



AECOM

Masterplan and development principles

GLEMSFORD

Final Report
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locality
the power of community

Quality information

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CONTENT

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1. Introduction | 5 | 4. Development proposal | 21 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 5 | 4.1 Spatial options | 21 |
| 1.2 Objective | 5 | 4.3 Preferred option | 22 |
| 1.3 Process | 5 | 4.2 Illustrative layout | 22 |
| 1.4 The area of study | 5 | 5. Design principles and guidance | 25 |
| 1.5 Locational analysis | 5 | 5.1 Movement and access | 25 |
| 2. Policy context | 9 | 5.2 Green infrastructure | 27 |
| 2.1 Local plan policy | 9 | 5.3 Townscape | 29 |
| 2.2 Parking standards | 10 | 5.4 Parking provision | 31 |
| 2.3 Open space standards | 11 | 5.5 Response to design guidance and codes | 33 |
| 3. Site analysis | 13 | 6. Next steps and recommendations | 36 |
| 2.4 Site context | 13 | 6.1 Embed the masterplan and guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan | 36 |
| 3.1 Heritage and community facilities | 14 | 6.2 Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals | 36 |
| 3.2 Landscape and topography | 15 | | |
| 3.3 Movement and access | 17 | | |
| 3.4 Overall site constraints | 18 | | |
| 3.5 Overall site opportunities | 19 | | |

Introduction

01



1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to assist the Steering Group to explore masterplanning of a potential housing site and prepare a high level design code to guide the development opportunities within the site.

1.2 Objective

This document sets out the context within which the site might be developed, a proposal layout that would deliver approximately 100 homes and the development principles which would inform the delivery of that development opportunity. This design development process is informed by some of the work carried out by other parties, as well as AECOM's own baseline assessment of the nature and extent of the development opportunity within the site.

1.3 Process

The key tasks undertaken to prepare this document were as follows:

- **Meeting with the Parish Council and site visit.** A comprehensive analysis of the site and its surroundings constitute the base to understand the spatial context of the Parish and its key features;
- **Review of relevant policy and previous documents.** These documents constitute the base to understand the objectives and aims of the plan, incorporating both the policy and the resident's aspirations; and
- **Masterplanning.** This stage includes the preparation of options for development on the site, preparation of design principles and finalising the preferred option.

1.4 Locational analysis

Glemsford is a Civil Parish located 6 miles north of Sudbury, in the District of Babergh, Suffolk. The Parish is served by the A1092 to the south and by the B1066 to the east. The village sits on a small hill above the River Stour and the River Glem.

The main settlement includes the historic core of Glemsford. The main heritage assets within this core includes The Angel House Inn and the Church of St. Mary.

The focus for this masterplanning document is a site located to the east of the main settlement, just south of the houses along Kings Road. The total area of the site is 11.5 hectares. This site is not allocated in the Local Plan but could be considered to bring forward housing, with a particular focus on affordable homes and homes for older people to meet the needs of the community. This is in addition to the housing requirement which has already been met through planning permissions.



Figure 01: Map showing Glensford Parish boundary and its surrounding context.



Figure 02: Map showing Glemsford village and location of the site.

Policy
context

02



2. Policy context

This section reviews the baseline position with regard to local policy and sets the development opportunity in the context of planning policy as it relates to residential development in Glemsford.

2.1 Local plan policy

The emerging *Barbegh and Suffolk Joint Local Plan (Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Document, 2020)* identifies Glemsford as a Babergh Core Village and allocates a minimum of 37 dwellings to Glemsford.

Policy SP01 Housing Needs seeks delivery of a minimum of 7,904 net additional dwellings (416 dwellings per annum) within the Babergh district over the plan period (2018 – 2037).

Policy SP02 Affordable Housing requires a contribution of 35% affordable housing on sites of ten or more dwellings or 0.5ha or more. Proposals which provide a greater amount of affordable housing will also be permitted,

subject to the relevant Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Policy SP03 Settlement Hierarchy states that Core Villages will act as a focus for development, which will be delivered through site allocations in the Joint Local Plan and/or in Neighbourhood Plans, and windfall development in accordance with the relevant policies. 'Settlement boundaries have been created to demonstrate the extent of land which is required to meet the development needs of the Plan. Outside of the defined boundaries in isolated locations development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.'

Policy SP04 Housing Spatial Distribution states that to assist with delivery of the overall district housing need requirements, designated Neighbourhood Plan areas will be expected to plan to deliver the minimum housing requirements between April 2018 and March 2037. Neighbourhood Plan documents can seek to exceed these requirements, should the unique characteristics and planning context of the designated area enable them to do so. The minimum housing requirement figure for the Glemsford Neighbourhood Plan is 37 dwellings.

Policy SP05 Employment Land states that existing employment uses should be retained and that to ensure a deliverable supply of employment sites to meet the changing needs

of the economy, development of net additional employment uses along strategic transport corridors will be supported in principle.

Policy SP09 Enhancement and Management of the Environment adds that the Council will require development to protect the landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, historic environment and historic landscapes through detailed environmental protection measures, such as biodiversity and sustainable urban drainage systems. All development proposals will be required to support and contribute to the Councils' project to maintain, enhance and protect biodiversity net gain, the networks of habitats and green infrastructure.

Policy SP10 Climate Change states that the Plan seeks to meet the Council's climate change aims through a combination of climate change policies that includes issues on sustainable construction, design, energy, flood risk and water management. The policies under this section will support the Council's aim for a zero carbon/carbon neutral future by 2030.

Policy LP17 Environmental Protection requires all developments to have regard for the efficient and effective use of resources and land, land contamination and instability, pollution and environmental amenity and water resources.

Policy LP25 Sustainable Construction and Design

states that all new development is required to minimise its dependence on fossil fuels and to make the fullest contribution to the mitigation of climate change through adopting a sustainable approach to energy use in support of the Council’s ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Policy LP26 Design and Residential Amenity

adds that development must be of high-quality design with a clear vision for a positive contribution to its context. Development should respond to and safeguard the existing character and context, create character and interest, integrate climate change adaptation and be designed for health, amenity, well-being and safety.

