

Site 47 Land west of Steventon

The site lies in the **OWLS LCTI Alluvial Lowlands**. The key landscape, visual and settlement characteristics are set out in the Record Sheet for Site 40.

OWLS Landscape Strategy

Maintain the tranquil nature of the landscape and promote the restoration and enhancement 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 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.
- 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 at the fringes of towns, villages and farms 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.
- Promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. These range from red brick and clay tiles in the Vale of White Horse to limestone and stone tiles in the Upper Thames valley.
- Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses such as gravel extraction with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic to the area. This will help to screen the development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside.

Site description:

Site 47 is a 55.8 hectares (46 ha excluding flood plain) greenfield site situated to the north-west of Steventon. The site comprises a single character area and straddles Hanney Road. The north and western boundaries mostly face onto open countryside and follow field boundaries for part of their length. An electricity substation compound forms part of the northern boundary. The southern boundary is defined by the London-Swindon railway line and to the east is defined by rear gardens, a field boundary and cuts across an open field. Part of the southern area of site is within the flood plain.

Key landscape planning factors:

Site 47 is not within the Green Belt or the AONB but 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. The majority of the site north of Hanney Road is identified in Local Plan policy NE1 I: an Area for Landscape Enhancement. Any development in this area should enhance the appearance of the area and avoid further erosion or damage to its character.

Photographs:

Photo 1: Panorama north across the north part of site towards the North Corallian Ridge in distance



Photo 2: View south-west across site towards AONB



Photo 3: View south-west towards north part of site



Photo 4: View north-west from Conservation Area across south part of site



Photo 5: View south-west across south part of site, with AONB visible

Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

1. **Medium / Low Visual Sensitivity:**
 - Open site with panoramic views
 - Countryside setting of Steventon
 - Mitigation feasible by building on existing/ subdividing.
2. **Medium / Low Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Lack of hedgerows/ significant vegetation
 - Southern part of site is Setting of Conservation Area and Listed Building (The Causeway)
 - Railway line to southern boundary.
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/ Low (combines 1 and 2)
4. **Medium / High Wider Landscape Sensitivity:**
 - Strong connections to countryside to west and north-west.
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)
6. **Medium / High Landscape Value**
 - Southern part of site forms setting for Conservation and Grade II* Listed Building (The Causeway).
7. Landscape Capacity: Medium / Low (combines 5 and 6)

Relationship of site to Steventon

- Eastern parts of site have strong links with Steventon

Relationship with adjacent wider countryside

- North and west of site connects strongly with open countryside to west and north west

Potential impact on key landscape characteristics

- Loss of openness to western side
- Loss of open countryside setting of and approach to Steventon

Potential impact on key visual characteristics

- Erosion of visual separation of Steventon and East Hanney
- Development in south-east corner of site could degrade setting of Listed Building and Conservation Area and block a key view of the open countryside from within the Conservation Area

Potential impact on key settlement characteristics

- Development in east of site would have strongest connections with Steventon
- Development in south-east corner of site could degrade setting of Listed Building and Conservation Area

Landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure

- Retain and enhance boundary vegetation
- Create new landscape structure to meet OWLS landscape strategy

Conclusion and recommendations

- Contain housing within the reduced area shown in figure 47.2, which avoids the flood plain
- Plant new woodland edge to boundaries of sites which face towards open countryside to create a strong edge and screen development

Potential capacity of the site

It is recommended that only the eastern parts of this site are considered further as a contingency site on landscape and visual grounds and excluding the floodplain. Development extending further to the west would erode the countryside setting of and approach to Steventon and development in the south east corner would block a key view over open countryside from within the Conservation Area. The preferred access to the north part of site would either be through the existing housing or via an existing farm track along the Hanney Road. Preferred access to the south part of the site would be through existing housing across the flood plain, if feasible. 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. Using a nominal density of 25dph, some 350 dwellings might be accommodated on Site 47.

