LCT 8)
- East of Hungerford the area is part of the designed parkland to Hungerford Park (to the south). A mixed area of parkland, recent and historic fields and small areas of ancient and other old woodlands. Ornamental woodlands are surviving parkland features. (HECZ Kennet Valley South-Western Parklands)
- Intimate and tranquil landscape (LSS LLCA 8A)
- River Shalbourne floodplain (LSS LLCA 2D)

AONB LCA 3A Savanake Plateau (unless source noted otherwise)

- Medium landscape sensitivity (LSS LLCA 2A)
- Good relationship with adjacent open landscapes (LSS 2A)
- Lack of internal sub-divisions (LSS 2A)
- Important to the setting of the river Dun and Kennet (LSS 2A)
- Semi-natural woodland blocks
- Area of open arable farmland
- Remnant chalk grassland confined to scarp slopes
- Kennet and Avon canal
- Quiet rural secluded area generally

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Blocks of woodland form visual enclosure and frame views (NDLCA LCT 2)
- Hedgerows with some trees form the skyline (NDLCA LCT 2)
- Open farmland giving extensive views over valley, particularly from ridgelines (NDLCA Map 61)
- High level of inter-visibility between each side of the valley

AONB LCA 7A Kennet Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Views from A4 over unspoiled parts of the valley (NDLCA LCT 8)
- Visually rich valley floor landscape (NDLCA Map 61)
- High level of intervisibility with surrounding hillsides (LSS LLCA 8A)

AONB LCA 3A Savanake Plateau (unless source noted otherwise)

- Open landscape
- Visually exposed (LSS 2A)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Medieval origins to historic Hungerford
- Sparsely settled but including expanded areas of Hungerford
- Settlement strongly influenced by topography with settlement in the valleys (NDLCA LCT2)
- Soft boundary between the town and its rural surroundings (Hungerford 2010 +)
- Compact settlement (Hungerford 2010 +)
- Southern area: Complex mix of older housing in Conservation Area. Much larger estates from Post War onwards with a group of Semi-rural housing on Salisbury Road (Quality Design SPD)
- Some large open areas around the southern edge of Hungerford, mostly comprising playing fields and recreational areas (HECZ Hungerford Suburban Area – South)
- North of A4: Small scale housing areas, mostly historic (Vernacular to Georgian/Regency) within Conservation Area with Semi Rural, Victorian Small scale housing areas, mostly historic (Vernacular to Georgian/Regency) within Conservation Area and late 20th century/post 2000 on the fringes (Quality Design SPD)
- Prior to development the area around the hamlet of Eddington was a mix of irregularly-shaped early enclosure field and meadows. 1980s business development in some of these areas, followed by small housing developments since 1990s (HECZ Eddington)
- Hungerford Common is an important gateway to Hungerford (LSS LLCA 2C)

AONB LCA 7A Kennet Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Attractive nucleated valley settlements at regular intervals, typically on the south side of the valley as at Hungerford
- Historic features reflecting long period of settlement
- Small scale housing areas, mostly historic (Vernacular to Georgian/Regency) within Conservation Area and late 20th century/post 2000 on the fringes (Quality Design SPD)
- Settlement sparse away from main centres and sited on upper river terraces (LSS LLCA 8A)
- River Dun valley is an important gateway into the town (LSS LLCA 8A)

AONB LCA 3A Savanake Plateau (unless source noted otherwise)

- Distinct settlement pattern with uninhabited plateau with villages concentrated in the east and in the river Dun valley

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

The hinterland of Hungerford was divided into seven local landscape character areas in the LSS. The landscape sensitivity of these areas covered several themes such as visual, bio-diversity, cultural aspects but did not have regard to the AONB. The two areas of high sensitivity included LLCA2C Hungerford Common and Park and LLCA8A River Dun Valley. LLCA 8B Upper Kennet Valley and LLCA18G Leverton and Chilton Estates are medium to high sensitivity and the remaining areas medium sensitivity. All of the SHLAA sites examined fall within the areas of medium sensitivity.

The town of Hungerford and its hinterland lie in two main landscape character areas LCA 7A Kennet Valley and LCA 8D Hungerford Farmlands (which includes Hungerford Common). These are closely linked both visually and historically, and through the merging of Hungerford and Eddington, but are very different in character. A third character area LCA3A lies to the west and is part of a large area extending westwards to beyond Marlborough, although the area nearest to Hungerford is not typical. Hungerford is a town with a strong distinctive character, with a historic core, and extensive 20th century expansion to the south. The form of the settlement has been heavily influenced by the river valley of the river Kennet, river Dun and their floodplains and of the river Shalbourne; the surrounding topography; common land to the west and east; and parkland to the east. Development is typically on the lower slopes, above the valley floor, or spreading up the north-west to north-east facing slopes up to the top of the ridgeline which extends southwards to Beacon Farm at 130m AOD. The southernmost part of Hungerford just reaches the highest point of this ridgeline.

Hungerford is noted for its still relatively compact nature with key landscape features comprising the unspoilt diverse character of the Kennet valley; the rising valley sides of open countryside which contain the town, where the slopes facing the town remain predominantly unsettled; and the high level of intervisibility between different parts of the surrounding countryside and to and from the town. Eddington, north of the river valley, has a different settlement character to the main town and is distinguished by its existing small scale pattern and of its lack of modern expansion over the open sided slopes.

The area is also noted for the historic and cultural importance of Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford Common, Hungerford Park and more minor parkland such as Denford Park and Chilton Lodge which should be protected from any inappropriate and intrusive development. The character of the gateways into Hungerford and Eddington are a key feature of the settlement and in many cases a single feature will mark the settlement edge or reinforce the rural character of the hinterland.

Although Hungerford has seen modern expansion up the hillsides to the south of the town centre, further major expansion, particularly on the north side of the river, would detract from the special qualities of the AONB and of the settlement. Where some development may be recommended, great care will still be needed to minimise the impact on the landscape character of the surrounding AONB, through limitations on development and generous provision of Green Infrastructure. In some cases, in order to mitigate the existing harm to the AONB landscape from existing built form such as modern housing on the edge of the town, some new development may be advantageous. The sensitivity of the river valley landscapes and those at Hungerford Common and surrounding parkland however preclude any development in these areas. Due to the high level of intervisibility, the potential cumulative impact of development on several sites is potentially considerable. Even where the landscape is slightly less sensitive, as on the south side of the town, an accumulation of sites under development would have a significant adverse impact on the AONB.

Sources:

North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2002;

Additional information from:

- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2003 (BLCA)

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- Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment 1993 (NDLCA)
 - An Integrated Landscape Sensitivity Approach to Settlement Expansion within West Berkshire 2009 (LSS)
 - Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)
 - Historic Environment Character Zoning (HECZ)
 - Quality Design SPD- Part 3
 - Hungerford 2010+

SITE HUN 001

Photographs:



View from settlement edge up the hillside to tree skyline

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- The site is flanked by housing and commercial development on two sides
- Back garden vegetation and scrub along the northern boundary separates the site from the houses and North Standen Road. The site is fairly open to the commercial site
- Site sits on slopes (up to 115m AOD) falling towards the town along a shallow stream side valley
- New housing has extended up North Standen Road with building opposite the site, moving the boundary to Hungerford slightly westwards

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- It is separated from the wider landscape by a thick hedgerow which encloses the site and forms the skyline
- The site forms the far north-east triangle of a pattern of open arable fields on hillsides between North Standen Road and Salisbury Road, an area of reorganised fields, previously parliamentary enclosure, which continue to the west; however the orientation of the site, its use as pasture rather than arable, and its boundary planting distinguish this site from the wider landscape
- The site lies in the transition from a very rural landscape to settlement

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- The site is not on an exposed plateau and slopes inwards towards the town
- The site has strong boundary features
- Site is typical of the transitional landscapes between the chalk downland and valley bottoms
- The site includes a bank and hedgerow to the road
- Other key characteristics of the area are not affected

Impact on key visual characteristics

- The site is well screened
- The hedgerow along the western skyline is an important feature
- Site is not widely visible but rooftops above the hedgeline would be intrusive

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- The site is on the valley sides
- The site forms part of the soft boundary to Hungerford

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Hedgerow along the western boundary and the bank and hedgerow along North Standen Road
- Views from the west through ensuring that no roof tops are visible over the hedgerow. New tree planting to mitigate any impact would not be sufficient mitigation.
- Access from the north-east corner of the site

SITE HUN 003

Photographs:



View from the A4 into site with open frontage to the left

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small site in keeping with the local scale of development and linked to the settlement at Eddington by HUN 015 • Frontage open space with a hedgerow along the A4 which forms part of the suburban frontage east of Eddington • Part of a varied open built form frontage to the A4, and flanked by garden centre to east and well vegetated large grounds to the west • The site is located along the valley side, as at Eddington • Part of gateway along the A4 into Hungerford
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site forms an important part of the setting of the Kennet valley floor (LSS High Sensitivity). Its semi-open character helps the latter to maintain its rural character • The site is separated from the wider landscape by a house to the north and the adjacent garden centre
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There could be a risk of further sub-urbanising this stretch of the Kennet Valley • The site is well located topographically, avoiding the exposed rural areas • Development would not impact on key landscape features of the area
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is visible from Hungerford Common but appears as part of the built form on the valley lower slopes
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site retains the pattern of development in the valleys • Development on this small site would retain the pattern of small scale development at Eddington • The site is part of the gateway along the A4 into Hungerford and would require sensitive treatment
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features: • Soft frontage to the A4 • Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location opposite the Kennet Valley and role as apart of the gateway to the settlement

SITE HUN 005**Photographs:**

View from A4 at Eddington looking north-west up the hillside

View from A4 at Eddington looking north up the hillside

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- This is a very large site extending northwards from the A4 east of the settlement boundary up to Denford Lane
- The size of the site is several times the size of the settlement at Eddington
- The site has a tenuous link with the settlement with the boundary between the two being mainly open land (cemetery and a field HUN 006)
- The site extends much higher above the settlement (max. 115m AOD) to 130m AOD
- The site extends eastwards from the current entrance to Eddington/Hungerford created by the garden centre and the house opposite

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The site is part of the stretch of open arable fields which extend over the south facing slopes of the Kennet Valley
- It is visually exposed to views from both the valley bottom and the north facing valley sides including Hungerford Common and North Standen Road
- The landscape interest on the site is low except for tree groups and the boundary planting
- It forms a part of the open hillsides around Hungerford which make an important contribution to the character of the settlement
- The site is subdivided in a north-south direction, although new planting has been introduced to section off the most southerly slopes
- The western boundary is defined by a hedgerow with a wall alongside the cemetery; and the northern by tree cover along Denford Lane
- The southern boundary is open to the A4 with a gappy hedge, being replanted
- The site forms an important part of the setting of the Kennet valley floor (LSS High Sensitivity), helping the latter to maintain its rural character
- Site stretches up onto higher plateau

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Development would extend over an exposed plateau and open undulating slopes above the Kennet Valley
- Development would impact on an important part of the setting of the Kennet valley floor (LSS High Sensitivity)
- Linear tree belts could be protected within the development
- Loss of quiet rural area

Impact on key visual characteristics

- The development would be highly visible from Hungerford Common and other elevated slopes around the town , for example North Standen Road
- Views to an open tree lined skyline would be lost
- The site would be highly visible in views from the eastern approach to Hungerford/Eddington

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- The development would detract from the compactness of Hungerford/Eddington
- Development would extend above the settlement boundaries within the valley
- Development would be out of scale with the settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, with the exception of a very small area, would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- The site as a whole should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. It may be that a very small area in the bottom south-west corner could be developed together with one or more of HUN 006, HUN 015, HUN003 and HUN 020. It is important that the scale of the development is in keeping with the existing pattern at Eddington and that any development is well broken up by internal tree planting and provision of soft edge on the eastern boundary

SITE HUN 006

Photographs:



View to the site looking south over a wall along the edge of the cemetery

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small site enclosed by settlement to the south, a house in large grounds to the west; and the cemetery grounds to the north (separated by a wall) • Mature tree cover to the northern and western boundary with patchy hedge along the southern boundary • Site at 105m AOD does not extend above the existing settlement • Small estate of new housing to the south (lacking in internal tree cover)
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is in pasture but is open to the open countryside of HUN 005 to the east • Otherwise site is enclosed by settlement land uses and strong boundaries
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is on the lower slopes and is not typical of the open rural landscape • It has strong boundary features
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is enclosed visually except for views from Hungerford Common where development would be seen above the existing new housing • The tree backcloth must remain dominant in the view
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would be sited on the lower slopes and contained by the existing settlement • The site is in scale with the settlement pattern
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site would result in some harm to the natural beauty of the AONB as a result of the impact on views from Hungerford Common. However, on balance, this could be mitigated as recommended below
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features: • Retention of the mature planting around the site and provision for tree planting internally • Provision of soft edge on the eastern boundary if the small recommended part of HUN 005 is not developed • Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location

SITE HUN 007**Photographs:****Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- This is a large site immediately south of an area of three estates from post war to post 2000
- The southern boundary to these estates is defined by tree cover, softening the settlement edge and screening houses in part
- The sites extends over the top of the ridgeline and starts to descend southwards away from the Kennet valley rising to between 125 and 120m AOD opposite Beacon Farm
- The site lies on a main approach road into Hungerford and forms the rural gateway with HUN 022

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The site forms a part of the open arable landscape on the undulating hills to the south of the settlement
- A weak hedge forms the southern boundary between the site with the wider landscape. A slightly more substantial hedge separates the site from playing fields to the east (although these are still visible)
- The eastern half comprises reorganised fields derived from pre 18th century irregular field; the western half is amalgamated fields derived from parliamentary enclosure. This is marked by a hedgerow boundary
- It has little of landscape interest on the site
- Beacon Farm and its grounds are a local landmark

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Sited on an exposed ridgeline above the Kennet Valley
- Part of the wider landscape of open arable fields lacking in boundaries
- The site has new planting which in time will screen this site
- Development up and around Beacon Farm would detract from the openness of the area and the role of the farm as a landmark

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would be highly visible from Salisbury Road, Sanham Green and its footpath network
- Houses close to Salisbury Road would be visible from North Standen Road on the skyline and in the distance from paths on Strongrove Hill

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- If developed the settlement would spread over the hillside away from the valley slopes
- Development of the whole site would erode the compactness of Hungerford
- Development on a larger scale could be in keeping with the estate pattern in this part of Hungerford

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the whole of this site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. However, a smaller area between Salisbury Road and the school might be possible as recommended below. This may have a beneficial effect in softening the southern edge of Hungerford. It is important that development on this site does not link visually and physically with any development on HUN 022 as the cumulative effect would result in greater harm to the AONB

Recommendations

- Development on a smaller part of this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.
- Creation of a woodland buffer to define the new edge of the settlement
- Careful design of the gateway approach
- Retention of views through the site to the wider landscape
- Retention of existing mature tree cover
- Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location

SITE HUN 015

Photographs:



View from A4 at Eddington

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small site immediately adjacent to the settlement at Eddington • A low hedge separates the two • Part of a varied largely open built form frontage to the A4 • The site is along the valley edge as found at Eddington • Strong contrast between the character of this site and the adjacent new housing • Site forms setting of older thatched property
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site forms an important part of the setting of the Kennet valley floor. Its semi-open character helps the latter to maintain its rural character • The site is separated from the wider landscape by adjacent built form • A neat hedgerow separates the site from the open landscape of HUN 005 to the north
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be a risk of further sub-urbanising this stretch of the Kennet Valley • The site is well located topographically, avoiding the exposed rural areas • Development would not impact on key landscape features of the area
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is visible from Hungerford Common but appears as part of the built form on the valley lower slopes
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site retains the pattern of development in the valleys • Development on this small site would retain the pattern of small scale development at Eddington • The site is part of the gateway along the A4 into Hungerford and would require sensitive treatment
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features: • Soft frontage to the A4 • Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location opposite the Kennet Valley and role as a part of the gateway to the settlement • Careful design to avoid detracting from the thatched property and to improve the entrance to Cotterell Close

