

Site 32 North Stanford in the Vale

The site lies in the **OWLS LCT19 Wooded Estatelands**. The key landscape, visual and settlement characteristics are set out in the Record Sheets for Site 32.

OWLS Landscape Strategy

Safeguard and enhance the characteristic landscape of parklands, estates, woodlands, hedgerows and unspoilt villages.

Guidelines

- Conserve and maintain semi-natural and ancient semi-natural woodland. Where appropriate, replace non-native conifer species with native species such as oak and ash. Promote the establishment and management of medium to large-scale deciduous and mixed plantations in areas where the landscape structure is particularly weak.
- 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.
- Conserve and sympathetically maintain species-rich hedgerows and, where appropriate, replant gappy hedges using species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, wayfaring tree, dogwood and spindle.
- Conserve parklands and their associated landscape features such as stone walls, lakes, mature trees and woods.
- Conserve the surviving areas of permanent pasture and promote arable reversion to grassland, particularly within parklands.
- Enhance and strengthen the character of tree-lined watercourses by planting willows and ash and where appropriate, pollarding willows.
- Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses such as quarries, landfill sites, airfields and large-scale development, such as new barns and industrial units, 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.

Site description:

Site 32 is a greenfield site of 19.9 hectares on the northern side of Stanford in the Vale. It is surrounded to the north by open countryside. To the east is Cottage Farm and the southern boundary runs behind the properties on Cottage Road and Upper Green with two narrow promontories which head south to meet Upper Green. The eastern most of these enters the Conservation Area. The western part of the southern boundary follows Cottage Road to the junction with Faringdon Road which forms the western boundary. Further west is a quarry and industrial estate separated from the site by some open fields. The area is predominantly arable on an open broad gently sloping raised landscape which affords panoramic views to the Chilterns to the east, North Wessex Downs to the south and the Corallian Ridge to the north.

Key landscape planning factors:

Site 32 is not within the Green Belt or the AONB. The site is 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: Well-vegetated northern edge of Stanford in the Vale across open, undulating fields



Photo 2: Long view south-west to AONB with quarry cranes in foreground



Photo 3: View north-east to Hatford with attractive view of church



Photo 4: View north-west with Faringdon Folly visible



Photo 5: Slightly more enclosed fields at edge of Conservation Area

Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

1. **Medium / High Visual Sensitivity:**
 - Largely open landscape
 - Intervisibility with Conservation Area
 - Panoramic views
 - Views of Hatford church
 - View of Faringdon Folly
2. **Medium Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Flat / undulating landform
 - Arable and pasture
 - Gappy hedgerows
 - Setting of Conservation Area and Listed Buildings
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium / High (combines 1 and 2)
4. **Medium / High Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Strong links with wider landscape
 - Edge of Stanford in the Vale largely well-screened with trees
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium / High (combines 3 and 4)
6. **Medium Landscape Value**
 - No written evidence of landscape value
 - Setting of Conservation Area
 - West end part of gateway to Stanford in the Vale
7. Landscape Capacity: Medium / Low (combines 5 and 6)

Relationship of site to Stanford in the Vale

- Much of the site's southern boundary is adjacent to housing on the northern side of Stanford, though is largely well screened
- The south eastern part of site is adjacent to the Conservation Area with a narrow 'finger' of the site within the CA
- The western end of the site feels separate from Stanford and is adjacent to the recreation ground, which is well screened
- The western end of the site forms the countryside setting of and gateway to the village

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- Strong links with adjacent countryside

Potential impact on key landscape characteristics

- Loss of openness
- Loss of pasture
- Opportunity to add to existing vegetation structure
- Possible impact on the setting of the Conservation Area

Potential impact on key visual characteristics

- Possible loss of attractive views of Hatford church tower, Faringdon Folly and south to the AONB
- Housing would be prominent on high ground in north west corner of site
- Possible negative impact on views from Conservation Area
- Possible negative impact on the open, rural gateway to the village

Potential impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the whole site would be out of scale with the historic core and modern expansions of Stanford
- Development would balance the settlement around the historic core
- Development of the whole site would be out of scale with the landscape pattern

Landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure

- Retain and enhance existing hedgerows and trees to boundaries
- Incorporate new hedgerow / tree planting to enclose new housing on countryside edge
- Build on landscape structure to meet OWLS landscape strategy
- Retain some views towards church, Faringdon Folly and AONB
- Enhance existing footpaths and create additional footpaths within site and linking to the village centre

Conclusion and recommendations

- Contain housing within 'reduced area' as shown in Figure 32.2.
- Create new vegetated northern edge to the settlement
- Preferred access from Cottage Road through existing gate
- Development would need to take account of the setting of the Conservation Area and important views
- Include Green Infrastructure as shown in Figure 32.2.