In order to achieve high quality design, proposals should:

- a. Respond to the wider townscape/ landscapes and safeguarding the historic assets/ environment and natural and built features of merit;
- b. Be compatible/harmonious with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area;
- c. Protect and retain important natural features such as trees or hedgerows during and post

construction;

- d. Create/reinforce a strong design to the public realm incorporating visual signatures (e.g. signage, hard landscaping, public art);
- e. Include good practice in design incorporating design principles such as active frontages/ edges, permeability, strong street composition and connectivity. Schemes of exceptional design and / or development within a sensitive area/ landscape will be required to undertake a design review to test this and adherence to Building for Life Criteria;
- f. Incorporate high levels of soft landscaping, street trees and public open space that creates, and connects to, green infrastructure and networks;
- g. Prioritising movement by foot, bicycle and public transport, including linkages to create/ contribute to a ‘walkable neighbourhood’;
- h. Design-out crime and create an environment for people to feel safe, and have a strong community focus;
- i. Protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses by avoiding development that is overlooking, overbearing, results in a loss of daylight,

and/or unacceptable levels of light pollution, noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust; Including any other amenity issues;

- j. Provide a reasonable standard of accommodation for future occupants in terms of privacy and adequate facilities such as bin storage (including recycling and re-use bins), secure cycle storage and garden space; and
- k. Where appropriate demonstrate that the design considers the needs of disabled people and an ageing population and follow Dementia-Friendly Design principles.

2.2 Parking standards

The **Barbegh and Suffolk Joint Area Parking Plan (2019)** provides detail on how the Suffolk Parking Management Strategy (2018) will be implemented locally and reflects both Councils’ vision for parking in both districts. This document does not set out specific proposals for parking restrictions for specific areas. It provides a toolkit to review the need for waiting, loading and parking controls when and if they occur. It also sets out how the Councils plan to engage with the local community and seek the views of local councils, businesses and residents.

Policy 2 Off-Street Parking Places will be

utilised to assist with traffic management and to support and promote local communities.

Policy 7 Footway Parking is not to be encouraged. It will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where local consultation supports it and if the footway construction and underground services are unlikely to be compromised, and only with agreement from local councillors.

Policy 8 Reducing Street Clutter states that parking schemes will be designed and implemented with the aim to reduce street clutter.

The **Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2019)** provides technical guidance on parking standards within the district. The following key standards were noted:

- For 2-3 bedrooms dwellings, a minimum of 2 vehicle parking spaces and 2 secure covered cycle parking spaces are required;
- There should be 0.25 spaces per dwelling for visitor/unallocated vehicle parking;
- Where housing densities are lower, space for car parking can be provided 'on plot,' within the curtilage of the dwelling, such as in the form of garage, car plot, parking bay or private drive; and

- On street parking can be formal or informal according to the overall design concept. Visitor parking and parking for additional vehicles owned by residents must all be considered.

2.3 Open space standards

The **Barbegh and Mid Suffolk Space Assessment 2016-2036 (2019)** document examines existing and projected needs for open space, sport and recreation provision, using a variety of data sources, independent surveys and investigations. The following standards were noted:

- **Allotments** - all parishes with a population greater than 1,000 people to have an allotment sized at 0.3ha per 1,000 population.
- **Amenity green space** - 600m or 12-13 min walk time to be met by amenity greenspace of at least 0.15 ha in size or by a park and recreation ground for parishes with over 200 people. The quantity standard of 1ha per 1,000 population (combined with natural green space) must be used for analysing requirements from new development.
- **Park and recreation ground** - all parishes with a population greater than 1,000 people to have a park and recreation ground at a minimum standard of 1ha per 1,000

population.

- **Play space (children and youth)** - all parishes with a population greater than 1,000 people to have an a play space and a youth play space. The minimum standard for the children's play space is 0.06ha per 1,000 population and for the youth play space is 0.04ha per 1,000 population.

Site analysis

03



3. Site analysis

This section explores the site with regard to its environment, heritage, landscape and built environment. A site analysis plan, summarising all of these issues, serves as the starting point for the preparation of design proposals.

3.1 Site context

The two panoramas below shows the current conditions of the site from two different angles.

The site is relatively well contained and capable of accommodating sensitively designed development. The site expands over 11.5 hectares. Its aspect, topography and position, relative to the current settlement boundary shows that the site is could be an appropriate extension to the village.

This relationship with the existing urban area is important. The site's capacity to accommodate development is complemented by the urban

areas located immediately along the northern and western edges of the site. This allows for the development to knit together with the existing urban areas.

The site is also surrounded by the open countryside along its southern edge and across Park Lane to the east. New development will affect some of the vistas towards the landscape. Design of the development should respect the surrounding landscape of the site.

The design exercise in the following pages is guided by the desired outcome of a sensitively designed development that knits with the existing urban area and wider landscape setting.



Figure 03: Panoramic image of the site facing Glemsford village (true north).



Figure 04: Panoramic image of the site facing north west (taken from Park Lane).

3.2 Heritage and community facilities

Glemsford village has 48 listed buildings and a designated conservation area. The oldest and most significant building is the Grade I listed Church of St. Mary located north of the site. The site currently sits within the setting of the historic core. The design of the northern and eastern parts of the site should consider its close proximity to the historic core and the Church.

Glemsford is one of the most economically active villages in Suffolk, with several notable local businesses. This includes a local SPAR, independent stores and restaurants. Most of these businesses are located along the B1066. There is also a primary school, GP clinic, and small churches along the same road.

The only existing green open space near the site is the playing field by the primary school, the small square by Tye Green, and the play area and green space within the Kings Road development. The green spaces are not easily accessible from the site due to the lack of connectivity of the local roads in Glemsford.