SITE HUN 020

Photographs:



View over site car park and garden centre from A4 at Eddington

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is separated from the settlement by HUN 003 and HUN 015 • These three areas have a suburban semi-open character which characterise this part of the A4 on the eastern edge of Eddington • The site is already developed but has large open areas, covered by hard standing • The site is along the valley edge as found at Eddington
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is the last of three along the A4 and forms an important, albeit not that attractive, gateway to the Hungerford/Eddington • The site abuts the open countryside of HUN 005, separated by a neat hedgerow with trees
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There could be a risk of further sub-urbanising this stretch of the Kennet Valley • The site is well located topographically, avoiding the exposed rural areas • Development would not impact on key landscape features of the area
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is very visible from Hungerford Common but appears as part of the built form on the valley lower slopes. • Redevelopment with more sympathetic building materials and internal tree planting may reduce the current visual impact
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site retains the pattern of development in the valleys • Development on this small site would retain the pattern of small scale development at Eddington • The site is an prominent part of the gateway along the A4 into Hungerford and would require sensitive treatment
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features: • Soft frontage to the A4 • Inclusion of significant tree planting along the eastern boundary • Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location opposite the Kennet Valley and role as a part of the gateway to the settlement

SITE HUN 022**Photographs:**

View over to the site on the hillside opposite River Shalbourne valley from North Standen Road



View of the site west from Salisbury Road with Beacon Farm behind

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- The site has two short common boundaries with the settlement which is characterised by post war suburban estates to the north and semi-rural housing to the east
- A weak line of back garden vegetation separates the site from these areas
- To the north lies the open grassland area of the water works, separated by a low hedge
- The site extends along the valley sides of the River Shalbourne to the west up to 130m AOD, to meet the existing settlement on Salisbury Road
- Settlement in the river Shalbourne valley, as well as the Kennet and Dun, is characteristic

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Part of a stretch of amalgamated fields derived from parliamentary enclosure which extend southwards to Standen Manor
- The site is a part of the wider open arable landscape which extends southwards from Hungerford
- It has little of landscape interest on the site
- The site sits on the lower slopes above the River Shalbourne valley floor
- No internal subdivision (although some fences and planting has been recently completed)

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Development would extend onto an exposed ridgeline
- Loss of part of a wide stretch of arable farmland
- Development would extend onto the slopes falling away from Hungerford
- Development will affect the setting of the river Shalbourne

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would be very visible, especially on the higher ground, in views from North Standen Road, Salisbury road, paths on Strongrove Hill, sections of the path along the River Shalbourne
- Existing views of open fields and trees on the skyline would be lost

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development over the whole site would considerably expand Hungerford southwards and undermine the compactness of the settlement
- The scale of the site is not in keeping with the settlement pattern, even allowing for the presence of larger estates in south Hungerford
- Part of the site continues the pattern of settlement in a river valley
- There is no existing vegetation to soften the outer edge of any development

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the whole site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. However, the site can be divided into two halves defined by a line from the river Shalbourne (where the belt of pasture along the valley starts) up the slope to meet the 130m AOD contour and continuing to follow this to Salisbury Road. The northern half has the merit of continuing the settlement pattern and avoiding development on open rural slopes falling away from Hungerford but development would still impact on the Shalbourne valley and be very visible from the north-west. The impact on the skyline can be reduced by confining development to the new roundabout, and no further south, and by new tree planting at this might be possible as recommended below. This may have a beneficial effect in softening the southern edge of Hungerford

Recommendations

- Development on a smaller part of this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.
- Creation of a woodland buffer to define the new edge of the settlement
- Careful design of the gateway approach
- Retention of views through the site to the wider landscape
- Careful design to respect the site's semi-rural location
- Retention of open landscape corridor to the river Shalbourne
- Extensive internal native tree planting to soften views from North Standen Road

Conclusion

It is recommended that careful consideration is given to the desired overall settlement form as a result of expansion of Hungerford as part of the review of SHLAA sites. With the exception of HUN 001, HUN 003, Hun 015, and HUN 020 where the impact on the special qualities of the AONB can be avoided by way of careful design and siting and the retention of boundary planting, all of the sites will have an impact to a greater or lesser degree. The scale of sites HUN 005, HUN 007 and HUN 022 which all extend over large areas of open and exposed countryside will not only harm the special qualities of the landscape but also are wholly out of keeping with the settlement pattern, extending well beyond the valley sides and creating very large estates (with the attendant risk of homogenous form and design) out of keeping with the settlement pattern, particularly near Eddington.

It is recommended that any expansion is achieved through a greater number of well landscaped smaller sites which are discrete and distinct, rather than a few larger ones, and a balance of lower valley slopes and rounding off on upper ridgelines and plateaux would avoid significant erosion of the special qualities and avoid excessive visual intrusion. On this basis, in addition to HUN 001, HUN 003, Hun 015, and HUN 020, a very small part of HUN 005 on the lowest slopes behind existing development; the northern approx.200m wide part of HUN 007 to round off with the school; and the northern 40% of HUN 022 (from the existing roundabout north) would be possible, provided the latter two included a landscape buffer to the open countryside and careful design in the approach to Hungerford.

Beacon Farm, set within its rural setting, is a key feature of the southern gateway to the town and the open fields are a key feature of this part of the AONB. The existing development extends to 130m i.e. the top of the hill but the farm sits on the slopes away from Hungerford at 125m AOD. Some of this development is visually prominent on the skyline and further development up to Salisbury Road would exacerbate this adverse impact on the AONB. For these reasons any settlement expansion should not extend further south than that recommended above.

If all 5 sites north of the A4 at Eddington come forward together it is important that the whole area is not developed to one homogeneous layout and form. The appearance of incremental growth in small areas and respect for street frontage and views from Hungerford is key to minimising the impact on this part of the AONB.

2.2. Rural Service Area: Lambourn – LAM 002A East, LAM 002B West, LAM 003, LAM 004, LAM 005, LAM 006, LAM 007, LAM 009

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Assessment of Settlement

Settlement	Lambourn
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 1B: Lambourn Downs LCA 7B: Lambourn Valley	
Date of site surveys	13 December 2010
Surveyors	AG/TJ

Key landscape characteristics

AONB LCA (unless source noted otherwise)

IB Lambourn Downs (LAM002, 005, 006, 007, 009)

- 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 (PROWs), 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
- Around Lambourn itself, large areas of former fields and downs are now covered by land-uses related to race horse breeding and training (HECA: Lambourn Valley)
- Sinuous grain due to the convergence of several valleys at Upper Lambourn and the existence of numerous routes radiating out to surrounding watersheds (HECZ: Lambourn Valley and Downs – Racing – LAM002, 005 northwest section, 006, 007)
- Hedgerows require replanting to ensure continuity of character (NDLCA)
- Dramatic, rolling landform (BLCA)

7B Lambourn Valley (LAM003, 004, 005)

- 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
- Almost all of Lambourn parish was enclosed into fields through Act of Parliament in the early 19th century, however the wider field pattern includes sinuous boundaries from 17th and 18th century informal enclosure (HECA: Lambourn Valley)
- Historically, the landscape was very sparsely wooded, with nucleated settlements of medieval or earlier origin regularly spaced along the valley floor. Valley sides were open fields with riverside meadows used for common grazing (HECA: Lambourn Valley)
- 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 – LAM003)
- Southern side of valley historically covered with open fields with areas of downland (HECZ: Lambourn Valley – Scattered archaeological records – LAM004)
- River Lambourn, unusually, dries up in winter and flows again in the spring (VDS)
- Paddock fencing should be replaced with new hedgerows; replant to improved existing gappy hedgerows (NDLCA)

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**1B Lambourn Downs** (LAM002, 005, 006, 007, 009)

- 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
- Large areas almost totally unwooded – the open aspect of the Historic Zone is important (HECZ: Lambourn Valley and Downs – Racing – LAM002, 005 northwest section, 006, 007)
- Limit visual influence of horse gallops and stable developments on the landscape, by selective siting (not screening with exotic conifers) (NDLCA)
- Open remote character west of Lambourn, with numerous bridleways, extensive panoramic views (BLCA)
- Open, undeveloped and highly visible skylines (BLCA)

7B Lambourn Valley (LAM003, 004, 005)

- 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
- Preserve views to open, undeveloped valley sides and crests; preserve distinct character of settlements and their clear relationship to the surrounding landscape (BLCA)
- Lambourn has a particularly rural and remote character (BLCA)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**1B Lambourn Downs** (LAM002, 005, 006, 007, 009)

- Late 19th and late 20th century settlement growth is modest and limited to infill or growth around existing settlements (HECA: Lambourn Valley)
- Late 20th century development over Parliamentary fields, which were formerly open fields, downland and meadow. 1960s development on the east side of the village consisting of small estates, parks and schools. Development from 1980s onwards largely on the west side of the village and consisting of a mix of large detached houses and dense groups of small houses (HECZ: Lambourn – Recent Settlement – LAM005 south east section, 009)
- The distinctive oval pattern of Saxon settlements still dictates the street pattern of Lambourn, the circuit being formed by Market Place, Oxford Street, The Broadway, Big Lane and Parsonage Lane, with the church on the southern edge. (VDS)
- Redevelopment of the small number of 'Brownfield' sites in the village centre is a threat to the character of the settlement (HECZ: Lambourn – Historic Core)
- New development proposals that are insensitive or uncharacteristic, e.g. tennis courts, conifer plantations, cut and fill, or amalgamation of settlements to form a continuous ribbon, should be prevented (NDLCA)
- The continued expansion of large settlements including Lansdown and linear expansion infill to join smaller settlements (e.g. Chieveley – Downend to Beadon) should be avoided to prevent loss of character and local identity (NDLCA)
- Limited infill within defined settlement boundaries would be preferable (NDLCA)
- Large scale developments in this open farming landscape would be visually intrusive (NDLCA)
- Lambourn has a historic core with more modern peripheral development (BLCA)
- Further development or intensification of existing settlements would need to maintain the feeling of remoteness (BLCA)

7B Lambourn Valley (LAM003, 004, 005)

- Late 19th and late 20th century settlement growth is modest and limited to infill or growth around existing settlements (HECA: Lambourn Valley)
- Late 20th century development over Parliamentary fields, which were formerly open fields, downland and meadow. 1960s development on the east side of the village consisting of small estates, parks and schools. Development from 1980s onwards largely on the west side of the village and consisting of a mix of large detached houses and dense groups of small houses (HECZ: Lambourn – Recent Settlement – LAM005 south east section, 009)
- New development proposals that are insensitive or uncharacteristic, e.g. tennis courts, conifer plantations, cut and fill, or amalgamation of settlements to form a continuous ribbon, should be prevented (NDLCA)
- New development should be severely restricted to conserve character of existing settlements - large-scale developments are not appropriate in this narrow river valley (NDLCA)
- Prevent amalgamation of settlements to form continuous ribbon along valley bottom (NDLCA)
- Lambourn noted for its nucleated form around the church and market cross (BLCA)

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

The village of Lambourn is centred on the convergence of several valleys, chiefly the valley of the River Lambourn and extending 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. Development occurs both in the valley floor and on the valley sides, mostly below the 150m AOD contour, but in some areas, notably on the western side of the village, up to the 170m contour. Development at the higher elevations tends to be made up of low density, detached properties with associated land often related to horse training. The result of the settlement extending up the slopes is that many views from within the settlement contain houses rather than clear, open countryside.

The valley landscape is noted for its small scale landscape mosaic, contrasting with the more exposed, large scale and open character of the surrounding Downland landscape. The enclosed valley landscape offers opportunities for locating new development whilst still retaining the visual enclosure. However, 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, to ensure that new buildings are appropriately integrated into the landscape. It is recommended that development within the valley floor and on open bluffs is avoided and that the settlement pattern is maintained along the direction of the valley and main road and that nucleated compactness of the village is maintained through small estates.

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 Area Report (HECA)
- Historic Environment Character Zoning (HECZ)
- Lambourn Parish Plan (VDS)

SITE LAM 002A East**Photographs:***View south from housing to north east**View west from public footpath to east***Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- Not bounded by any road but accessible through residential area
- Housing on its north east side.
- School grounds to the north west
- Scale of site relates well to settlement pattern

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Surrounded on three sides by open fields and horse paddocks
- Weak relationship to the countryside on the east and south sides as the site is not typical of the Downland landscape
- Part of open lower valley slopes extending east of settlement

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland affected
- Potential for removing long section of high conifer hedge which is out of character with the AONB
- Trees along north east boundary

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Vegetation along two sides of the site means the site has a sense of enclosure despite longer views to the south
- Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent housing and school and from a short section of a PROW along the south eastern side of site
- Views back into the site from the wider landscape would be affected

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the site would not be out of character with the existing settlement pattern, though higher density housing on the southern edge of the village is generally at lower contours

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

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

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.
- Retention of the existing vegetation along the north east boundary
- Replacement of the conifer hedge with more appropriate native planting
- Denser development should be kept towards the north east edge, becoming less dense as the land rises
- Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered
- New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape and defining the settlement edge

SITE LAM 002B West

Photographs:



View north east from lane and public footpath south west of site

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separated from the main settlement by the school and its grounds • Adjacent to rural road and low density housing to the west • Stable buildings to the south
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long views to the east, north east and south east, but physically separated from the wider landscape by the stable buildings • The landscape pattern is typical of the transition between the settlement and the wider landscape
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No woodland would be affected • Site currently in use as paddocks • No impact on the wider landscape
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not typical of the wider LCA – less exposed and smaller in scale • Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent housing and school and from a short section of a PROW along the western side of site • Views back into the site from the wider landscape would be affected with the village as a background
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This site could be developed without detriment to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the following recommendations
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features. • Low density would be the most appropriate form of development at this elevation. • Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered and • New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape

SITE LAM 003

Photographs:



View north from lane south west of site

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to dense post-war suburban estate to east across the river • Open field (LAM004) leading to wider open fields to the south west, across the lane • Separated from the main village core by a sports field to the north. • South western edge of site bounded by rural lane • Linear pattern of double depth of housing fronting onto the lane at village entrance, including a lone house at the southern end of the site
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to valley landscape weakened by the sports field to the north and the house to the south • Open countryside extends from site across Bockhampton Road into wider landscape • Part of the open river corridor east of the village
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No loss of woodland, but trees and vegetation along river would need to be retained as an important site feature but also a characteristic of the river valley bottom • Loss of a small, intimate section of the valley landscape • Loss of open setting to the river Lambourn • Loss of open approach to village
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly enclosed site – development could be contained with additional planting along road edge • Localised impact on views out from adjacent properties and from a short section of a PROW running through the site
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of the countryside setting at the village entrance
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. It would affect the key characteristic of the open river landscape and reduce the overall effectiveness of the open countryside to the south in maintaining a rural approach to the village.
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site

SITE LAM 004**Photographs:**

View south west from lane and public footpath north east of site



View north west from lane and public footpath north east of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Separated from main core of village by an open field and housing.
- North eastern edge of site bounded by rural lane.
- Open field (LAM003) to the north east, across the lane

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Not typical of valley landscape character
- Some connection with Downland character area to the south
- Part of the landscape pattern which extends south-eastwards between the valley bottom and river corridor and the open arable fields on higher ground

<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No woodlands would be affected• Boundary hedgerows would need to be retained• Loss of open countryside in lower valley slopes characteristic of this part of Lambourn
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site has a degree of enclosure but development would be exposed along its western and southern edge• Localised impact on views out from adjacent properties and from a short section of a PROW running through the site
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of the countryside setting at the village entrance• Development in this part of the village is below the 130m AOD contour line, which passes through the site
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. It would reduce the overall effectiveness of the open countryside to the south in maintaining a rural approach to the village and contribute to the erosion of the river valley landscape.
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site

