

Milton Park Local Development Order  
Vale of White Horse District Council and MEPC Ltd.

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL**

**For planning approval**

September 2012

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## **Landscape and visual appraisal**

### **Introduction**

1. Terence O'Rourke Ltd has been instructed by MEPC Milton Park to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal for Milton Park, Oxford. The Milton Park Local Development Order (LDO) is a partnership between Vale of White Horse District Council as the local planning authority, and MEPC Milton Park as the landowner. Terence O'Rourke Ltd has been instructed by MEPC to help coordinate the LDO process.
2. The purpose of the Milton Park LDO is to enable a vibrant business area, promoting employment-generating uses at the business park, to maximise the success of the Science Vale UK Enterprise Zone and give greater confidence to business to invest in Milton Park. It is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.
3. Milton Park LDO will simplify planning control to give greater flexibility for businesses to develop new premises and facilities or adapt existing premises, whilst maintaining a successful and diverse mix of employment generating uses. Development will only be permitted where the local authority is satisfied that it is in accordance with the permitted uses and development parameters set out in the Order. Development proposals not in accordance with the provisions of the Order will be determined by a planning application.
4. The LDO has been designed to be effective for a period of 15 years to reflect the typical timescale of business leases and give greater certainty for potential investors.
5. This report provides a landscape and visual appraisal of the existing, well developed, multi-use business park. The conclusions drawn seek to set the parameters for future development at Milton Park, with particular regard for building heights and with focus on Enterprise Zones.
6. The site, approximately 95.65ha in size, is in an outlying urban edge location approximately 2km north west of Didcot. The Local Development Order area covers the extents of the existing Milton Park business park in addition to smaller pockets of land to the south of the railway line which forms the southern boundary of Milton Park. Situated adjacent to the A34 and A4130 trunk roads, the business park is well served by public roads.
7. The site and surrounding area were visited during July 2012 to obtain familiarity with the landscape and to perform a landscape appraisal and photographic report. Field studies and desk based studies of photographs, map information, character assessments and statutory and emerging planning policy documents have enabled the recording of landscape elements such as topography, land use, development, vegetation and other features. This has allowed an evaluation of the existing landscape characteristics, features, the

way the landscape is experienced and the value of the landscape and visual resources in and around the site, and the key effects to be analysed.

## Legislation and policy

### *Local policies*

*Vale of White Horse Adopted Local Plan (Adopted July 2006)*

8. **Saved policy DC1**, relating to the overall quality of design and design consideration, states that development will only be permitted provided that:

*'it is of a high quality and inclusive design such that the layout, scale, mass, height, detailing, materials used and its relationship to adjoining buildings and open space do not adversely affect those attributes that make a positive contribution to the character of the locality;*

*ii) it takes into account local distinctiveness and character either in a modern or a traditional interpretation..'*

9. **Saved policy DC10**, relates also to design considerations and states that:

*'development will not be permitted if it would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment in terms of:*

*Dominance or visual intrusion'*

10. **Saved policy NE9** relates to the potential impact of development on the landscape of the Lowland Vale and states that:

*'development in the lowland vale will not be permitted if it would have an adverse effect on the landscape, particularly on the long open views within or across the area.'*

## LDO Area Context

### *Topography*

11. The LDO area is situated on relatively flat, low lying land within a wider area of gently undulating landform characterised by a series of low plateaus and shallow valleys (Figure 1). Much of the area is associated with the Gault Clay although a band of siltstones and sandy limestones of the Upper Greensand forms the transition between the low lying vale and the higher downs to the south of the LDO area where a more rolling landform can be observed.
12. There are a number of water courses in the study area concentrated at low elevations on the valley floor. Ephemeral drainage ditches are particularly numerous in the local area, whilst the Upper Thames lies approximately 3km to the north of the LDO area. Standing water is not a characteristic of the study

area although there are a number of man made reservoirs and disused gravel pits visible in the surrounding landscape.

13. The LDO area itself is generally flat and relatively low lying in a local context at approximately 60m AOD. Within Milton Park there are a number of existing smaller water bodies which are components of a wider drainage strategy, central to a series of green open spaces. There are also a number of drainage ditches that run through Milton Park on a north-south axis and on the northern boundary.

