

2008 Study Faringdon LCA	2008 Study Landscape sensitivity	2008 Study Landscape capacity	2008 Study Landscape robustness	2014 Landscape capacity conclusions	Additional comments and reasons for any difference in judgement
7 Highden Hill	Very high	Very low	Very low	Medium / Low	Possibility for some sensitive development east of existing hedge adjacent to existing settlement. Open field containing distinctive landform and clump (outside of 2008 study area) should be retained
8 Highden Farm	Very high	Very low	Very low		

### Site description:

Site 5 is a largely greenfield site of 25.5 hectares on the south west side of Faringdon. The site includes a visually prominent hill with tree clump. The majority of the site is made up of arable fields and pasture, but also contains the garden and buildings of Steeds Farm and Highdens Farm. The site wraps around (but does not include) buildings now used as a youth centre on the south side of the B4019. The eastern boundary of the site is largely formed by the housing estate at the edge of Faringdon with Site 6 (South Faringdon) adjacent to the south east corner. The B4019 forms the northern and western boundaries. The southern boundary opens on to adjacent countryside, with a byway along the western section of the southern boundary. An area in the eastern side of the site, abutting Westland Road, is the subject of a current planning application for 126 houses (P13/V1653/0).

### Key landscape planning factors:

Site 5 is not within the Green Belt or AONB but is within an area identified in the Local Plan as Great Western Community Forest (Policy NE12). The aim of the policy is that developments make a positive contribution towards the creation of a diverse woodland environment appropriate to the landscape character of the area. Adjacent Site 6 (South Faringdon) is currently the subject of a major housing application which would extend the settlement to the south. The site is within the North Vale Corallian Ridge area identified in Local Plan policy NE7. This policy protects the prevailing character and appearance of the north facing scarp slope separating the clay vale from the Thames Valley to the north.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View south from edge of settlement towards rising, open ground*



*Photo 2: View north east with clump on prominent high ground*

*Photo 3: View east across shallow valley to rising ground*

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

1. **High Visual Sensitivity:**
  - Clump is an important local landmark
  - View of Thames Valley typical of landscape character area
2. **Medium / High Landscape Sensitivity:**
  - Distinct landform
  - Landmark clump
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)
4. **Medium / High Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
  - South part of site links with countryside to south
  - North part of site feels distinctive and separate
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)
6. **Medium / Low Landscape Value**
  - No written evidence of landscape value
7. Landscape Capacity: Medium / Low (combines 5 and 6)

**Relationship of site to Faringdon**

- Development on the eastern edge could relate well to existing housing
- Development on the rest of the site would be distanced from the existing settlement though development of the south eastern edge could relate to site 6 South Faringdon if this were developed

**Relationship with adjacent wider countryside**

- South part of site is linked to the countryside to the south
- The northern part of the site containing the hill and clump feels distinctive and separate

**Potential impact on key landscape characteristics**

- Loss of openness particularly of large fields making up the majority of site (all but the southern edge)
- Loss of distinctive hill and clump
- Some loss of pasture
- Existing hedges could be integrated into the development
- Small to medium scale development adjacent to the existing settlement would reflect landscape pattern

**Potential impact on key visual characteristics**

- Views of prominent hill from Faringdon and Bedbury Hill would be lost
- Possible views from Thames Valley

**Potential impact on key settlement characteristics**

- Development of the whole site would result in further modern development which is all located on the south side of the historic core
- Development of the eastern side of the site would relate well to the existing settlement and to development on the northern part of site 6A if it goes ahead

**Landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure**

- Create new landscape structure to contain new housing,
- Retain and enhance existing hedgerow on boundary
- Build on landscape structure to meet OWLS landscape strategy and contribute to the aims of the Great Western Community Forest

**Conclusion and recommendations**

- Contain housing within 'reduced area' as shown in Figure 5.3.
- Conserve the distinctive hillock and clump
- Protect views towards the site from Faringdon, Bedbury Hill and from the Thames Valley
- Include new tree / hedgerow planting to contain new housing as shown in Figure 5.3.
- Preferred access off of B4019, minimising loss of hedgerow and avoid impact on views from Thames Valley

