

~ Milton Fields ~

Masterplan

September 2023

A Proposed development of 800 homes
allocated as part of Didcot Garden Town

“ Surprisingly **INNOVATIVE** “

“ Genuinely **SUSTAINABLE** “

“ Hopefully **EXEMPLAR** “



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1.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared by Carter Jonas LLP on behalf of the Trustees of the LA Barrett Will Trust to implement the allocation of 800 houses at "Milton Fields".

The site has one major significant advantage – it is all within single ownership (unlike neighbouring Valley Park and Great Western Park which were in multiple and varied ownership).

The owner is Mr Anthony Mockler as Tenant for Life of the LA Barrett Will Trust referred to above. He lives nearby at Milton Manor House (a Grade I Listed Building, famous for its Strawberry Hill Gothic interior designs). Therefore, decision making with only one owner to consult is much simpler than in the case of most major developments.

The landowner has always rejected very financially tempting offers from numerous developers, both large and small. However, at long last, he's in a position to produce his own Masterplan, with the assistance of his land agents, Carter Jonas LLP.

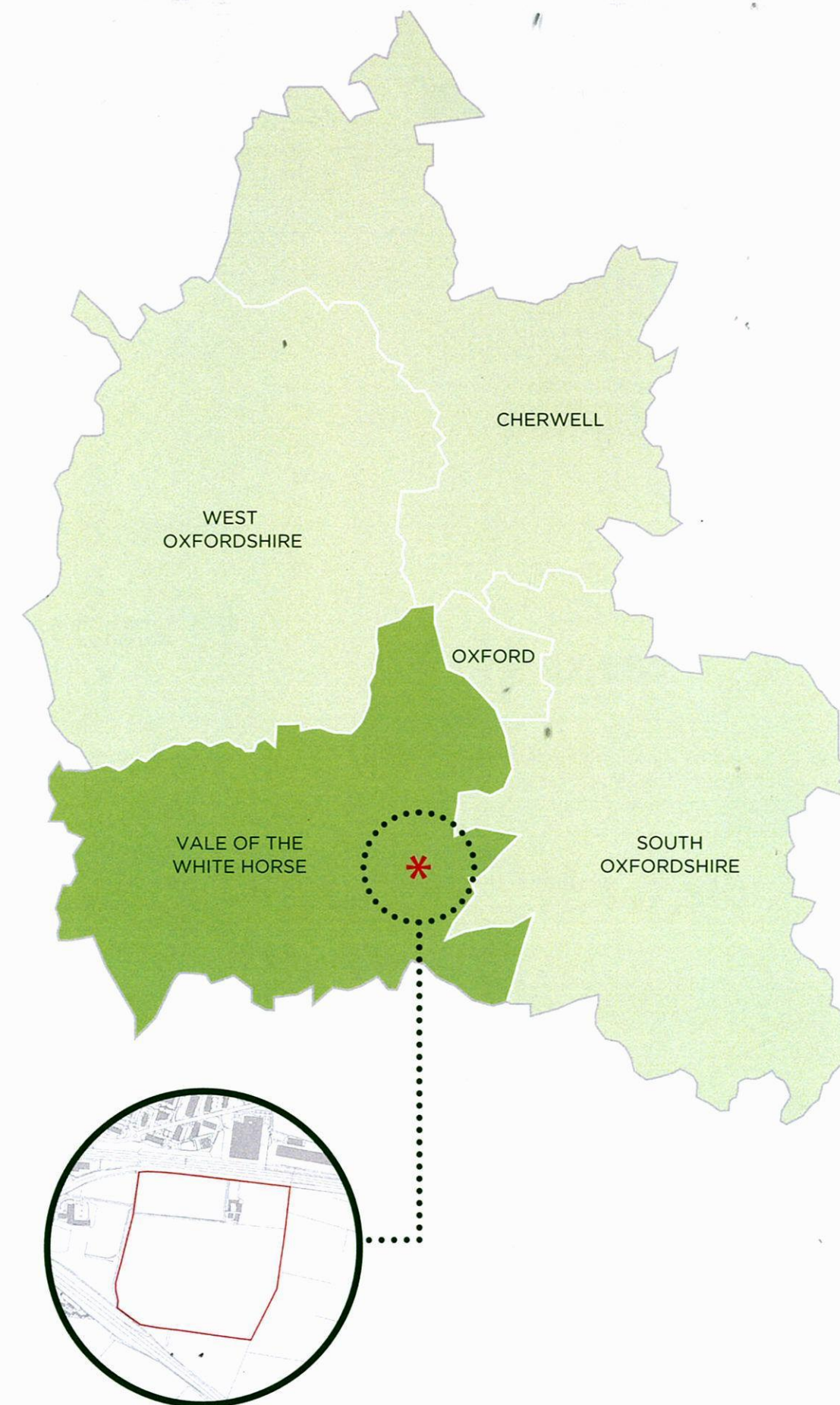


Fig 01: Vale of White Horse District Council location plan

1.2 Why Here?

Accessibility

The Site is conveniently positioned directly to the west of Didcot, with access to direct bus links, cycleways and footpaths leading to the centre of the town.

Public Transport

Didcot Train Station provides onwards rail services into Oxford, Bristol and London, affording an excellent, sustainable public transport connection.

Enclosure

The Site is well enclosed by existing hedgerows and tree lines, which ensure the development is physically and visually contained and has defensible boundaries.