### *Vegetation*

14. The study area is generally an open, intensively managed landscape particularly dominated by arable crops. This landscape pattern is prevalent at higher elevations and in areas more distant from the Upper Thames. In these areas, woodland cover is generally sparse, as a result, and restricted to small deciduous and mixed plantations associated with villages and farmhouses. A rationalised field pattern is defined in parts by managed native hedgerows but this distribution is sporadic and, for large areas of the study area, the landscape lacks vegetative structure. At lower elevations, and in areas bordering the River Thames and its tributaries, land use is dominated more by small permanent pasture fields and semi-improved grassland bounded by more substantial and consistent managed and un-managed native hedgerows. Woodland cover is also more widespread in these areas and characterised by typical wet woodland blocks and semi-natural woodland.
15. In the immediate landscape context of the LDO area there is a relatively strong landscape structure consisting of substantial planting on the embankment of the A34 dual carriageway and the Milton interchange, mature parkland trees within the Milton Manor Estate and areas of mature scrub associated with a number of gravel pits in the area. In addition, hedgerows are more numerous and substantial than much of the study area and contain a high number of mature hedgerow trees.
16. The LDO area itself is relatively well vegetated. The existing, developed component of the LDO area is particularly well screened by substantial vegetation on the southern boundary and a more open belt of tree and shrub species on the northern boundary. Southern boundary vegetation creates a visual barrier between Milton Park and the railway line although this belt of vegetation is relatively narrow and partially transparent during the winter months with a low proportion of evergreen species.
17. The two smaller plots of land (Enterprise Zones MP8 and MP5) are currently open, unmanaged fields with little substantial vegetation of note. MP5 is bounded by a belt of substantial shrub and tree species on its southern and eastern boundaries which is beginning to self seed, encroaching into the field.
18. Despite being a densely developed business park, the existing developed component of the LDO area is reasonably well landscaped with a high number of large native and non-native trees planted along road edges and within a

broken network of small public green spaces. Tree planting within car parks and along building facades is well distributed and represents a common approach to landscape planting through the majority of the site.

### ***Land use and settlement***

19. Land use in the local area is mixed. Intensively cultivated agriculture land is predominant although there are widespread and prominent land uses that characterise the area as a semi-industrial landscape. Of particular note is the Didcot Power Station. The cooling towers of which are visible from the majority of the study area and define the local landscape. These dominant structures create an overwhelming industrial character even in more isolated areas of the landscape. This sense of industry is further strengthened by other human development in the area, such as Harwell International Business Centre, Milton Park, the Science and engineering centre among others and numerous gravel pits and sewage works.
20. The settlement pattern is relatively dense and randomly distributed. There are a number of larger, nucleated settlements in the study area, at Didcot and Abingdon, and a numerous villages and individual farmsteads, of particular note at Steventon, Harwell, Milton Hill, Milton, Drayton and Sutton Courtenay, which are all situated within 3km of the LDO area.
21. The LDO area consists of three smaller unconnected plots. The larger component is made up of the existing Milton Park, a well developed business park consisting of a high number of units predominantly in industrial, office and warehouse and distribution use which includes a small area of undeveloped land on the northern boundary at Kelaarts Field.. Two smaller plots, to the south of the railway line and Milton Park, are not currently developed and are unmanaged.
22. The LDO area is well served by public roads providing direct access to and through the sites and linking the wider area via the rail network and the A34 and A4130 trunk roads. The Milton Interchange is located approximately 0.5km to the west of the LDO area and provides direct access from Milton Park to the national road network. The nearest railway station to the site is situated 3km to the east at Didcot.

### ***Public rights of way***

23. There is a widespread network of public rights of way in the study area largely following farm tracks and field boundaries linking many of the local villages and farmsteads. There are a number of public rights of way within 1km of the LDO area boundary. Firstly, two public footpath links terminate on the LDO areas northern boundary and continue north to Sutton Courtenay and north west to Milton. Two further footpaths lie in parallel on a north south axis to the south of the LDO areas boundary and link the A4130 with Harwell, approximately 2.5km to the south.

### ***Statutory Designations***

24. There are a number of heritage assets in the study area that are of national importance (see figure 2). These features are of prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon origin and can be found at Appleford, south of Abingdon, Drayton and on the sites northern boundary (SAM OX250). The scheduled monument OX250 is evident as an area of extensive cropmarks located largely on the eastern side of the field with outlying cropmarks visible to the west. In 2006, a full geophysical survey yielded evidence of a prehistoric ‘ladder’ settlement enclosure and activity from the Iron Age to the Anglo-Saxon period. The scheduled area extends approximately 100m into the LDO area and, as such, correspondence has been made on behalf of MEPC with Oxfordshire County Council and English Heritage to agree a position, ensuring satisfactory and appropriate treatment of this area for the life of the LDO.
25. There are no sites within the study area designated for their national ecological importance.

### ***Future Baseline***

26. Outline consent for a 6 storey, 120 bedroomed hotel with conference facilities was granted in August 2008 (Ref. P07/V1640/0) for a site within the core area of Milton Park. The building will become an additional, visually prominent landscape element and so will form part of the baseline on which the assessment is made.

## **Landscape Appraisal**

### ***Landscape character assessment***

#### *National character area*

27. With reference to the Countryside Agency’s *Countryside Character – The character of England’s natural and man-made landscape*, the site lies within Character Area 108, The Upper Thames Clay Vales. This character type is subdivided into two distinct character areas: The Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Vales and the Vales of the White Horse and Aylesbury in which the LDO area sits. The key characteristics of the Vales of the White Horse and Aylesbury are:
- *“A predominantly lowland agricultural landscape of open undulating vales.*
  - *Mixed farming, dairy herds, hedges, hedge trees and field trees are all frequent and characteristic within the landscape. In many places, mature field oaks give a parkland feel to the landscape.*
  - *The clays of the Vale of the White Horse support arable farming with some tracts of sheep pasture in medium sized and regular field pattern with few hedgerows or trees.*
  - *Long views often dominated by Didcot power station and associated power lines.*
  - *Aylesbury Vale is a continuation of the Vale of the White Horse, with a*

*quiet, more enclosed agricultural character. Black poplar trees are distinctive features within the agricultural landscape of the Vale.*

- *The chalk scarp of the Chilterns and the Berkshire and Marlborough Downs form a backdrop for many views from the Vales to the south.”*

Following analysis of the landscape character of the local area, it was concluded that the character of the area is not entirely consistent with that described by the national level assessment. In consideration of this, and for the purposes of this report, the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (internet resource) will be referred to.