SITE LAM 005**Photographs:**

View north west from housing to south



View south east from housing adjacent to west side of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Bounded along south west edge of site by 20th, century, medium density housing
- Open fields to north west and the river to the north east
- The south eastern edge of site is separated from the historic core of the village by a small section of woodland
- The site is accessible via a residential road

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The larger eastern part of site in LCA 7B has strong links with the wooded river valley landscape to the north west
- The small section on the western side which is within LCA 1B is of the same character as LCA7B
- The site is enclosed and distinct from the wider unwooded landscape extending north-westwards up the valley along Upper Lambourn Road

Impact on key landscape characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heavily wooded slope to north east of site, but no woodland within site• Loss of a section of the valley landscape
Impact on key visual characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visually enclosed by housing to south west and south east and by woodland and landform to the northeast• Localised impact on views out from adjacent properties and from adjacent piece of open land to the north west
Impact on key settlement characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of informal open space• Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern
Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This site could be developed without detriment to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the following recommendations
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.• Retention of existing riverside vegetation and• Provision of connections for pedestrians to link the existing housing with the valley floor to the north

SITE LAM 006**Photographs:***View west from B4001**View south west from B4001***Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- The site directly abuts a medium density housing estate to the south,
- This edge of the settlement has a rather 'raw' edge, with buildings poorly integrated into the landscape
- The adjacent housing forms a strong, straight edge to the settlement, with houses extending from the road up the hill to the edge of woodland at an elevation of approximately 140-145m AOD
- The site is outside of the village 'gateway' marked by signage
- The site's eastern boundary is formed by a rural road

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Open fields are adjacent to the north and across the road to the east
- The site has a strong relationship with the east-facing valley which extends to the north.
- The site forms a transition between the open arable fields to the north and the settlement to the south
- The site is located on steeply rising ground facing the dry valley along the Wantage Road, part of the open hillside north of the village

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No wooded areas on site, but adjacent to the west
- A line of trees runs along the boundary with the road, with a young hedge on the northern boundary
- Loss of part of the open hillside
- Impacts on northern gateway into the village

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Visually enclosed by housing to south and by woodland and landform to the north west
- Localised impact on open views from adjacent housing
- Development would be visible from Wantage Road and Sheepdrove Road

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Breaking of strong, straight settlement edge which creates a strong sense of arrival to the village
- However, the site's development could offer opportunities to soften the edge of settlement

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. It would extend settlement further into the open downland landscape.

Recommendations

- The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. However should the adjoining site within the settlement boundary be redeveloped it is recommended that a wooded edge is planted along the existing settlement edge at this point to integrate the housing into the landscape

SITE LAM 007**Photographs:**

View south east from lane to west of site



Distant view of site from B4001 to south (adjacent to LAM009)

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- The site is surrounded on 3 sides by housing, with 20th century medium density and more recent development to the north east and south east boundaries, and older, low density housing across the road to the north west
- The lower density housing occurs up to the 170m AOD contour, with higher density on the lower slopes, below 150m. The site itself extends up to 170m AOD with the majority below 165m AOD
- The site contains horse paddocks and stable buildings

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The site has some relationship with the countryside to the south west, which is a continuation of the east facing valley side, but hedgerows around and within the site, including a tall, conifer hedge disconnect the site visually from the countryside beyond
- The site lies on slopes dropping into the valley and the settlement away from the extended wider landscape

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodlands are affected
- Potential for replacing the incongruous conifer hedgerow with more appropriate planting
- Other boundary hedges made up of native species are important features
- Site currently in use as paddocks

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Not typical of the wider LCA – less exposed and smaller in scale
- Development of the whole site would be prominent in views from the surrounding Downs and from within the settlement

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Some appropriate development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on part of this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. It is recommended that only the land adjacent to Folly Road and below the 150m AOD contour in the south of the site be included

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Low density, linear housing (similar to that north of Folly Lane would be the most appropriate form of development at the higher elevation, and
- Higher density, similar to the housing to the east, on the lower ground in the eastern part of site.
- Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered
- New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape, including the replacement of the conifer hedges.
- An area between the two portions of the site for development would need to be left as open field or open space to reduce the overall impact of the development

SITE LAM 009**Photographs:**

View north east from public footpath to west



View south from public footpath to west

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Separated from main core of village by low density housing to north and east.
- The western boundary is formed by the road,
- Upshire Farm is to the south
- The site sits on lower valley slopes which are typically part of the more open and fragmented edge of the village

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Link with surrounding countryside along valley side to the south west interrupted by the farm
- Lower valley sides across the road to the west are less steep and visually separated from the site by the roadside vegetation

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Dense hedgerow vegetation along the western boundary with the road
- Strong hedgerow boundaries to the south boundary, and part of the eastern boundary
- No woodland affected
- Development of the more visible higher parts of the site would have some impact on the character of the wider landscape pattern

Impact on key visual characteristics

- More enclosed than is typical for wider LCA, so some development could be visually contained
- Views of higher part of site from the valley and village to the west, so views back into the site from the wider landscape would be affected
- PROW within site

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

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

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Low density would be the most appropriate form of development in the higher parts of the site
- Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered
- New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape
- Existing vegetation framework would need to be protected

Conclusion

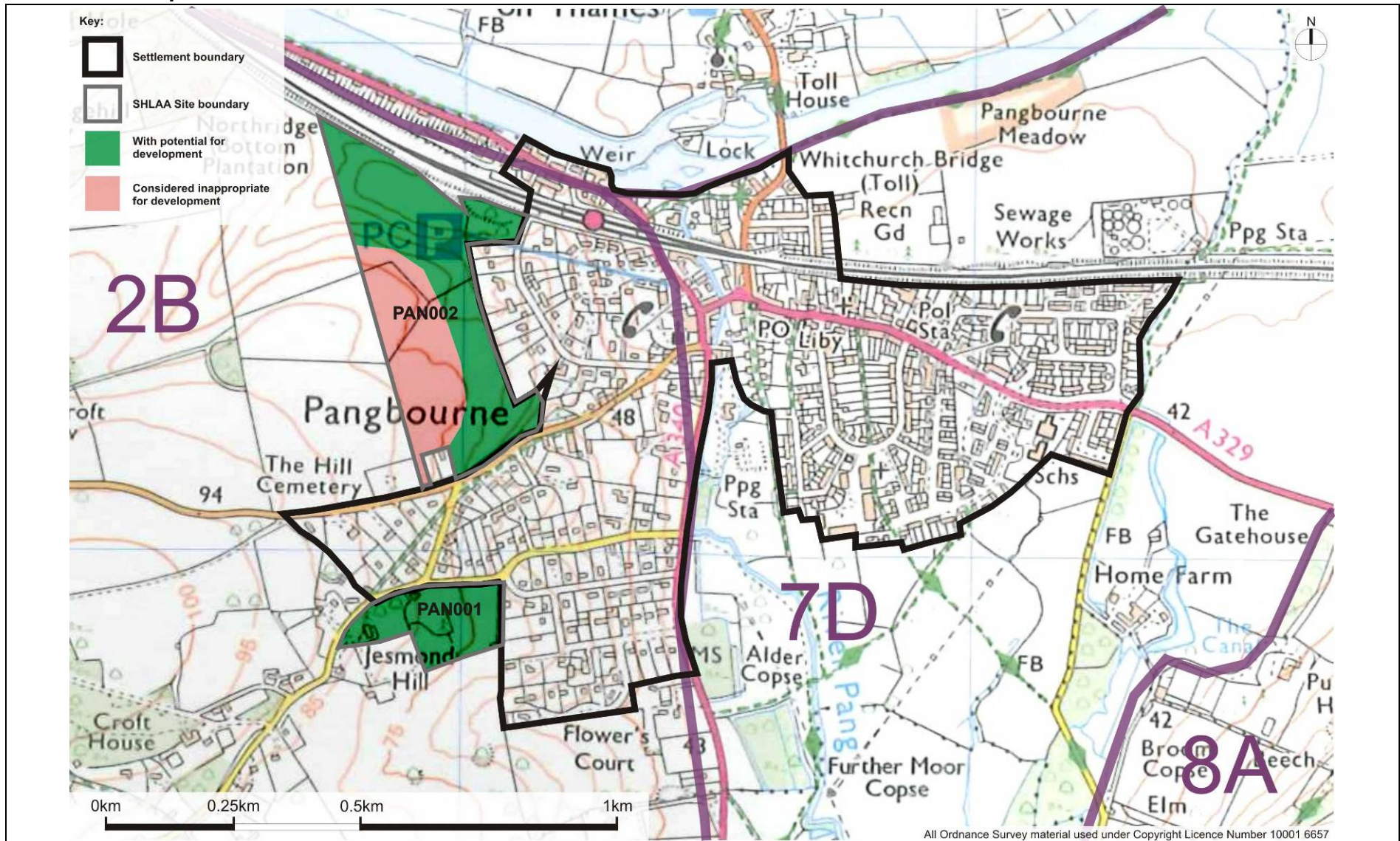
It is concluded that some development can be considered adjoining the settlement of Lambourn within all eight potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is therefore recommended that LAM002A East, LAM002B West, LAM005, LAM007 and LAM009 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations, which include constraints on the extent of the sites which could be developed.

It is recommended that not all three sites south of the village, LAM 002 A and B and 009, be developed as the cumulative effect on this more open loosely developed part of the village would be detrimental to both the settlement and the interface with the wider landscape to the detriment of the AONB. It is also recommended that the larger sites LAM 005 and 007 are either only developed in part concurrently, or either one or the other selected, to continue the pattern of sequential small developments in the village.

2.3. Rural Service Area: Pangbourne – PAN 001, PAN 002

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement	Pangbourne
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 2B Ashampstead Downs downland with woodland (west of A340): SHLAA sites PAN 001 and PAN 002 LCA 7A Pang Valley river valley (east of the A340)	
Date of site surveys	8 December 2010
Surveyors	BK

Key landscape characteristics

AONB LCA 2B Ashampstead Downs (unless source noted otherwise)

- Plateau incised by dry valleys running east-west
- Extensive interconnected semi-natural woodland on valley sides and steep slopes
- Pasture, including remnant herb rich grassland, concentrated along the steeper slopes, particularly along the escarpments or valleys
- Intricate network of minor roads, rural lanes and tracks, lined by dense hedgerows and woodland edges
- Varied field pattern including sinuous medieval and post medieval enclosure and regular, straight edged open fields resulting from parliamentary enclosure
- Historic features including archaeological sites, parkland and historic field pattern
- Unsympathetic modern forestry plantations
- Quiet rural landscape
- Historically, the landscape was a mix of fields, woods and commons and small settlements, and farms were scattered throughout the zone. The combination of land-use and topography gave a very sinuous grain to the landscape (HECZ: Pang-Thames Modernised Landscape)
- Reorganised fields derived from pre18th C irregular fields (HLC): both SHLAA sites
- Strong contrast between settlement and surrounding countryside (VDS)
- Contrast between floodplain to east and hills to west (VDS)
- Strips of arable fields between river valleys and upland chalk (NDLCA LCT 2): PAN001
- Hedgerows, hedgerow trees, banks and wide grass verges (NDLCA LCT 2): PAN001
- Large scale landscape grain (NDLCA LCT4): PAN002
- Dramatic landform (BLCA LCA NI): PAN002;
- Settlement strongly influenced by topography with settlement in the valleys (NDLCA LCT2 and 4):
- Wooded dry valleys (VDS)
- Historic Bere Court and Pangbourne College (VDS)

AONB LCA 7D Pang Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Open more shallow landform than common in the river valleys
- Varied land cover with lowland mosaic of woodland and wet meadows in the lower section east of Pangbourne
- Willow pollards, poplars and alder and strips of pasture along river banks
- Comparatively isolated, intimate and secluded
- Riparian woodlands
- Chalk stream
- Manor houses
- Small scale landscape
- Contained by the wooded escarpment to the east (NDLCA 16)
- Complex of ditches and small streams (NDLCA 16)
- Piecemeal enclosure with irregularly shaped fields (HECZ Thames Valley Floor)
- Loss of many historic boundary features but the grain of the landscape survives (HECZ Sulham Gap)

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA 2B Ashampstead Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Mainly enclosed by woodland with restricted views
- Arable hillsides more exposed and of fragmented appearance (BLCA LCA F3): PAN001
- Views of the river and river meadows (VDS)
- Views from Pangbourne Hill to the Chilterns (VDS)

AONB LCA 7D Pang Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Visually enclosed (NDLCA 16)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA 2B Ashampstead Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Hamlets and small villages clustered around cross roads or a small green
- Early 20th century and recent housing developments that have expanded out from the historic village of Pangbourne (HECZ: Pangbourne Suburban Area)
- Compact settlement (VDS)
- Growth since the medieval period in response to location on the rivers Thames and Pang; location on coaching road from Reading to Oxford; and coming of railway line along valley (VDS)
- Strong village centre and pattern of housing reflecting growth over time (VDS)
- Distinctive gateways into the village (VDS)
- Character of the former Breedon estate west of Tidmarsh Road is dominated by the landscape rather than the houses themselves (VDS)

AONB LCA 7D Pang Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Minor lanes and farms
- Scattered farms along valley with hamlets clustered around a church and small town of Pangbourne at the confluence of the rivers
- Mixed pre inter-war development with a medium sized area of Victorian housing as far east as Horseshoe Road. Post war suburban estates to the east as far as Sulham Lane (Quality Design)

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

The settlement at Pangbourne, and its hinterland, has two distinct character areas: the river valleys of the Pang and Thames in the north, east and south-east; and the rising open hillsides of Ashhampstead Downs in the west and south-west. The village remains compact and, despite more recent development up the valley hillsides, retains its importance as a settlement on the confluence of these two rivers. Away from the village settlement is sparse and scattered, providing great contrast with the urban Reading conurbation. North of the railway line the Thames landscape remains dominant with small scale older housing areas. South of the railway line the centre has a variety of small areas of development but much larger estates are a common feature on the periphery. The impact of the existing built form is mitigated by the heavily landscaped setting of the former Breedon Estate. Housing which has crept up the hillsides to the west of the Pang corridor, is of decreasing density and increasing vegetation cover further up the hillside. With the exception of an outlier at Jesmond Hill, most of this housing sits below the 70m AOD. East of the Pang housing has spread across the valley floor between this river and Sulham Brook. However the remaining open valley floor and its riparian landscape, and the open agricultural hillsides are all important to the setting of the settlement, along with the meadows of the Thames. Any proposed development which would result in further incursion into the surviving riparian landscapes of the Pang and the Thames or which was sited on the exposed open slopes is likely to have a detrimental affect on the special qualities of the AONB and the settlement of Pangbourne. New development sites within the riparian landscape setting of the river Thames, river Pang or Sulham Brook would harm a number of locally and nationally important features of the AONB.

The area is also noted for the views across the river Thames and to the Chilterns AONB and from and to the open slopes. It will also be important to protect the character of its rural lanes and the gateways to the village, and the sense of tranquillity, despite the proximity of Reading.

Some of the field sizes on the perimeter of the settlement are large and not easy to sub-divide. The landform, orientation of the field, relationship to the settlement pattern and ability to include a high cover of vegetation will determine a site's suitability for new housing. It is important that the current perception of compactness is not lost through expansion into visually exposed areas.