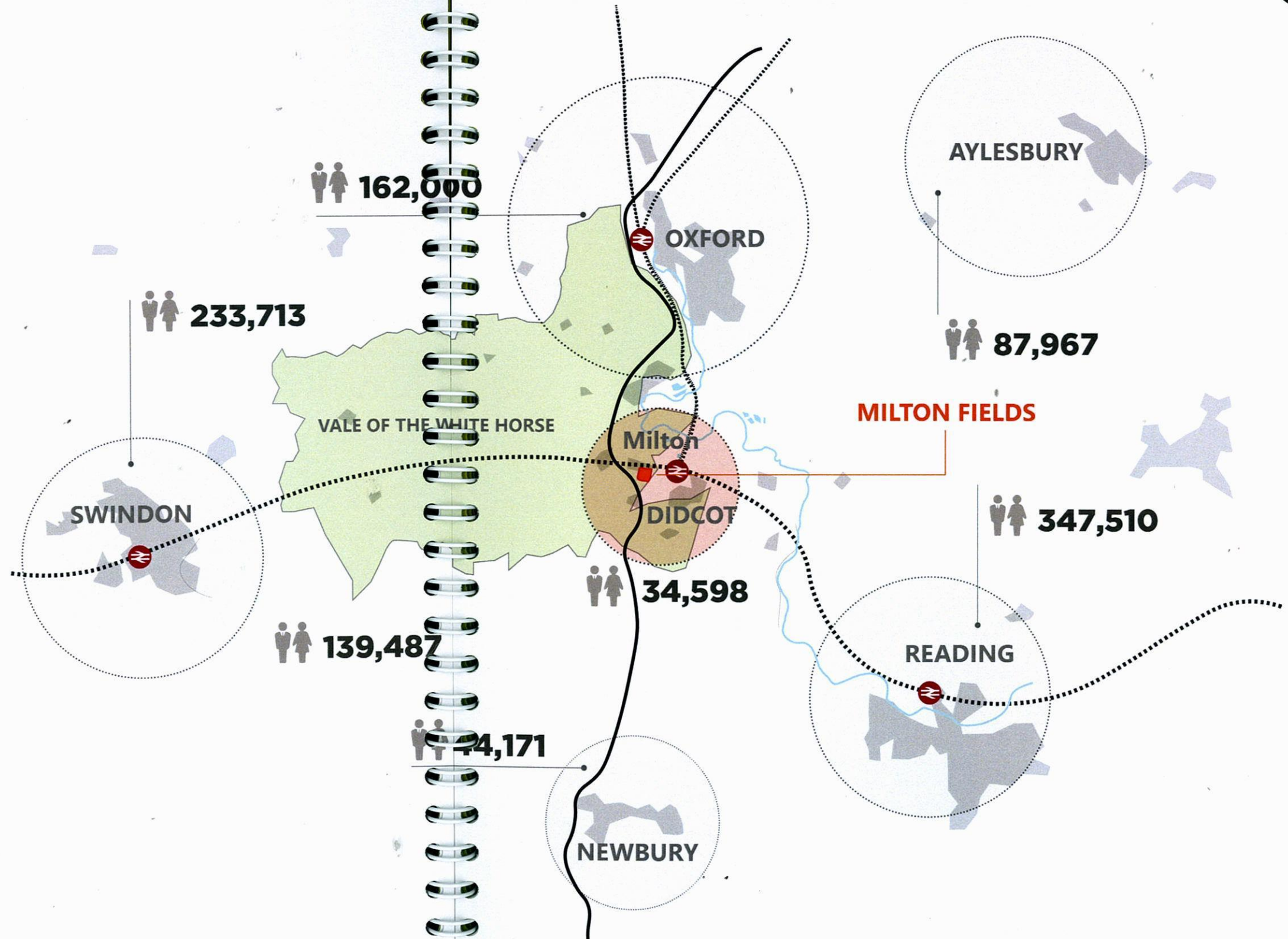


Fig 02: Wider Context Plan

2.0 Vision & Masterplan

- 2.1 Vision for Milton Fields
- 2.2 Existing Site Influences
- 2.3 A Landscape-led Response - Working with Nature
- 2.4 Access & Movement
- 2.5 Emerging Concept Masterplan
- 2.6 Sustainability Objectives
- 2.7 Sustainable Housing

2.1 Vision for Milton Fields

“

1. The single, most striking, most innovative and therefore most surprising element of the vision is this:

Milton Fields is to be a car free development.

It perhaps ought to be stressed here that this is not a new idea. The Trust first proposed it a quarter of a century ago – much before its time. However, now it is very much of the time – and indeed in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's general philosophy.

The concept is of course very far from new in the sense that car free developments, both on a small and larger scale, exist in many countries of the world; and solutions to the obvious problems that will occur to planners and councillors have been found in both modern car free developments such as Freiburg as well as ancient settlements such as Rhodes. In England the only current example appears to be the North Devon village of Clovelly.

Therefore, we describe this proposal as

“ Surprisingly INNOVATIVE ”.

2. So how are people to get around? Obviously on foot and by bicycle; but also by much improved means of public transport including, very possibly, S Bahns, light railways and trams, all of which are now being reintroduced in cities such as Dublin and Paris; and which will be much less expensive to construct in comparatively open countryside rather than built-up city centres.

However, the Masterplan does include provision for shared car use (which is already very popular in Oxford) in the form of electric cars stationed adjoining the present A4130.

3. Milton Fields is part of Didcot Garden Town.

The proposed Delivery Plan for Didcot Garden Town was published in the autumn of 2017 – almost six years ago!

Very little seems to have been achieved since then. This will change entirely with Milton Fields. Its traffic free environment, open green spaces and green corridors, walkable community shopping and recreation centre, and nearby primary school, lack of noise and pollution, will genuinely form “a Super Green Town” as originally proposed.

It will therefore be

“ Genuinely SUSTAINABLE ”

4. As regards the types and tenures of houses, of which TEN versions were proposed in the *Delivery Plan*, all these are enthusiastically supported; in particular, Self-Build which we would propose to incorporate in partnership with the Vale of the White Horse District Council.

Milton Fields will also follow the Vale of White Horse's Joint Design Guide (of 211 pages!); and set up its own Design Council to oversee construction so that the end result is not only attractive but will indeed follow Government guidelines in being beautiful in design as well as affordable and sustainable.

5. The *Delivery Plan* refers (page 208) to a “unique site with potential for a new specialist neighbourhood comprising 800 homes and associated green space”; and indeed to Milton Fields as an “Exemplar Site”.

This description we are determined in every way to justify. Our hope therefore is that this will become an example of inspirational development, not only for Oxfordshire, but indeed, for the country as a whole. Hence Milton Fields will be

“ Hopefully EXEMPLAR ”.

”

2.2 Existing Site Influences

1. Land, buildings and rights of way

There are three aspects of the Site that need preserving, and integrating into the layout.

First: two areas of high grade farmland on the first of which a City Farm will be located close to a new primary school; the second will be the site of a bosquette.

Second: the carefully designed re-use of existing farm buildings into a community centre including retail, crafts, hospitality and entertainment.

Third: the integration of two public rights of way which run along the eastern boundary of the site and perpendicular into the western boundary.

2. Access

The site abuts the A4130 along its northerly edge. Access is proposed to be taken from the northwest corner of the Site with the A4130, approximately where an arrow is shown on the accompanying plan.

3. Topography & Drainage

The Site has clearly pronounced topography and patterns of drainage. This includes the highest point located at the southwest corner and the lowest point at the opposite, northeast corner. The site layout has been very strongly guided by this change in topography which includes the location of a 'belvedere' at the highest point on the Site as an exemplar landmark.