**Potential capacity of site 5**

It is recommended that only part of this site is considered further as a contingency site on landscape and visual grounds. The capacity of the site is constrained by the distinctive hill with tree clump which is a prominent local feature. The poor relationship of all but the eastern section of site with Faringdon further constrains the site. Development of the northern part of site 6A would link with development in the south eastern corner of site 5. The

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capacity of the reduced area will be determined by the factors listed in the above recommendations including a detailed landscape and visual impact assessment including the visual impact on the skyline and key views and the impact of locating buildings on the rising ground; whilst respecting the distinctive character of Faringdon and its rural setting. The preferred access is from B4019, minimising loss of hedgerow. The density of this reduced area is recommended to be a maximum of 25 per ha. A full detailed landscape and visual impact assessment will be required to inform the final capacity of the site. On this basis some 115 dwellings might be accommodated on Site 5.

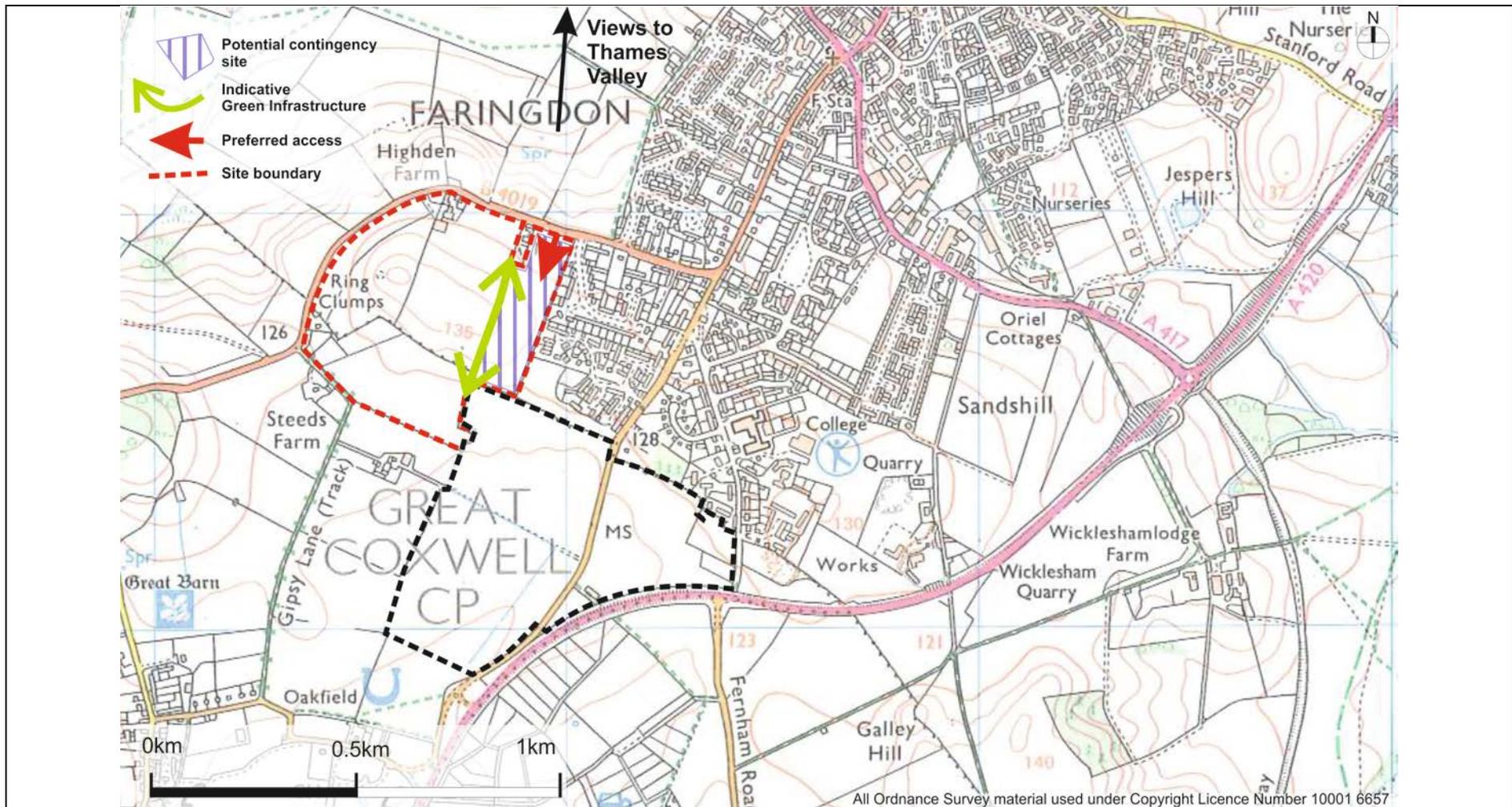


Figure 5.3: Site 5: South West Faringdon - Recommended contingency site area and Green Infrastructure