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)
- Quality Design SPD- Part 3
- Pangbourne Village Plan (VDS)

SITE PAN 001

Photographs:



View from Green Lane at corner with Courtlands Road

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Abuts extensive area of former Breedon estate.
- Adjoining housing is semi-rural in character with the landscape being the dominant characteristic
- Enclosed by tree belts and hedgerows in back gardens and along Bere Court Road
- Enclosed by settlement on 2 sides and houses in large grounds on a third
- The site relates well to the adjoining parts of the village

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Located on valley side slopes of Jesmond hill
- Short boundary to adjacent field marked by fragmented hedgeline
- Part of area of reorganised fields, formerly pre 18th century irregular fields extending into the wider landscape
- The southern boundary sits on the north, settlement side, of the bluff on this hillside, orientating the site into the village

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Loss of small area of open hillside
- Site is off minor road serving low density housing
- No loss of woodland or herb rich pasture
- No adverse impact on historic features

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Site is not visually exposed
- Low rise development in keeping with the adjacent development would not be visually intrusive
- Would not further fragment the open hillside
- No adverse impact on views of the rivers or meadows
- Localised impact on views to the Chilterns

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development on the site would link the built form at Jesmond Hill with that to the north-east.
- Site would not compromise the compactness of the village
- Development would not affect a gateway into the village
- Size of site is in keeping with the settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Views from the east and north-east should be protected through limits on the mass and height of the development and native boundary planting along the southern boundary
- Retention of on site trees
- Retention of the hedgerow boundary along the north-western boundary
- Provision of a high level of internal tree and shrub planting to blend the site into the adjacent Breedon Estate
- Retention of the character of Bere Court Road

SITE PAN 002**Photographs:**

View from edge of woodland at the northern end of Riverview Road across north part of site



View from land immediately north of Pangbourne Hill over south part of the site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Lies to west of area of former Breedon estate
- Adjoining housing is semi-rural in character with the landscape being the dominant characteristic
- Abuts small pockets of Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-war housing
- Separated from settlement by tree belts and shrubbery in back gardens and along Pangbourne Hill

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Part of open arable field pattern west of village
- No boundary vegetation to western boundary with the wider landscape
- Straddles slopes above the village facing the Chilterns
- Part of area of reorganised fields, formerly pre 18th century irregular fields extending into the wider landscape

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No impact on woodland or pasture or particular landscape features
- Loss of open arable field which forms a part of the wider open landscape on the hillside west of Pangbourne
- Development on the southern part of the site would extend the village envelope above the predominant 70m AOD to 80m AOD
- Tranquillity of northern part of the site is already compromised by the railway line
- Access would require partial removal of local tree cover

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development particularly on the higher slopes would be prominent in views from the west, the Chilterns AONB; and this approach to Pangbourne, affecting this gateway; development on the lower northern slopes would be less intrusive
- Views from the river corridor largely unaffected
- Potential loss of panoramic views from Pangbourne Road across the Thames Valley to the Chilterns

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development would extend the village along the Thames valley in keeping with local settlement character
- Uniform development over the whole site would not be in keeping with the pattern of built form in the village
- The density and level of internal Green infrastructure would need to reflect the local characteristics of the Breedon Estate

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on the whole site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. However, development on the lower parts of the site in small phases of distinct character, in keeping with the local settlement form, may avoid harm to the special qualities of the AONB provided that the following recommendations below are included

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following constraints to ensure the protection and enhancement of the AONB:
- The mass and scale of development should not be visually intrusive and must not detract from views of the Thames valley and the Chilterns
- The western boundary should be planted with a linear woodland designed to respect the local topography and vegetation pattern and contain the settlement
- The continuous bank and tree cover along Pangbourne Hill/Road should not be broken to provide access to the site
- The development should be in keeping with the mass, scale and density of the western part of Pangbourne and include a high level of landscape infrastructure as found in the adjacent Breedon Estate
- The layout should work with the grain of the topography and be restricted to lower slopes below the 75m AOD contour, or 70m AOD where the site is more visually exposed

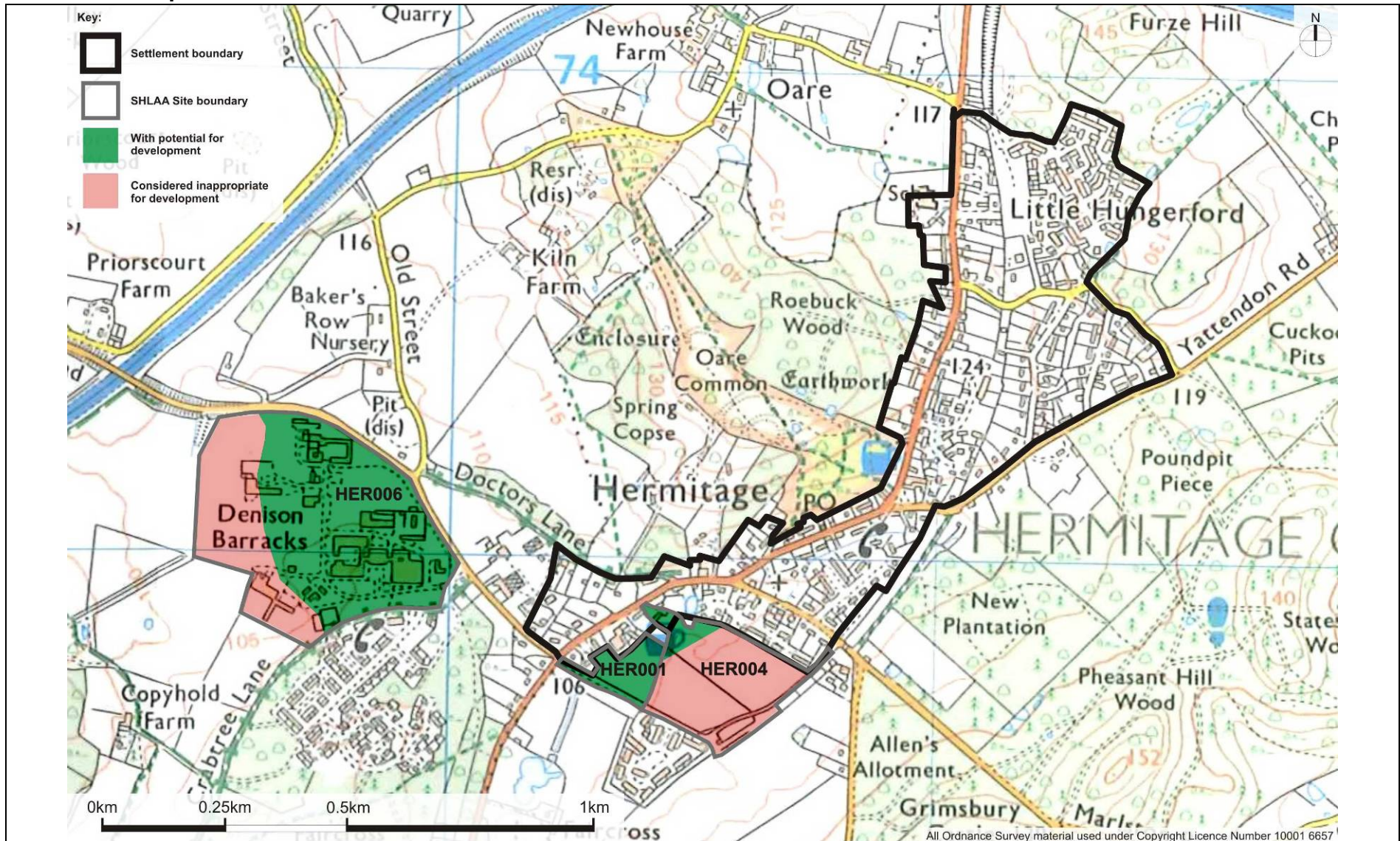
Conclusion

It is concluded that some development can be accommodated adjoining the settlement of Pangbourne within the two potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is therefore recommended that PAN001 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations. PAN002 is a large site and development of the whole area would have an adverse impact on the western side of Pangbourne, most significantly in visual terms. However partial development, subject to the above recommendations, may be possible. Both sites could be developed concurrently as although they are close in distance they are clearly separated by landform and the existing settlement.

2.4. Service Village: Hermitage – HER 001, HER 004, HER 006

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement Hermitage
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons Lowland Mosaic
Date of site surveys 8 December 2010
Surveyors BK/AG
Key landscape characteristics
<p>AONB LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons (unless source noted otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad undulating plateau • Intricate mosaic of woodland, pasture and small areas of remnant heathland • Large interconnected woodland blocks • Strong hedgerow pattern with mature trees • Enclosed and intimate character • Small irregular fields of informal and piecemeal enclosures • Intricate network of rural lanes, many sunken and overhung with woodland • Historic parkland • Ancient and semi-natural woodland • Mixed well managed woodland to east in Fence Wood, Grimsbury Wood and Pheasants Hill Wood (VDS) • Substantial tree groups at gateways to the village (VDS) • Reorganised fields, formerly pre 18th C irregular fields (HLC): HER 004 and 007
Key visual characteristics
<p>AONB LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons (unless source noted otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low wooded horizons • Fine views over the AONB • Views out of the village to the wooded skylines (VDS)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Dispersed settlement pattern characteristic of encroachment into woodland and commons
- Large nucleated settlement (Hermitage) and loose roadside settlements
- Hermitage is a good sized settlement (NDLCA LCT11)
- Settlements have a sense of long establishment (NDLCA LCT11)
- Development has extended beyond the settlement boundary
- Original settlement centred on two drove roads
- Linear settlement with residential growth post WWII and a number of non residential developments (e.g. Cementation site; depots and barracks) (VDS)
- Recent settlement growth, formerly pre18thC irregular fields (HLC): HER 001
- Military establishment, formerly pre18thC irregular fields (HLC): HER 006
- Development has been so intense that it has spread along the roads between historic nuclei: Cold Ash, Longlane, Curridge, Hermitage and Little Hungerford from an almost uninterrupted belt of settlement. The small surviving agricultural areas consist of modern fields created by rationalisation of historic enclosures through boundary removal and reorganisation. (HECZ Curridge, Hermitage, Cold Ash Settlements)
- Most housing has been constructed around historic settlement nuclei on areas of former common heathland. Small areas of ancient woodland have also been lost to housing development on the edge on Hermitage (HECZ Curridge, Hermitage, Cold Ash Settlements)

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

The whole of Hermitage and its hinterland lies within the AONB landscape character area LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons. This is a well populated landscape which has been subject to development pressures as a consequence of the area's relative accessibility. This has resulted in the linear spread of development out from the nucleated settlements. However although Curridge and Longlane lie close to Hermitage, these settlements are separated by open countryside and woodland which are particularly important in retaining the rural character and identity of Hermitage itself. Hermitage is noted for its wooded setting, with many woodlands adding height to the surrounding low hills that contain the village. Most of the settlement lies on lower flat ground at 105 – 115m AOD, either side of the B4009. Any proposed development which would result in the loss of woodland cover, would extend up onto higher ground, or would lead to the loss of open countryside between Hermitage and the adjacent settlements is likely to have a detrimental affect on the special qualities of the AONB and the settlement of Hermitage.

The area is also noted for its small scale landscape mosaic, its fine views of this particularly wooded landscape of the AONB, its rural winding lanes and the pattern of hedgerows and tree lines. Any proposed development needs to respect these characteristics and avoid suburbanising the rural character through unsympathetic hard landscape features such as kerbs, grand site entrances, or ornamental planting on the perimeter of the countryside.

Although Hermitage has had, and still has, large sites on the edge of the settlement which have long been under some form of development, 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, and to mitigate the existing harm to the AONB landscape from intrusive built form as at Dennison barracks.

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)
- Hermitage VDS

SITE HER 001**Photographs:**

View north into site from access road to Hermitage Green



View north over site to wooded slopes from access road to Hermitage Green

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Broken settlement edge on western boundary
- Site relates well to the settlement pattern

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Part of the open field pattern of reorganised fields east of Hermitage
- Hedgeline separates this area from field to east and the wider landscape
- Flat lower slopes immediately east of the village
- Land use as grass and scrub is not typical of the adjacent wider landscape

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Small site that is well contained by tree and scrub vegetation. 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 flat area below 100m AOD
- Site would not intrude into valued open countryside lying between settlements

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would have a localised impact on views out from property along the B4009 to the wooded hills to the east
- By retaining and enhancing existing tree cover and hedgerows, the visual impact of any development could be contained

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Tree line along the access to Hermitage Green
- On site trees
- Hedgerow boundary along the eastern boundary
- Views through or over the built form to the woodland beyond

SITE HER 004

Photographs:



View into site with wooded slopes behind from Charlotte Close, off Newbury Road

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Abuts settlement on the northern boundary and isolated housing estate, Hermitage Green, on the southern
- Separated from settlement on west by HER001
- Open boundary to rear gardens on the north
- Prominent and significant line of trees along the southern boundary which separates the site from Hermitage Green
- Site is part of the open gateway to Hermitage from the south

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Links with open fields to south (west of Hermitage Green)
- Linked to wider wooded landscape by visually prominent tree belt on eastern boundary
- Site is typical of the local field pattern which extends southwards
- Views to woodland in east
- Views across the site to wooded hillside from the village centre, Hermitage Green and Slanting Hill

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Notwithstanding the presence of Hermitage Green, development on the site would result in the loss of the open field linked to the wooded hillsides and open landscape at Hermitage, forming the setting of the village
- The site lies in the flat lower area at 110-115m AOD

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would result in the loss of predominantly rural views from the village and surrounding area

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the site would constitute considerable back land and infill development which is not characteristic of Hermitage
- Development would not extend Hermitage further south or result in merging with Curridge or Longlane
- The landscape and visual impact of Hermitage Green is limited by its current isolation and containment and by its rural setting within open fields with views of woodland

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- The site as a whole should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. It may be that a small area in the north-east of the site (between the public house and the access off Upscomb Close) could be developed together with HER001

SITE HER 006**Photographs:**

View of east part of site from Crabtree Lane



View north from PROW to south west

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Military establishment on the outer edge of the village
- Separated from main settlement by substantial belt of woodland
- Brownfield site used as barracks linked to settlement by built form of garden centre, the children's nursery and housing estate on north side of Priors Court Road
- Synergy with housing to the east in the northern part of Faircross Plantation
- Built form is not typical of the settlement. Large buildings, mainly 1 to 3 storeys high are set within open grounds with scattered trees, lines of trees, woodland blocks, grassland and extensive hardstandings
- Site and buildings mark the gateway to Hermitage from the west

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Site projects into open countryside west of Hermitage
- Distinct character in contrast with surrounding area of open fields, dense or scattered woodland and mixed uses: parkland, pockets of older houses, gravel sites and the garden centre
- Northern boundary to Priors Court Road lined with trees and formal beech hedgerow. Arboretum west of garden centre, with backcloth of trees on Doctor's Lane, lies immediately opposite site
- Open fragmented boundary to the wider landscape to the west
- Buildings on the site are intrusive and visible from open countryside to the south and west
- Open fields in the south-west of the site are part of the character of the open landscape to the west which is temporarily disturbed by gravel workings
- The M4 overbridge and sound of traffic draw attention to the presence of the motorway west of the site but it is not visually intrusive

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No loss of woodland
- Site is on flat lower ground at 105m AOD
- Part of the site contributes to the wider landscape west of the barracks
- Site could be better integrated into the local landscape/settlement vegetation pattern
- Semi-open aspect of the site could be lost

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Additional built form on the site could increase the visual impact of modern development on this part of the AONB
- Views from the south are particularly vulnerable to visual intrusion
- Views over the site to the wooded backcloth must be retained

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- The extent of the site is out of keeping with the settlement pattern
- The site relates well to one of the principal roads through the village
- Inappropriate development would adversely affect the character of this gateway to the village

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Some development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB.