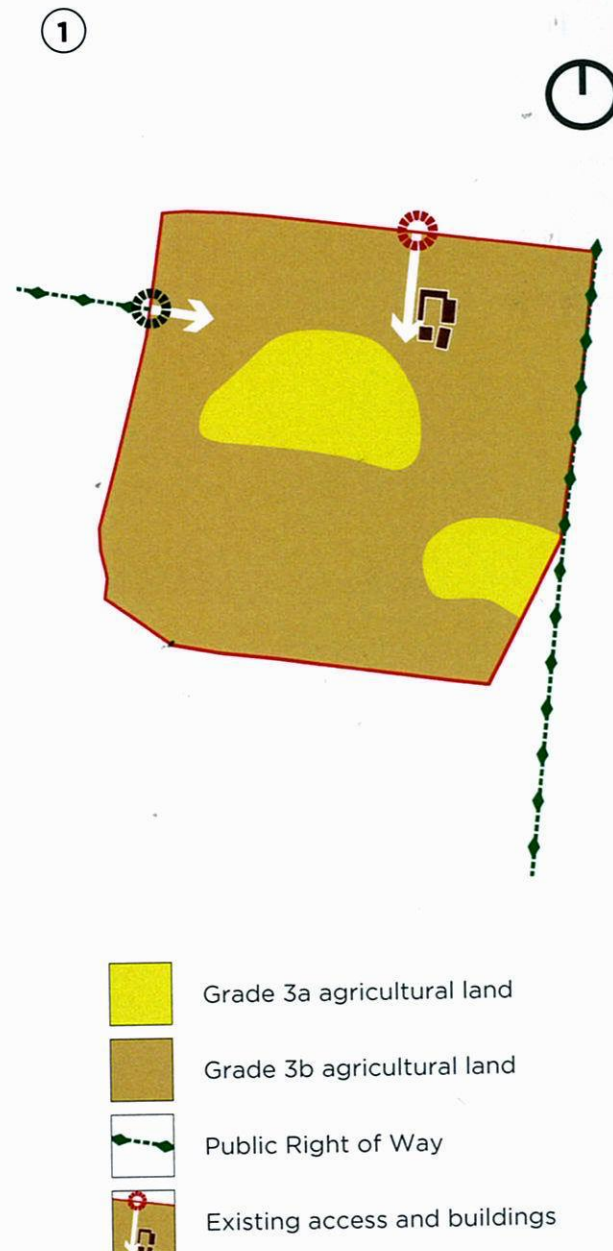


Fig 03: Land, building and rights of way site driver

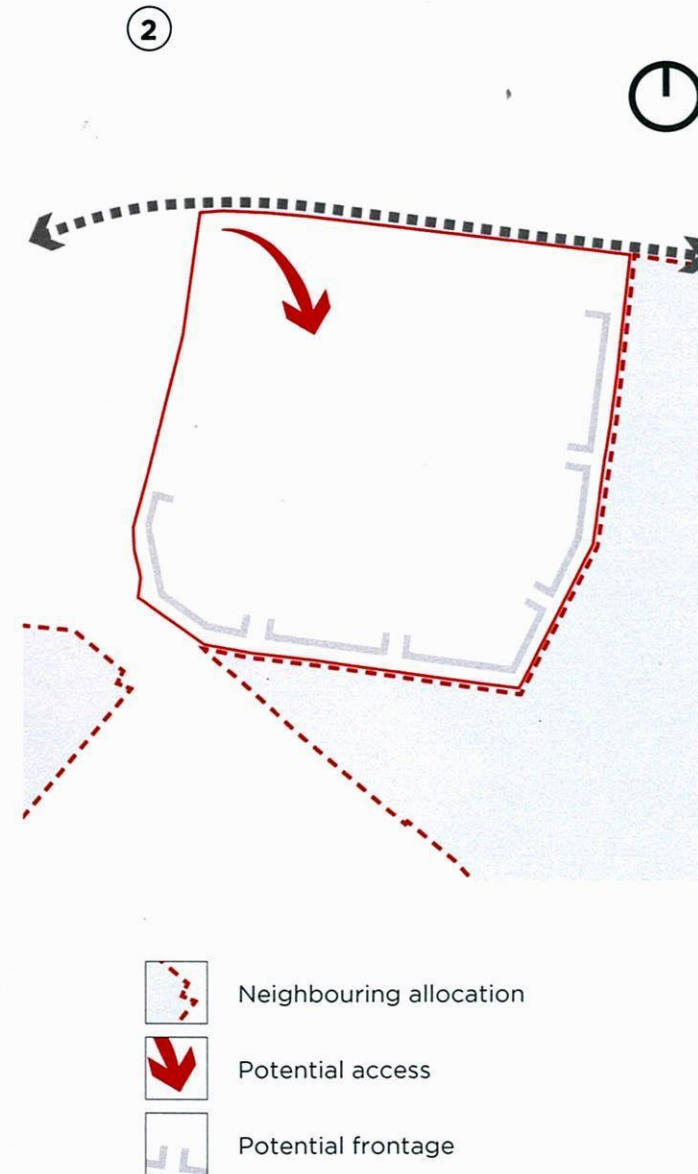


Fig 04: Access and allocations site driver

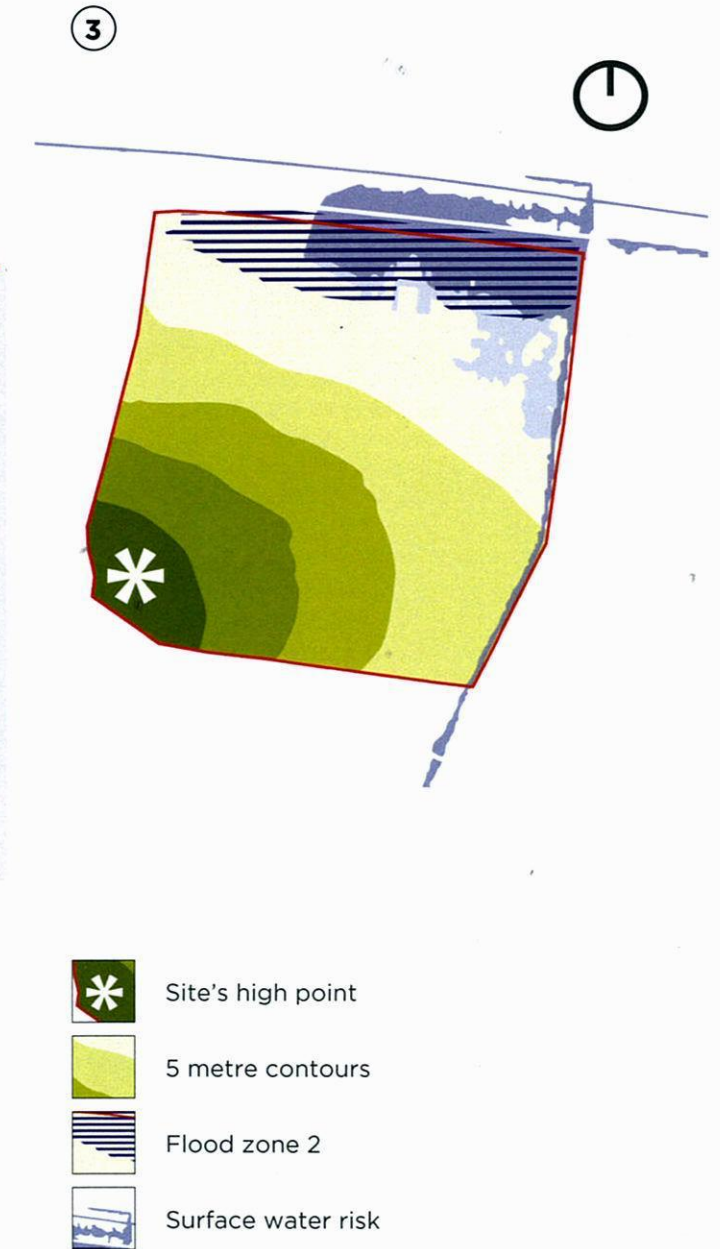


Fig 05: Topography and drainage site driver

2.3 A Landscape-led Response - Working With Nature

The masterplan concept presented in this document is strongly influenced by both existing site conditions and landscape together with an arrangement of blocks and spaces which seeks to create landscape at its heart.

On the plan opposite, white blocks indicate space for future homes and crescent-shaped streets. There is also a variety of green spaces as denoted in green. Blue is indicative of drainage, and principal buildings are depicted in an orange colour.

There is a pavilion positioned to overlook the open space and cricket pitch in the southern part of the Site. A bosquette is provided - formal plantation of trees as a public garden, very much a formal planting area but inviting residents to linger and enjoy. There is a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) to be used by both the school and the local community, as well as an orchard in the southeast corner at arrival from the east. A City Farm located on higher grade agricultural land and adjacent to the primary school will provide a key role for food growing within the development and help facilitate meetings and greetings for local residents. Finally, the site layout helps ease of movement through the creation of a modified grid, and allowing for the positioning of a belvedere at the highest, southwestern point of the Site. All in all, the design supports, creates and enhances both landscape and nature.




	Primary school / recreation		Swale
	Urban farm		Green corridor
	Focal / key buildings		Existing green infrastructure
	Orchard		Bosquette
	Attenuation feature		Cricket pitch / pavilion

Fig 06: Landscape-led response plan



2.4 Access and Movement

The development will truly be an exemplar of sustainable travel.

The movement network will comprise a series of walking and cycling routes connected by a modified grid pattern of routes. "Micro mobility hubs" will be provided in various locations.

Overall, the Site will have a highly connected network of spaces and amenities, enhanced above all by the absence of vehicles parked along the roads and obstructing pedestrians, cyclists, and indeed, social encounters - as happens only too often in neighbouring villages throughout Oxfordshire.

-  Primary corridor / access
-  Cycle / pedestrian route / access
-  Primary pedestrian route / access
-  Secondary pedestrian route
-  Mobility Hub
-  Primary school
-  Village centre
-  Parking / EV hub
-  Public Right of Way
-  Existing road

Fig 07: Access and movement plan



2.5 Emerging Concept Masterplan

- 1 Re-development of existing farm buildings (New Farm) into a central community shopping, craft and entertainment centre
- 2 The primary school - very close to the community centre
- 3 A multi-use games area for the use of both the school and the local community
- 4 City Farm - located on high grade agricultural land adjacent to the primary school
- 5 Catholic church and cloister
- 6 Cricket pavilion overlooking the open space and cricket pitch
- 7 Orchard in the south-east corner
- 8 Bosquette - formal plantation of trees, as a public garden
- 9 A belvedere situated at the Site's highest point as a landmark for the whole development; visible from both the A34 and Didcot town centre
- 10 Shared semi-private gardens for residential blocks
- 11 Informal parkland in the North as a buffer from the A4130
- 12 Primary vehicular access point from A4130 with street planting
- 13 Electric car club - charging points
- 14 Emergency access entrance utilising the cycle / pedestrian link
- 15 Major pedestrian route / gateway into Didcot
- 16 Major mobility hub for the Site - public bus stop, bike shelter and turning facility for vehicles

Note: The images shown on this page are purely indicative and are not by any means definitive of what will be developed.