Potential capacity of site 32

It is recommended that only part of this site is considered further as a contingency site on landscape and visual grounds. Development of the whole site would be out of scale with the landscape and settlement pattern and much of the site would be disconnected from the existing settlement. The rural approach to and setting of the village and the CA would be impacted by the development of the site. The retention of an area of open land as the setting to the Conservation Area is desirable, as is restricting the extent of development to keep it in scale with the existing landscape pattern. Preferred access would be from Cottage Road through the existing gate. The density of this reduced area is recommended to be a maximum of 25 dwellings per ha. A full detailed landscape and visual impact assessment will be required to inform the final capacity of the site. A detailed assessment of the impact on the setting of the Conservation Area will be required. On this basis some 25 dwellings might be accommodated on site 32.

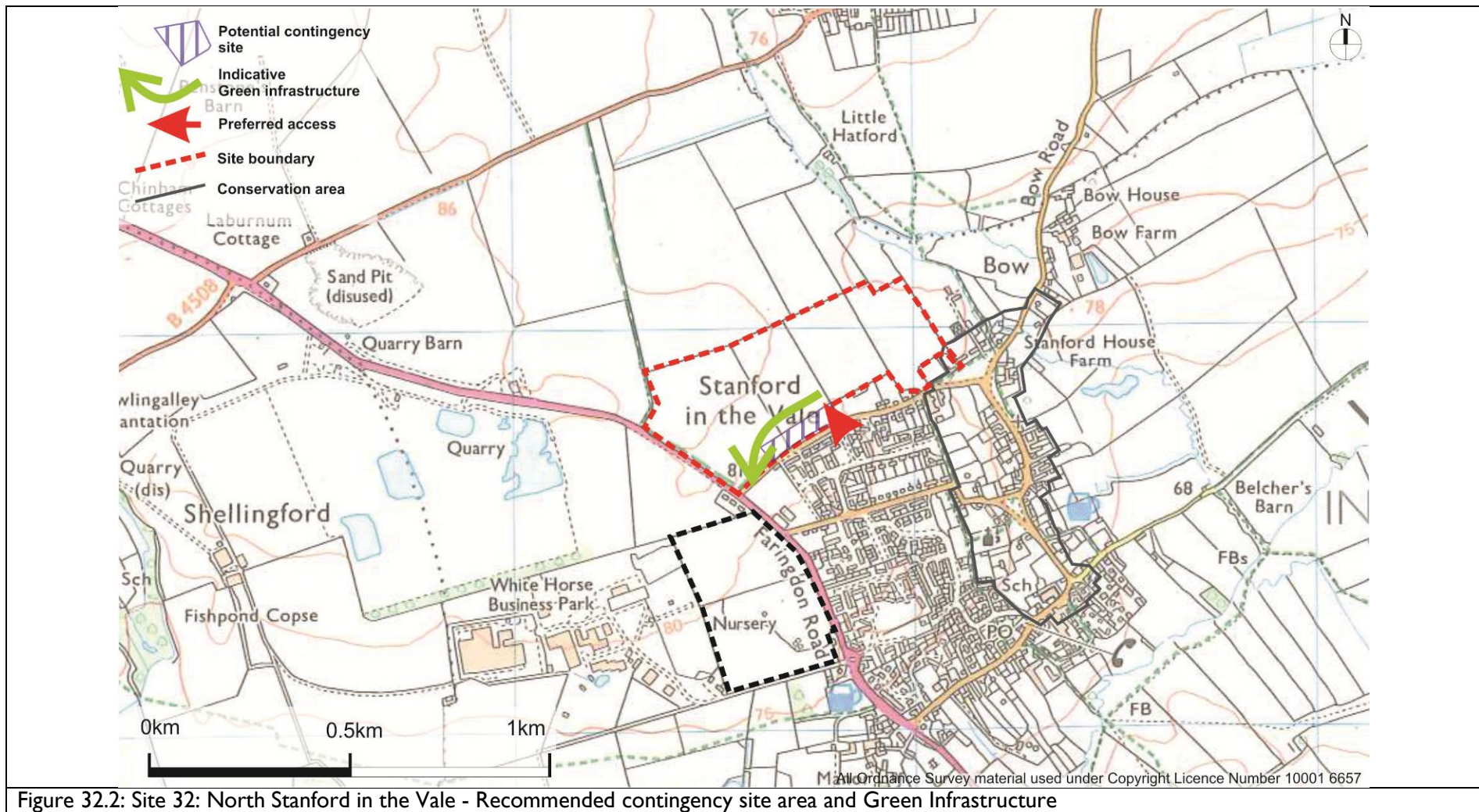


Figure 32.2: Site 32: North Stanford in the Vale - Recommended contingency site area and Green Infrastructure

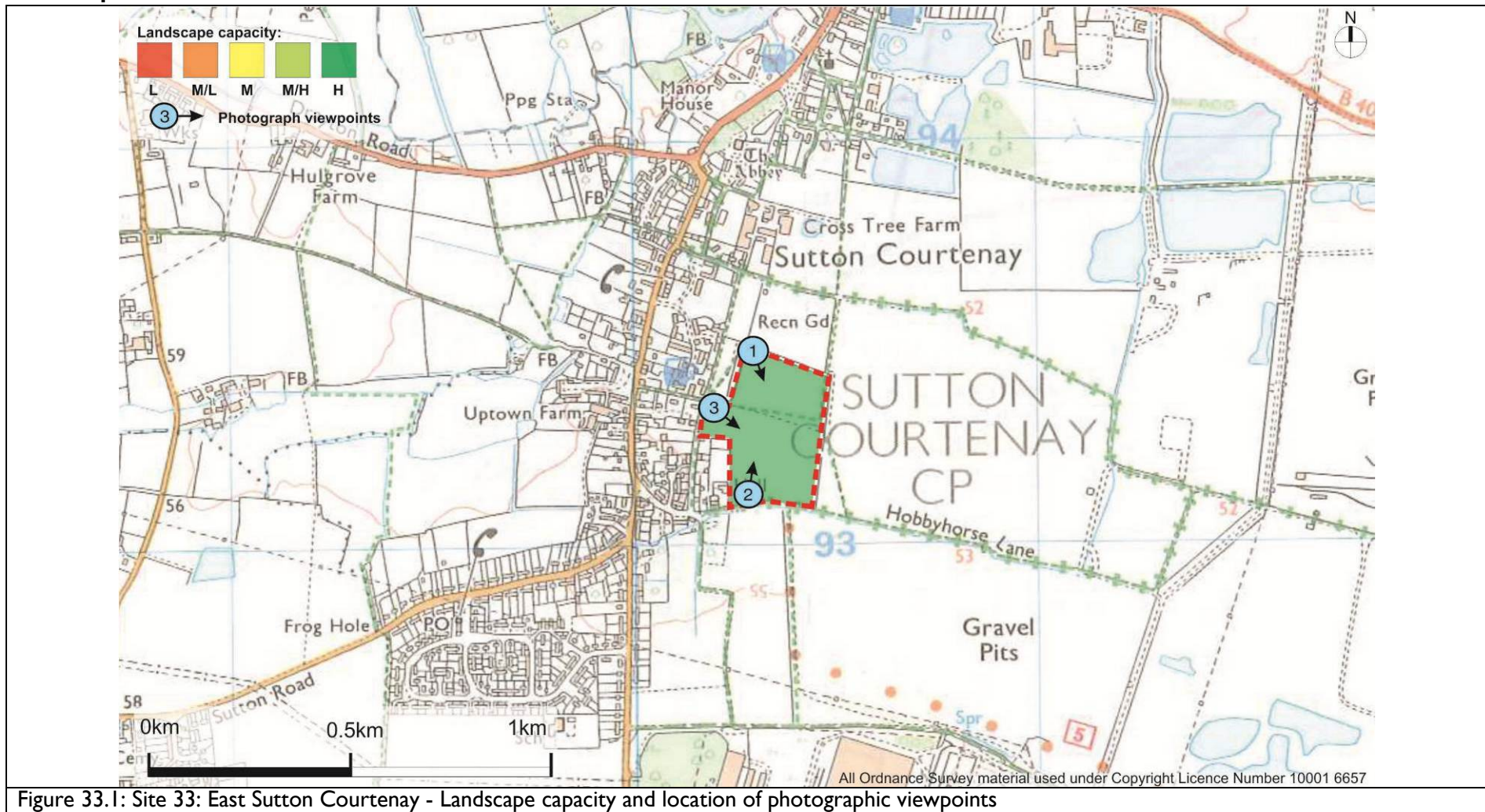
Site 33: East Sutton Courtenay**Site map:**

