



WELLS

Neighbourhood Plan Site Masterplanning Studies

Final Report

November 2021

Limitations

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Introduction

01

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme, led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Wells City Council in producing the Wells City Neighbourhood Plan.

This report presents design studies for three sites allocated for development in the Mendip District Local Plan. The report has been prepared to support emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies that will guide the assessment of future development proposals on these sites. The objective of this report is to advise on the key placemaking principles, illustrating options for the three sites **allocated by Mendip District Council in the Local Plan**. This report aims to provide:

- A review of the relevant planning policies;
- A comprehensive analysis of the sites and their surroundings;
- Key placemaking principles and option studies for each site; and
- Next steps.

These areas of focus were agreed with Wells City Council at the outset of the project.

1.2. Process

The following steps, as agreed with the City Council in an inception meeting, were undertaken to produce this report:

- Initial meeting with the City Council and virtual site visit to understand the spatial context;
- Urban design analysis of opportunities and constraints, of each site;
- Review of the planning policy context;
- Understanding of key place-making principles to inform how future developments may take shape;
- Site analysis to understand the opportunities and constraints of each site;
- Option studies, which include frameworks for each site;
- Preparation of a draft report, subsequently revised in response to feedback provided by the City Council; and
- Submission of a final report.

The report also builds on previous work, including the Wells Design Guide prepared by AECOM for Wells City Council in December 2020.

1.3. Area of study

Wells is a small city, in the Mendip District of Somerset, located to the south of Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Ebbor Gorge National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Wells is situated approximately 25 km to the north east of the M5, which links Bridgwater, Weston-super-Mare and beyond. Bath is located approximately 26km to the north east of Wells. More locally Wells is situated to the north east of Glastonbury and to the west of Shepton Mallet. Wells has a rich history of high-quality buildings, including Wells Cathedral, Bishop's Palace and Vicars' Close located in the Wells Conservation Area, designated in 1970.

Wells has a population of approximately 10,536 residents, with an average age of 45.9 according to the 2011 Census

There are plenty of green spaces close to the city centre, including the Recreation Ground and Palace Fields. The main vehicular access to the settlement from the south west is provided by A39 from Glastonbury, connecting onwards to Bath to the north east. The A371 is another main vehicular access, linking Wells to Weston Super Mare to the west.

The Neighbourhood Plan Area is served by a network of Public Rights of Way (PROW) promoting the health of residents and liveability of the area.