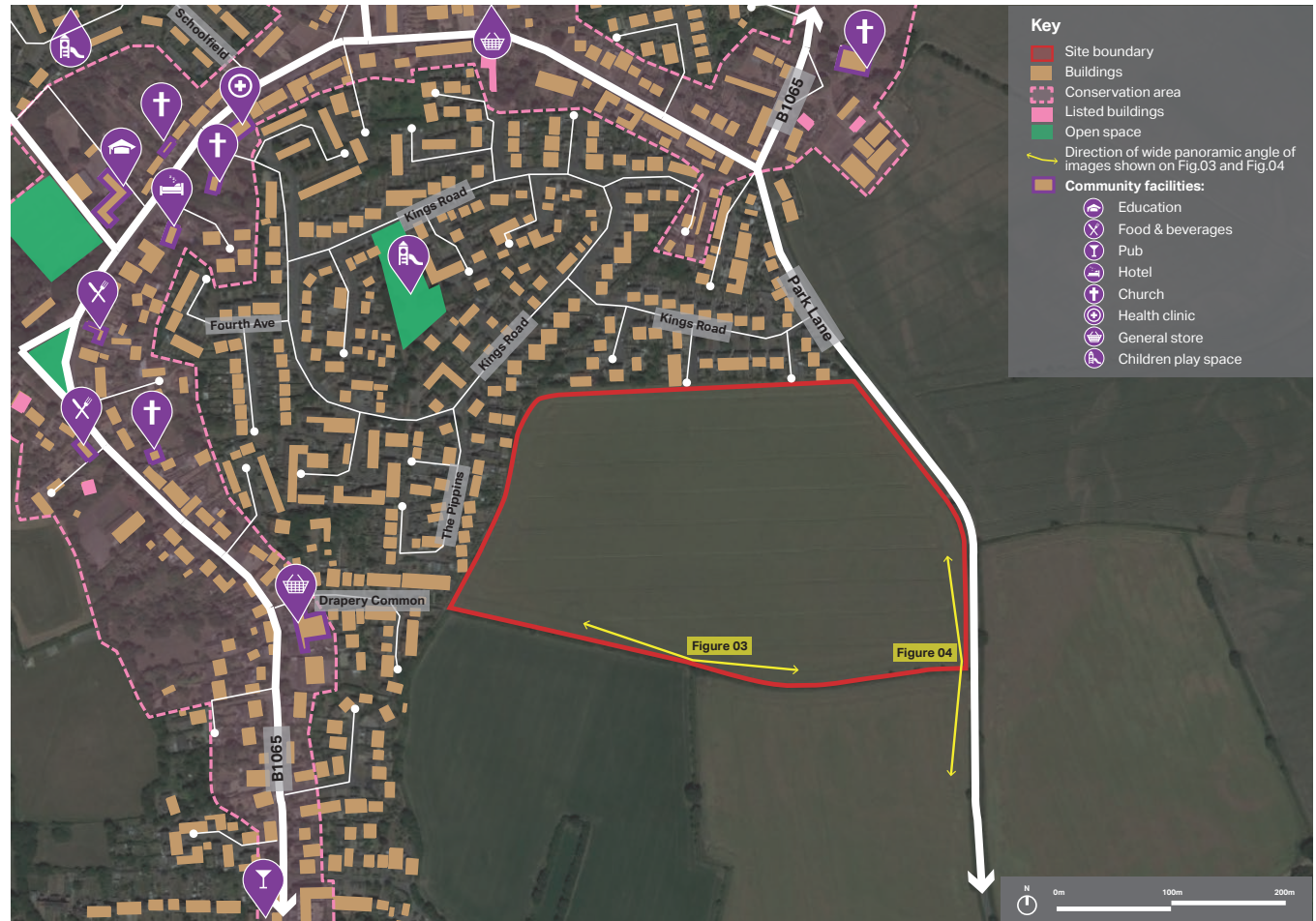


Figure 05: Map showing Glemsford village (south half).

3.3 Landscape and topography

The site currently sits amongst large swathes of green fields served by public rights of way. It is mainly bordered by short hedgerows across the western, southern and eastern edges. There are some mature trees located directed north of the site, residing within the back gardens of the house along Kings Road.

There are also some mature trees and along Park Lane towards the north of the site. The hedgerows along Park Lane towards the southern half of the site are much taller and creates a sense of enclosure along the street and separation with the fields.

There are only three formal green spaces near the site.

The site sits on a gentle slope of 1.3%, with the lowest topography of 72m above sea level towards the south east.