Figure 33.1: Site 33: East Sutton Courtenay - Landscape capacity and location of photographic viewpoints

Site 33 East Sutton Courtenay

The site lies in the **Lowland Vale 2C / OWLS LCT8 Lowland Village Farmlands**. The key landscape, visual and settlement characteristics for this area are set out in the Record Sheets for Site 33. The following guidance is given in OWLS.

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.

Guidelines

- 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 33 is a greenfield site of 8.8 hectares on the eastern side of Sutton Courtenay. The site is surrounded by open countryside to the east and south, with a recreation ground to the north. Along the west side, the north part of site abuts an area of woodland / grassland through which a public right of way passes; the middle, widest section of the site extends west to abut housing and the south western boundary is adjacent to the village hall and public tennis courts. A number of public footpaths pass through and along the boundaries of the site.

Key landscape planning factors:

LA33 is not within the Green Belt or AONB but is within an area identified in the Local Plan as an Area for Landscape Enhancement (NE11) which could benefit from, for example, 'the removal of eyesores, management of woodland, or the planting of trees to enhance or frame views or to block less attractive views.' The A34 corridor south of Abingdon has been affected by the A34, Didcot Power Station and gravel workings and has a relatively light tree cover. Development which would further erode or damage the landscape character would not be permitted and any development proposals would need to include an appropriate landscape scheme. The site is within the Lowland Vale, as 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 south across open fields to D.P.S and landfill.



Photo 2: View towards well vegetated eastern edge of Sutton Courtenay.



Photo 3: View south showing some intervisibility with adjacent housing, but otherwise well vegetated edge.

Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

1. **Medium / Low Visual Sensitivity:**
 - Open exposed site
 - Views dominated by Didcot Power Station, though the cooling towers are soon to be demolished
 - Several PROWS
2. **Low Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Arable land
 - Limited landscape features
 - No cultural significance
 - Good access but several visual detractors
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Low (combines 1 and 2)
4. **Medium Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Partly influenced by urban fringe uses, although Sutton Courtenay is largely enclosed by vegetation
 - Links to countryside to east
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium / Low (combines 3 and 4)
6. **Low Landscape Value**
 - No written evidence of landscape value
7. Landscape Capacity: High (combines 5 and 6)

Relationship of site to Sutton Courtenay

- The site is remote from the historic core and village shops.
- Well linked to community facilities.

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- The site is strongly linked to the countryside extending east away from Sutton Courtenay.

Potential impact on key landscape characteristics

- Loss of openness

Potential impact on key visual characteristics

- Long views towards the east would still be available from the PROW along the southern boundary.
- Potential for screening detracting views of Didcot power station, though the cooling towers are soon to be demolished

Potential impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development of the whole site would result in a settlement pattern somewhat out of character with the linear pattern of the historic core Sutton Courtenay, though similar in pattern to the modern developments to the south west of the site.

Landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure

- Retain and enhance existing vegetation to boundaries
- Include Green Infrastructure as shown in Figure 33.2.
- Create new landscape structure, building on existing landscape features to meet OWLS landscape strategy and policy NEI I objectives
- Protect and enhance public right of ways
- Create link to recreation ground

Conclusion and recommendations

- Create link to recreation ground
- Preferred access off of Hobbyhorse Lane next to village hall.
- Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of Sutton Courtenay.
- Include Green Infrastructure as shown in Figure 33.2.

Potential capacity of site 33

It is recommended that the whole of this site is considered further as a contingency site. While the whole site could accommodate development, in order to keep it in scale with the existing settlement character the site would need to be broken down into compartments to mirror existing patterns, and phasing of the compartments would also be advised. Preferred access is off of Hobbyhorse Lane through the existing gap. The density of this 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 220 dwellings might be accommodated on site 33.