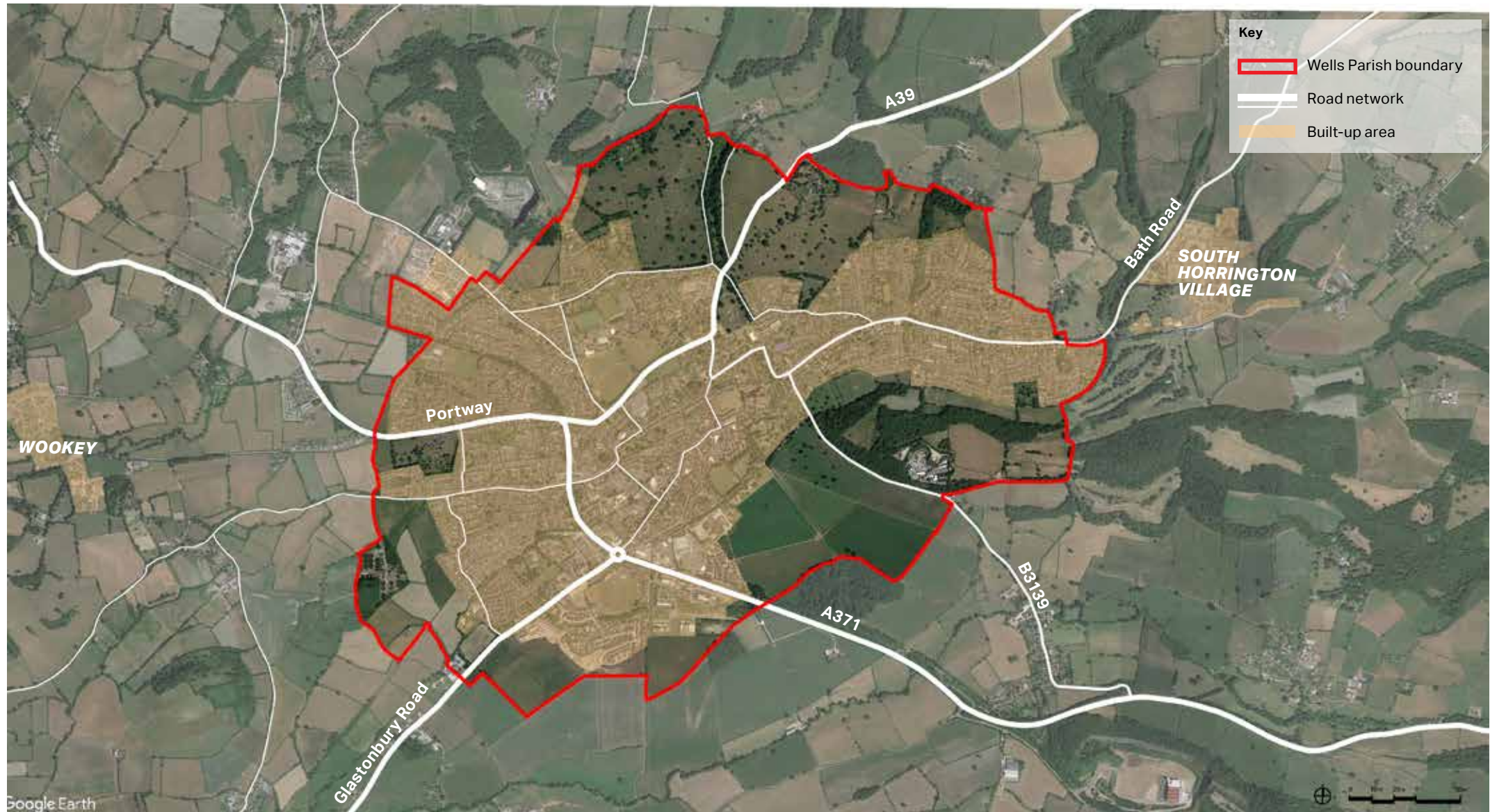


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan boundary and surrounding area (Source: Google Earth).

1.4. The sites

There are 3 sites allocated for development by Mendip District Local Plan. The related policies for each of the sites are as follow:

- WL1- Land off Bubwith Walk: This site is situated on the south-west side of Wells, consisting of three agricultural fields which slope to the south. It is surrounded by residential development to the east and is located in proximity of Wells Sewage Treatment Plant to the west.
- WL2- Land at Wells Rugby Club: located to the west of Wells, the sit consists of sports pitches and a club building, abutted by residential development on three sides. The land is suitable for housing but is subject to the re-provision of the club and pitches. Wells Leisure Centre and associated car park is located directly to the west. A Public Right of Way (PRoW) runs to the north and east of the side.
- WL4- Tincknells Depot: this is a large central site bounded by the Glastonbury Road and Strawberry Way, Part of the site is used as a country store with an extensive depot to the rear. The northern portion of the site includes a stretch of land following St Andrews Stream, comprising former railway land which is partially overgrown with some space used for open storage.

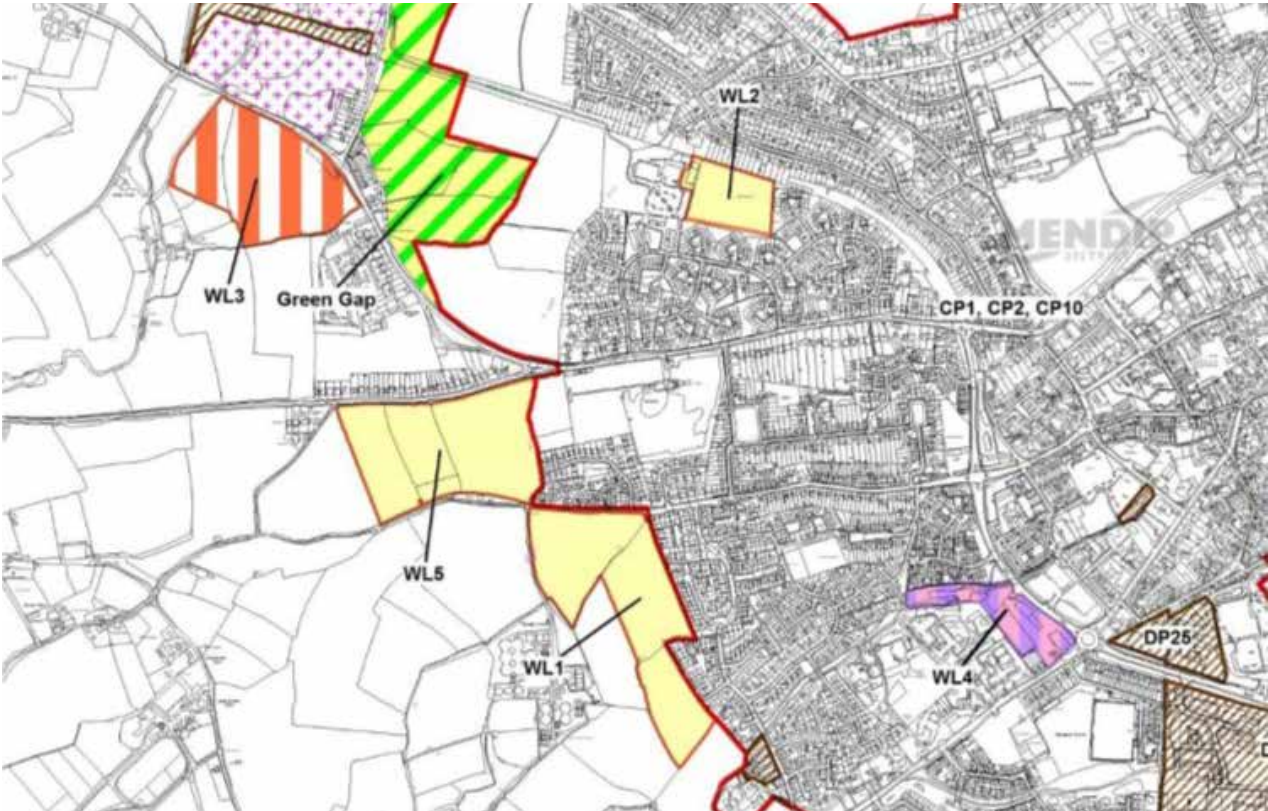


Figure 2: Site WL1, WL2 and WL4

Site No.	HELAA Site	Site Address	Site Area (Ha)	Potential number of dwelling
WL1	WELLS044	Land off Bubwith Walk	7.17	Minimum c.120
WL2	WELLS094	Land at Wells Rugby Club	1.96	Minimum c.80
WL4	WELLS116M	Tincknells Depot	1.99	Minimum c.25+employment

Table 1: Site descriptions.