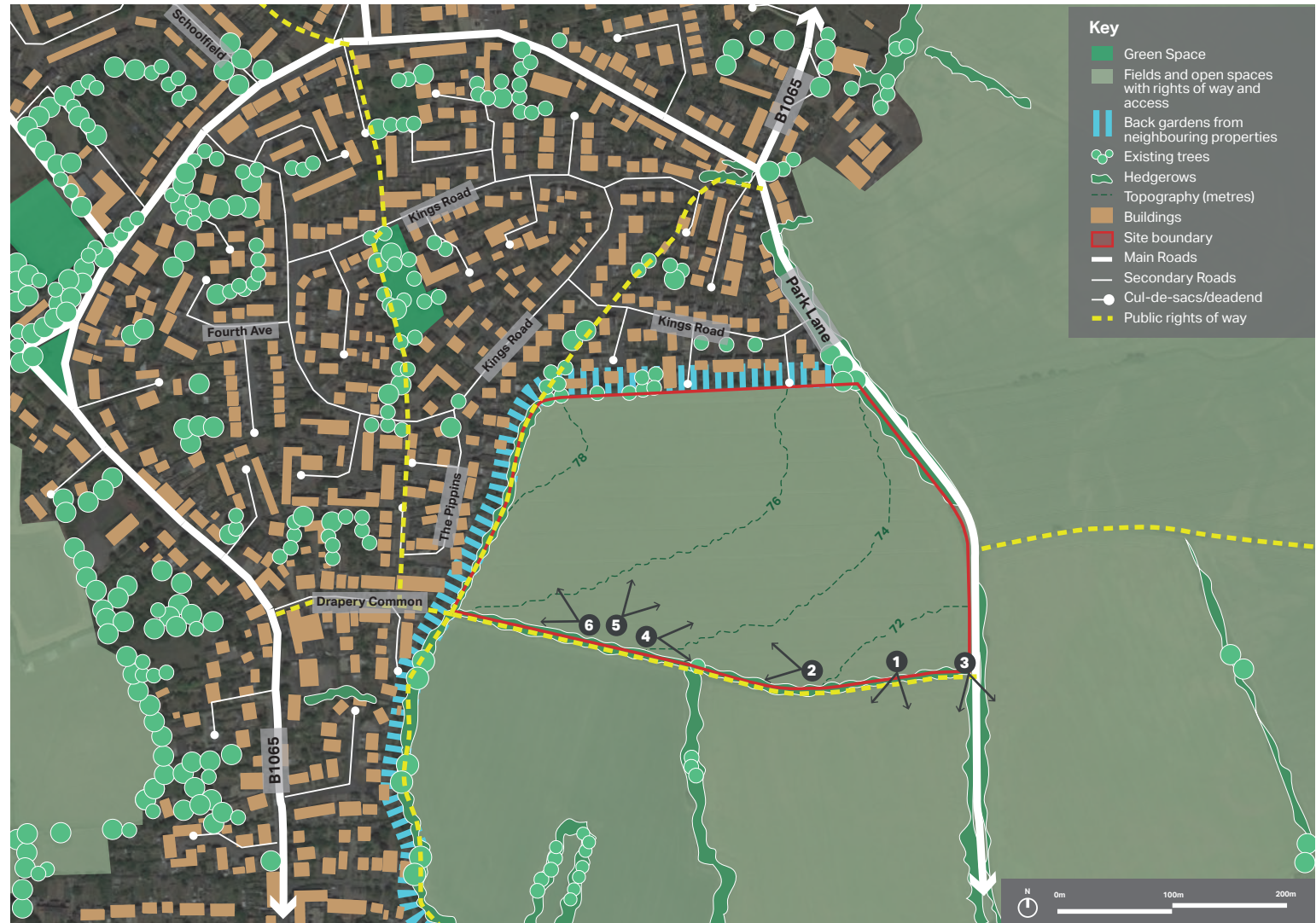


Figure 06: Map showing the landscape, topographic conditions, and views surrounding the site.



Figure 07: Images of the views around the site (towards the surrounding landscape and urban areas). Refer to map for location.

3.4 Movement and access

The site is served by Park Lane across the eastern edge and public rights of way across the western and southern edge. It is currently accessible for pedestrians and cyclists via the public rights of way. Park Lane is the only way for vehicles to access the site with some noticeable tractor lines across the fields marked as 'existing vehicle access' on the map. These marks also represent areas along Park Lane that are not covered by hedges.

The site sits adjacent to the backgardens of neighbouring properties and are currently cut off from the existing local road network. There is a potential to create an additional vehicle access through Parklands Close, located to the north of the site.

The site is connected to several bus stops located along the B1066.

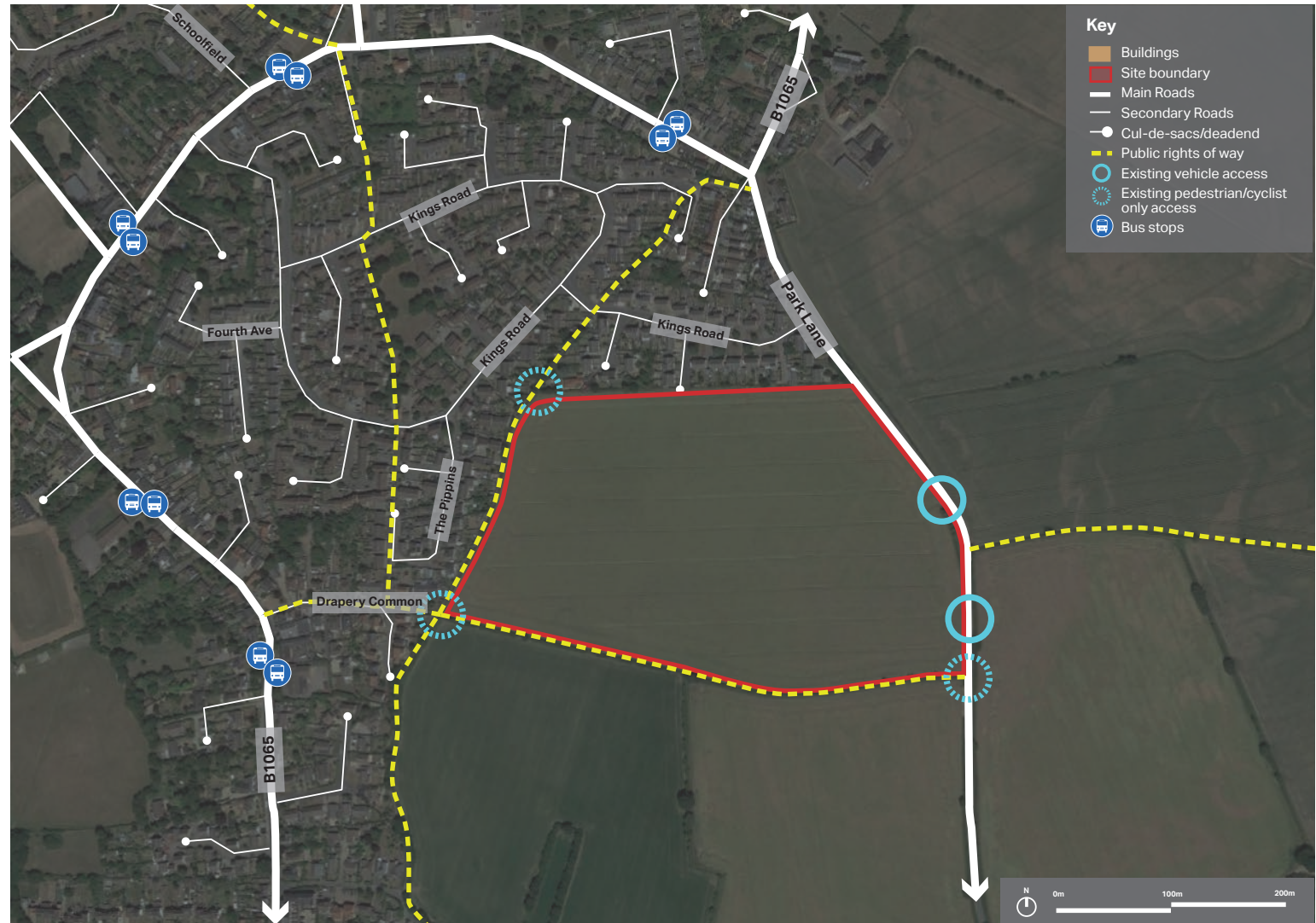


Figure 08: Map showing the mobility and access surrounding the site.

3.5 Overall site constraints

The map to the right shows all the constraints of the site that will be need to be considered when designing the masterplan.