**Site 6: South Faringdon**

**Site map:**

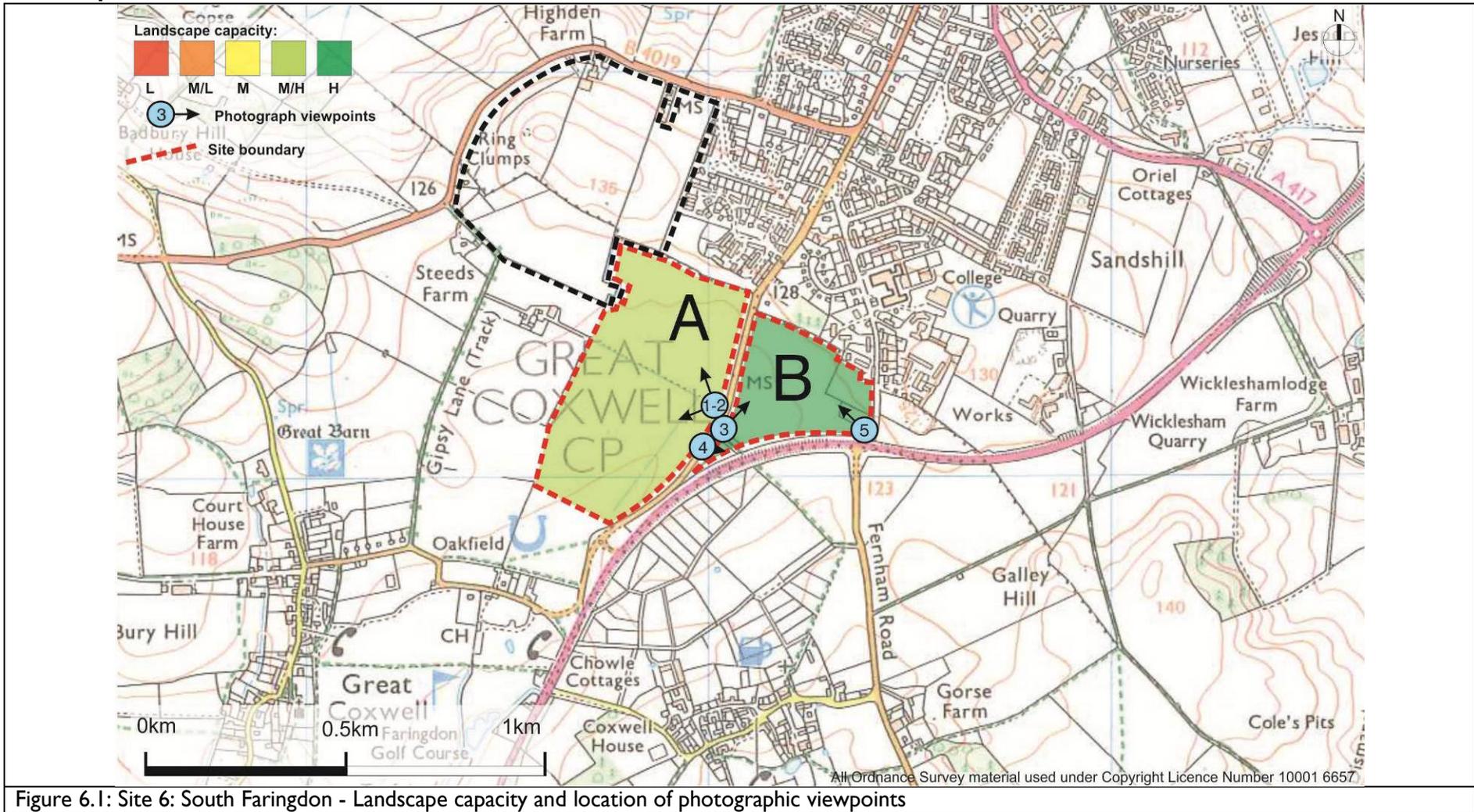


Figure 6.1: Site 6: South Faringdon - Landscape capacity and location of photographic viewpoints

## Site 6 South Faringdon

The site lies in the **North Vale Corallian Ridge Zone IB / OWLS LCT12 Rolling Farmland**. The key landscape, visual and settlement characteristics are set out in the Record Sheets for Site 6.