A photograph of a residential area. In the foreground, a tall, rusted metal pole with a netting structure is visible. To the left, there is a green lawn, a wooden fence, and a brick house. A large, leafy tree is on the right. The sky is blue with some clouds.

**Planning Policy
Context**

02

2. Planning policy context

2.1. Policy context

2.1.1. Local planning policies

2.1.1.1. Mendip Local Plan Part II: Sites and Policies

The three sites in this report are included as allocations in the Mendip Local Plan Part II which went to Examination in January 2019. Consultation on Main Modifications to the Plan took place from 21st January 2020 to 2nd March 2020. This Plan has not yet been adopted but can be a material consideration in planning decisions. The policy references are set out below:

- WL1 - Land off Bubwith Walk (HELAA site WELLS044) – Housing
- WL2 - Land at Wells Rugby Club (HELAA site WELLS094) – Housing
- WL4 – Tincknells, Strawberry Way (HELAA site WELLS116M) – Mixed Use

Extracts from the Main Modifications relating to the sites are reproduced below.

Policy WL1: Development Requirements and Design Principles

1. **A minimum of 120 dwellings** making provision for affordable housing in line with relevant policies. The capacity of the site remains subject to additional assessment work on odour nuisance in liaison with Wessex Water. **[MM53] (MM1)**
2. Have particular regard to site layout, building height and soft landscaping to minimise the visual impact of the development in this edge of town location.
3. New development should reflect the local materials and style.
4. The site should be designed to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.
5. Opportunities should be taken to maintain or enhance biodiversity. Additional work will be required to ensure no harm to the local wildlife site at the sewage works and the protected species that it supports.
6. A masterplan should include a minimum of 1.2 ha of accessible replacement habitat.
7. Surface water flooding on the northern part of the site will need to be addressed.
8. Further investigation will be required to ensure that any contamination is remediated before development can go ahead.
9. Satisfactory means of access will need to be achieved.

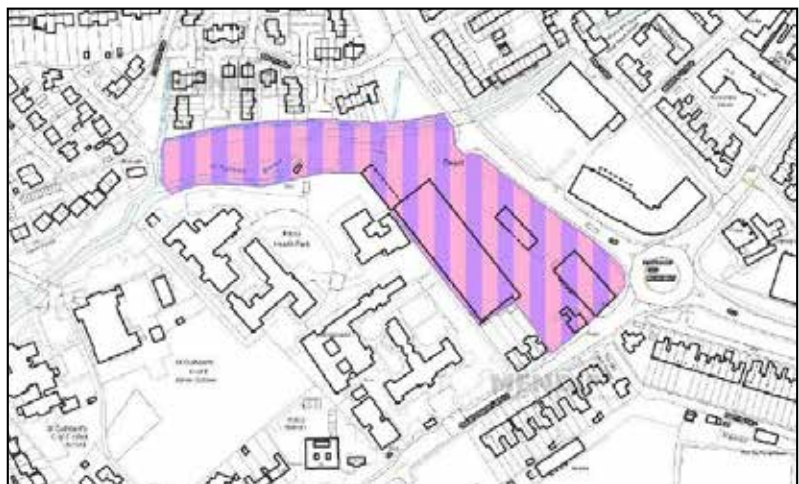
**Policy WL2: Development Requirements and Design Principles**

1. **A minimum of 80 dwellings** making provision for affordable housing in line with relevant policies. **[MM56] (MM1)**
2. The release of land is subject to the provision of replacement sports pitches and club facilities. Re-provision must be of equal or better community and sporting value.
3. The site should be designed sensitively to ensure no harm to its setting.
4. Have particular regard to site layout, building height and soft landscaping to minimise the visual impact of the development.
5. New development should reflect the local materials and style.
6. The site should be designed to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.
7. Opportunities should be taken to maintain or enhance biodiversity.
8. Surface water flooding should be addressed in any scheme.
9. A traffic impact assessment will be needed and may constrain the overall capacity of the site as it is accessed through surrounding residential areas.



Policy WL4: Development Requirements and Design Principles

1. A minimum of 25 dwellings as part of a mixed use scheme to include residential and employment uses including provision for affordable housing in line with relevant policies. [MM54] (MM1)
2. The site should be designed sensitively to ensure no harm to the location.
3. Any scheme should be designed to protect and enhance the adjoining Conservation Area and the setting of the nearby listed buildings.
4. Have particular regard to site layout, building height and soft landscaping to minimise the visual impact of the development in this edge of centre location.
5. New development should reflect the local materials and style.
6. The site should be designed to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.
7. Opportunities should be taken to maintain or enhance biodiversity.
8. Any design will need to address flooding as parts of the site are in flood zones 2 and 3.
9. All houses will be required to be located outside of flood zones 2 and 3. [MM55] (MM24)
10. Further investigation will be required to ensure that any contamination is remediated before development can go ahead.



2.1.1.2. Adopted Mendip District Local Plan (2006-2029)

Policy related to parking requirements:

Policy DP9: Transport Impact of New Development.