The site is very close to the conservation area and the Grade I listed Church. Careful consideration of building materials and architecture styles is required to ensure the development respects Glemsford’s heritage. The northern and western edges of the site is adjacent to existing residential development, thus a reasonable distance has to be maintained in order to prevent overlooking. Existing trees, hedgerows and public rights of ways surrounding the site should also be considered. They should be maintained as much as possible. There is a wastewater pipe running through the site and a 3m easement on both sides must be considered.

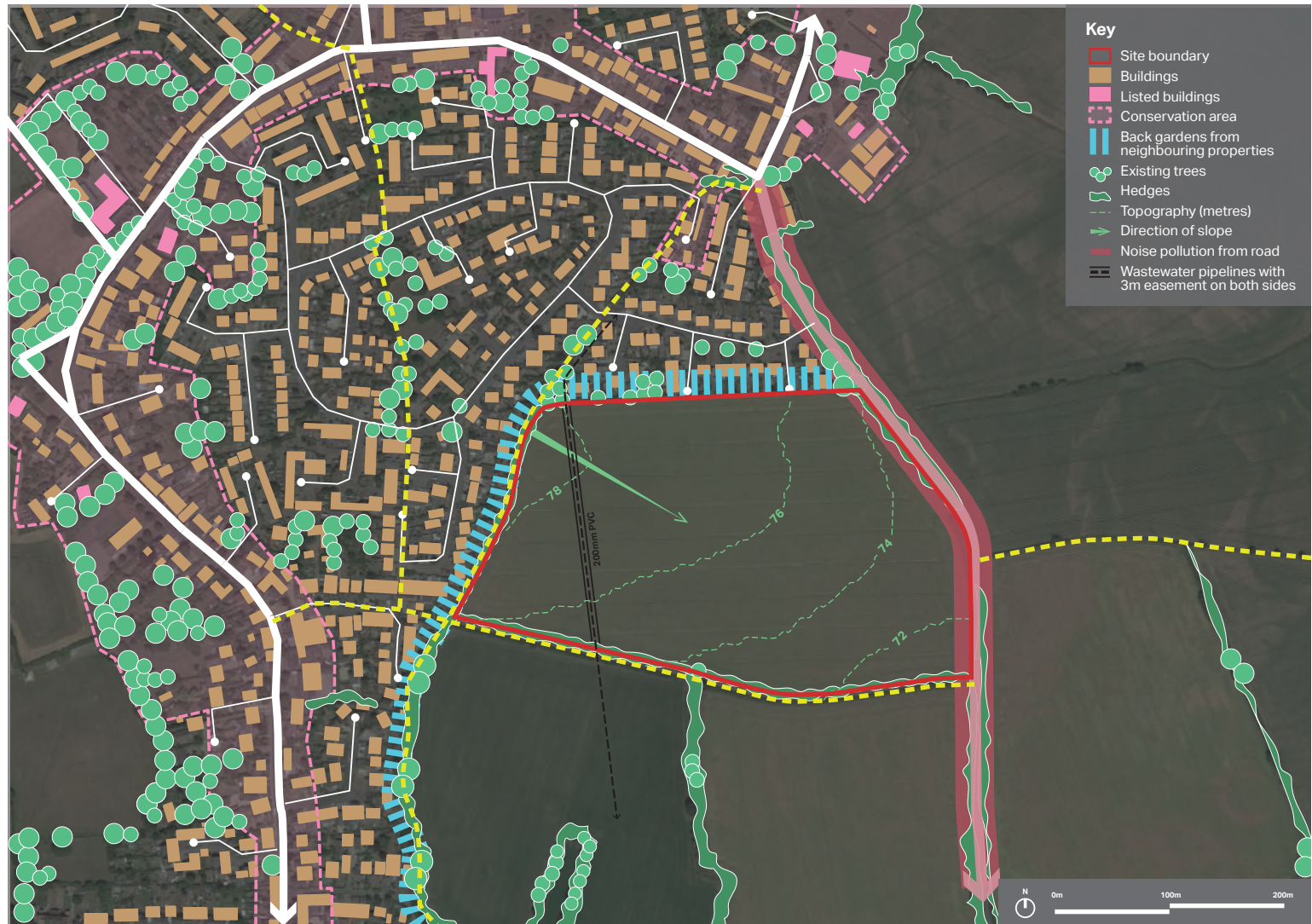


Figure 09: Map showing the main constraints of the site.

3.6 Overall site opportunities

The map to the right shows all the opportunities surrounding the site that would guide the design of the masterplan.

The site is very accessible with multiple public rights of way connecting it directly to surrounding community facilities in the village core. It also served by Park Lane and has the potential of creating a new access through Parklands Close. This new access will knit the new development with the existing urban grain of the surrounding neighbourhoods. Views towards the surrounding landscape, especially that towards the south and the east of the site should be maintained wherever possible. The existing densities and morphology of developments adjacent to the site should help guide that of the design of this development. This will ensure cohesion with the existing settlement of the village.