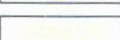

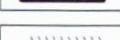





	Site boundary		Access loop
	Vehicular access		Pedestrian / Cycle route
	Pedestrian access		Primary pedestrian route
	Residential parcel		Secondary pedestrian route
	Key building		Equipped play area
	Attenuation basin		Swale route (drainage)
	Existing hedgerow		Public Right of Way

Fig 08: Emerging concept plan



2.6 Sustainability Objectives

The Site's location provides for ease of walking and cycling into the centre of Didcot to the east. The new community of up to 800 new homes (1,920 people) will have direct access to public transport; Didcot Rail Station is a 20 minute walk / 8 minute cycle and bus stops are located at a mobility hub to the north of the Site offering regular and direct access to central Didcot.

Other key considerations for the masterplan design include: drainage and ecology / biodiversity. Existing trees and landscape features are carefully integrated within the masterplan.

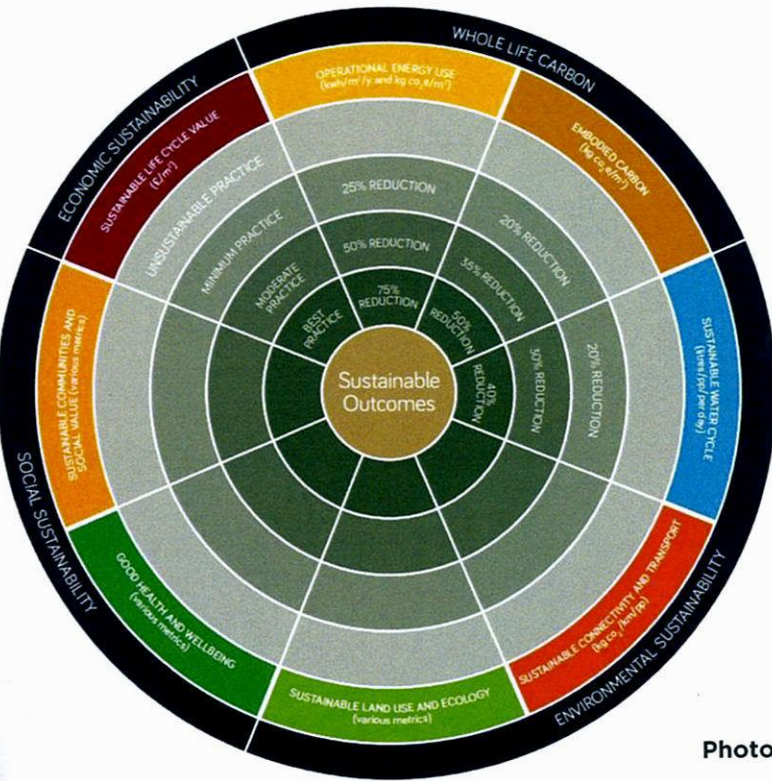
On-site habitats have the potential to support local native species of mammal and bird.

RIBA Sustainable Outcomes

In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the RIBA have developed 8 Sustainable Outcomes (the "Outcomes"):

- Net zero operational carbon
- Net zero embodied carbon
- Sustainable water cycle
- Sustainable connectivity and transport
- Sustainable land use and biodiversity
- Good health and wellbeing
- Sustainable communities and social value
- Sustainable life cycle cost

Given the holistic nature of the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes 2030 framework, these 'outcomes' would need to be adopted by the whole design team.



Photograph Descriptions

1. Nest boxes supporting the local bird population
2. Native deciduous woodland
3. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
4. EV charging points
5. Attenuation basins as wildlife habitats



Fig 10: Environmental and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) features

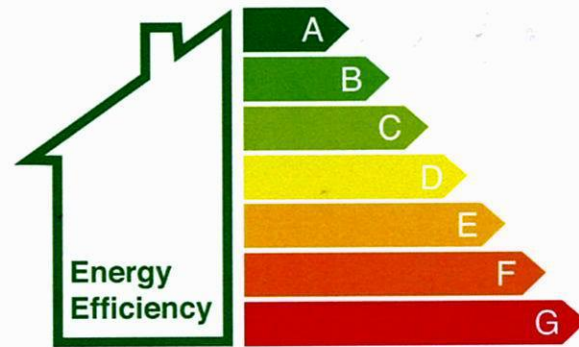
Fig 09: Diagram from RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide (December 2019).

2.7 Sustainable Housing

New homes at Milton Fields will be designed to meet the highest of sustainability criteria, in the following ways.

Energy Efficient Homes

A commitment to promote new developments and communities that incorporate new low carbon technologies and ideas that help minimise the impact of development on our changing climate and helping home buyers to reduce their energy costs.



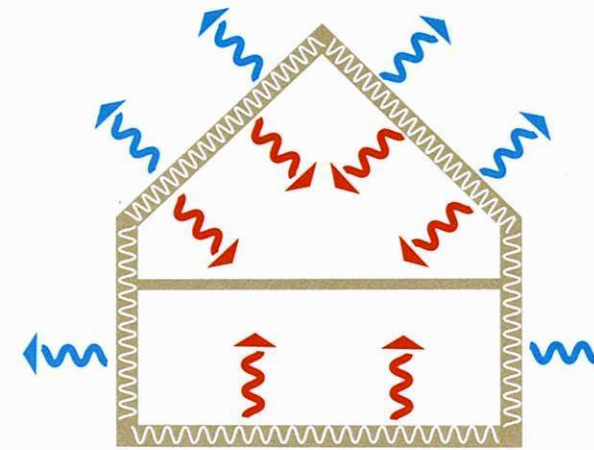
EV Charging Hub

Homes will be 'car free', however an EV charging Hub is proposed next to the main entrance which will be home to car club vehicles available for use by all residents.



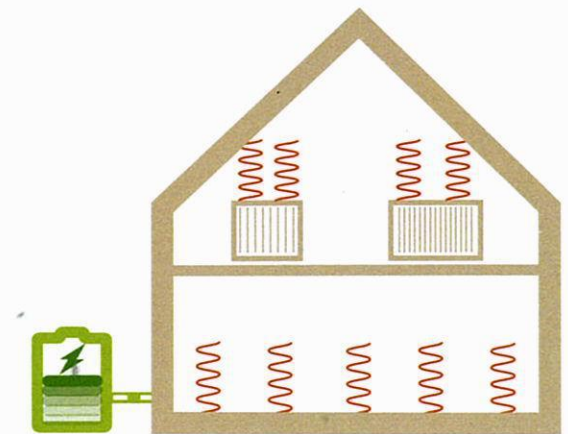
Fully Insulated Homes

New homes will be fully insulated, meaning more heating is kept inside, helping to keep pleasant temperatures all year round and reducing carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.



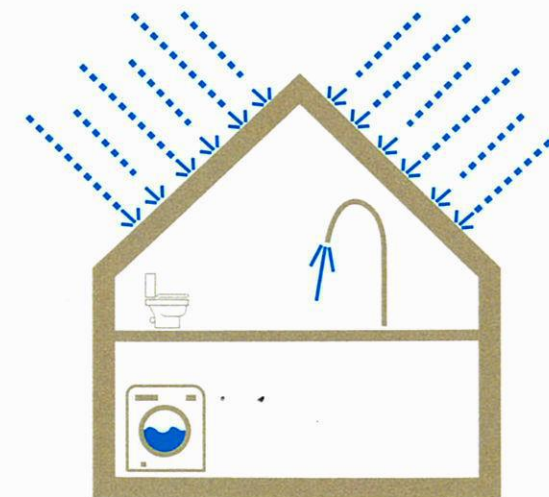
Heat Pumps

Homes fitted with air source heat pumps. Air source heat pumps are a great source of renewable energy because they use renewable heat from the environment. They can assist in lowering energy bills and are better for the environment by lowering our carbon footprint.



Energy Efficient Appliances

Energy and water efficient appliances installed reducing energy and water consumption.