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Open landscape in the west and south-west of the site
- Predominantly open character in the western and southern developed part of the site to protect the wider AONB
- Woodland cover within the whole site
- Tree line along Priors Court Road and trees on site
- Views through or over the built form to the woodland beyond

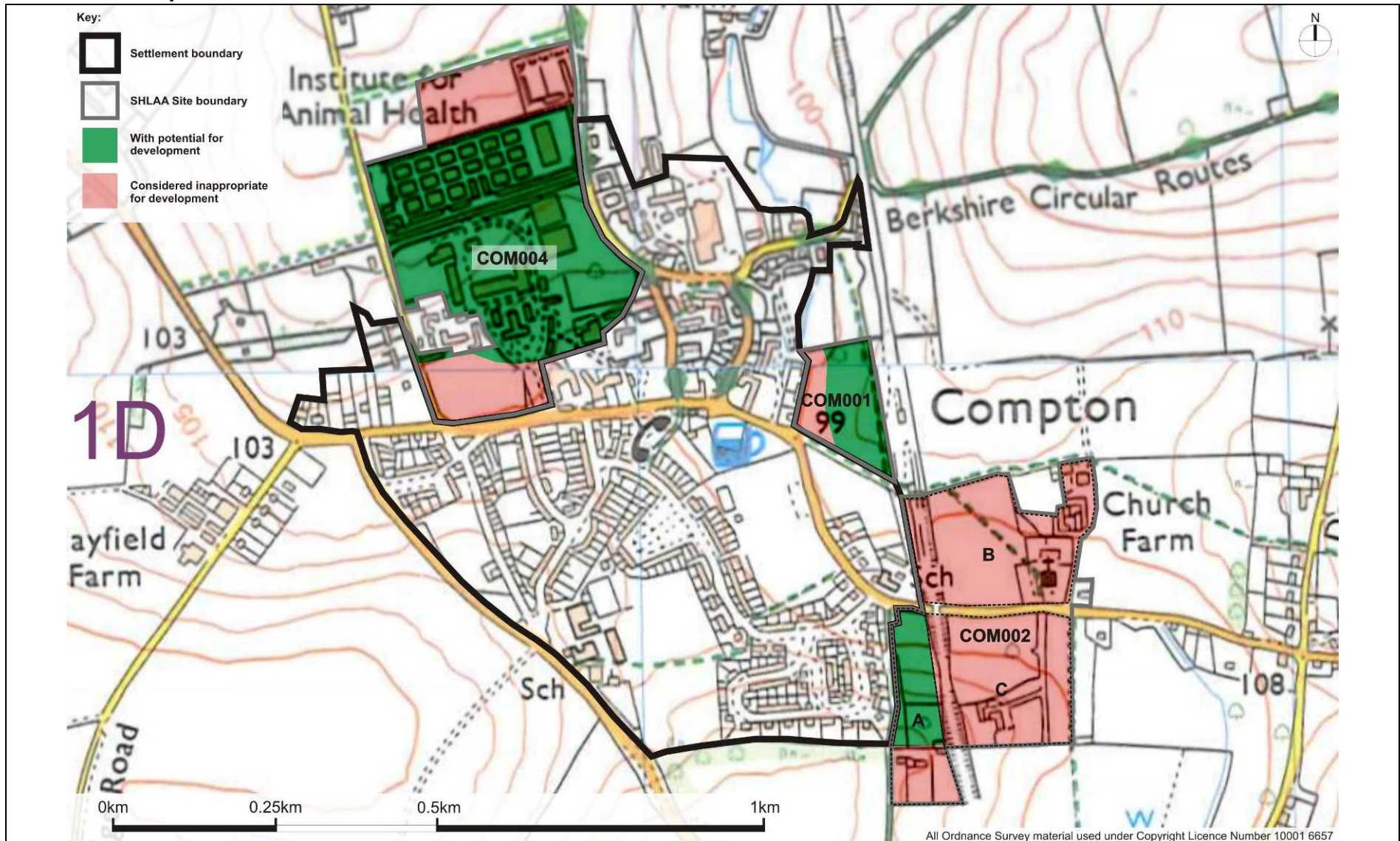
Conclusion

It is concluded that some development can be accommodated adjoining the settlement of Hermitage within the three potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is recommended that HER001 and HER006 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations. However it is recommended that HER 002 be deleted, except for a small part next to HER001. The development of such a large area at her 006 should be undertaken in phases over time to create smaller discrete and distinct areas, avoiding the introduction of a large homogeneous estate design. It is not recommended that all areas are developed concurrently as the scale of development would not be in keeping with a continuing slow sequential development of the village.

2.5. Service Village: Compton – COM 001, COM 002A, B and C combined, COM 004

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement Compton
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA ID Blewbury Downs open downland
Date of site surveys 16 December 2010
Surveyors BK
Key landscape characteristics
<p>AONB LCA ID Blewbury Downs (unless source noted otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong structural landform of elevated downland with round or flat topped hills • Intersecting dry valleys • Large open landscape of rectilinear fields with little subdivision • Dominated by arable farmland with sparse woodland on the tops • Little enclosure • Racehorse gallops and equestrian centres • Numerous rights of way including the Ridgeway • Sense of remoteness • Some skyline tree belts and sparse hedgerow trees (NDLCA LCT1) • Southern boundary of the village is marked by the extensive tree belts and woodlands (NDLCA LCT1) • Upper winterborne section of the river Pang on the eastern boundary of the village (VDS) • Important area of meadow at Stocks Farm west of the railway line (VDS) • Settlement is surrounded by reorganised fields, formerly parliamentary enclosure of open downland or open fields; site COM 002 and the north of COM 004 are typical site; COM 001 is a mix of 18/19th century development (south of Aldworth Road), pre 18th century irregular fields within former mediaeval settlement (north of Aldworth Road); COM 004 is an industrial farming complex on former parliamentary fields on past downland (HLC) • Historically most land to the north of the Pang was downland grazing, with open fields to the south (HECZ Upper Pang Valley)

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA ID Blewbury Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Long views
- Valleys often concealed from view by the landform (NDLCA LCT1)
- Area is noted visually for its broad sweeping lines and the vastness of the wide horizons
- Views out from the village to the Downs (VDS)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA ID Blewbury Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- More settled than other areas of open downland
- Villages nestle at the heads of dry valleys
- The more major roads and lanes tend to follow the valley bottoms (NDLCA LCT1)
- Nucleated settlement (BLCA E4 Farnborough open downlands)
- Compton has a more modern character with 'business park' like buildings (BLCA E4 Farnborough open downlands)
- East Compton is a cluster of sporadic residential dwellings, originally clustered around the church. This area is visually and physically distanced from the remainder of the village by the railway line (VDS)
- Older housing in small groups lies north of the High Street, much of which is in the Conservation Area (VDS)
- South of High Street the estates are larger post war and modern but do not form a solid mass (VDS)
- The village benefits from private and public open green spaces within the village boundary (VDS)
- Industrial buildings on the eastern boundary are visible on the skyline (VDS)
- Economically diverse village with good community facilities reflected in its buildings and built form (CPP)

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

The whole of Compton and its hinterland lie within the AONB landscape character area LCA 1D Blewbury Downs. It is recommended that an overriding objective should be that the village remain small and contained within its dry valley setting and ensure that the wider landscape retains its visual qualities and sense of relative remoteness. The northern side of Compton is noted for its openness and it is very important that no development should be visually intrusive. The existing Institute of Animal Health currently detracts from the character of the village (except where it abuts the High Street) and the special qualities of the AONB, and opportunities should be sought to remedy this. Compton also lies on the transition of open downs to the more wooded hillsides to the south, whereby the existing tree cover in the south of the village is of particular value. Most of the settlement lies on lower flat ground at 100 – 115m AOD, either side of the main route through the village. Any proposed development which would result in the loss of woodland cover, would extend up onto higher ground, or would lead to the loss of views into the open countryside is likely to have a detrimental affect on the special qualities of the AONB and the settlement of Compton.

The village is also noted for its pattern of generous open spaces within the settlement, many of which are linked visually or physically and lead the eye into the surrounding countryside. The village also has a distinctive settlement pattern. The two settlements of Compton and East Compton have distinct characters which should be maintained. The strong rural character of East Compton is a special feature of this area and a valuable contrast to the more modern and economically vibrant main village. The historic core and the pattern of small development plots in Compton require that the scale of any development is important. East Compton would not be able to accommodate any housing in even small estates without significant harm to the AONB. Any proposed development needs to respect these characteristics.

Although Compton has a large site on the edge of the settlement which has long been under some form of development, 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 the scale of development and generous provision of linked open space, and to mitigate the existing harm to the AONB landscape from intrusive built form as at the Institute of Animal Health and the industrial buildings.

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)
- Compton Parish Plan (CPP)
- Compton Village Design Statement (VDS)

SITE COM 001**Photographs:**

View over site looking north-west from east end, near to former railway line



View from edge of site north towards paddocks off Wallingford Road

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Site is visible from the village and lies between the main village spine and the prominent industrial buildings on higher ground
- The open space links into the recreation ground and the allotments to the south and open paddocks to the north
- The western boundary abuts the back gardens of houses, and the southern abuts the access to the industrial units
- The site is identified as one of the important open spaces in the village (VDS)
- Mature trees and pasture lie to the north beyond which lies housing within the settlement boundary

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Site separated from wider landscape in the east by trees along former railway line and the industrial buildings
- Site links with small paddocks to the north but these are separated from the wider landscape by housing

Impact on key landscape characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not significant
Impact on key visual characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not significant• Would not affect views out to the Downs
Impact on key settlement characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of open space within the village envelope• Site nestles within the lower slopes of the village envelope• A small site in scale with the development pattern north of the High Street in this part of the village• Good design could mitigate the current adverse impact from the industrial buildings
Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some development could be accommodated on this site without harm to the special qualities of the AONB subject to the recommendations below
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features:• An open area visually linking the paddocks to the north with the recreation ground to the south• On site trees• Hedgerow boundaries• Views from the public right of way (through careful siting and design)

SITE COM 002A, B and C combined

Photographs:



View over the site from Aldworth Road southwards up the hillside to the tree skyline

View over site to church from Aldworth Road west of railway bridge



View over site up hillside from Aldworth Road west of railway bridge

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- A large site most of which lies east of the tree lined former railway which acts as a strong feature separating the settlement from the wider landscape
- Railway arch and school act as a gateway to the settlement
- Part of site west of the railway line (002A) rises up the Compton valley hillside bounded by housing to the south, set within trees, and to the west with a line of mature trees separating the two
- The part of the site east of the railway line and north of Aldworth Road (002B) includes the Church, Church Farm and Church house which formed the original hamlet of East Compton. These buildings are isolated from the settlement by open fields. The open fields are an important setting to these buildings
- The part of the site east of the railway line and south of Aldworth Road (002C) is an individual large farmhouse set within its own grounds, with a different character to that of the village or the landscape and hamlet of 002B

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- 002A is separated from the wider landscape by the tree covered railway line and the housing to the west. The existing houses, set within mature trees in the south of the site, act as an important transition from the village core to the wooded hillsides south of the village. These tree groups are a key feature of the village
- 002B is pasture, retaining its per 18th century irregular field pattern in contrast with the open arable fields beyond. However it is very much a part of the wider landscape
- 002C is separated from the wider landscape by perimeter mature trees; and an avenue of trees on the eastern side of the site, which forms a strong boundary feature. However these trees and open pasture complement the open countryside of 002B and act as an important transitional landscape on the edge of the settlement
- With the exception of the southern part of 002A, the sites sit on the lower slopes of the valley, falling inwards towards the village
- All three sites flank the dry upper river Pang valley

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- 002A: Southern part of site sits on a prominent ridge and contains important tree cover
- 002B: Any development on this site would have an adverse impact on the valued characteristics of the site and on the wider landscape. It would detract from the setting of the historic core of East Compton and result in sprawl along the Pang valley.
- 002C: Development on this site would harm the Pang valley and detract from the special qualities of 002B

Impact on key visual characteristics

- 002A: Tree line on the top of the hill is an important local feature
- 002B: Views out to the edge of the Downs would be lost. Development would detract from the scenic qualities of the eastern approach into Compton and from views of the church from Aldworth Road.
- 002C: Tree line on the top of the hill is an important local feature. Development would detract from the scenic qualities of the eastern approach into Compton

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- 002A: Carefully designed development on the open field could reflect the local village character
- 002B: Development in this area would extend the village beyond a significant gateway feature, with a subsequent loss of containment.
- 002C: Development in this area would extend the village beyond a significant gateway feature, with a subsequent loss of containment.

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, with the exception of a small area, would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. Some limited development could be accommodated on land west of the railway line in 002A subject to the recommendations below

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- Exclusion of redevelopment of existing housing (except perhaps on a like for like basis) at the southern end of 002A
- Mature tree cover to be retained on the boundaries
- Views to tree lined skyline to be provided

SITE COM 004**Photographs:**

View to the site from footpath to the north



View over open space at the southern end of the site from High Street

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- The site is already developed with several large buildings and tall chimneys which contrast with the village centre and the residential housing areas. However the buildings overlooking the High Street contribute to the distinctive character of Compton
- The site includes the Cricket Ground, one of the many areas of open space valued in the village
- The site extends the village envelope further up the hillside than found anywhere else (to 125m AOD)
- Lines of trees form the western, southern and eastern boundaries of the site with the adjoining settlement
- The site is separated from a row of cottages at Superity Farm to the north by two small fields
- Built form on the site is visually prominent from much of the village

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The site at the northern end is set within the open downland
- The northern boundary is defined by a double row of new hedge planting either side of the footpath/bridleway
- The most northerly part of the site is set down into the landform, thus reducing the visual impact on the wider landscape
- The whole site contrasts strongly with the surrounding landscape but is contained
- The site is visible from a number of elevated viewpoints in the surrounding countryside

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Western edge of site sits on the slope of a prominent ridge (the cottages at Superity Farm demonstrate how exposed development on the ridge can be)
- Site relies on peripheral planting to mitigate local impacts
- No loss of downland or other valued landscape features

Impact on key visual characteristics

- The existing buildings and chimneys on the site are visually prominent from the surrounding open landscape. This could be mitigated through redevelopment of a lower and more domestic scale and mass and with boundary planting
- Due to the prominence of the site, the design of any development must be sympathetic and not detract from the character of the village

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Wholesale and uniform redevelopment of the site would be out of keeping with the pattern of development in Compton
- The loss of open space and of views to the main attractive building set back from the High Street would effect the character of the village centre
- Development in the most northerly section, albeit set down in to the landscape, would extend the village beyond its natural valley setting
- Existing and additional open space should be maintained and provided as part of any development

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Aspects of the current building form and extent of the site already result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. Redevelopment of this site has the potential to remove development from the most northerly part of the site and to reduce or remove much of the harm to the AONB

Recommendations

- Development could be accommodated on the site subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following landscape features:
- The open downland character above Compton should be enhanced through the removal of buildings in the most northerly part of the site, restoration of a more natural landform and use as open space/open farmland
- Protect views to Compton from the open downland
- Protect views of the upper valley sides of the site from the village
- A matrix of good sized open spaces to be provided throughout the development, linking physically and visually with the existing provision
- Retention of the existing character facing onto High Street and in particular the area of open space

Conclusion

It is concluded that some development can be accommodated adjoining the settlement of Compton within the three potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is therefore recommended that COM 001 and COM 004 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations. However it is recommended that COM 002 be deleted, except for a small part west of the railway line within COM 002A. The development of such a large area at COM004 should be undertaken in phases over time to create smaller discrete and distinct areas, avoiding the introduction of a large homogeneous estate design. It is not recommended that all areas are developed concurrently as the scale of development would not be in keeping with a continuing slow sequential development of the village.