Development proposals will be supported where they make safe and satisfactory provision for Parking of motor vehicles and cycles, addressing the needs of all including those with a disability.

Policy DP10: Parking Standards. New development will be supported where vehicle parking is proposed which is appropriate to the operational needs of the development.

1. When assessing what is an appropriate level of parking provision in relation to a development proposal, regard will be had to:

- a. The objectives of reducing growth in the use of private vehicles and promoting alternative means of travel
- b. The need for on-site provision to prevent problems of highway safety, congestion or visual intrusion in the vicinity of the site.

Standards for specific types of development, whether residential or non-residential, are set out in the latest Somerset Countywide Parking Strategy. Proposals should demonstrate that appropriate parking needs are provided within any given setting that broadly accords with the strategy.

Policy related to open space:

Policy DP16: Open Space and Green Infrastructure.

1. Development resulting in the loss of existing open, sport or recreational space, including allotments will not be permitted unless:

i. It can be demonstrated that there is an excess of recreational or open space in the settlement and the proposed loss would not result in a current or likely shortfall during the plan period; or

ii. Suitable alternative recreational or open space, which is adjudged to be of equal or greater benefit to the community as compared with the space which is to be lost, is provided in an accessible location. If acceptable, such alternative provision will be required to be made available prior to the commencement of development .

2. All new residential development will make a contribution towards the provision of new open space, including accessible natural greenspace, to meet the needs of the growing population.

3. Where appropriate, the required open space contribution will take the form of on-site provision. Such on-site provision will require appropriate long term management arrangements to be agreed between the Council and the developer. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, or deemed to be more suitably provided elsewhere, a financial contribution toward off-site provision or enhancements will be required. The level of contributions for off-site provision and management arrangements will be calculated in accordance with a guidance note which will be produced by the Council.

Expenditure of financial contributions will be prioritised in line with Green Infrastructure Strategies for each 'town' and equivalent arrangements put in place by rural parish councils within Parish Plans or other formal mechanisms.

Policy related to housing:

Policy DP11: Affordable housing

The Council will negotiate the provision of a contribution towards meeting the district's housing need from all housing proposals.

1. Proposals will contribute through either:

- a) on-site provision, (or a combination of on-site provision together with a development contribution) on residential developments of 7 or more dwellings, or sites of a size greater than 0.25 hectares, or
- b) the payment of a commuted sum in lieu of equivalent on-site provision on sites below 0.25 hectares or providing up to 6 new homes

2. Proposals will make provision for 30% of the total number of new homes to be provided in affordable tenures. In Wells, and developments on its fringes, proposals will make provision for 40% of the total number of new homes to be provided in affordable tenures. In rural areas the Council may negotiate or allocate sites with provision in excess of 30% where this is justified and financially viable. Equivalent financial contributions in lieu of on site provision will be negotiated.

3. Provision on site will be made by the applicant, or negotiated with the Council, on an initial basis that:

- Delivery is not predicated on any additional public subsidy
- A tenure split of 80% social rented housing, 20% intermediate housing is provided
- The affordable housing is fully integrated through the overall scheme design with associated market housing.

4. Planning permission will be subject to a planning obligation to ensure that the affordable housing is provided and retained for eligible households in perpetuity.

Where proposals cannot viably deliver (as set out in a detailed financial appraisal to be prepared by the applicant and submitted to the Council) the Council will negotiate on matters of tenure, subsidy design and amount of provision.

A Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared to outline detailed matters related to the implementation of this policy and affordable housing delivery including the calculation of commuted sums and the resolution of viability issues.

Policy DP14: Housing Mix and Type

Proposals for residential development should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes. This mix should reflect identified local need in Mendip (both within the district as a whole and within identified sub-market housing areas) - including for small family sized units and housing suitable for older people - as set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other local evidence, particularly Local Housing Needs Assessments in rural communities.

Subject to viability, this requirement will apply to both market and affordable housing, and in the case of the latter, will also have regard to the Council’s Housing Waiting List.

Proposals for care homes or similar specialist accommodation that meet an identified local need will be permitted in accordance with the Plan’s overall spatial strategy. Exceptionally, permission for such accommodation outside development limits will be granted where there is clear justification having regard to the need for the facility and evidence of the unsuitability and/or unavailability of alternative sites within named settlements. All such development should be accessible and be proportionate in scale to the locality. Any ancillary facilities provided as part of the development should complement locally available amenities and, where possible, be made available to the wider community.

2.1.1.3. Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Wells (Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane) (October 2016)¹

The analysis linked to long-term (25-year) demographic change concludes that the following represents an appropriate mix of affordable and market homes:

Type	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Market	5-10%	30-35%	40-45%	15-20%
Social/affordable rented	35-40%	35-40%	20%	5%
Intermediate/started homes	15-20%	50-55%	25-30%	0-5%

Table 2: Approximate mix of affordable and market homes.

2.1.1.4. Somerset County Council Parking Strategy (September 2013)

Policy PM1: Overall Management Policy. Somerset County Council will work with the district councils and other car park operators to ensure that the parking stock within Somerset is effectively managed so that the supply, maintenance, charging and enforcement measures applied within the County help to achieve local objectives. The County Council will support the

1. https://www.mendip.gov.uk/media/14834/SHMA-October 2016/pdf/Somerset_final_SHMA_Oct2016.pdf?m=636162028823900000

development of local strategies, based on a comprehensive evidence base of parking supply and demand.