#### *Local Landscape Character*

28. The site is situated within character area 8, illustrated on Figure 3, *Lowland Village Farmlands*, described in summary as:

*“A variable, often large-scale farmed landscape closely associated with village settlements.”*

The key characteristics of which are described as:

- *“A varied gently rolling and almost flat topography.*
- *Medium to large-sized arable and hedged fields.*
- *Thinly scattered hedgerow trees, which are mostly ash.*
- *Ash, willow and poplars fringing ditches and streams.*
- *Prominent village settlements scattered throughout the area.”*

29. Much of the LDO area is extensively developed and as such displays few characteristics of the landscape type in which it sits. It is important to note that the study area is characterised by prominent and numerous industrial activities and so, in context, the existing development is not uncharacteristic in its existing form within its immediate setting.

#### *Visual appraisal*

30. A number of viewpoints have been selected that best demonstrate how the site interacts with the landscape. The viewpoints chosen provide a representative selection of views from locations where the site is visible and cover a range of receptors from varying directions. These views V1 – V10 and viewpoint location plan, are illustrated in figures 5 to 15 and help to illustrate the findings of the visual appraisal. The findings of the visual appraisal are set out in the following paragraphs.

- **There is no inter-visibility with the site beyond 1.5km from the application site boundary.** There is a moderate degree of visual containment to the site and, although the immediate context of the site consists of large open fields, the relatively flat topography and significant areas of built development, the A34 road corridor, hedgerows and significant boundary vegetation restrict views from the wider landscape. As a result, the site is only visible from locations in the immediate local

area. The site is not visually perceptible beyond approximately 1.5km distance.

- **The site is not visible from the A34 road corridor.** The A34 is situated on raised embankments which are planted on both the western and eastern edge with a dense band of mature deciduous trees. Views from the area of land to the north of the railway line and west of the A34 are also obstructed by this embankment and vegetation. There are restricted and partially screened views of the LDO area from a slightly more elevated location on the railway bridge at Steventon (Figure 15, viewpoint 10). From this location, the radio mast, to the south of Milton Park, is visible and the roofline of a number of the existing larger buildings to the west of the LDO area will be visible during the winter months as intervening vegetation is predominantly deciduous.
- **There are no distant views from more elevated land to the south west of the LDO area.** The landform to the south of the railway line is more elevated and undulating in nature so, although the A34 road corridor is a factor, it is not a determinant on the extent of visibility from these locations. Visibility from this area is largely determined by the abundance and scale of tree belts, landform and settlements.
- **Views from the east of the A34 and to the south of the LDO area are more open.** As the landform rises gently to the south, partially screened views are possible of the rooflines of existing buildings within Milton Park. This includes views from the public right of way to the immediate east of New Farm and from Cow Lane (Figure 8, viewpoint 3). From these locations there are no views of the MP5 and MP8 enterprise zones to the south of the LDO area.
- **There are clear views of the LDO area from the A4130 to the south of MP5 and Milton Park.** The trunk road lies on a west-east axis and forms the southern boundary of MP8. As the southern boundary of MP8 is relatively open, there are unobstructed views over the entirety of this area (Figure 7, viewpoint 2). Further to the north, the rooflines of existing buildings within Milton Park are visible above the tree canopies of deciduous trees on the park's southern boundary. The A4130 also lies approximately 50m from the northern boundary of MP5. MP5 covers a relatively small area that has a northerly aspect and, as such, is visible above the intervening petrol station and fast food restaurant. The entirety of this area can be perceived from within the service area (Figure 6, viewpoint 1). To the east of MP5 and MP8 and further along the A4130 views of the LDO area within the existing Milton Park are obstructed by a significant tree belt on the southern edge of the railway line (Figure 9, viewpoint 4).
- **Partially screened views of the LDO area are possible through scrubby vegetation from a section of the railway line between the A34 and Milton Road.**