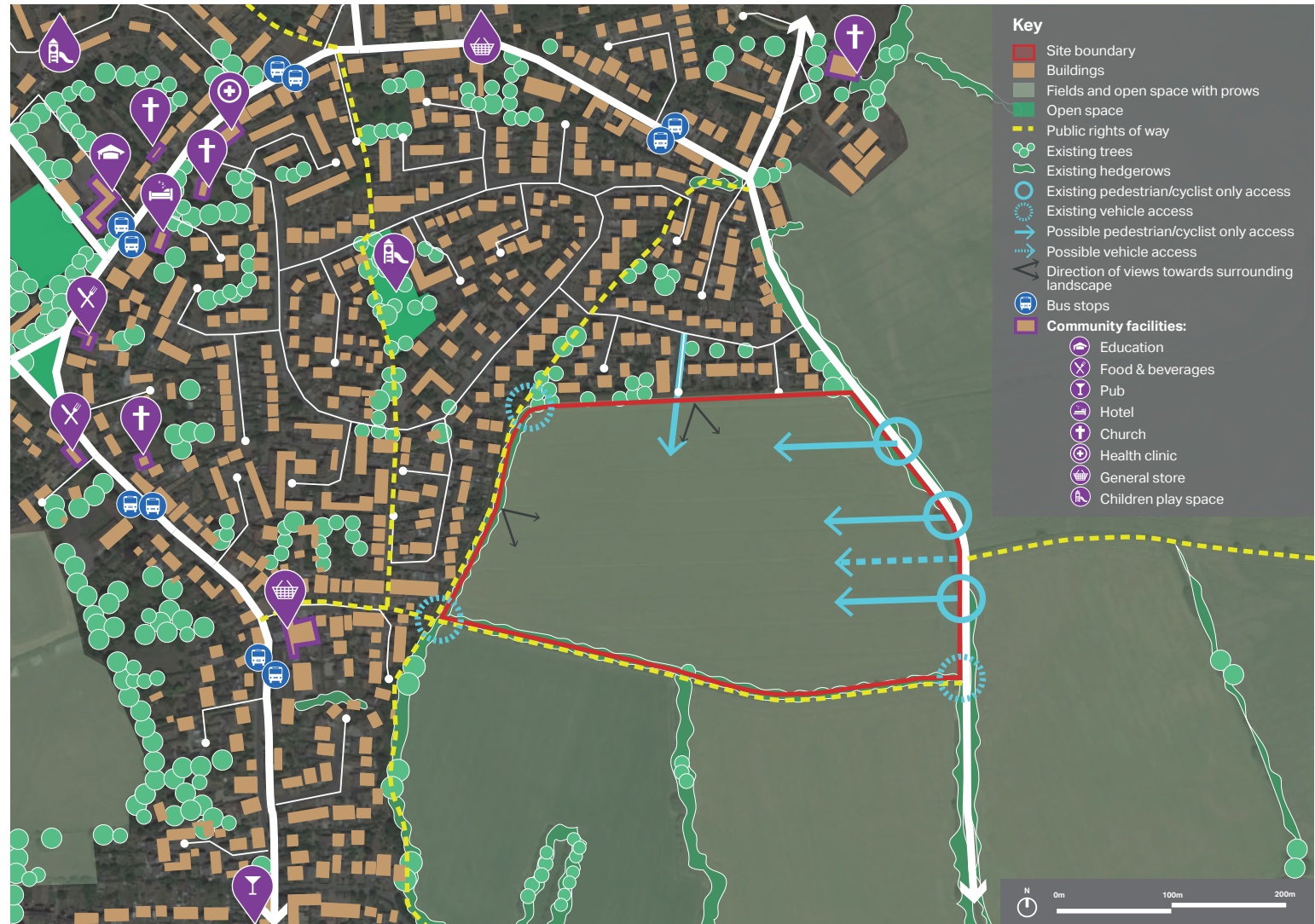


Figure 10: Map showing the main opportunities of the site.

Development
proposal

04



4. Development proposal

This section sets out the spatial options considered as part of the design development process and a final, preferred development option, which was presented to the Glemsford Neighbourhood Plan group for their consideration and approval.

4.1 Spatial options

Several spatial options were considered during the design process of the masterplan. All the options considered were designed based on the design guidance and codes set out in the ***Glemsford Design Guidance and Codes*** document. The open space and parking standards for Glemsford were also considered in the spatial arrangements drawn.

From the three options, the last option was preferred based on the potential to offer the most efficient use of land for both development and open space provision and the potential to retain or enhance existing landscape and urban features of Glemsford.



Figure 11: Diagram of preferred option

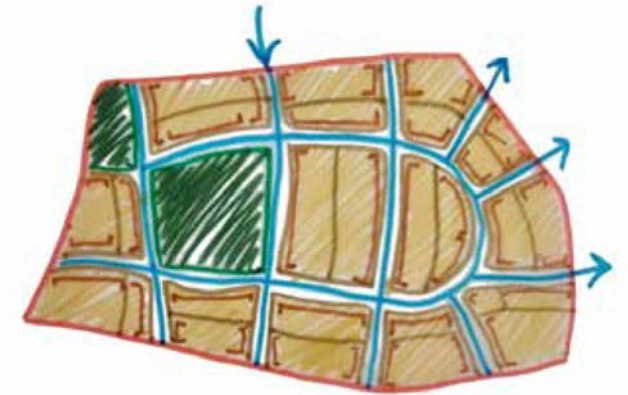


Figure 12: Diagram of Option 1

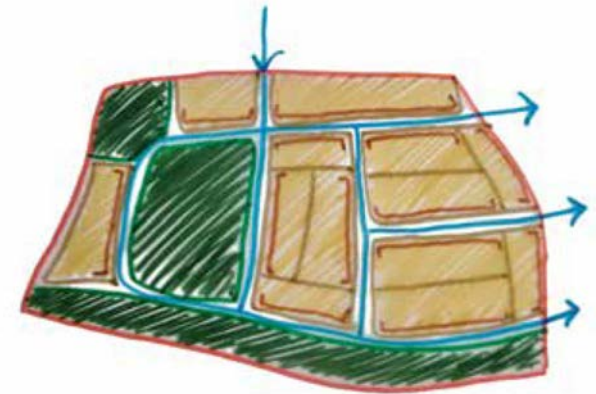


Figure 13: Diagram of Option 2

4.2 Preferred option

The preferred option is predicated on delivering an appropriate number of homes in such a way as to maintain the key landscape features (hedges and boundaries), retain the existing connections with the wider landscape and provide a setting for development that is attractive, accessible and capable of delivery.

The spatial arrangement of development, as proposed, has the potential to deliver the target number of homes, in a mix and range (density, housing types, tenure mix) that would provide a balanced and efficient use of land. The arrangement also meets and surpasses the open space and parking standards for Glemsford.

4.3 Illustrative layout

The final form of development will be arrived at following a more detailed process of design exploration based on a more comprehensive assessment of the site's opportunities and constraints. However, it is helpful to show how development might be arranged in accordance with the general design guidance and codes set out in the complementary document.

Figure 14 shows how development could be arranged in such a way as to deliver the key open space components that gives structure and character to the proposals. It also shows a variety of development opportunities with smaller and larger units arranged in semi-detached pairs and as single dwellings within larger plots. There is an implied mix of tenure across the site, in accordance with planning policy. These arrangements allows for relatively deep back gardens throughout the site. This is a deliberate attempt to create a more flexible plan, where garden space is part of the green infrastructure and helps to contribute to the sense of place of the wider development.