High Performance Windows

Windows and doors will be fitted with high performance glazing and seals, delivering high thermal performance and reducing external noise transmission into homes.

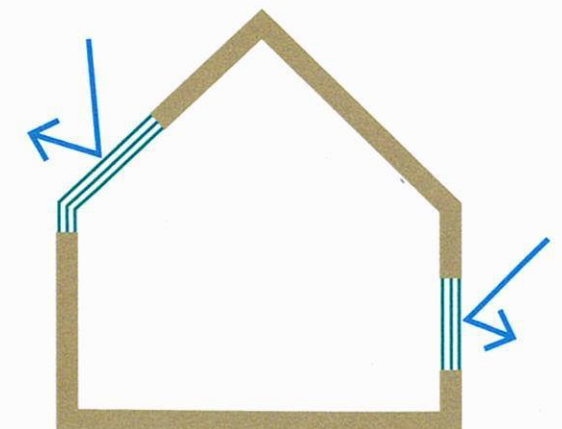
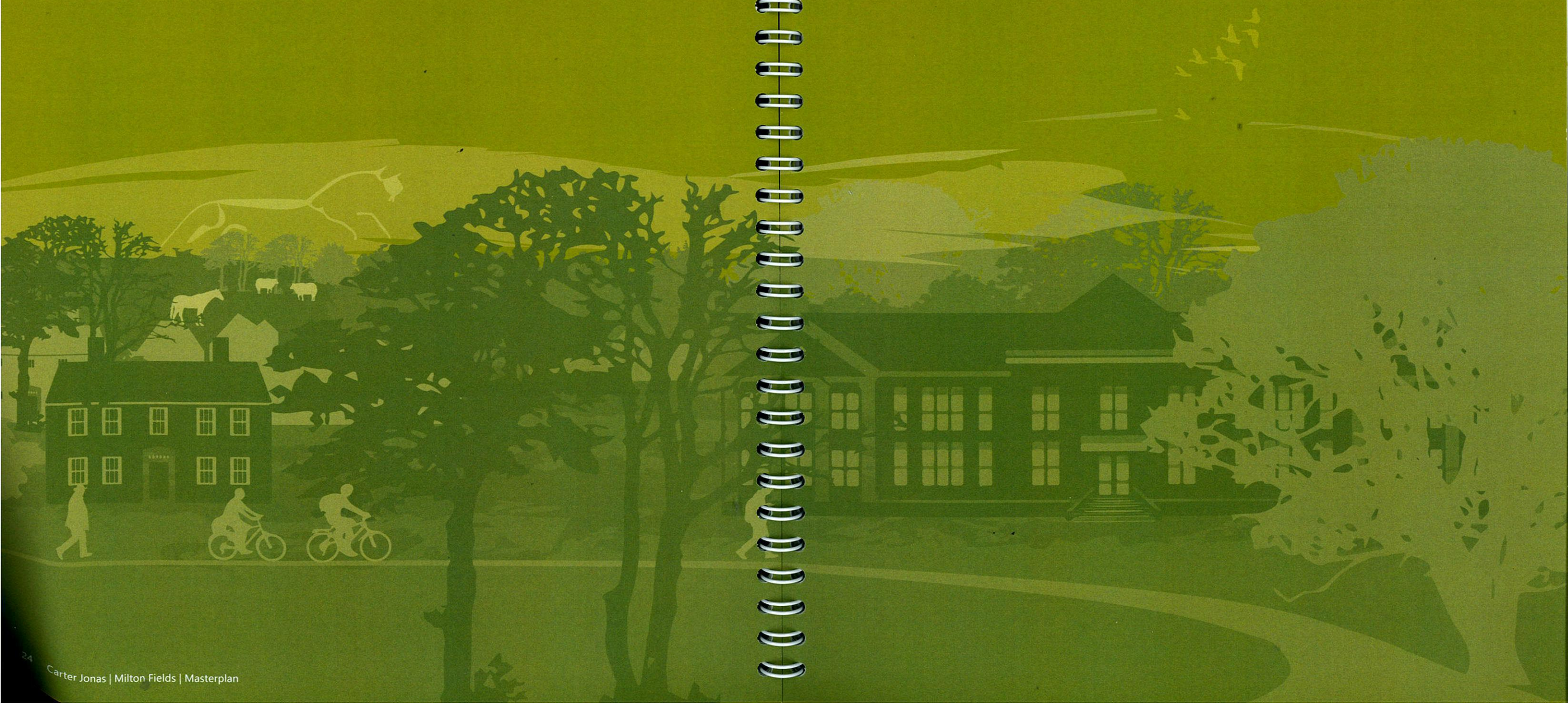


Fig 11: Sustainable housing diagrams

3.0 The Site

- 3.1 West Didcot - A Well Connected Place
- 3.2 West Didcot - A Sustainable Place
- 3.3 The Opportunity
- 3.4 The Site
- 3.5 Site Considerations



3.1 West Didcot - A Well Connected Place

The Site is located in the Vale of the White Horse District. The Site is located within the boundary of the parish of Milton, approximately 3.0 miles (4.8 km) west of the town of Didcot.

The Site is rectangular in shape and is bound by the A4130 to the north and the A34 to the south and south west.








The wider context of the Site includes Milton Park to the north, open fields to the east and south (though these are part of Valley Park and will one day be developed; indeed Valley Park has planning permission for 4,254 homes).



Oxford - 45 mins
Swindon - 15 mins
Reading - 13 mins



Oxford - 23 mins via A34
Swindon - 45 mins via M4
Reading - 40 mins via A34 & M4

-  The Site - 33.3ha / 82.3ac
-  Vale of the White Horse District boundary
-  District boundary
-  Motorway
-  Primary A road
-  Rail line
-  Rail station