### OWLS Landscape Strategy

**Conserve and enhance the surviving pattern of woodlands, hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree-lined watercourses. Minimise the impact of built development through appropriate location, choice of building materials, and the use of locally characteristic tree and shrub species.**

#### Guidelines

- Strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn, and hedgerow trees such as oak 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.
- Promote the sustainable management of existing ancient semi-natural woodland to safeguard its long-term survival.
- Promote small-scale planting of deciduous woodland blocks using locally characteristic species such as oak and ash.
- 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 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 nucleated pattern of settlements and promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. This includes limestone or limestone and bricks and clay roof tiles in the Midvale Ridge, and red bricks and clay tiles in the Vale of White Horse and North Wessex Downs.

### Advice on the Landscape Impact of Further Development South of Faringdon December 2008 (2008 Study)

The Study included part of Site 6 South Faringdon in its assessment. The south western part of site was not included. The part of site that was assessed was divided into 2 character areas; Area 6 Steeds Farm largely to the west of Coxwell Road and a small area to the east of Coxwell Road; Area 5 Fernham Road which forms a wide strip from the eastern edge of site 6 across to the Coxwell Road, along the southern edge of Faringdon. The summary of this

assessment is set out in figure 6.2 below. This assessment has been reviewed in the light of our current work and our conclusions included in the Table below.

