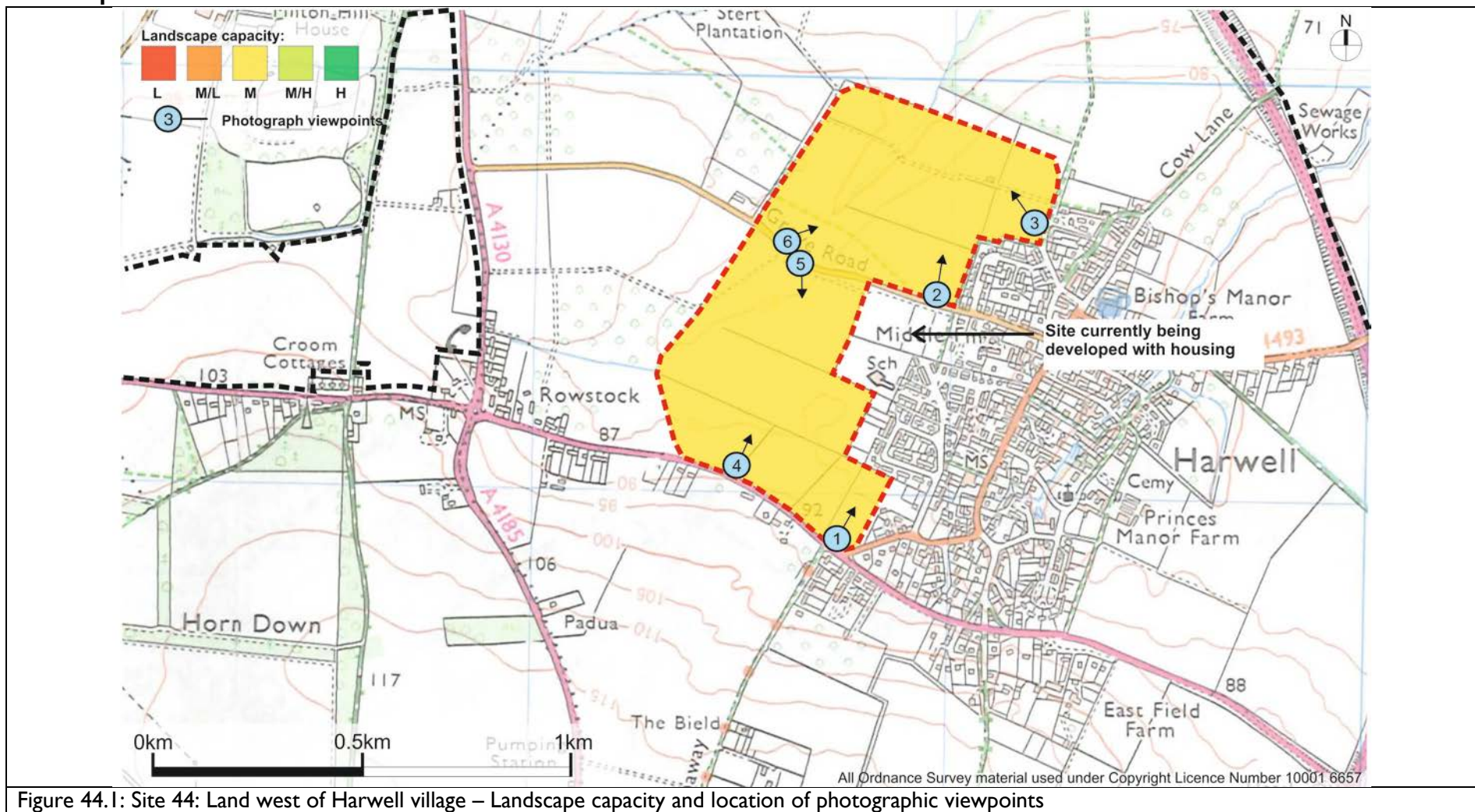


Site 44: Land west of Harwell village**Site map:**

Site 44 Land west of Harwell village

The site lies in the **OWLS LCT8 Lowland Village Farmlands**. The key landscape, visual and settlement characteristics are set out in the Record Sheet for Site 44.

OWLS Landscape Strategy

Conserve and enhance the vernacular character of the villages and strengthen the existing pattern of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree-lined watercourses.

- Strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn, and hedgerow trees such as willow and ash.
- Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type.
- Enhance and strengthen the character of tree-lined watercourses by planting willows and ash and where appropriate, pollarding willows.
- Conserve the surviving areas of permanent pasture and promote arable reversion to grassland, particularly on land adjacent to watercourses.
- Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses, such as industrial estates, gravel pits, landfill sites, airfields and the fringes of towns and villages with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic of the area. This will help to screen the development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside.
- Maintain the vernacular character of settlements and promote the use of local building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. This ranges from limestone and stone tiles at Garsington and Merton through to the red bricks and tiles associated with the clay vales.

Site description:

Site 44 is 50 hectares of greenfield site situated to the west of Harwell village. The site comprises a single character area, straddling Grove Road, and is bordered to the north and west by open countryside with only the northern portion of the western boundary following existing field boundaries. The eastern boundary is defined by rear gardens, school grounds and field boundaries and the southern boundary comprises the A417, across which lies the boundary of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The south-east corner of site is used as a recreation ground.

Key landscape planning factors:

Site 44 is not within the Green Belt or the AONB but is adjacent to the AONB and within the Lowland Vale area identified in Local Plan policy NE9. This policy protects the Vale which is valued for its contribution to distant views from the higher ground to the north (Corallian Ridge) and the North Wessex Downs to the south.

Photographs:

Photo 1: View north from A417 across recreation ground



Photo 2: View north across site from Grove Road



Photo 3: View north-west across site towards lower ground and open countryside



Photo 4: View north across site from boundary of AONB/A417



Photo 5: View south from Grove Road with North Wessex Downs AONB in distance



Photo 6: View to shallow valley landscape to north with Didcot Power Station beyond

Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

- 1. Medium Visual Sensitivity:**
 - Intervisibility with AONB
 - Good opportunities for mitigation
 - Locally prominent site for large number of residents and drivers
 - Potential impact of relocating existing recreation ground elsewhere
- 2. Medium / Low Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Lack of hedgerows
 - Distinctive tree lines of poplar and alder
 - No cultural associations
 - Busy roads
 - Recreation ground.
- 3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/Low (combines 1 and 2)**
- 4. Medium Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Part of site adjacent to rear gardens more influenced by edge of Harwell
 - Northern and western parts of site connect well with wider landscape and provide setting for village.
- 5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)**
- 6. Medium Landscape Value**
 - No formal designations
 - Southern part of site forms setting for AONB
 - Local recreational facilities.
- 7. Landscape Capacity: Medium (combines 5 and 6)**

Relationship of site to Harwell

- Area bounded by A417 and straddling Grove Road relate more strongly to Harwell village
- Northern part of site does not relate strongly to village

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- North and west of site relate strongly to countryside despite presence of A34
- Countryside to west forms part of separation between Harwell and Rowstock
- Southern part of village extends along A417

Potential impact on key landscape characteristics

- Loss of recreation ground
- Southern part of site forms setting for AONB
- Reduction in openness

Potential impact on key visual characteristics

- Erosion of visual separation of Harwell from A4130 along Grove Road
- Erosion of visual separation of Harwell from Rowstock
- Southern part of site forms setting for AONB
- Potential impact of relocating existing recreation ground elsewhere

Potential impact on key settlement characteristics

- Southern and eastern part of site are well linked to Harwell
- Development of whole site would be out of scale with Harwell
- Northern and western parts of site relate less well to Harwell