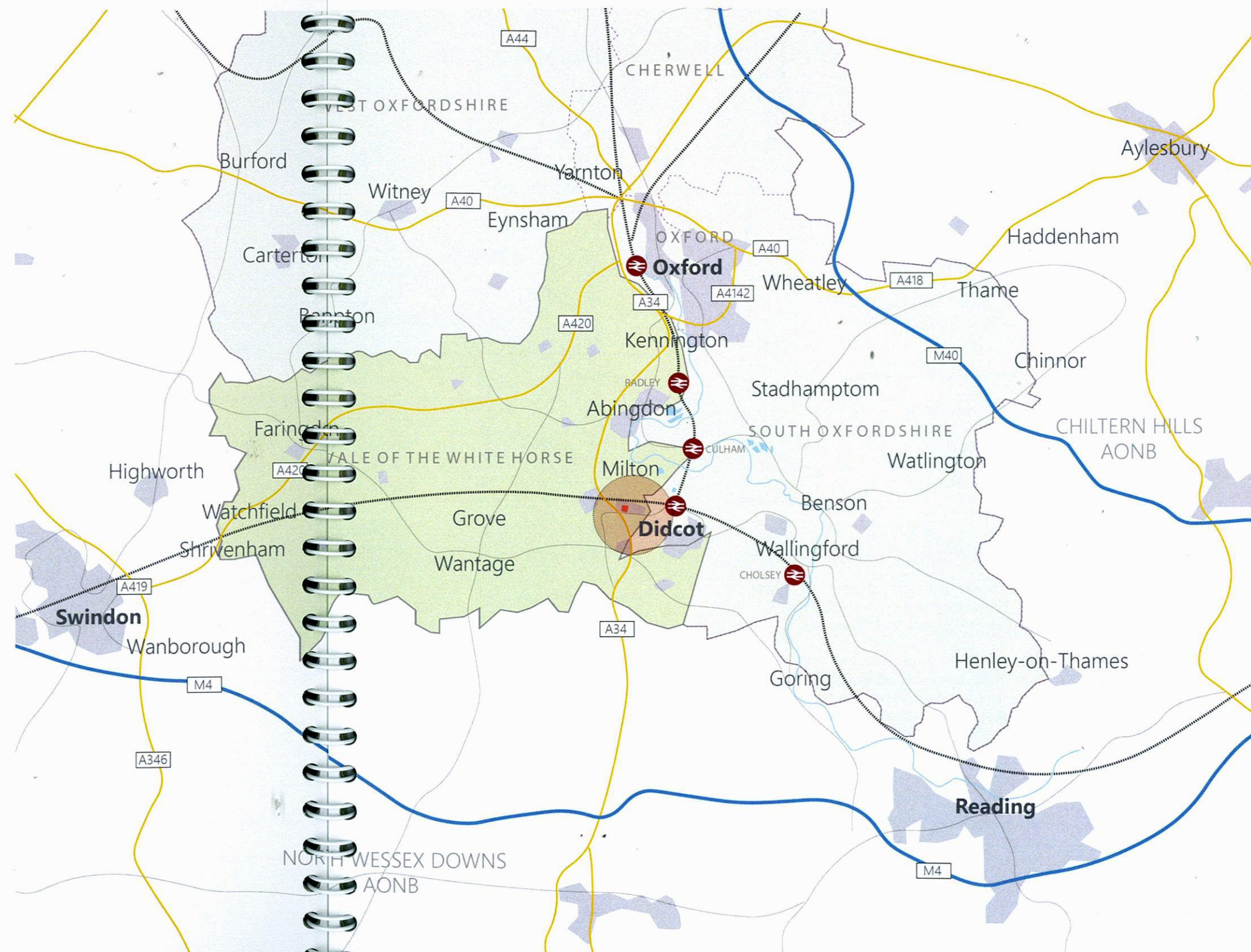


Fig 12: Regional Context Map

3.2 West Didcot - A Sustainable Location For Growth

The Site is well served by a range of facilities located in Milton, Didcot and Harwell. These existing services and facilities are shown on Figure 13 opposite and include:

- ① St Blaise's Church
- ② Milton Manor House (Catholic Chapel)
- ③ Milton Methodist Church
- ④ Apollo Pharmacy (Milton Park)
- ⑤ St Blaise C of E Primary School & Milton United Football Club (Milton Heights)

Surrounding residential Local Plan allocations in the Vale of White Horse district are noted below:

- ⑥ 'The Site' Milton Fields for 800 dwellings
- ⑦ Milton Heights for 400 dwellings
- ⑧ Valley Park for 4,254 dwellings
- ⑨ West of Harwell for 207 dwellings



The closest primary school is St Blaise C of E Primary School located on Midwinter Avenue in Milton.



Bus stops are located along the A4130, outside of Milton Service Area. The X32 bus passes in front of the site along the A4130 and connects the development with Oxford and Abingdon via Didcot



Didcot Parkway Rail Station is located approximately 2.1 miles (3.5km) east, accessible via the X2 Connector bus which runs to Oxford City Centre.

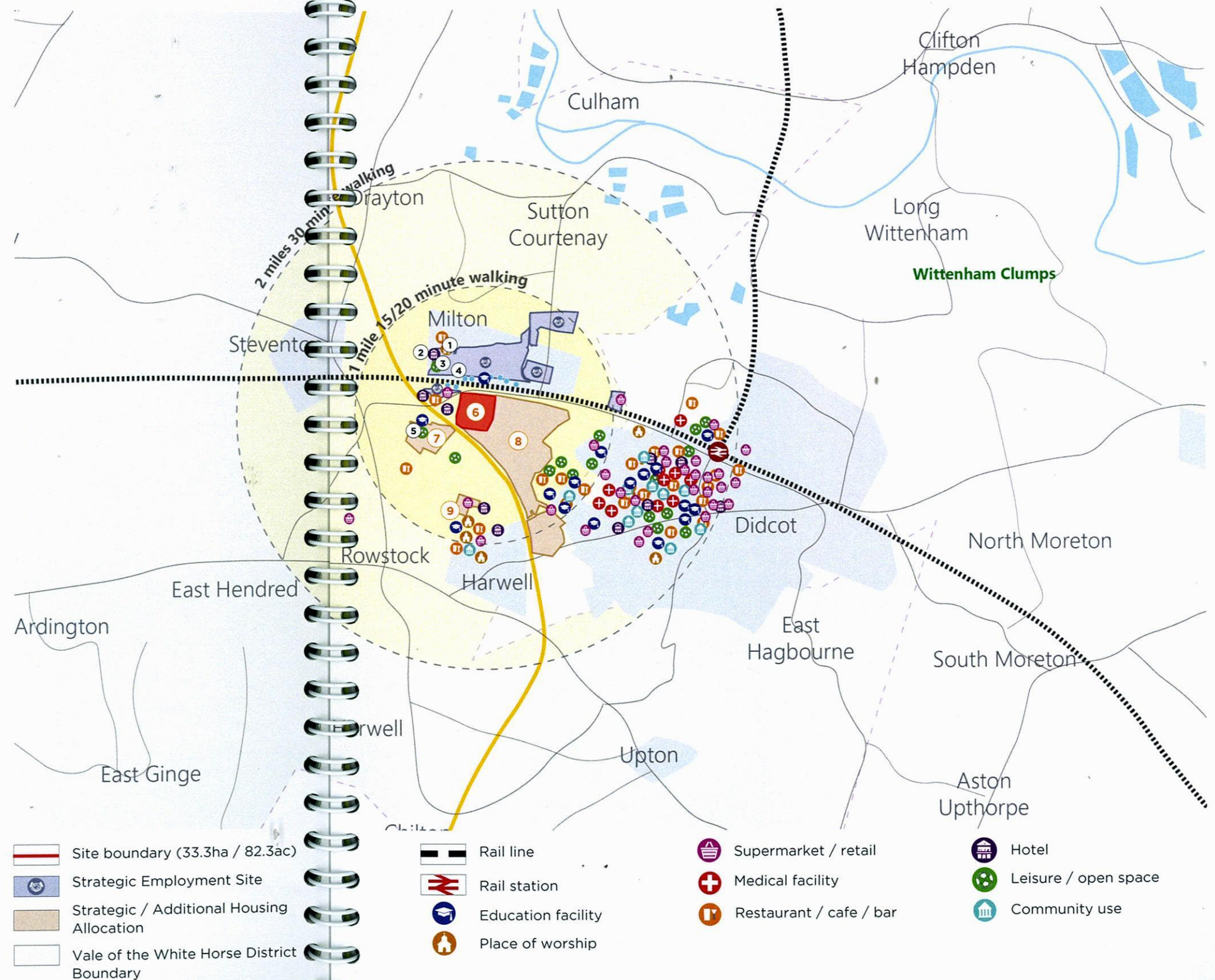


Fig 13: Community facilities plan

3.3 The Opportunity

Milton Fields provides an excellent opportunity to help create a comprehensive extension to the west side of Didcot as part of other sites earmarked for development in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan as shown on the plan opposite. It is therefore right and proper to plan for the development of Milton Fields as part and parcel of this area of expansion.