2.6. Service Village: Kintbury – KIN 001, KIN 004, KIN 005, KIN 006, KIN 007, KIN 008, KIN 009, KIN 011, KIN 013, KIN 015

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Assessment of Settlement

Settlement	Kintbury
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 8D: Hungerford Farmland LCA 7A: Kennet Valley (this LCA contains no SHLAA sites)	
Date of site surveys	13 December 2010
Surveyors	AG/TJ

Key landscape characteristics**AONB LCA 8D: Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- An open, rolling landscape; a transitional lowland area between the valley and the chalk downs;
- Predominantly arable land use, with free-range pig units and occasional pastoral fields, with an increasing number of 'hobby farms' and horse paddocks characterised by rank weedy grassland and poorly managed boundaries;
- Field patterns immediately around Kintbury are small and intimate with a good hedgerow structure - this is not reflected in the wider area, where field boundary features are virtually non-existent with the only definition, in many areas being low grassy banks;
- Varied field pattern, but dominated by large regular fields of Parliamentary enclosure, with more recent removal of boundaries;
- Woodland blocks are a feature across the area and include small woods and copses on the clay capped ridgetops;
- Associated with the river valley but settlement extends out onto the slopes above the valley;
- Presence of water with many wells and numerous small streams influencing the landform;
- Majority of historic fields have been reorganised into modern fields, but this has been carried out within the existing grain of the landscape and has not adversely affected character (HECZ Kintbury Hinterland – KIN001, 005, 008, 009, 011, 013, 015);
- Maintain ridgetop shelterbelts and favour broadleaf (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)
- Maintain lowland woodlands (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)
- Replant hedgerows and hedgerow oaks (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)

AONB LCA 7A: Kennet Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Relatively steep sides and a narrow valley floor providing a strong sense of enclosure in its upper reaches, broadening out to a wider lowland landscape east of Hungerford;
- Valley floor dominated by pasture, although east of Hungerford pasture is intermixed with arable fields. Valleys sides are generally under arable cultivation;
- Diverse vegetation including lush floodplain pasture, marsh and reedbeds, lines of willow pollards and poplars; remnants of valley floor floated water meadows
- Sinuous belts of woodland line the valley sides and some larger broadleaved woodland blocks on the valley floor
- An important lowland chalk river - much of the length downstream from Marlborough is designated as a SSSI
- Kennet and Avon Canal is a dominant feature merging with the river east of Hungerford and includes industrial archaeological sites (sluices, locks and warehouses etc.) and World War II military structures
- Potential changes in farming practices including loss of livestock, with some remaining valley pastures and meadows no longer being grazed resulting in scrub encroachment;
- Loss of hedgerow boundaries and particularly mature hedgerow trees, plus poor management of remaining hedgerows;
- Conserve the river valley floor woodland and replant hedges (NDLCA – Kennet Valley)

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Very large scale open landscape in places, smaller scale and more intimate, with more enclosure immediately around Kintbury;
- Quiet, rural character;
- St Mary's church is an important landmark, within the Conservation Area of the settlement (Kintbury Parish Plan);
- Views to the Downs are important features of the settlements in the area (BLCA)

AONB LCA 7A: Kennet Valley

- Wider lowland landscape east of Hungerford
- Overall, an intimate, pastoral rural valley character
- The overall management objective is to conserve and enhance the tranquil, intimate character of the Kennet Valley
- St Mary's church is an important landmark, within the Conservation Area of the settlement (Kintbury Parish Plan);

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA 8D Hungerford Farmland** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Sparsely settled, with occasional isolated farms, manor houses and hamlets connected by a fairly dispersed pattern of lanes;
- Kintbury is one of many attractive settlements of detached houses located at regular intervals along the whole length of the valley;
- Recent housing developments have enveloped previously separate zones of historic settlement at Blandy's Hill and Leyland's Green. These settlements were in existence by the 18th century (HECZ Kintbury Suburban Area – KIN004, 006, 007, 011, 015);
- Open spaces and footpaths important to the local residents (Kintbury Parish Plan);
- Locally important to restrict housing to the Village Envelope (Kintbury Parish Plan);
- Historic development along east – west linear corridor of the High Street, with inter-war and post-war development spreading south and south east, with late 20th century development to the southern edge (QD);
- Large scale development would be visually intrusive in this open farming landscape (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)
- The continued expansion of large settlements including Kintbury and linear expansion infill to join smaller settlements (e.g. Chieveley – Downend to Beadon) should be avoided to prevent loss of character and local identity (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)
- Limited infill within defined settlement boundaries would be preferable (NDLCA – Chalk Dipslopes and lowland)
- Kintbury has retained a strong rural character despite having expanded out onto the adjacent higher slopes (BLCA)
- Important to retain the low density and distinctiveness of settlements in the area (BLCA)

AONB LCA 7A: Kennet Valley (unless source noted otherwise)

- Kintbury is one of many attractive settlements of detached houses located at regular intervals along the whole length of the valley, typically on the south facing side
- Development pressures, particularly for new housing on the edge of settlements
- Sensitivity of narrow, intimate scale valley to any form of large scale development
- The aim should be to maintain the distinctive pattern of settlement, with discrete villages characteristically located along a road on the first contour above the winter flood level
- Open spaces and footpaths important to the local residents (Kintbury Parish Plan);
- Locally important to restrict housing to the Village Envelope (Kintbury Parish Plan);
- Infilling of valley margins and valley floor should be strongly resisted (NDLCA – Kennet Valley)
- New tree planting of appropriate species should be a condition of any development (NDLCA – Kennet Valley)
- Take positive measures to prevent light pollution and restrict the urbanising influence of street and floodlighting on rural nature of the valley (NDLCA – Kennet Valley)
- Important to retain the distinct character of settlements in the area, and to preserve their clear relationship with the surrounding countryside (BLCA)

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

The village of Kintbury is one of a number of settlements found along the Kennet Valley and the line of the Kennet and Avon Canal. The settlement is contained within the AONB landscape character areas: LCA 7A: Kennet Valley and 8D Hungerford Farmland. The older development is found along the east – west linear corridor of the High Street, with inter-war and post-war development spreading south and south east, with late 20th century development to the southern edge. This newer development has occurred on the lower, shallow slopes away from the river corridor, in areas of former agricultural hinterland made up of generally larger fields.

Development on the northern edge of the village, including the parts of the Conservation Area, extends right down to the canal on the 95-100m AOD contours, and on the southern edge of Kintbury starts to climb the hill to the 130m AOD contour, and here is found in a linear pattern related to the road, with low density housing enclosed by the wooded slopes to the south. The newer development is contained on flatter ground below the 115m contour north of the high point (152m AOD) on a part wooded hill to the south.

The landscape to the east, west and south of Kintbury is noted for being of smaller scale and more enclosed than the wider area, though the valley landscape is in a wider stretch of the valley than is found further west.

The relative enclosure of the areas around Kintbury offers opportunities for locating new development whilst still retaining the visual enclosure. Infilling of the valley margins and valley floor should be strongly resisted. Limited infill within the defined settlement boundary would be the preferred approach to prevent further expansion at the outer edges. In particular medium or large scale expansion in open land, which becomes progressively wider, between radial roads should be avoided.

Sources:

North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2002;

Additional information from:

- Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment 1993 (NDLCA)
- Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2003 (BLCA)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)
- Historic Environment Character Area Report (HECA)
- Historic Environment Character Zoning (HECZ)
- Quality Design SPD Part 3 (QD)
- Kintbury Parish Plan

SITE KIN 001**Photographs:**

View north from lane at south west corner of site



View east from lane at south west corner of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Separated from the east side of the settlement, with only a short section along the south-west boundary which is adjacent to houses, across the road

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- A continuation of the sloping valley side to the east

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland affected
- Boundary hedgerows could be retained if the site was developed
- Loss of rolling landscape
- Loss of open countryside with a strong link to the wider landscape

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent housing
- Development would be prominent in views from the wider landscape to the east and across the valley to the north, including a PROW to the east, with the development encroaching onto the expansive valley sides to the east of Kintbury

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development on this site would not be infill, as preferred
- The scale of the site is out of keeping with the settlement pattern and its development would constitute an unacceptable expansion of the settlement
- Furthermore, the site is disconnected from the main settlement and could encourage further large-scale infill development

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- 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 Kintbury

SITE KIN 004**Photographs:**

View west from lane at south east corner of site



View north from lane at south east corner of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- On the east side of the settlement, extending north from the rural lane, with part of the site is adjacent to the eastern tip of the Conservation Area which consists of low density, linear housing, with a well vegetated, soft edge to the settlement
- Large housing estate to the south of the road

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- A continuation of the sloping valley side to the east

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland affected
- Boundary hedgerows could be retained if the site was developed
- Incongruous conifer hedge splitting the site and along the northern boundary which could be replaced with more appropriate planting if the site was developed
- Loss of rolling landscape

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Open views interrupted by conifer hedgerows
- Localised impact on views to the countryside
- Development would be prominent in views from the wider landscape to the east and across the valley to the north, including a PROW to the east but less so than KIN001

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development on this site would not be infill, as preferred
- Development of the whole site as a large single estate would be out of scale with housing on the north side of Kintbury, though there are estates of similar size to the south side of the road
- Development of the whole site as a large single estate could constitute an unacceptable expansion of the settlement
- The site is fairly well connected to the settlement edge, though extends further north than the adjacent linear development to the west

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Limited linear development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement the following features:
- Boundary hedgerows and trees, and replacement of the conifer hedges.
- Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered and new planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape.
- The scale of any new development would need to be carefully considered against the overall size of the settlement and aspirations to limit expansion
- Linear development could be accommodated along Irish Hill Road to match the settlement pattern in the Conservation Area

SITE KIN 005**Photographs:****Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- Extending from the straight eastern side of the settlement between rural lanes,
- This edge of the settlement is rather 'raw' with buildings poorly integrated into the landscape

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong link with open farmland plateau to east and south, but generally flatter than the valley side to the north
- Open edge to adjacent field

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland affected
- Native hedgerows to north, east and south boundaries. These could be retained if the site was developed
- Loss of open countryside with a strong link to the wider landscape

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent housing
- Development would be prominent in views from the wider landscape to the east and north, including a PROW to the north east, with the settlement encroaching onto the expansive countryside to the east of Kintbury
- The existing housing creates a strong edge to the settlement but the distinction between the village and the countryside is somewhat harsh, so that new development would give opportunities for softening the settlement edge

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the whole site would be out of scale with housing in most of Kintbury (though there are estates of similar size to the west) and could constitute an unacceptable expansion of the settlement
- The site is well connected to the settlement edge
- Breaks a strong, straight settlement edge which creates a strong sense of arrival to the village
- However, the site's development could offer opportunities to soften the edge of settlement with new planting
- Development on this site would repeat an undesirable pattern of development between radial roads in this open landscape getting progressively wider away from the centre of the village

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- 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 Kintbury

SITE KIN 006

Photographs:



View of site from lane

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small site adjoining the Inkpen road on the south side of Kintbury, between a medium density housing estate to the north and low density housing which extends south along the road in a linear pattern
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked with small scale, enclosed fields to east, though visually separate
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed by tree belt to north, woodland to south and native hedgerow to western boundary with the road - boundary vegetation could be retained if the site was developed • A single tree within the site – may be lost if site was developed • A ditch runs along the northern boundary – could be retained if the site was developed
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small scale, intimate space enclosed by trees and landform • New development would be visible from the road
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would not be out of keeping with existing development pattern • The site has a strong relationship with the settlement, though it is not within the settlement boundary
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of boundary hedgerows and trees and the protection of the ditch

SITE KIN 007

Photographs:



View of site across KIN006 in foreground, from lane

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small site set back from the Inkpen road, on the south side of Kintbury, with a medium density housing estate to the north and low density housing which extends south along the road in a linear pattern • Could be accessed from the Inkpen road via KIN006, or via the residential area to the north
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked with small scale, enclosed fields to east, though visually separate
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed by a tree belt to north, woodland to south and native hedgerow to the eastern boundary with KIN009 • Boundary vegetation could be retained if the site was developed • A ditch runs along the northern boundary – could be retained if the site was developed
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small scale, intimate space enclosed by trees and landform • New development would be visible from the road
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would not be out of keeping with existing development pattern • The site has a strong relationship with the settlement, though it is not within the settlement boundary
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of boundary hedgerows and trees and the protection of the ditch

SITE KIN 008**Photographs:**

View south, from lane north east of site

View west from lane north east of site

- **Relationship with adjacent settlement**
- Extending from the straight south eastern edge of the settlement, which comprises a medium density housing estate; the largest estate in Kintbury
- This edge of the settlement is rather 'raw' with buildings poorly integrated into the landscape
- A rural lane forms the north eastern boundary
- **Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**
- Part of the open countryside to the east, north and south
- Strong link with countryside to south east and south, on rising ground – though the countryside to the north (KIN005) is on flatter ground

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key landscape characteristics • No woodland affected • Native hedgerows to north, east and south boundaries. These could be retained if the site was developed • Impact on open landscape as part of the wider countryside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key visual characteristics • Development would have a localised impact on views out from adjacent housing • Development would be prominent in views from the wider landscape to the north, east and south, including a PROW to the north east, with the settlement encroaching onto the expansive countryside to the south east of Kintbury • The housing creates a strong edge to the settlement but the distinction between the village and the countryside is somewhat harsh, so that new development would have less of an impact and would give opportunities for softening the settlement edge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key settlement characteristics • Development of the whole site would be out of scale with housing in most of Kintbury, though the adjoining estate is large, but is on flatter ground at lower elevation • Development of the whole site could constitute an unacceptable expansion of the settlement • The western part of site is well connected to the settlement edge • Breaking of strong, straight settlement edge which creates a strong sense of arrival to the village • However, the site's development could offer opportunities to soften the edge of settlement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 • This site as a whole could not be developed without harming the AONB. A narrow wedge at the western end from the eastern corner of KIN 009 to the edge of settlement on Holt Road could be developed in conjunction with KIN009, 006 and 007, thus linking to the Inkpen road for access, and subject to the recommendations below. Development could continue north east to join the rural lane and give an opportunity to soften this edge of the village
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations • The small western part of this site and possibly north edge against the settlement edge could be pursued as a SHLAA site in conjunction with the sites to the west, subject to the following conditions and the protection of the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary hedgerows and trees • Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered • New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape • Careful design in scale the settlement

SITE KIN 009**Photographs:**

Glimpsed view of site from housing to north



Partial view of site across KIN008

- **Relationship with adjacent settlement**
- A small site set back from the Inkpen road on the south side of Kintbury, and with only one corner of the site touching the settlement edge – a medium density housing estate
- **Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**
- Open fields to north east and west and woodland to the south
- Linked with small scale, enclosed fields to the west (KIN006 and 007), though visually separate
- **Impact on key landscape characteristics**
- Adjacent to woodland but not containing woodland
- Native hedgerows to boundaries – could be retained if the site was developed

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on key visual characteristics• The site is very contained (by landform and vegetation) and not visible from public viewpoint• Possibly some intervisibility with adjoining sites KIN008, 007
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on key settlement characteristics• Development would not be out of keeping with existing development pattern
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21• Development of this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. Development could be in conjunction with KIN006 and 007 and the western tip of KIN008, thus linking to the Inkpen road for access.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommendations• Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following:• Boundary hedgerows and trees and could be in conjunction with neighbouring sites.• Views from the surrounding countryside would need to be carefully considered and• New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape

SITE KIN 011**Photographs:***View south from housing to east**View west from housing to east*

- **Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- A site on the south western edge of the settlement, which comprises small estates along the west side of Inkpen Road
- Not directly adjacent to any road but accessible via adjacent housing estate
- Recreation ground adjacent to the north

- **Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**

- Different in nature to the countryside to west and south, being flat and enclosed transitional landscape made up of rough grass and with no visual link to the wider landscape

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key landscape characteristics • Could be developed without harm to boundary vegetation • Some scattered trees in the south part of site would need to be assessed for their value to establish whether they would be a constraint to development • Replacement of the conifer hedge to the western boundary with more appropriate planting would be an improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key visual characteristics • Visually contained by hedgerows and trees, with possible views from adjacent housing and PROW along western boundary • Localised impact on views to the countryside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key settlement characteristics • Development of this site would discontinue the linear nature of adjacent development, but a deeper pattern of development is common elsewhere in Kintbury • The site has a strong relationship with the settlement, though it is not within the settlement boundary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 • Development of this site, subject to the recommendations below, could be accommodated without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations • Development on this site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features: • Boundary hedgerows and trees and scattered trees within the southern section of the site • Replacement of the conifer hedgerow with more appropriate planting. • Views from the surrounding countryside, PROW and the neighbouring recreation field would need to be carefully considered and • New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape

SITE KIN 013**Photographs:**

View of north part of site from public footpath in northwest corner



View south, from public footpath in northwest

- **Relationship with adjacent settlement**
 - A site on the western edge of the settlement, just south of the Conservation Area and extending down the western side of the recreation ground
 - The north part of the site is surrounded on two sides by low density housing, with a small, newly built housing estate between the site and the road
 - Not immediately adjacent to any road, but possibly accessible via the housing estate
 - The south part is detached from housing, being beyond the recreation ground at the edge of the village
-
- **Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**
 - South part of site linked with countryside to the south, with a continuation of gently sloping ground of similar scale
 - Strong boundary planting along western edge

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on key landscape characteristics• No woodland affected• Site could be developed without damage to boundary vegetation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on key visual characteristics• Much of the site is enclosed by housing and boundary vegetation, with the western flank having slightly longer views and less enclosure• Localised impact on views to the countryside from adjacent housing, and from the PROW along the western boundary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on key settlement characteristics• Development of the site as a whole would be out of keeping with the scale and linear pattern of nearby development• The southern part of the site is poorly connected to the settlement• The northern part of the site is well connected to the existing settlement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21• The northern part of this site could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the recommendations below
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommendations• Development on the northern part of the site should be subject to the following conditions and the protection and enhancement of the following features:• Protection of boundary vegetation.• Views from the surrounding countryside, in particular the PROW would need to be carefully considered and• New planting would be important in integrating the buildings into the landscape

SITE KIN 015**Photographs:**

View of site entrance from lane



View south along lane west side of site

- **Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- A large site on the south eastern edge of the settlement, with part of the western boundary formed by the Inkpen Road and containing a number of detached properties along the road
- Site is separated from the main settlement by a narrow gap of open land in KIN 006, 007 and 009

- **Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**

- Similar in character with smaller sites KIN006, 007 and 009 to the north being small scale and visually enclosed, though on steeper ground and made up of garden and woodland.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key landscape characteristics • The site contains areas of woodland on rising ground, as well as internal and boundary hedgerows and internal individual trees – these would need to be protected • Development would extend up steeper slopes on wooded hillside • Development would impact on the rural setting of Dongall's Wood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key visual characteristics • The site is visually well contained by landform and woodland, with glimpses from the lane between houses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on key settlement characteristics • The site would be suitable for the development of a very small number of low density detached houses but higher densities would have the effect of intensifying development on the hillside away from the main village • The development of the site as a whole would be out of character and would result in the loss of woodland as well as housing at a high elevation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 • The small open part of this site could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the recommendations below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations • The site would be suitable for a very limited development of very low density to match that existing on the site located to ensure the retention and protection of the existing woodland and other valuable trees and hedges

Conclusion

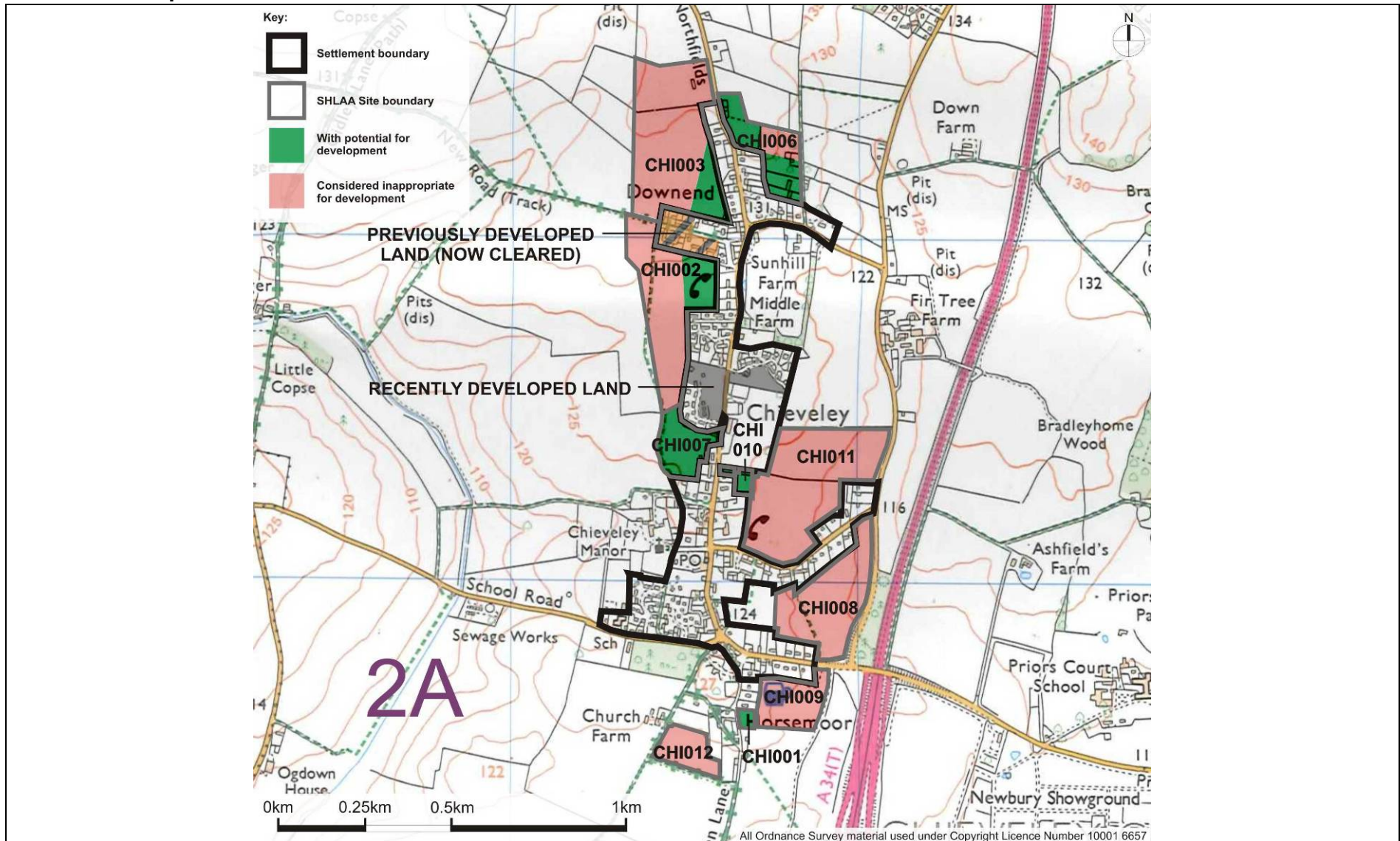
It is concluded that some development can be considered adjoining the settlement of Kintbury within seven of the ten potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is therefore recommended that KIN004, KIN006, KIN007, a small part of KIN008, KIN009, KIN011, and KIN013 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations, which include constraints on the extent of the sites which could be developed. It is recommended that KIN001 and KIN005 are not pursued further. KIN 015 would only be able to accommodate a very small number of houses.

It is recommended that KIN 006, 007, 009 and the part of 008 be developed together, whilst maintaining some of the internal subdivision to break up the built form. It is also recommended that only one main site (of the four KIN 004, combined southern group, KIN 011 and KIN 013) be developed to meet current needs to avoid over expansion into the rural hinterland and over dominance of by a single period of growth.

2.7. Service Village: Chieveley – CHI 001, CHI 002, CHI 003, CHI 006, CHI 007, CHI 008, CHI 009, CHI 010, CHI 011, CHI 012

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement Chieveley
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas LCA 2A Brightwalton Downs
Date of site surveys 15 December 2010
Surveyors AG/TJ
Key landscape characteristics
<p>AONB LCA 2A Brightwalton Downs (unless source noted otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A discrete area of downland with woodland occurring on the dip slope, between the more open downland areas of Lambourn Downs to the west and Blewbury Downs to the east • The area has the essential landform pattern and characteristics of the Open Downlands but on a reduced scale, with gentler contours • A large scale, undulating mixed farmed landscape of pasture and arable fields, enclosed by hedgerows, though boundaries often denuded with gaps or intensively flailed • Hedgerows frequently with mature oak and ash hedgerow trees • Varied field patterns, including some sinuous boundaries reflecting medieval or post medieval 'ladder' fields, but generally large regular fields created by Parliamentary enclosure • Large ridge top woodland blocks are a feature of the area and form dark wooded horizons providing visual containment • In some parts of the area, where woodland is less prevalent, the landscape has a more open arable character, particularly where field boundaries have been removed • Woodlands are very diverse and include recent mixed plantations and shelterbelts as well as semi-natural woodlands of ancient origin, including formerly coppiced woods of ash, maple and hazel with oak standards, though traditional coppicing has been discontinued resulted in more dense enclosed woodland structures • Carefully positioned tree clumps drawing the eye to the higher ground are distinctive features • Chieveley has a north-south orientation and sits on relatively flat land, declining slightly from north to south (VDS) • Chieveley is well endowed with hedges and trees, which help to conceal the village from outside (VDS) • The mix of broad-leaf and evergreen species maintains Chieveley's rural feel even in winter, softening the hard edges of walls and buildings (VDS) • Replant hedgerows and hedgerow oaks (NDLCA) • Retain wooded horizons and strengthen existing character of wooded summits and ridges with shelterbelts and hedges (BLCA)

Key visual characteristics**AONB LCA 2A Brightwalton Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- Low wooded horizons
- Excellent views from the northern edge, from which the escarpment drops steeply
- Views also exist to the east and west of the area
- Tree and woodland features combine to create a softer, sheltered character
- The sunken, enclosed lanes contribute to the rich and intimate scale of the landscape
- A quiet, rural landscape
- Apart from the church tower, Chieveley is well hidden from most aspects in the wider landscape, with the only view available from off road on the higher ground to the west or north west, though even then the settlement is so cloaked with mature trees, shrubs and hedgerows that it offers only tantalising glimpses of itself (VDS)
- The village has a remarkable sense of seclusion (VDS)
- The linear nature of the settlement area provides opportunities to view the surrounding landscape, not just from the properties themselves but also through the spaces between (VDS)
- Peaceful, remote, rural character (BLCA)

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA 2A Brightwalton Downs** (unless source noted otherwise)

- A well settled area with a large number of individual farms and with villages often surrounded by woodland and set within folds in the landform
- The linear settlement of Chieveley is located on a low ridge rather than in a valley
- An extensive network of interconnected rural lanes serve the settlement, the lanes often deeply incised and overhung by grass banks, hedges and mature hedgerow trees
- Where the village becomes more visible at its main entrances, houses are either set back from the road or, for the most part, well screened by hedges, shrubs and trees (VDS)
- Almost complete lack of tall structures in Chieveley (VDS)
- The newly completed housing developments in the centre of Chieveley emphasise the linear form of the settlement and create a new 'centre' for the village (VDS)
- Large scale development would be visually intrusive in this open farming landscape (NDLCA)
- The linear expansion infill to join smaller settlements (e.g. Chieveley – Downend to Beedon) should be avoided to prevent loss of character and local identity (NDLCA)
- Limited infill within defined settlement boundaries would be preferable (NDLCA)

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

The whole of Chieveley and its hinterland lies within the AONB landscape character area LCA 2A Brightwalton Downs. This is a well populated landscape with many individual farms set in folds in the landscape. Despite Chieveley's location on a low ridge, the buildings are generally well integrated into the landscape in views from the surrounding countryside. Essentially made up of two settlements, one to the north and one to the south, recent developments have closed the gap with the intention of creating a new settlement 'centre' though the open spaces and lack of focus in this centre make it feel like a gap rather than a centre. The pattern of development has grown in a linear fashion, closely linked to the road network that makes up the village, with modern estates small in scale and closely related to the road, rather than extending back into the open countryside.

The area is noted for its quiet, rural character, its fine views, rural, often sunken, lanes and the pattern of hedgerows and woodlands. The older parts of the village have a strong visual and architectural character and the village is notably devoid of tall structures. Any proposed development needs to respect these characteristics and avoid suburbanising the rural character through unsympathetic hard landscape features such as kerbs, grand site entrances, or ornamental planting on the perimeter of the countryside.

Although Chieveley has had, and is still building, modern housing estates, these are generally of a scale in keeping with the older pattern of development, and with close relationships with existing road networks. Large, sprawling 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 which will be needed to continue the existing character of a village in a well-vegetated setting. Although the relative enclosure of the areas around Chieveley offer opportunities for locating new development and still retaining the visual enclosure, the cumulative effect of multiple developments should be taken into consideration so that the special qualities of the LCA close to Chieveley are not completely lost.

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)
- Chieveley VDS

SITE CHI 001

Photographs:



View north from PROW to south (site behind trees)

<p>Relationship with adjacent settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural settlement edge at the southern tip of the village • Site relates well to the settlement pattern in terms of scale and location • The western boundary is formed by Green Lane • Low density housing to the north and south of site, with open fields to the east (CHI 009)
<p>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgeline separates this area from field to east and the wider landscape • The site is better related to the village and the houses along the lane
<p>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small site that is well contained by tree and hedgerow vegetation. Development could be accommodated and retain small scale pattern and not intrude into the wider AONB • No woodlands are affected
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would not affect views out from adjacent properties to the countryside to the east • By retaining and enhancing existing tree cover and hedgerows, the visual impact of any development could be contained
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, with close relationship to the adjacent lane
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of this site could be accommodated provided the existing boundary vegetation were retained

SITE CHI 002**Photographs:**

View south-west from track adjacent to northern boundary of site



View across north-west corner of site to countryside beyond, from track adjacent to northern boundary.

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- The site extends down the western side of village, beyond the existing linear development of the village
- Site large in scale in comparison to the settlement
- Linear site that extends along the central section of the village and is disconnected from the main road, but can be reached by a road through houses and through a site formerly containing houses (since demolished and now open ground)

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong relationship with the flat, elevated farmland to west

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No loss of woodland
- Native hedge to short northern boundary, with scattered trees in hedge and within site
- Development could be accommodated without loss of hedgerow

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Localised impact on views to the countryside
- Development would be prominent in views from the network of PROWs in the open countryside to the west

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with the existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by low density housing in small estates, based on a linear pattern around the network of village roads, though there is potential for the widest part of the site to be developed with a small estate or low density single houses, similar to adjacent development

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the whole site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. However part of the site that projects eastwards towards housing along the main road could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the recommendations below

Recommendations

- Development of the whole of this site would be out of character with the linear development of Chieveley. Development on a smaller part of this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.
- Careful design in keeping with the character and scale of adjacent housing
- Retention of the existing vegetation framework
- Good connection with an existing road.
- Settlement edge planting along the western boundary

SITE CHI 003**Photographs:**

View south from lane east of site



View north from PROW to south

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Linear site that extends around the north western corner of the village and wraps around the north edge to reach the road, thus protruding beyond the northern tip of the settlement
- Site large in scale in comparison to the settlement
- The site is bounded to the north and west by open fields

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong relationship with the flat, elevated farmland to west

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No loss of woodland
- Strong framework of native hedgerows
- Development could be accommodated without loss of hedgerow

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Localised impact on views to the countryside
- Development would be prominent in views from the network of PROWs in the open countryside to the west

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by low density housing in small estates, based on a linear pattern around the network of village roads

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the whole site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB. The northern section of the site adjacent to the road is important open countryside at the entrance to the village, and would not be suitable for development. The south east parts of this site could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the recommendations below

Recommendations

- Development of the whole of this site would be out of character with the linear development of Chieveley. Development on a smaller part of this site should be subject to the following conditions and protection and enhancement of the following features.
- Careful design in scale and character to adjacent housing
- Retention of existing vegetation framework
- Good connection with an existing road could be established.
- Settlement edge planting along the western boundary

SITE CHI 006**Photographs:**

View south west from PROW along east side of site

View north west from PROW along east side of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Irregular settlement edge to north east corner of village
- Site slightly large in scale in comparison to the settlement, though the site already contains the large gardens of two low density houses
- The site is adjacent to Northfields Lane for a short distance then wraps around the east side of housing

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- A continuation of the gently sloping farmland along the crest ridge to north and east

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- A large conifer hedge creates a strong but incongruous boundary between gardens to the south and open fields that form much of the site
- No woodland would be affected
- Strong linear tree belt along north part of the eastern boundary which could be retained
- Native hedge along road which could be partially retained if the site were developed

Impact on key visual characteristics

- South section visually contained by garden vegetation
- Localised impact on views of open fields from properties along the road and the PROW along the eastern boundary
- Development in the north eastern corner would be prominent in views from the settlement and from the countryside looking back at the village

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the whole of this site in one large estate would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by low density housing in small estates, based on a linear pattern around the network of village roads
- An extension of the existing linear development along Northfields would be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern
- Further development of the southern section of the site would be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern.