Policy PM2: Overall Sustainability Policy. In order to help achieve its objectives for sustainable development, Somerset County Council will seek to support parking related proposals that enable reductions in the environmental impacts of travel. As and when external funding opportunities arise, Somerset will work with relevant partners to progress suitable options.

Policy PM5: Management of Private Parking Policy. Where a new development includes proposals for the provision of publicly available car parking, there will be an expectation that a management plan will be secured for the car park, ensuring that the future operation of the car park (duration of stay, charging regime, security and enforcement) is aligned with the County and District's plans and other local considerations for car parking management in that area.

Policy PM9: Resident-Friendly Parking Measures Policy. Within residential areas that have limited off-street parking for residents and clear conflicts between resident and commuter parking, measures to manage on-street parking will be considered at the request of residents.

Policy PP1: Countywide Parking Standards Policy. Somerset County Council will work with the Local Planning Authorities to ensure that the levels and design of parking provided at new developments are in accordance with revised Countywide Parking Standards, which include the minimum requirements for disabled car parking that developers will be expected to provide in new developments. Where it is appropriate for a development to make use of existing off-site parking facilities this will be encouraged, subject to negotiation with the County Council and, if required, third-party operators.

Cycle parking A minimum of 1 space per bedroom. N.B. Requirements in some areas especially in Zone A) are likely to be higher.						More info
Motorcycle parking A minimum of 1 motorcycle parking space per 5 dwellings OR 1 motorcycle space per 20 car spaces, which ever is the greater.						Sections 7.2 & 7.3
Car parking						
Zone	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed		
A- Red	1	1	2	3	+visitor parking	Note A and B
B- Amber	1.5	2	2.5	3	+visitor parking	Sections 7.4 & 7.5
C- Green	2	2.5	3	3.5	+visitor parking	
Where half of parking is unallocated				No visitor parking required		
Where less than half of parking is unallocated				0.2 spaces per dwelling		
Electric Vehicle Charging Points						
In all new residential developments, access to 16 amp electric vehicle charging points will be provided to all dwellings(see Section7.4.1 for more detail).						Section 7.4.1
Blue badge parking for people with severe mobility problems						
7.4.3Advisorybays available on request where no off-road space is provided						Section 7.4.3

The zones we developed in this way are as follow:

Zone A- (Red) - Large population areas

These were defined by three main urban hubs (Taunton, Bridgwater, and Yeovil). Red Zones are population areas over 30,000 residents.

Zone B - (Amber) - Mid-Range population areas

These areas have a population of between 3000 and 29,999

Zone C - (Green) - Low population areas

These areas have a population of up to 2,999

Table 3: Parking Standards - Somerset County Council Parking Strategy (September 2013).

Policy PP2: Residential Parking Standards Policy.

Residential standards have been developed to ensure that car, cycle and motorcycle parking provided for new homes is sufficient to meet the needs of both current and future occupiers (including 16 amp charging points, or any future standardised equipment, for electric cars), whilst avoiding over-provision. Flexibility of Countywide Standards will be considered where they are justified by fully funded Travel Plan measures including parking management. New residential developments will be designed and located to encourage sustainable transport choices. Unallocated parking areas will be incorporated to meet the needs of visitors and appropriate shared use parking arrangements considered.

2.1.1.5. Housing Mix (AECOM Housing Needs Assessment)

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements
1 bedroom	20%
2 bedroom	30%
3 bedroom	30%
4 bedroom	10%
5 bedroom	10%

Table 4: The housing mix based on AECOM Housing Need Assessment.