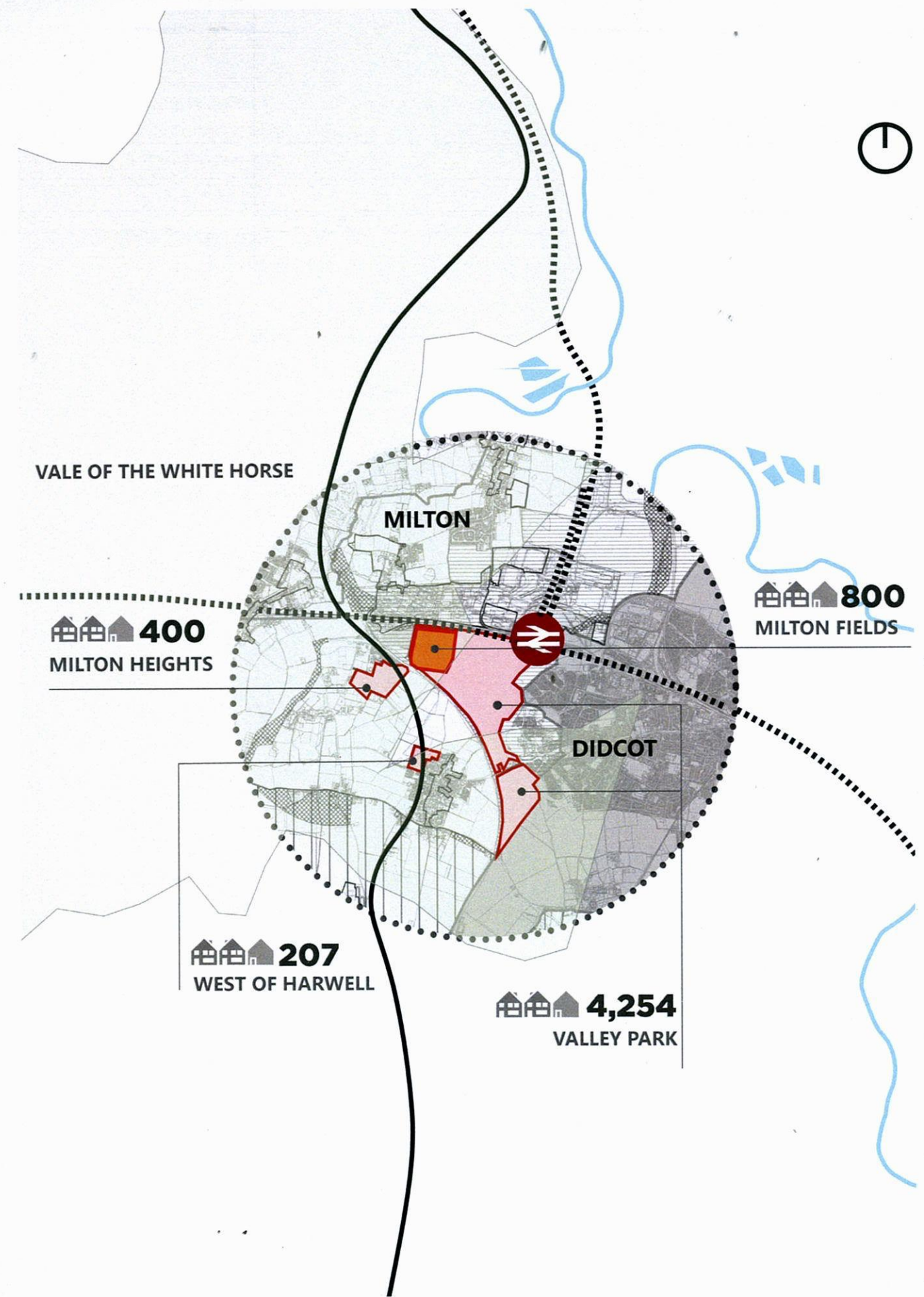
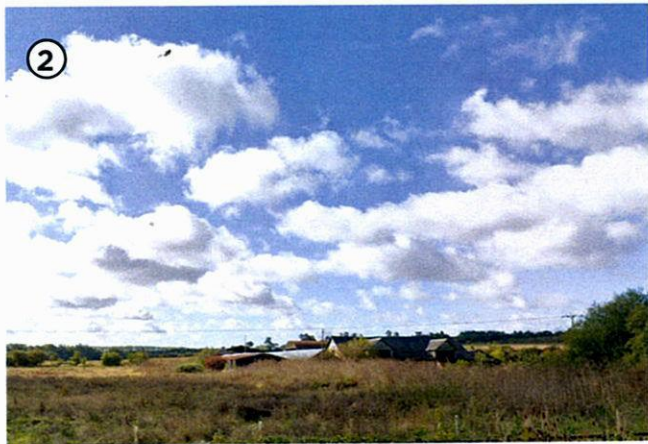
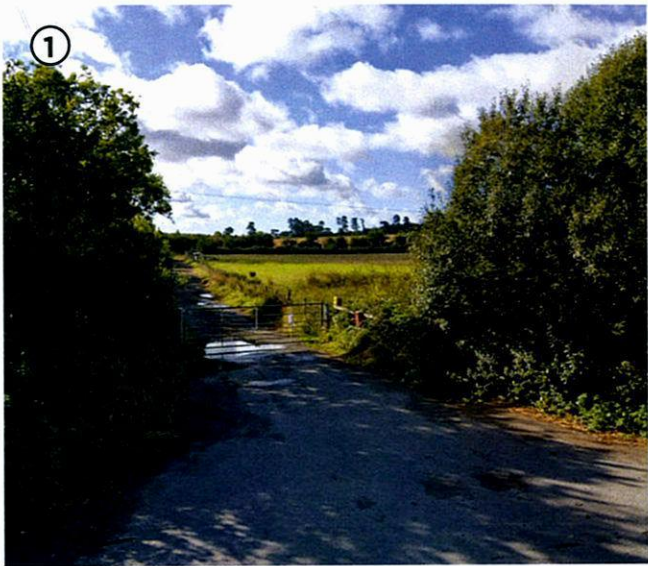


Fig 14: Surrounding Housing Allocation Map

3.4 The Site

The Site is square in shape and comprises approximately 33.3 Hectares (82.3 acres). To the north of the Site is Milton Park, separated from the Site by the A4130.

To the west of the Site is a road interchange between the A34 and A4130 and an area planned for warehousing. To the south is the A34, including a field between the Site and the A34 that belongs to Valley Park. Finally to the immediate east is Valley Park, a large mixed use urban extension to Didcot.



The photos on the opposite page were taken from Google Street View:

- ① View of the existing access taken from the A4130
- ② View looking south west across the Site, showing the existing buildings within the red line.
- ③ looking east from the Premier Inn parking area to the west of the Site

Fig 15: Site photographs



Fig 16: Aerial plan of the Site with the site boundary highlighted in red

3.5 Site Considerations

The following are a series of key site considerations we have identified which need to be considered through the masterplan design process:

- ① There is an existing minor access point off the A4130.
- ② Part of the Site to the north and north east falls within Flood Zone 3. Close to this area, the land also falls within Flood Zone 2.
- ③ Existing hedgerows transect the Site centrally from east to west.
- ④ The Site falls from around 75m AOD at the south west corner to around 60m AOD to the north eastern corner
- ⑤ There are a cluster of existing buildings on the Site, including a small farmhouse, which have been used for agricultural purposes but are now mainly redundant.
- ⑥ Two Public Rights of Ways (ProW's) border the Site to the east (running north to south) and to the west (running east to west). There is the potential to link new footpaths across the Site to these existing ProW's. (This will clearly need the co-operation of Valley Park to the east - which we would urge the Council to insist on as part of their Section 106 agreements).
- ⑦ The adjacent site to the east (Valley Park) has planning permission for up to 4,252 homes,