- **There are no views of the LDO area from residential properties on the western edge of Didcot.**
- **More distant views of the LDO area from the east are screened by the significant Didcot Power Station, landfill site and expansive gravel excavation works.** The low lying, level nature of the landform to the east prevents any views of the LDO area above these significant human elements (Figure 10, viewpoint 5)
- **Views from the immediate landscape to the north are more open.** Three adjoining open agricultural fields cover an area between Sutton Courtenay, Milton and Sutton Road. Three public rights of way cross this small area and allow partially obscured views of the LDO area to the south (Figure 14, viewpoint 9). Further north, locations on Sutton Road allow similar views albeit over a greater viewing distance (Figure 12, viewpoint 7). A narrow band of vegetation, composed of scrubby native species and mature trees, partially screens the building facades on Milton Parks northern boundary. Due to the level viewing field and the comparable elevation, mature trees on this boundary are of sufficient height to screen buildings up to 3 storeys in height. The distribution of trees on this boundary is intermittent, however, and so, for the most part, existing buildings are clearly visible. The majority of the LDO area is not perceptible in views from the north.
- **Views further north of Sutton Road are possible with decreasing clarity proportional to viewing distance.** Due to the level viewing field, the LDO area is barely perceptible from distances over 1.5km.
- **Views from Sutton Courtenay are restricted to residential properties on the southern edge of the settlement.** The built development itself obstructs any views from further into the settlement, a result also of the level landform. From these locations, existing buildings on Milton Parks northern boundary are visible although the majority of the LDO area can not be perceived.
- **Views are possible from Sutton Courtenay Lane and Sutton Courtenay Road.** Sutton Courtenay Road lies adjacent to the LDO areas eastern boundary. At present, there is a hedgerow of varying composition, height and density along the eastern boundary that softens and screens built development within Milton Park. Building units that lie immediately on the boundary are clearly visible above and through the existing hedgerow and trees whereas this vegetation is of sufficient height and density in other locations to almost entirely screen views of units more than approximately 25m from the boundary. Further north on Sutton Courtenay Lane, the road edge is more open and allows views along the northern boundary of the LDO area (Figure 11, viewpoint 6).
- **Views of the LDO area from Milton are restricted to residential properties on Pembroke Lane (Figure 13, Viewpoint 8).** These receptors lie adjacent to the LDO area and so are influenced by a small proportion of the LDO area. The proximity of receptors, however, means that any

redevelopment in this area is likely to have a significant affect on views. There are a number of substantial trees and hedgerows along the road edge and within gardens which, as the building heights of units on this boundary are no more than 2 storeys high, largely screen views from the road itself although views from the rear of residential properties are unobstructed.

### ***Conclusion***

31. The landscape appraisal (summarised on Figure 4) has identified key visual receptors in the landscape that are sensitive to future development and re-development within the LDO area. These are:

- Residential properties to the south of Milton including Pembroke Road
- Pembroke Road users, Milton
- Public rights of way users to the north of the LDO area and south of Sutton Road
- Sutton Road users between Sutton Courtenay and Milton
- Residential properties on the southern edge of Sutton Courtenay.
- Users of the two public rights of way to the south of the A4130.

To a lesser degree receptors more tolerant to change in the landscape have been identified, these are:

- Road users of the A4130 trunk road, Sutton Courtenay Road, Sutton Courtenay Lane and High Street
- Users of the Fast Food restaurant and hotel on the Milton Interchange
- Railway users.

### **Development Parameters**

32. The visual receptors identified above and the overall landscape character of the local area have been given a high level of consideration in drawing up a set of development parameters. Development should only be permitted under the Local Development Order if it is in accordance with the parameters listed below. Reference is also made to Figure 16.

- ***Development immediately adjacent to Milton village***  
Due to the proximity of residential properties to the edge of the LDO boundary a maximum building height of 9m is permitted. This constraint is imposed to ensure that future development is of a comparable height to residential properties on the village edge and therefore will not be visible above the rooflines of village properties. Future development will result in a negligible change to the character of the street scene on Pembroke Lane and for views from the rear of residential properties.
- ***Development on LDO area's northern-most boundary***  
Development on the northern boundary is restricted to a maximum of 12m in height. The landscape appraisal concluded that views from the area to the north were level and generally unobstructed resulting in the facades and rooflines of a number of existing buildings within Milton Park remaining

visible. This constraint on building height ensures that any future development will not represent a relative increase in visual impact (as building heights on this boundary are comparable) and allows the impacts to be mitigated adequately with tree and hedgerow planting. Further consideration should also be given to building façade treatment. The landscape appraisal identified a number of existing building units that were visually more prominent than other buildings of comparable height and exposure. It was concluded that the light coloured treatment of the façade was the determining factor on visibility. As a result, building facades on the northern boundary should require a dull or moderately dark grey/brown colour or brick treatment for development to be permitted.

- ***Development within Enterprise Zone MP9***  
Enterprise Zone MP9 lies adjacent to SAM OX250. The boundary of the enterprise zone has been reduced to exclude the SAM following correspondence with English Heritage and Oxfordshire County Council. Despite the archaeological remains not being evident on the surface, the landscape setting of this asset has also been taken into consideration. A maximum building height within MP9 of 12m allows a suitable planting buffer to screen development up to the roofline from views to the north, including the SAM and residential properties to the south of Sutton Courtenay.
- ***Development within Enterprise Zone MP5***  
MP5 has a relatively steep gradient and northerly aspect, lying at elevations above the A4130 trunk road. The perceived height and extent of any future development will be exaggerated by this change in level and will therefore result in a more significant impact for visual receptors in the immediate area to the north. A maximum building height of 9m is imposed to ensure that future development is in scale with adjacent, existing buildings and future development within MP8.
- ***Development within Enterprise Zone MP8***  
The capacity for change within Enterprise Zone MP8 was deemed to be relatively high as it is low lying, flat and visible only from low sensitivity receptors on urban roads and railway line in the immediate area. A building height constraint of 16m is imposed to ensure that development is in scale with existing development in Milton Park but no further constraint is defined. In this location, as the ‘gateway’ to Milton Park and Didcot, a successful, well-assimilated development relies on a sound architectural and urban design approach but does not carry wider landscape issues.
- ***Development within the core of Milton Park***  
Existing buildings within this area are generally screened from view by buildings on the northern boundary and by substantial vegetation on the southern boundary. In response, a maximum building height comparable with existing are acceptable without additional landscape character or visual impact.