2.1.1.6. Planning history

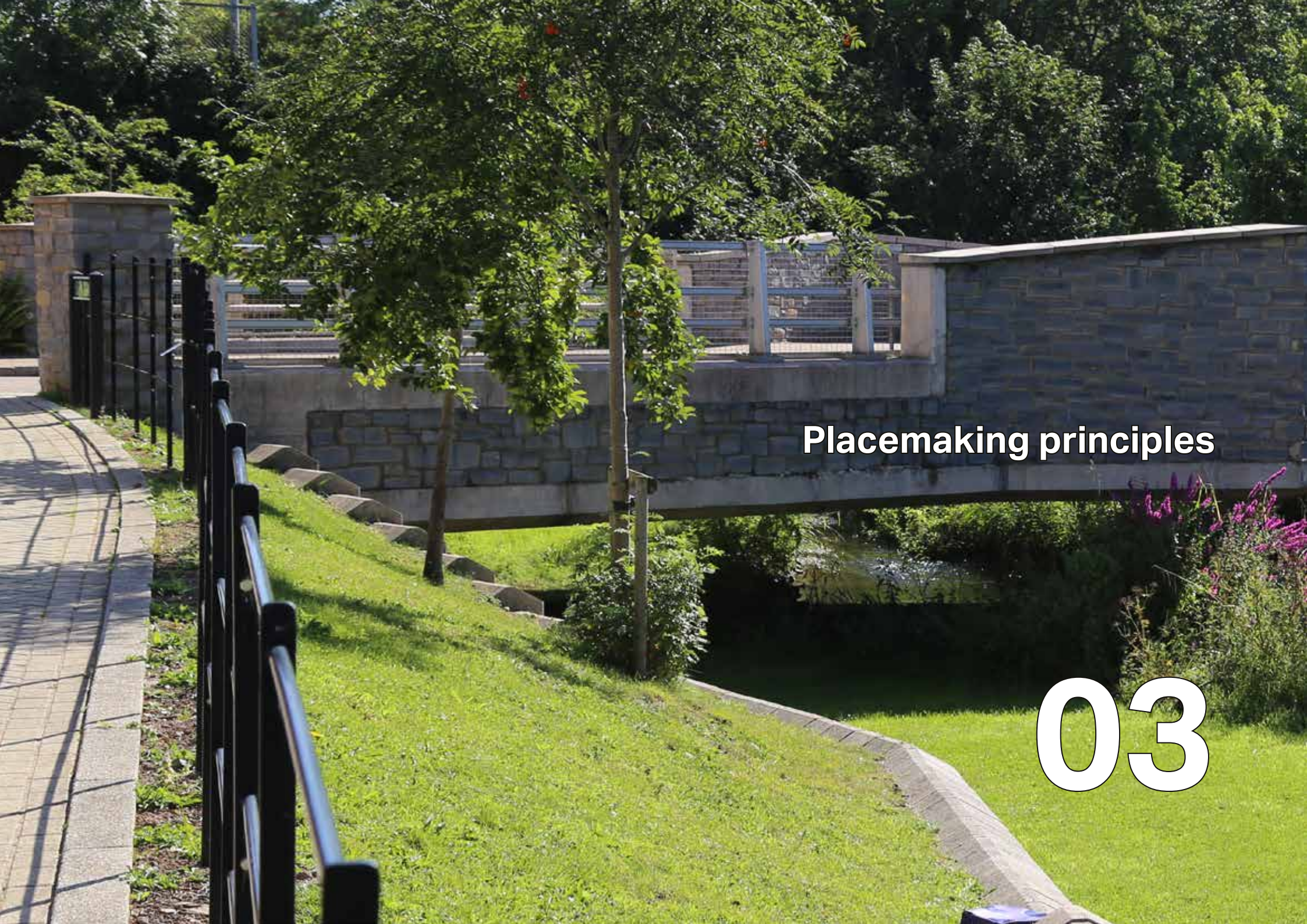
Planning history for each site is summarised below:

WL1: Land off Bubwith Walk – no relevant planning history

WL2: Land at Wells Rugby Club – (ref: 102417/022) Well Rugby Food Club – two storey extension to provide new changing facilities, function room and storage. Approved with conditions (July 2006).

WL4: Tincknells Depot – (ref: 2009/1850) Tincknell Fuels Ltd - Demolition of store and 4,6,8,10,and 12 Glastonbury Road. Erection of a class A1 foodstore (2305 sq m floorspace net, 4305 sq m floorspace gross) and construction of an associated customer car park with 222 spaces, customer access from Strawberry Way and service yard access from Glastonbury Road, provision of landscaping and related works (Board). Application refused and appeal dismissed (July 2010).

(ref: 054330/012) Tincknell Fuels Ltd. Mixed use development comprising the erection of a class A1 foodstore, 42 retirement flats, car parking, servicing and associated development. Withdrawn (October 2008).



Placemaking principles

03

3. Placemaking principles

3.1. Key placemaking principles for sites

The masterplanning exercises apply the following key principles to each site, reflecting good design practice and responding the context of individual site context.

- High standards of **energy efficient** and **climate change resilient** housing.
- **Interconnected street network** provide people with a choice of different routes, encouraging walking and direct access to public transport.
- The layout should respond to the **topography, natural desire lines and access** to the site.
- **Legibility** should be reinforced with a clear and uncomplicated layout, including landmarks buildings, places and open spaces.
- **Perimeter block** structure to provide clarity between front and back of buildings, between public and private spaces and to enable continuous overlooking of the street.
- **Efficient mews and courtyard arrangement** Buildings grouped around areas of open space or a well landscaped parking area
- **Edges, scale mass and typology** must appropriately respond to the topography, existing landscape and context.

- **Integrated landscape** design combining ecological principles and retaining existing features where possible.
- **Clear distinction between front and back** of the property as well as between public fronts and private/semi-private backs.
- Promote **active frontages** on the main vehicular and pedestrian and cycle connections as well as public spaces. Create active frontages introducing regular doors, windows, front gardens and front parking.
- **Pedestrian and cycle routes** should be overlooked in order to create natural surveillance and a sense of security.
- Promote **sense of enclosure** and create modest gaps in street frontages in medium to lower density areas.
- **Corner buildings** should define the corner architecturally. The corner building should have multiple entrances and two active frontages incorporating primary entrance and windows.
- **Continuous building lines** and setbacks to define the overall character of the area and the sense of enclosure

Further details on the City Council's expectations are provided in the Wells Design Guide, produced alongside this report.

A landscape photograph showing a field of tall grass and bushes in the foreground, a dense line of trees in the middle ground, and a small hill with a tower on top in the background under a clear blue sky.

Site WL1 Masterplanning

04

4. Site WL1- Land off Bubwith Walk masterplanning

4.1. Introduction

This section introduces Site WL1 and proposes masterplanning approaches for its redevelopment.

This chapter comprises of two parts:

- 1. The site analysis and site photographs.
- 2. Option studies with site design principles.

- There are a number of points of access including Burcott Road. Access will need to meet highways standards on width and visibility.
- There is an existing public right of way in the north - west part of the site.