The illustrative masterplan shows the hierarchy of routes and edge treatments of the site. The plan illustrates that the site's capacity to accommodate approximately 102 dwellings with a density of about 9 dwellings per hectare, accompanied by about 5.10 hectares of public open space.



Figure 14: Map showing the illustrative masterplan of the site.

4.4 Phasing Plan

The development will benefit from a phasing plan where the eastern half of the illustrative masterplan is to be delivered first. This is shown in Figure 15 to the right.

The first phase will include a smaller open space with main vehicular access from Park Lane. Phase 1 will also be directly connected to the main settlement through the public rights of way and green buffer along the western edge.

The second phase benefit from a larger open space (including sports pitches). Its main vehicular access will be from Park Lane along the eastern edge. There will also be a pedestrian and cyclist only access from the north that connects to Kings Road.



Figure 15: Map showing the proposed phasing plan for the development of the illustrative masterplan.

Design principles
and codes

05



5. Design principles and guidance

This section sets out more detailed design guidance in respect to the general layout of the site. This section also includes how the developed preferred option responds to the detailed design guidance and codes set out the Glemsford Design Guidance and Codes document. The aforementioned document provides detailed commentary on the types of material, boundary treatments, massing and form of development, drawing on local precedents.

5.1 Movement and access

The key to structuring the site, and providing access to development parcels is the movement and access framework. Figure 15 shows how this key component of the site might be arranged relative to the Illustrative Masterplan.

There is a clear hierarchy of routes with the access route from Park Lane being the highest level of movement within the masterplan with tertiary routes across the site. The network of streets integrates seamlessly with the existing network surrounding the site. The development might require to extend the 30mph limit to the southern extent of the site, subject to transport assessment and travel plan.

There are designated shared surfaces that will only be used by cars for turning or emergency vehicle access. The pedestrian routes also connects directly to surrounding public rights of way and offers a chance to improve its conditions as walking routes. This network of shared/pedestrian priority routes also complements the network of public open space, creating a highly accessible and permeable new neighbourhood for Glemsford.

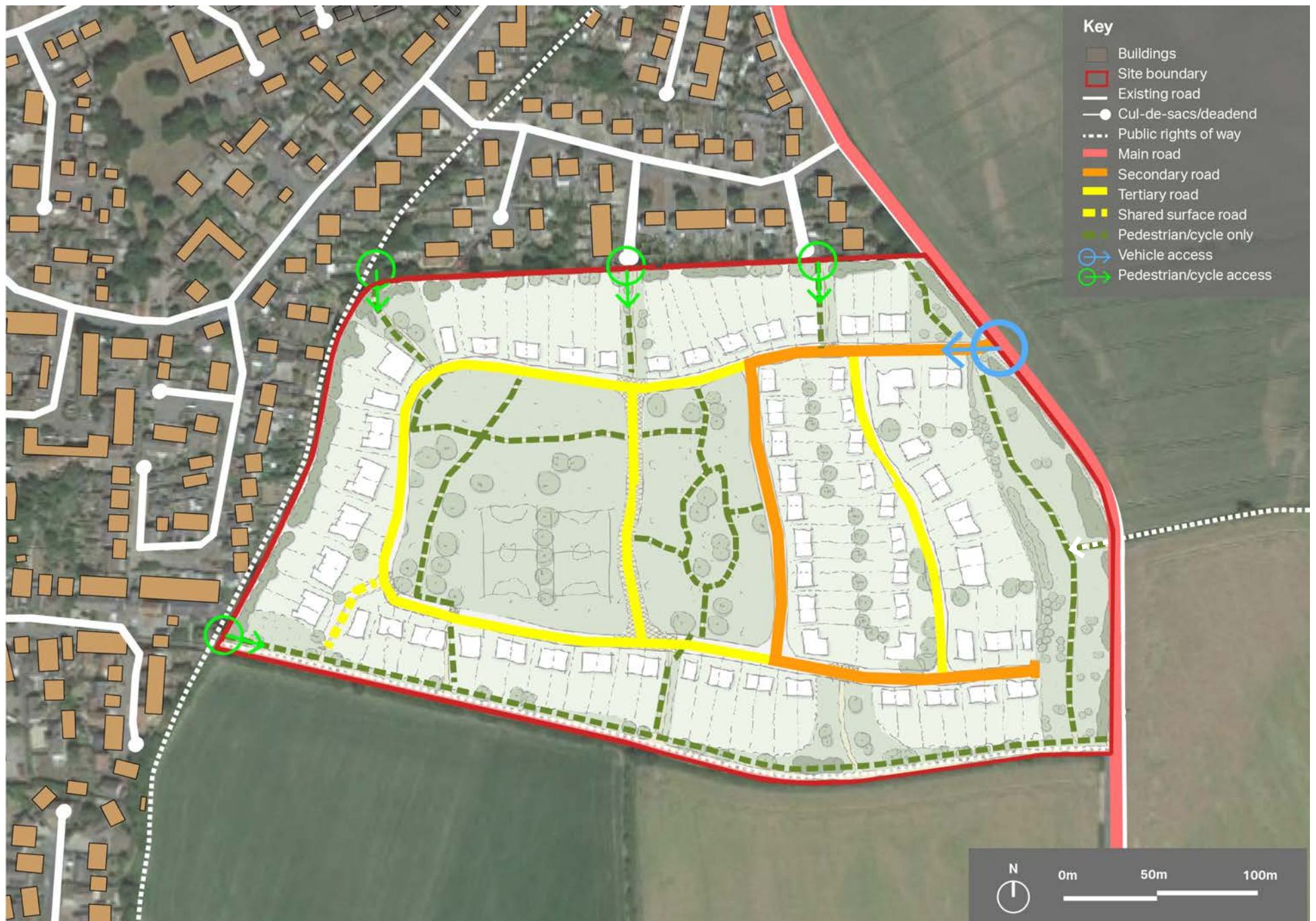


Figure 16: Map showing the networking of streets and key vehicle and pedestrian access points of the masterplan.

5.2 Green infrastructure

The network of open spaces in Figure 16 provides a focus and a sense of place for the development while also integrating it to the wider landscape and surrounding green infrastructure.