## **Landscape strategy**

33. In addition to the development parameters outlined above, a broad overarching landscape strategy seeks to mitigate any residual visual impact resulting from future development. Most significantly, vegetation on the northern boundary has been found to be relatively intermittent and its ability to screen development from views is inconsistent along its length. The Design Guidance outlines provision for supplementary planting to augment the screening affect of the existing hedgerow to consist of native species which, together with the existing hedgerow, should be maintained to an approximate height of 5m. In addition, new tree planting should be undertaken along this boundary, in-filling sparser, more open lengths of the boundary, creating a more successful and consistent screen to views from the north.
34. A new landscape buffer should be planted on the western and northern boundary to Zone D (Enterprise Zone MP9) to consist of a native hedgerow (triple staggered rows, maintained to a height of 4.5-5m) and hedgerow trees. This band of planting is proposed to conserve the landscape setting of the SAM and to mitigate the landscape impact of new development and a change in land use in this area. In order to achieve a satisfactory visual screen to new development, new planting should be implemented prior to any construction works in Enterprise Zone MP9. The location of planting and species composition should be agreed with English Heritage prior to implementation to ensure that there is no disturbance to the archaeological remains resulting from tree root damage and changes to the hydrology.
35. To help assimilate future development within MP5 and MP8, and to minimise the perceived change to the landscape character, an appropriate landscape edge consisting of tree planting is proposed along the road edges. The intended result is to soften the built form and to create an attractive street scene.

## **Effects on landscape character and views**

36. The form, scale and nature of potential future development within the LDO area mean that there will be potential effects on the landscape character of the area, landscape resources and on views. The following paragraphs describe those potential effects.

### ***Potential effects on landscape character***

37. The LDO area is set within a semi-rural landscape characterised by a moderate level of industrial activity. There are numerous large scale industrial developments including gravel excavation and landfill. The LDO area is set within a rapidly changing landscape which therefore has a relatively high capacity for development. Of particular note is Didcot Power Station, a highly significant element in the landscape. It is understood that Didcot Power Station will be decommissioned in the near future although it is likely that it will remain a dominant human element in the landscape for much of the lifespan of the LDO. Such is the scale and visual prominence of the cooling towers that the power station is the over-riding characterising element of the landscape.

Any future development within the LDO area is viewed within the context of the power station and therefore any minimal change in the landscape resource will result in a negligible change to the overall landscape character of the area.

38. The core area of the LDO is currently well developed and so any future development will result in a negligible change to the landscape resource and will not result in a change in land use. As such, any development of this area will result in a negligible perceptible change in landscape character.
39. Development of enterprise zones MP5 and MP8 will result in a significant change in land use and therefore to the inherent landscape resource. Due to the limited zone of visual influence of these two plots, however, the direct affects on landscape character resulting from development are not widespread. The immediate landscape setting is also semi-urban, located on a busy road and adjacent to development at the Milton Interchange, and visible in the context of Milton Park and Didcot Power Station. In conclusion, development in these two areas will not significantly affect the character of the immediate landscape.
40. Long distance views of the LDO area are not a characteristic of the Lowland village farmlands due to the generally level nature of the landform, the distribution of settlements and vegetation. This is consistent with the immediate landscape surrounding the LDO area and consequently any change to the built form will generally have very localised affects on landscape character. Additional planting to augment the screening effect of existing hedgerows on the northern and southern boundaries will potentially increase the sense of containment to a minor degree but, as there is a wide variation in hedgerow and woodland belt form in the local area, a moderate change in the form of the field boundaries using a locally prevalent planting type, will not adversely affect the landscape character.

#### ***Potential effects on views***

41. Paragraph 27 sets out the range of potential available views of the site. A summary of the visual effects of potential future development in accordance with the LDO Design Guidance and development parameters is set out below:

**Effects of the proposals on views from the north of the LDO area.** There will be a minimal to moderate alteration to views from public rights of way to the north of the LDO area resulting from re-development within the core area and development of Enterprise Zone MP9. Development within the core area will present a negligible change for views relative to the existing built form. Overall there will be a minimal perceptible change to views resulting from development within the core area. Views from the public right of way adjacent to and closest MP9's western boundary will perceive a moderate degree of change due to the proximity of built form and the significant relative change in land use in this area. Planting on the northern and western boundary of MP9 will be implemented as an early phase of works and so will be well established prior to development within MP9, screening the majority of built development for longer viewing distances.