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Parts of this site could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the recommendations below. It is recommended that the north east corner of the site be left undeveloped so that the depth of development is not widened such that this corner would have a poor relationship with the existing road, and so that the link with the adjacent countryside is maintained

Recommendations

- The southern section consisting of enclosed gardens could accommodate some development without negative effect, providing the existing vegetation framework were retained. Development could be accommodated in the northern-most section adjacent to the road where the existing linear development could continue. It would be important to retain boundary vegetation, replacing the incongruous conifer hedgerow with more appropriate native species

SITE CHI 007**Photographs:**

View south from housing north of site



View west from public open space to east of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Small site nestled against the western side of village at its new 'centre'
- Scale of site in keeping with other pockets of housing within the settlement
- The site is bounded by open fields to the west, with a new housing estate to the north and linear housing to the south and with a short section bounded by the main road

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Some relationship with the flat, elevated farmland to west and north (CHI 002), though smaller in scale and more enclosed

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland would be affected
- Unmanaged hedgerow along the western boundary - could be retained if the site were developed
- Some planting against new housing to the north

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Localised impact on views to the countryside, including from the open space / recreation field at the settlement centre
- Development would be visible in views from the network of PROWs in the open countryside to the west, though filtered through boundary vegetation

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this site would be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by low density housing in small estates, based on a linear pattern around the main road
- The development of this site could enhance the area as a new settlement centre, by removing the open space

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Much of this site could be developed without harm to the natural beauty of the AONB, subject to the following recommendations

Recommendations

- Development on this site should be subject to the protection and enhancement of the following features:
- The western edge of the site may need to be left undeveloped and planted along the western boundary
- The existing vegetation framework would need to be retained
- Careful design to enhance the character and sense of place to the transition between Downend and Chieveley

SITE CHI 008**Photographs:**

View south east from PROW entering site on north side

View west from PROW entering site on north side

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Irregular settlement edge at south east end of village
- Site large in scale in comparison to settlement and extends further back from the roads than is typical elsewhere
- Bounded by rural lane to east and south, with housing adjacent to north and south west
- The site is separated from the houses to the west by a field, which would be surrounded by development if the whole of CHI 008 were developed
- The site feels disconnected from the village, which has a well-vegetated edge in this area

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong relationship with flat farmland to the north east and south

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland affected
- Native hedgerow to eastern boundary which could be retained if the site were developed

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Loss of open space creating setting for Chieveley
- Localised impact on views to the countryside and from the PROW across the site
- Development would be prominent in views from the road to the east

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by houses closely associated with the village roads (not the adjacent road to the east, which is not part of the village envelope)

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development over the site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB.

Recommendations

- The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. It would not be possible to repeat the linear pattern of the rest of Chieveley without developing along the rural road to the east, which would harm the countryside setting of the east side of the village.

SITE CHI 009**Photographs:***View north from PROW south of site**View north east from PROW south of site***Relationship with adjacent settlement**

- Strongly rectilinear settlement edge at south east end of village
- Site large in scale in comparison to the settlement
- The site is not closely related to the main village roads, except for a small section at the north end which wraps round beyond the existing entrance to the village.
- The site extends further back from the roads than is typical elsewhere
- The site feels disconnected from the village, which has a well-vegetated edge in this area

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Continuation of flat, open farmland to south

Impact on key landscape characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No loss of woodland or hedgerows
Impact on key visual characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Localised impact on views to the countryside• Development would be prominent in views from the PROW across open field to south
Impact on key settlement characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by houses closely associated with the main roads
Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. Development of the whole of this site would be out of character with the linear development of Chieveley. The northern section of the site adjacent to the road is important open countryside at the entrance to the village, and would not be suitable for development. If the north west corner of the site were developed, thus extending housing back from the roads, the straight, strongly vegetated edge of settlement would be lost

SITE CHI 010**Photographs:**

View south from public open space north of site



View south east from public open space north of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Small plot containing two dwellings, bordering the open space of the new settlement centre edge along eastern side of the village
- Site relates well to the settlement pattern in terms of scale and location
- Low density housing to the west and south of site, with open fields to the east (CHI 011)
- Short road frontage

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Hedgeline separates this area from field to east and the wider landscape
- The site is better related to the village and the houses along the street

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- Small site that is well contained by tree and hedgerow vegetation. Development could be accommodated while retaining the small scale pattern and not intrude into the wider AONB
- No woodlands are affected

Impact on key visual characteristics

- By retaining and enhancing existing tree cover and hedgerows, the visual impact of any development could be contained

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development would not be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site, subject to the recommendations below, would result in little harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- Development of this site could be accommodated if the existing boundary vegetation were retained

SITE CHI 011**Photographs:**

View east over hedge from public open space to west



View north from lane to south

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Irregular settlement edge along eastern side of village
- Site large in scale in comparison to the settlement and extends further back from the roads than typical elsewhere
- Bounded by rural lane on eastern boundary, with housing adjacent to much of southern half of site, and the recreation ground / open space adjacent to the north west corner
- The site feels disconnected from the village, which has a well-vegetated edge in this area

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong relationship with countryside to north

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No woodland is affected
- Native hedgerows to eastern, northern and internal boundaries - could be retained if site were developed, though internal hedge would influence site layout

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Localised impact on views to the countryside from the village
- Loss of the open countryside setting of the village
- Development would be prominent in views from the road and countryside to the north

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by small estates, with houses closely associated with the main roads (not the adjacent road to the east, which is not part of the village envelope)

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- The site as a whole should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. It would not be possible to repeat the linear pattern of the rest of Chieveley without developing along the rural road to the east, which would harm the countryside setting on the east side of the village.

SITE CHI 012**Photographs:**

View west from PROW south east of site

View north from PROW south east of site

Relationship with adjacent settlement

- Irregular settlement edge at south west end of village
- Site slightly large in scale in comparison to settlement
- The site is not closely related to the main roads and extends further back from the roads than typical elsewhere
- The site feels disconnected from the village, which has a well-vegetated edge in this area

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong relationship with flat, open farmland to south and west

Impact on key landscape characteristics

- No loss of woodlands or hedgerows

Impact on key visual characteristics

- Localised impact on views to the countryside from the village
- Loss of the open countryside setting of the village
- Development would be prominent in views from the countryside to the west and south, including several PROWs

Impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of this whole site would be out of keeping with existing settlement pattern, which is characterised by houses closely associated with the main roads

Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21

- Development on this site would result in harm to the natural beauty of the AONB

Recommendations

- The site should not be pursued as a SHLAA site. Development of the whole of this site would be out of character with the linear development of Chieveley. The site is important open countryside at the edge of the village, and is disconnected from the village.

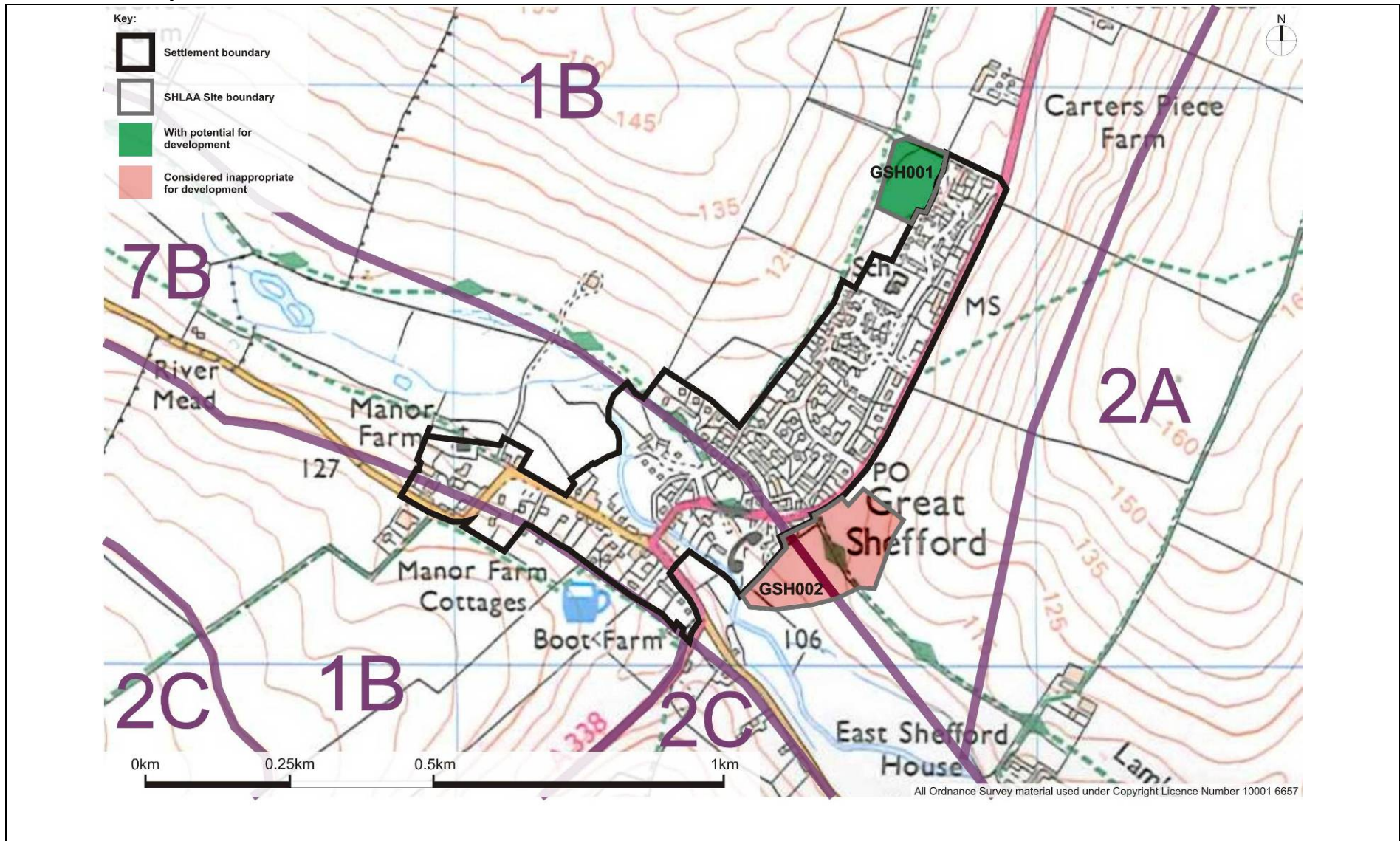
Conclusion

It is concluded that some development can be accommodated within and adjoining the settlement of Chieveley within six of the ten potential SHLAA sites examined without incurring material harm to the special qualities and natural beauty of the AONB. It is therefore recommended that CHI 001, 002, 003, 006, 007 and 010 be retained subject to the landscape requirements in the Recommendations. However it is recommended that CHI 008, 009, 011 and 012 be deleted. It is also recommended that CHI 003 and CHI 006 are not developed concurrently to avoid increasing the temporary visual impact on the wider landscape and entrance to the village. Overall the design of each site should respect its location and the surrounding architecture to ensure that the new development is integrated into the village without harm to the special qualities of the AONB.

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

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Settlement map:



Assessment of Settlement

Settlement	Great Shefford
North Wessex Downs AONB Character areas	LCA 1B: Lambourn Downs LCA 7B: Lambourn Valley
Date of site surveys	15 December 2010
Surveyors	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)

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>Impact on key landscape characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site extends from the valley bottom up the lower valley sides, straddling the 105-120m AOD contours • No woodland is affected • Native hedge to south side of driveway, line of trees to the north side of the driveway • Impact on river landscape corridor?
<p>Impact on key visual characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Western part of site partly visible through tree line from approach to village from south-west – settlement currently not visible
<p>Impact on key settlement characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Loss of wide open space forming setting of the village
<p>Summary of compliance with PPS7 paragraph 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development over this whole site would result in significant harm to the natural beauty of the AONB.
<p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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.

2.9. Service Village: Bradfield Southend – No SHLAA sites

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Assessment of Settlement

Settlement Bradfield Southend
North Wessex Downs AONB Character area LCA 8A: Hermitage Wooded Commons Lowland Mosaic
Date of site visit 20 January 2011
Surveyors BK
Key landscape characteristics AONB LCA (unless source noted otherwise) 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad undulating plateau • Intricate mosaic of woodland, pasture and small areas of remnant heathland • Large interconnected woodland blocks (along river Bourne) • Strong hedgerow pattern with mature trees • Enclosed and intimate character • Small irregular fields of informal and piecemeal enclosures • Intricate network of rural lanes, many sunken and overhung with woodland • Ancient and semi-natural woodland • Reorganised fields and paddocks, formerly pre 18th C irregular fields (HLC) • Blurring of the urban/rural boundary as result of introduction of paddocks (HECZ) • Network of lanes with old hedgebanks (NDLCA LCT15) • Linear woodland (NDLCA LCT15)
Key visual characteristics AONB LCA (unless source noted otherwise) 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low wooded horizons

Key settlement characteristics**AONB LCA** (unless source noted otherwise)**8A Hermitage Wooded Commons**

- Dispersers settlement pattern characteristic of encroachment into woodland and commons
- Linear roadside settlements as at Southend
- Development has extended beyond the settlement boundary
- Original centred on two drove roads
- Mix of farmhouses and poly-focal hamlets with several nuclei clustered around road junctions at Southend (HECZ)
- Housing developments from the 1960s concentrated around the historic settlements of South End, typified by small housing estates and developments constructed around the historic nuclei. Development at South End has shifted the settlement's focus to the south-west and away from the historic core (HECZ)
- Ridgetop roads and settlements (NDLCA LCT15)
- Insensitive modern infill development (NDLCA LCT15)

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

The whole of Southend and its hinterland lies within the AONB landscape character area LCA 8A Hermitage Wooded Commons. The village extends along a low ridge at 95 to 100m AOD above the river Bourne valley to the south and the river Pang valley to the north. A minor stream in a shallow valley defines the northern edge of the village. The settlement is largely linear in character, as the historic nucleated hamlets have been linked through more modern housing along Cock Lane and South End Road, although these are linked by development along Heath Road. The settlement edge is fragmented but much more clearly defined at the west end of the village on Cock Lane and at the top of Aldmoor Lane. The village has few open views; with framed views into adjacent fields. The Bourne valley is a local feature and the local tree and hedgerow cover helps to contain the village.

The village still maintains its ridgetop character and largely retains a linear pattern. The impact of modern infill development is partly mitigated by the lack of large or medium sized estates and the open space between Cock Lane and South End Road. The village would benefit from a greater sense of containment and clearer definition to the main approaches into the village. This is already in evidence at Cock Lane and further development beyond the existing boundary here should be resisted. The character of Aldmoor Lane should be conserved and development should not extend down the ridgeline slopes. Minor extensions at each end of South End Road might be achieved without harm to the AONB provided that an opportunity was sought to enhance the settlement edge and the village did not expand beyond any well defined landscape features.

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)