4.2. Site analysis

- The site is made up of three fields on the south-west side of Wells which slope to the south.
- The site abuts existing residential development on its eastern edge and is adjacent to the Wells Sewage Treatment Plant on the western edge.
- There are mature hedgerows along the field boundaries within the site, with existing trees located to the western edge of the site
- There are important views from the site towards Glastonbury Tor and Ben Knowle Hill.
- Due to the proximity to the Wells Sewage Treatment Works, surveys will be needed to assess the odour contours. Previous studies have been undertaken, with indicative findings included in figure 5 below.

Site No.	HELAA Site	Site Address	Site Area (Ha)	Potential number of dwellings
WL1	WELLS044	Land off Bubwith Walk	7.17	Minimum c.120

Table 5: Site description.



Figure 3: Aerial view of Site WL1 (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 4: View A.

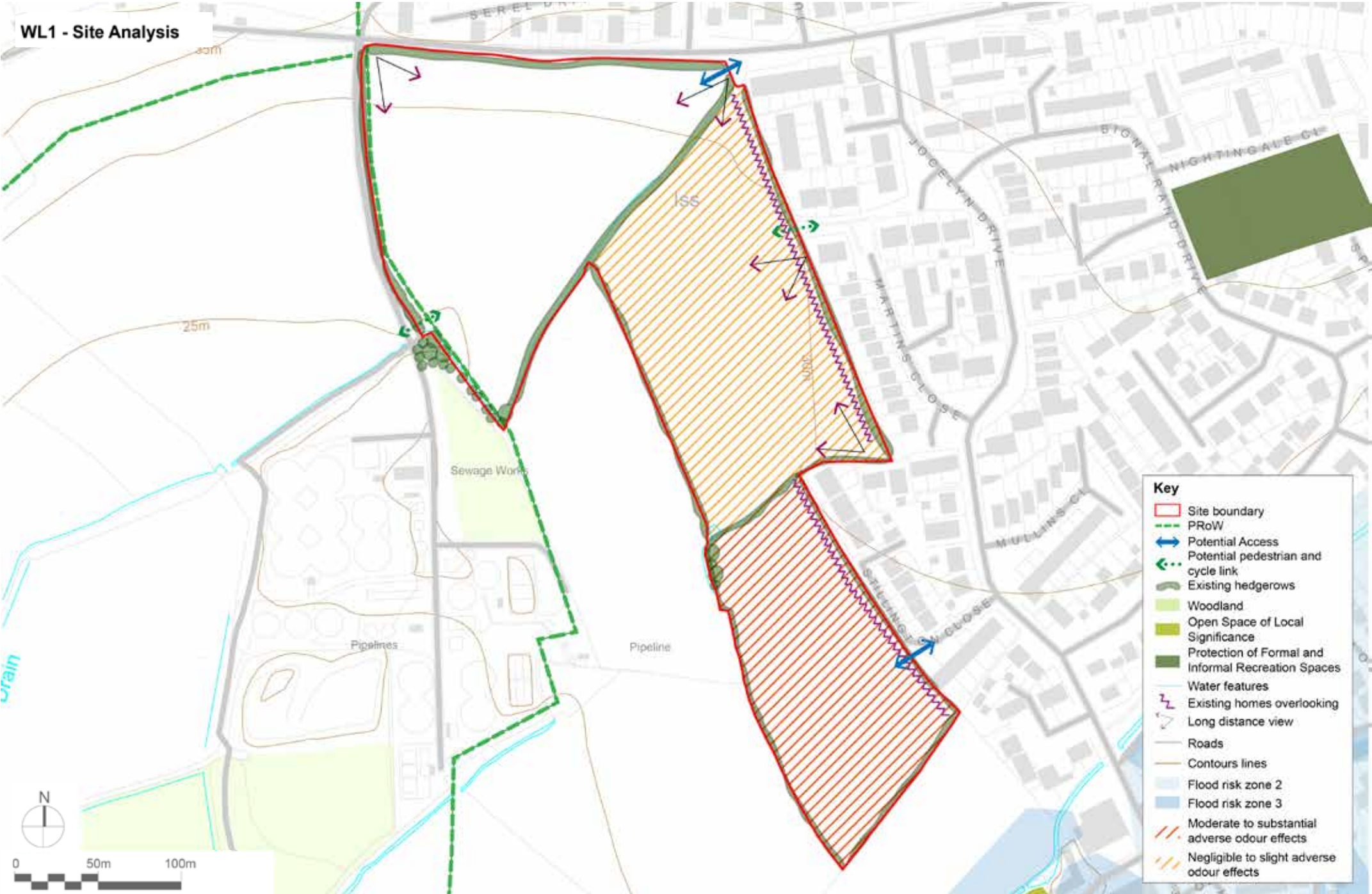


Figure 5: Site analysis WL1.



Figure 6: Views of the site - see photos below



Figure 7: View B.



Figure 8: View C.



Figure 9: View D across the site to Ben Knowle Hill.



Figure 10: View E.



Figure 11: View F.



Figure 12: View G.

4.3. Option studies

This section presents policy-compliant masterplan framework studies setting out different development options for Land off Bubwith Walk. As there is on-going uncertainty about which of the three existing fields are developable, given the presence of the Sewage Treatment Works, the following options are presented:

- Option A assumes that all three fields are developable; and
- Options B, C and D show development on each field in turn, from north to south, illustrating how each might be designed as a standalone scheme, although these options could be combined to form a larger development.