**Effects of the proposals on views from residential properties to the south of Sutton Courtenay and users of Sutton Courtenay lane.** Residential properties will be sensitive to development within MP9 due to their southerly aspect and proximity. Additional planting will soften future development although built form will appear closer and visible through breaks in and above boundary vegetation. Development within MP9 will not introduce uncharacteristic elements into the landscape and will be viewed as a coherent component of the existing Milton Park.

**Effects of potential development on views from the A34 dual carriageway.** Due to the transient nature of views and the density of planting on embankments, there will be negligible perceptible change resulting from development of the LDO area.

**Effects of potential development on views from residential properties to the south of Milton.** As future development is constrained to building heights comparable with the existing built form, there will be a minimal alteration to views from residential properties.

**Effects of potential development on views from the railway line to the east of the A34.** Views to the north of the railway line will remain largely screened by vegetation on the core areas southern boundary and so the effects of changes in the built form will be negligible. The proximity of built development in MP8, and the significant change in landscape resource that results, will have a more significant visual effect. Current views from the railway line incorporate urban development, including major roads, the power station and settlement, and so the sensitivity of the receptor to visual change is relatively low. Overall, the visual impact of potential future development is acceptable.

**Effects of potential development on views from the A4130 trunk road.** Road users will perceive a significant change to views. Due to the transient nature of views and the existing urban nature of the landscape, receptors are considered to be relatively tolerant to change. Future development will be perceived in the context of the existing services and Milton Park and so will not introduce uncharacteristic elements to the view.

**Effects of potential development on views from the Milton Interchange services.** Users of the petrol station, fast food restaurant and hotel will perceive a significant change to the view, however, the nature of the view will remain urban.

## Conclusion

42. The landscape and visual appraisal shows that the local pattern of topography, vegetation and development limits the extent to which the LDO area is visible in the landscape.
43. Receptors of moderate to high sensitivity have been identified as users of the public rights' of way to the north and south of the LDO area and from

residential properties within Milton and Sutton Courtenay, all within 1km of the site. The overall effect of on these views are minimal to moderate due to the negligible relative visual change that will result from future development and the addition of future development within an existing undeveloped area of land. These affects have been mitigated by defined development parameters.

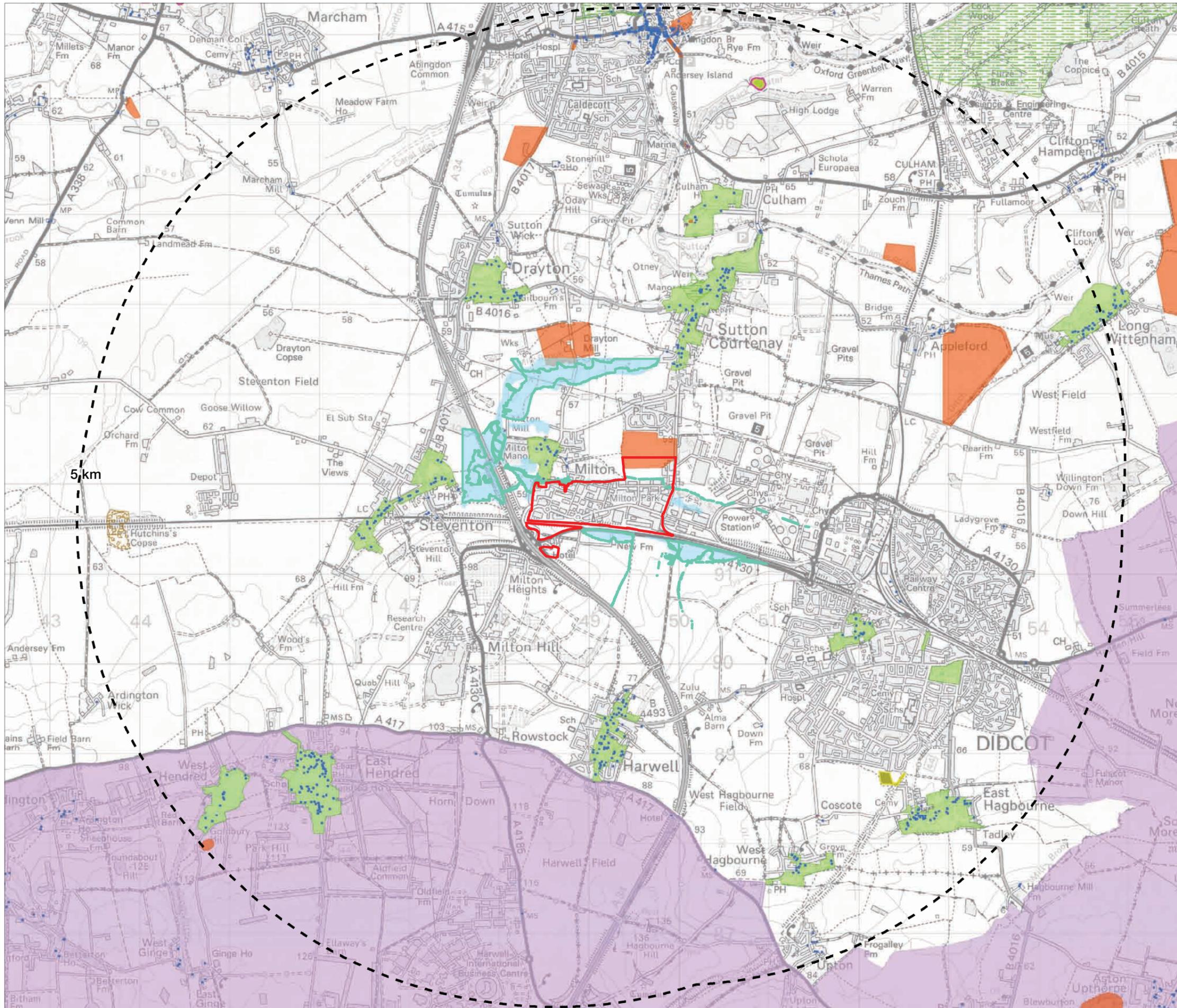
44. An over-arching landscape strategy is designed to augment boundary vegetation with a net improvement in screening potential and, as development in the core area is comparable with existing building heights, the visual impact to the north of development at Milton Park will be improved overall. A more significant localised impact will result from development within Enterprise Zone MP9 although early phase planting will reduce the impacts.
45. The impact of potential development to the south of the railway line is moderate to high, carrying a significant change in land use and to landscape resources. Screening of development in MP5 and MP8 will be minimal although this development is not uncharacteristic in the immediate landscape and the extent of visual influence is narrow, resulting in an overall acceptable level of visual impact.