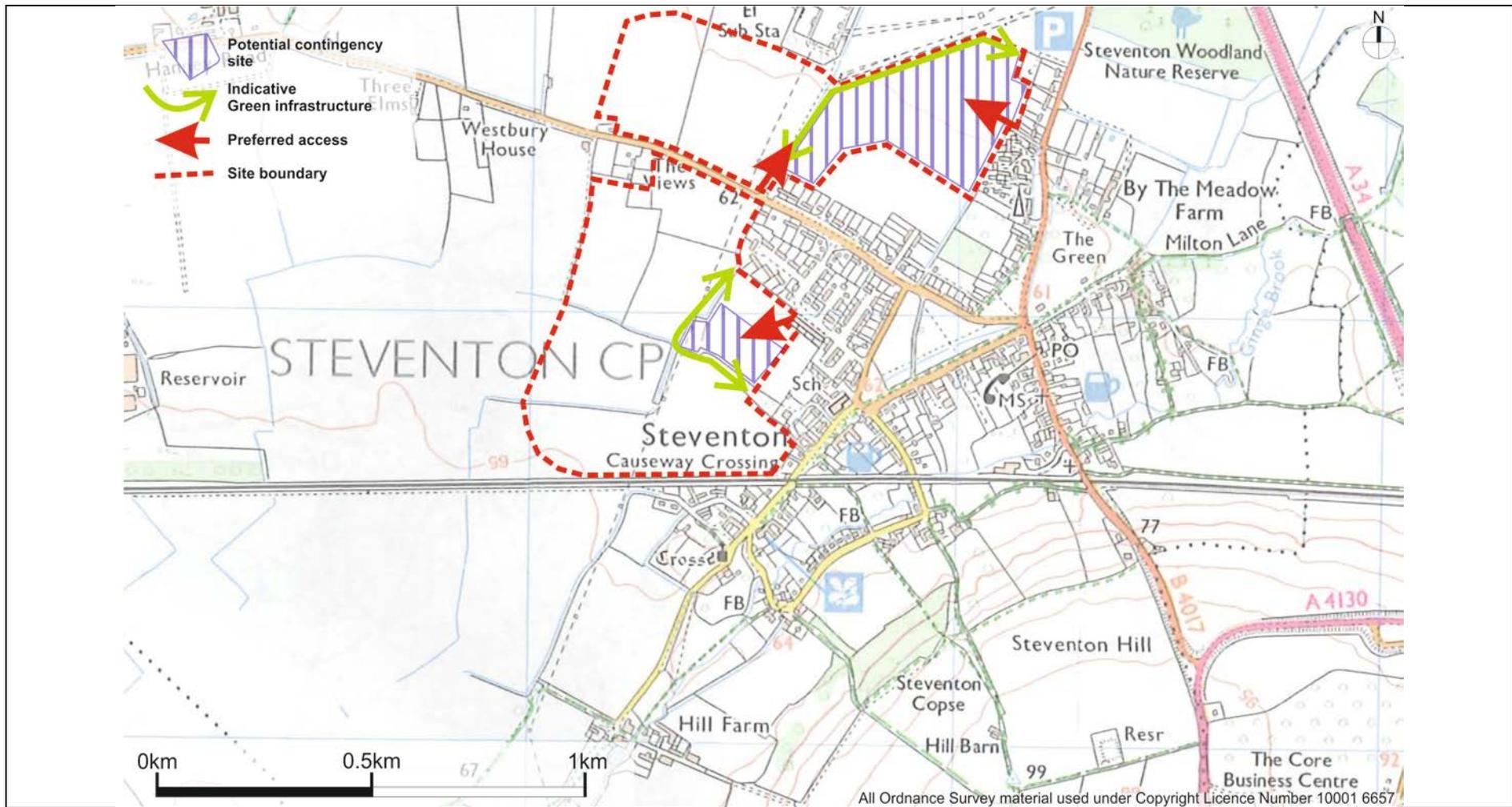


Figure 47.2: Site 47: Land west of Steventon - Recommended contingency site area and Green Infrastructure

4 SUMMARY AND TABLE A

6.1 The above analysis has led to the recommendation that five sites should not be included as contingency sites on landscape and visual grounds. Of the remaining thirty three sites the landscape capacity varies considerably with a number of the sites amended to show a 'reduced area' where development might be acceptable subject to any landscape or visual constraints, as set out in the site reports. Table A below sets out a summary of the recommendations:

TABLE OF LANDSCAPE CAPACITY OF THE POTENTIAL VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE CONTINGENCY SITES										
Site	Name	Whole site capacity from VWH (ha)	Potential housing numbers from VWH	Designation	Landscape Capacity (of whole site)	Recommended potential development area (ha)	Green Infrastructure - summary	Nominal capacity of recommended site area based on 25 dph. Figures rounded up to nearest 5 or 10 dwellings.	Total per site	Comments
1A	North Abingdon - adjacent Sports Centre	69.4	1735	Green Belt	Medium	8.5	Major GI link through centre of site linking with GI in the existing built form and Lodge Hill; buffer to A34; link into Sports Centre Tree planting to north-east road boundary Reinforce GI along Wilts and Berks canal; link into substantial planting along western boundary - linking into landscape setting of SAM Retain key landscape features of reduced area	410	460	Recommended areas in 1A and 1B merged with central substantial area of Green Infrastructure A slightly higher density would be acceptable south of perimeter road
1B	North Abingdon - Lodge Hill			Green Belt	Medium / Low	7.8				
1C	North Abingdon - Peachcroft			Green Belt	Low	1.9				
2A	South Abingdon - Clay Hill	63	1575		Medium	12.9		325	480	Development contained within immediate hinterland of Abingdon A lower density is recommended to take account of landscape and heritage constraints
2B	South Abingdon - Stonehill Farm				Medium	6.2		155		
3	South-West Botley	53.9	1350	Green Belt	Low	x	x	x	0	Not suitable for development - see Report
5	South-West Faringdon	25.5	635		Medium / low	4.6	Include new tree / hedgerow planting on western and southern boundaries to contain new housing	115	115	Site's development highly constrained by distinctive hill with tree clump which is a prominent local feature and the poor relationship of all but the eastern section of site with Faringdon
6A	South Faringdon - west of Coxwell Rd	32	800		Medium / high	18.5	Include new tree / hedgerow planting on western and southern boundaries to contain new housing	465	695	Development of the south part of this site is constrained by the need to keep open as an approach to Faringdon and to maintain the separation with Great Coxwell The open approach to Faringdon and the separation of Faringdon and the A420 can be maintained provided the vegetation to boundaries is retained
6B	South Faringdon - east of Coxwell Rd				High	9.2	New woodland to increase buffer along A420	230		
9	South Wantage	12	305	Setting of AONB	Low	x	x	x	0	Not suitable for development - see Report
10	South Valley Park, Didcot	22.9	575	Setting of AONB	Medium	14.7	Plant new woodland edge to eastern boundary to create a strong countryside edge and link with existing and new green infrastructure	370	370	Housing on the southern part of the site would have an adverse impact on the setting of the AONB and the separation of Harwell and Didcot
11	North West Valley Park, Didcot	47 (41 exc flood zone)	1025		High	41	Provide enhanced footpath / cycleway route along south side of A4130	1025	1025	The capacity has been based on the developable area excluding the area to be set aside a flood zone or landscape buffer as a major area of Green Infrastructure.
12A	Valley Park, Didcot - New Farm				High	59	Provide enhanced footpath / cycleway route along south side of A4131	1475		An increase in density would be acceptable in landscape terms provided it was in keeping with local built form and the landscape setting

12B	Valley Park, Didcot - Zulu Farm	147	Site was proposed to be allocated for 2,150 homes in the February 2013 LPP1 consultation document. Seeking to test the impact of increasing density on the site	Setting of AONB	Medium / High	88	Maintain open areas or introduce increased vegetation each side of the B4493	1320	2795	Higher density not recommended due to potential impact on the AONB
13A	Didcot A	17	425		High	17	Conserve and enhance existing landscape structure planting	425	425	Potential for higher density
13B	North Didcot	44.5	1115		Medium / high	42.3	New tree planting to screen detracting views and soften northern edge of Didcot, though the partial demolition of the power station is imminent	1060	1060	Site currently not suitable whilst waste management and minerals extraction continues adjacent to the site
16	North West Grove	40	1000		High	27.8	Consider new hedgerow trees along the road; new woodland / tree planting to screen detracting views, including of railway	695	695	Recommended area excludes field of ridge and furrow until further investigation and excludes cemetery
17	East Harwell Oxford Campus	140	3500	ACONB	Low	x	x	x	0	Not suitable for development - see Report
19	North West Harwell Oxford Campus	11	285	ACONB	Medium / Low	7.9	Create new wooded northern edge to new settlement and enhance public footpath	200	200	Development breaking the brow of the hill when viewed from the road to the north east would be visually intrusive.
20	North West Drayton	28	705		Medium / High	22.2	Retain open area in north part of site to include access road; plant buffer along A34	555	555	Housing in the southwest corner of site which is level with the A34 would impact on views from the A34 and the countryside to the west. The retention of an area of open land as an approach to Drayton from the north and separation with Abingdon is desirable
21A	South Drayton - north of East Way				Medium / Low	10.6	Incorporate open space / village green	265		A lower density is recommended to allow for landscape and heritage constraints and scope to provide open space for the village centre
21B	South Drayton - south of East Way	20	500		Medium / High	9.4	New woodland planting to eastern edge to screen views and create strong edge to settlement	235	500	While the whole site could accommodate development, in order to keep it in scale with the existing landscape and 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.
22A	South Cumnor - north fields			Green Belt	Low	2.4	Conserve and enhance existing landscape assets; maintain existing tree belts to south and west of the reduced area	60		Site development capacity is highly constrained by potential landscape impact of site access.
22B	South Cumnor - southern area	11.7	295	Green Belt	Low	x	x	x	60	Not suitable for development - see Report
23	East Challow	12.7	315	Setting of AONB	Medium / Low	4.1	Substantial planting along western boundary of reduced area, linked through to landscape buffer on higher ground; conserve and enhance existing landscape features	105	105	A lower density is recommended to reflect edge of village location and landscape sensitivity of the area. Site development capacity is highly constrained by potential landscape impact of site access.
25	South Kennington	11.8	295	Green Belt	Medium / High	10.7	Reinforce existing north tree belts to retain link with Radley Large wood; retain and reinforce tree belt along southern boundary	270	270	Care to be taken to avoid visual impact of development on high ground in views particularly from the east
27	South Marcham	8.6	215		Medium / High	5.8	Incorporate new hedgerow / tree planting to eastern boundary to create strong new edge of settlement	145	145	The retention of an area of open, rural approach to Marcham is desirable.