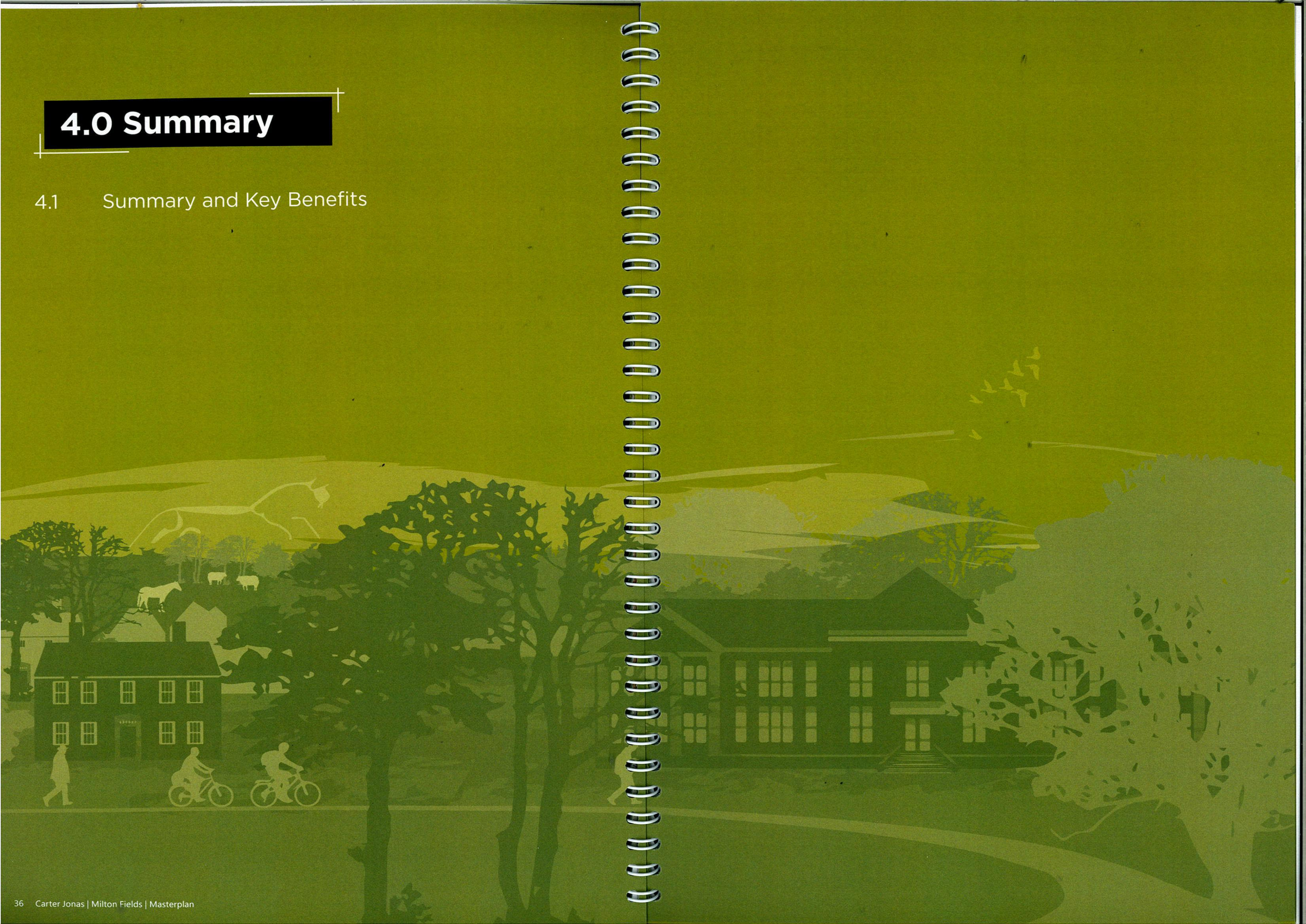
-  Site boundary (33.3 ha / 82.3 acres)
-  Existing access from the A4130
-  Sensitive boundary to noise
-  Existing hedgerow
-  5m contours
-  EA Flood Zone 2
-  EA Flood Zone 3
-  Adjacent planning permission for 4,254 dwellings
-  Public Right of Way (PRoW)
-  Landfall arrow



Fig 17: Site Considerations Plan

4.0 Summary

4.1 Summary and Key Benefits



4.1 Summary and Key Benefits

Summary Of Proposals

The concept plan for up to 800 new homes and a range of facilities seeks to respond to the landscape and emerging context of the Site and surroundings through the creation of a highly integrated network of walkable / cyclable routes including proposals to reduce traffic and improve public transport – on the lines proposed by Councillor Louise Upton, Cabinet member for Health and Transport, Oxford City Council in September 2022.

Milton Fields will emerge as an environment of conviviality that promotes a healthy living and learning lifestyle.

Next Steps

Once the Masterplan has been discussed and agreed, it is proposed to involve at least three medium sized developers who will be offered a share in the eventual profits; as well as, most importantly, an area set aside in consultation with the Vale of the White Horse for Self Build – a vital feature.

This will be on the lines of the development at Romsey in Hampshire which is well under way (though on a much larger scale) under the aegis of the Mountbatten Estate.

Milton Fields, Didcot: Key Benefits for the Community



A car free development



Renewable energy systems to all new homes



Access to over 10 hectares of new Public Open Space, including childrens play areas



A diverse range of up to 800 new homes catering for all, including self build



30% of all new homes will be affordable



An urban farm



A new two form entry primary school



Direct cycling and walking routes into neighbouring Didcot in 10 minutes



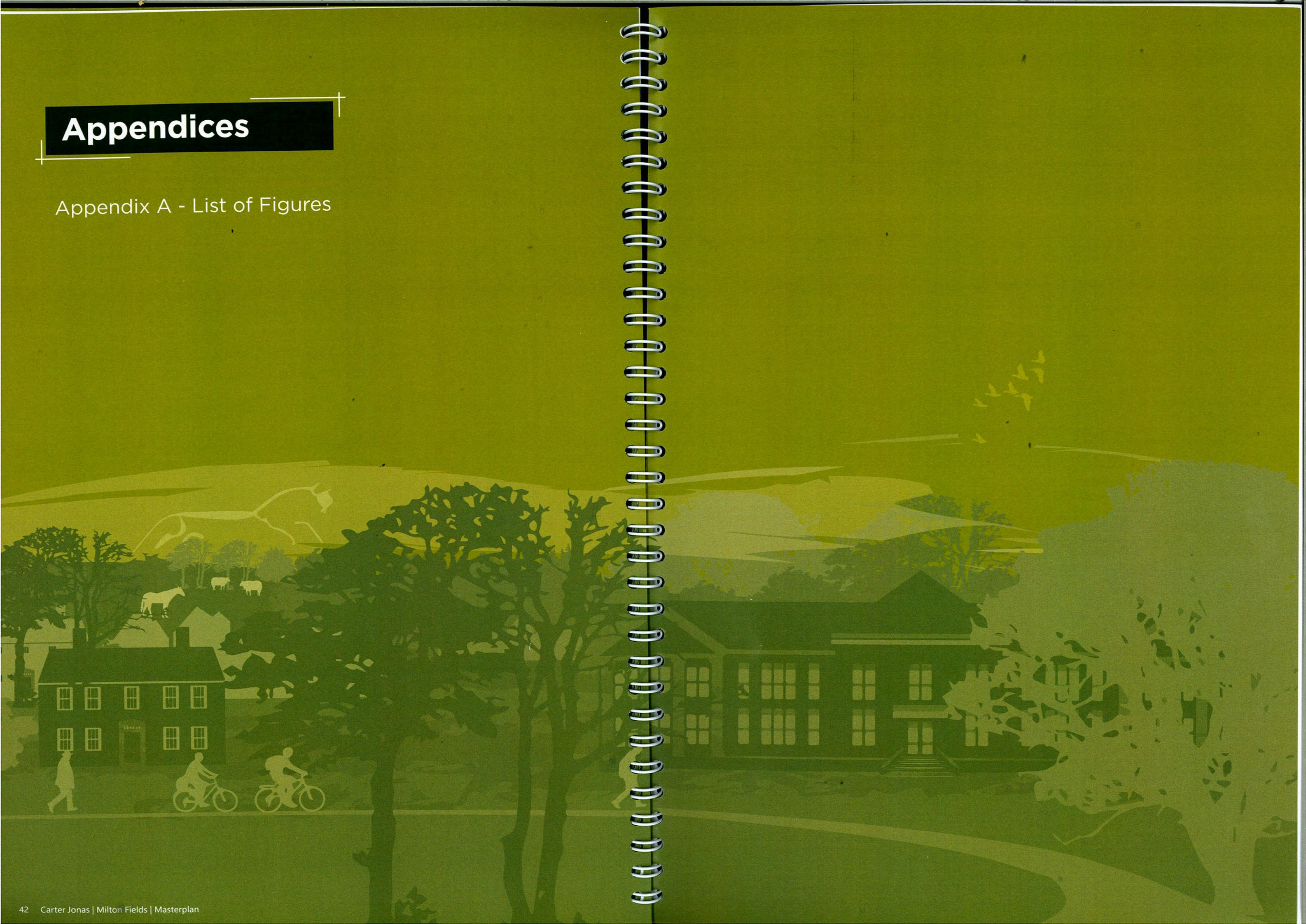
Creation of new habitats to achieve biodiversity net gain

Fig 18: Key benefits infographics



Appendices

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Appendix A - List of Figures

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