Site boundary

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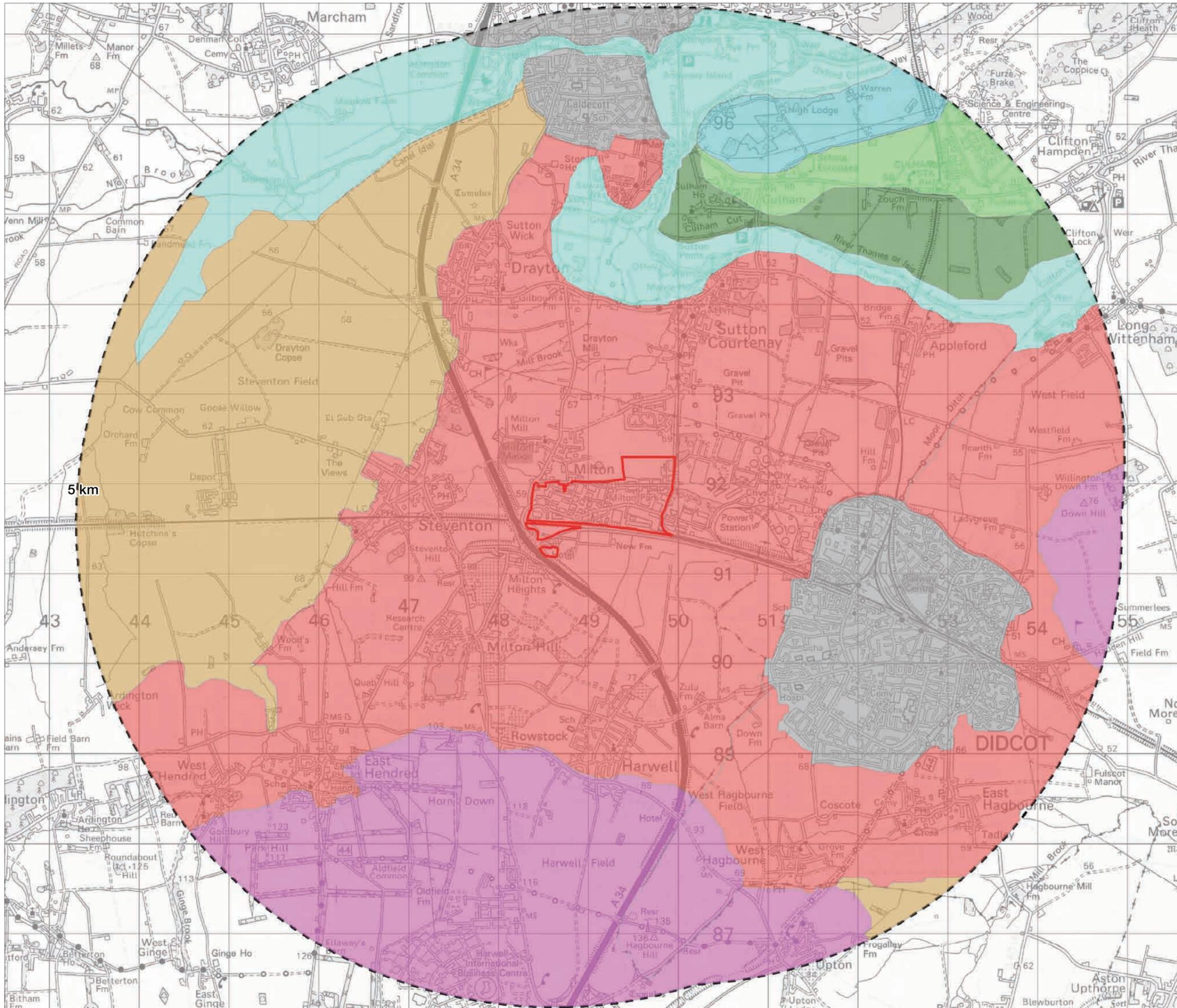
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- Legend**
- Conservation areas
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Local Nature Reserve
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
  - Listed buildings
  - Registered parks and gardens
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Flood zone 2
  - Flood zone 3
  - Site boundary