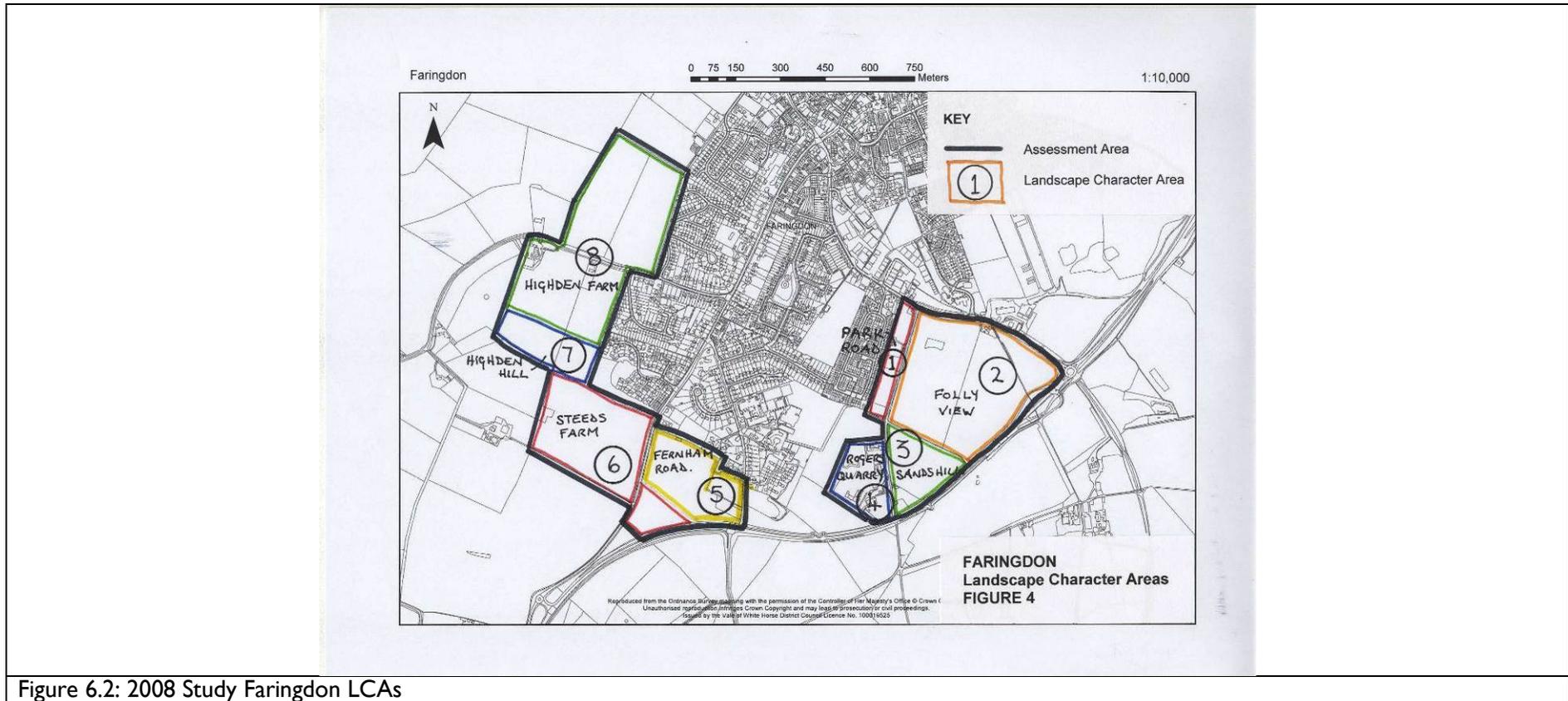


Figure 6.2: 2008 Study Faringdon LCAs

2008 Study Faringdon LCA	2008 Study Landscape sensitivity	2008 Study Landscape capacity	2008 Study Landscape robustness	2014 Landscape capacity conclusions	Additional comments and reasons for any difference in judgement
5 Fernham Road	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	6B High	Consider that this area has a better capacity than indicated in the 2008 Study subject to further assessment. The site is visually well enclosed and well connected to Faringdon. Separated from wider countryside by roads. No particularly sensitive landscape features and no cultural sensitivities.
6 Steeds Farm	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	6A Medium / High	Consider that part of this area has a better capacity than indicated in the 2008 Study subject to further assessment. Housing could relate well to the southern edge of Faringdon and there are no particularly sensitive landscape features and no cultural sensitivities. The site forms part of the separation with Great Coxwell and open approach to Faringdon from the south and further studies would need to establish how these features might be retained.

### Site description:

Site 6 is a greenfield site of 32 hectares on the south side of Faringdon. The site is divided into 2 distinct character areas: Landscape Area 6A Steeds Farm (west of Coxwell Road) and 6B Fernham Road (east of Coxwell Road). Landscape area 6A is the larger portion of the site, with the Coxwell Road forming its eastern boundary and abutting open countryside to the south and west. Site 5 (South West Faringdon) is adjacent to the north west corner of the site and the south west edge of Faringdon forms the northern boundary. A driveway leading to Steeds Farm bisects the site. Landscape area 6B comprises a roughly triangular piece of land bounded by the southern edge of Faringdon, the Coxwell Road and the A420, and includes the garden of Rosenborg House. These two areas have been assessed separately below.

### LA6A Steeds Farm

The area is predominantly arable and part of the wider plateau shared with Great Coxwell.

### Key landscape planning factors:

Site 6A is not within the Green Belt or AONB but is within an area identified in the Local Plan as Great Western Community Forest (Policy NE12). The aim of the policy is that developments make a positive contribution towards the creation of a diverse woodland environment appropriate to the landscape character of the area. The site is currently the subject of a major housing application which would extend the settlement to the south. The site is within the North Vale Corallian Ridge area identified in Local Plan policy NE7. This policy protects the prevailing character and appearance of the north facing

scarp slope separating the clay vale from the Thames Valley to the north. The site does not form part of land identified as Important Open Land between Faringdon and A420, policy NE10 which aims to protect the open countryside through which the bypass was designed to pass.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: Houses at south edge of Faringdon well screened*



*Photo 2: View south-west across open fields from Steeds Farm drive*

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**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

1. **Medium Visual Sensitivity:**
  - Open, exposed site
  - Part of separation between Faringdon and Great Coxwell
  - No highly sensitive receptors
  
2. **Medium / Low Landscape Sensitivity:**
  - Arable land
  - General lack of landscape features
  - No cultural significance
  - No public access
  
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium / Low (combines 1 and 2)
  
4. **Medium / High Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
  - Forms part of countryside to west
  
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)
  
6. **Medium / Low Landscape Value**
  - No written evidence
  - Some value as separation of Faringdon and Great Coxwell and approach to Faringdon
  
7. Landscape Capacity: Medium / High (combines 5 and 6)