New amenity space, play space (for children and youth), and two multi-purpose futsal courts will be available for residents from the new neighbourhood and surrounding neighbourhoods to enjoy. A total of more than five hectares of new green space will be provided as part of the masterplan. As there is a lack of large, public green spaces in Glemsford, the network of open spaces in this masterplan will provide a positive contribution for the village.

At every opportunity, this new network of open spaces must seek to integrate existing features such as hedgerows and trees. For example, the mature hedges along the northern and southern edges of the site along Park Lane and the green buffer provided along the south and west edges to complement the existing public rights of way. These buffers are also important in ensuring a clear boundary that integrates well with the surrounding open landscape.

The new green spaces meets the standards set out in the ***Barbegh and Mid Suffolk Open Space Assessment 2016-2036 (2019)*** as

summarised in Section 2 Policy context.

In addition to the new network of public open spaces, private green spaces such as front and rear gardens are also an important part of the wider green infrastructure. On-site rainwater capture and infiltration into garden space, tree planting and habitat creation are key features of gardens that can help contribute to the overall quality and performance of the wider green infrastructure in Glemsford.

The treatment of front gardens, in particular, can help contribute to the sense of place and it is proposed that there should be few hard structures (walls and fences) to mark front boundaries. In respect to the surrounding neighbourhoods and its characteristics, front boundaries should be marked by low hedges, shrub and perennial planting. Where walls are used, they should comply to the materials used in the main buildings and surrounding neighbourhoods. They should also be consistent with the heights and detailing of adjacent structures and accommodate for planting to integrate into the boundary treatment.

Together, the public and private components of the green infrastructure network will help create a greener Glemsford that respects its surrounding landscape.



Figure 17: Map showing the green infrastructure and network of open spaces of the illustrative masterplan.

5.3 Townscape

The development parcels that derive from the structure of roads and open spaces are shown in Figure 17.

Development is arranged in a series of large and smaller parcels. Each parcel has a relationship with the open space and surrounding street network in some shape or form. The larger parcels are situated alongside Park Lane and the larger open spaces within the masterplan. These larger parcels and open spaces create the main focal point of the masterplan with the smaller parcels surrounding it to knit into the existing urban grain of the village.

These smaller parcels along the top seamlessly knits into the parcels of the development adjacent to the site, almost as if forming larger parcels together. The other small parcels along the western and southern edge has its back gardens along the public rights of way and green buffers accommodated within the masterplan.

Buildings will be arranged with their frontages perpendicular to the road line and in such a way as to create a relatively complete sense of enclosure. This allows for openings for parking and the varying setbacks of building lines from development plot lines. Splayed units on corners of plots are acceptable.

In keeping with the existing urban grain of the village, all the buildings within the masterplan

will be of 2 storeys in height. As there is a slight slope in topography down towards the south-east of the site, this will allow for the views towards the surrounding landscape to still be visible from the main village.



Figure 18: Map showing the development plots and key frontages throughout the masterplan.

5.4 Parking provision

Parking provision is always a key consideration for any development proposal, regardless of the scale or nature of the development.

As stated in the ***Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2019)*** document, the plan will accommodate for 2 parking spaces for every 2-3 bedroom dwelling and 0.25 visitor parking spaces per dwelling. Figure 18 shows that the majority of the parking provided will be located on plot, primarily to the side of the properties. The Figure also shows that there is scope for some component of on-street parking to accommodate visitors parking. Presence of on-street parking may also contribute to reducing vehicle speeds, creating safer residential streets throughout the site. They may also help enliven the street, in a way that parking courts to the rear of buildings, would not.

Parking provision will be a consideration that will be explored in more detail in subsequent stages of the planning and design processes. As a sequence, the relative mix of on-plot and on-street parking and its general arrangement is subject to further design exploration and discussion. However, the key point to note is that this draft masterplan does not envisage rear parking courts in any shape or form on any part of the development.



Figure 19: Map showing the parking provision within the masterplan.

5.5 Response to design guidance and codes

All the options and the development of the preferred option were designed in regard to the design guidance and codes outlined in the ***Glemsford Design Guidance and Codes*** document.

The masterplan has considered and incorporated all the relevant design guidance and codes outlined in the document. Figure 19 in the following page summarises the instances in which specific design codes were met within the design of the masterplan. Some of these design guidance and codes are presented in further detail in the following pages of this section.

Other design guidance and codes not mentioned in this document, such as ***DC.04 Architectural style, material and details*** and ***DC.10 Sustainable design***, are to still be considered at a later stage of the development design process.



Figure 20: Map summarising the instances in which specific design codes were met within the illustrative masterplan.

Next steps and
recommendations

06



6. Next steps and recommendations

This section concludes the report with recommendations on how to embed findings in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The recommended next steps for how to use the outcomes of this design options study are to:

- Embed the masterplan and guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan; and
- Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals.

6.1 Embed the masterplan and guidelines in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The objective of this report is to develop a series of design guidelines, development principles, and masterplan options for development possibilities in the specified site.

The report's content could usefully be converted into neighbourhood plan policies, or could be presented as an appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan, referred to in design policies.

6.2 Engage with the Council to develop policies supporting the proposals

The inputs from the Council's policy and development management specialists would be invaluable in advance of formal consultation and submission. The Parish Council should consider how our recommendations can be transposed into policy through discussions with the Council and use the best practice guidance from Locality's 'Writing Planning Policies' guidance of how different planning policies are designed to achieved different things.

The guide describes the three most common

policies as:

- **Generic** - a simple policy which applies universally to development across the entire neighbourhood plan area;
- **Criteria based** - a policy with a series of requirements that should be met by development proposals. These can be set out as separate bullet points; and
- **Site specific** - this is where a policy applies to particular areas of land. One of the most powerful tools for a neighbourhood plan is to allocate land for a particular type of development. As well as allocating land you can use your plan to set out the principles which need to be followed in developing a particular site. This might include specifying what needs to be covered in a design brief to accompany any planning application. If you have specific policies then you need to include a clear map showing the location and boundaries.

In addition, the steering group should check with the Local Planning Authority that emerging preferred options are planning matters (i.e suitable for inclusion as land use planning policy). Those that are not can be considered as community projects or neighbourhood infrastructure to be included within a delivery and implementation section of the neighbourhood plan.

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