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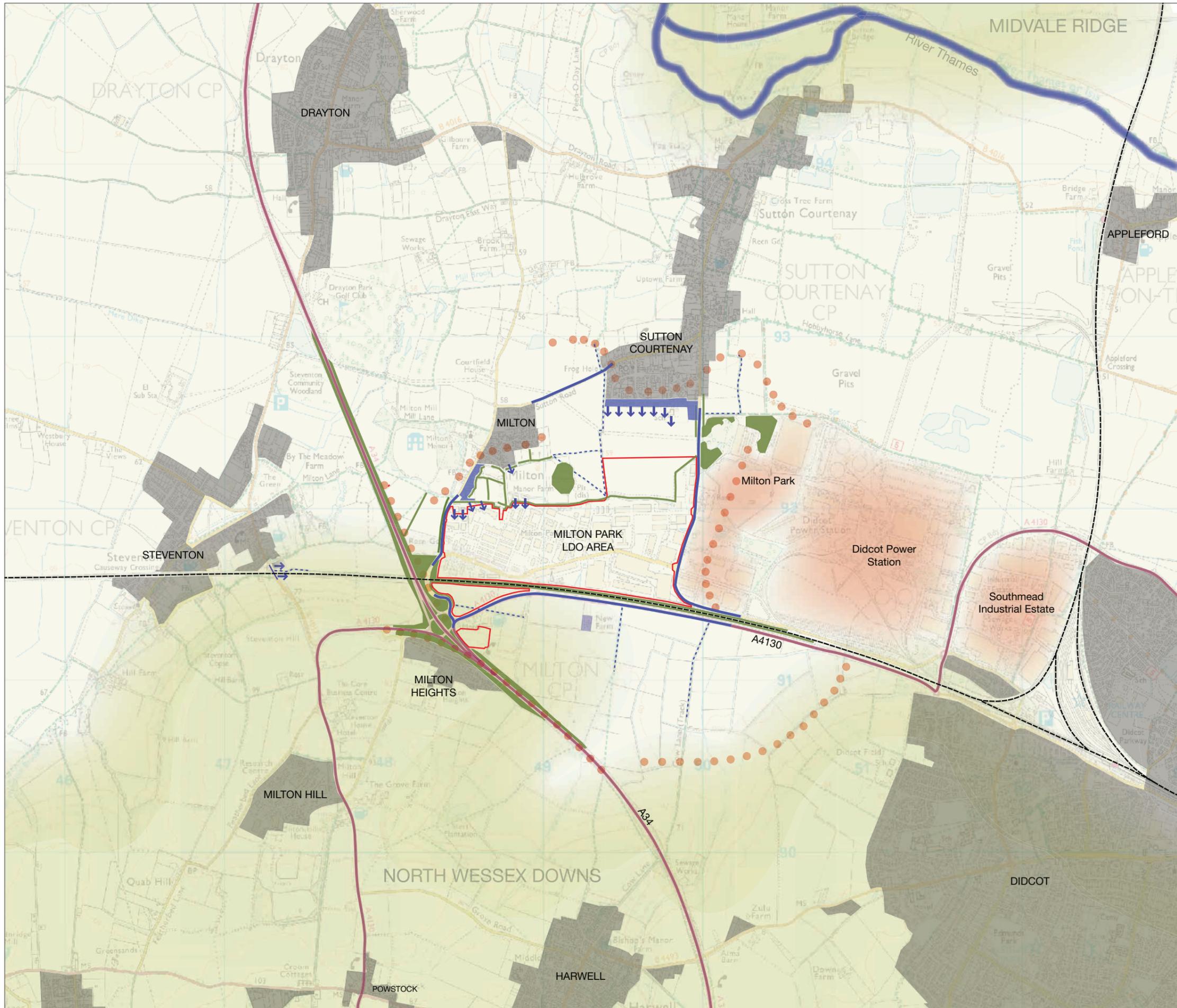


**Legend**

- Alluvial lowlands
- Lowland village farmlands
- River meadowlands
- Rolling farmland
- Terrace farmland
- Urban
- Vale farmland
- Wooded estatelands
- Site boundary

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**Legend**

- Trunk road/main road
- Railway line
- Urban area
- Significant vegetation screen to views
- Key views of site
- Public right of way with views to site
- Section of road with views to site
- Urban area allowing inter-visibility with LDO area
- Approximate outer extent of inter-visibility with LDO area
- LDO Area boundary

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Access road to fast food restaurant

LDO area - Enterprise zone MP5



Vegetation on embankment of the A34

Access road to fast food restaurant



Viewpoint: 1

Elevation: Approximately 65m AOD

Location: Taken from a petrol station adjacent to the A4130 looking south to MP5