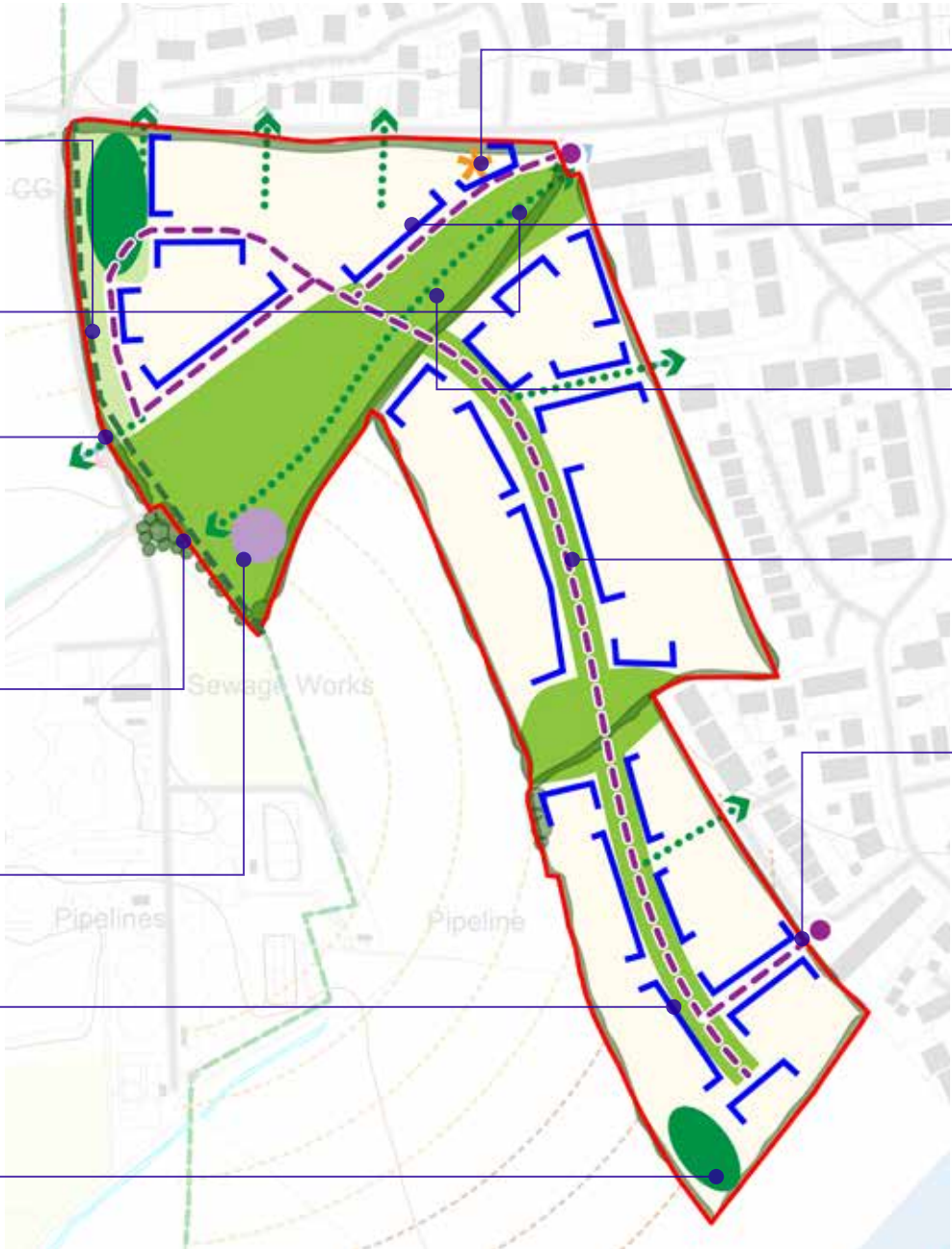
For each option, the following information is presented:

- Key design principles, including recommended access, open space and high level block layout; and
- Policy compliant assumed housing mix and land use budget, showing the split between development blocks and open space.

4.3.1. Site WL1 - Option A

4.3.1.1. Key design principles

- Connect the existing PRow to a proposed pedestrian and cycle link across the site
- Maintaining long distance views across the site to the south west
- Clear, safe and direct pedestrian and cycle links to encourage sustainable travel
- Retain existing hedgerows and trees where possible
- Provide playground areas within the site
- Create a continuous building line and active frontages along the main spine road
- Provide allotments within the site for residents



- Distinctive landmark building to reinforce the gateway to the site
- Create active frontages overlooking the green space
- Create a landscaped central green space without obstructing the views
- Green space across the site to reinforce its character and biodiversity
- Provide vehicular access from the existing road to promote connectivity

Key

- Site boundary
- Proposed pedestrian and cycle link
- Existing PRow
- existing trees
- existing hedgerows
- Vehicular access
- Main road connection
- Existing landscape
- Open green space
- LEAP/LAP
- Development plots
- Gateway feature
- Main frontages

Figure 13: Framework for site WL1 - option A.

4.3.1.2. Housing mix numbers

The number of units are calculated based on AECOM’s Housing Need Assessment report (HNA). As shown in table 6, the majority of the units are 2 bed and 3 bed with 42 units for each. There is one apartment block proposed for this option which accommodates all 1-bed and some 2-bed units. 4 and 5 bed houses occupy 10% each of the overall housing mix.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Assumed housing number
1 bedroom	20%	27
2 bedroom	30%	42
3 bedroom	30%	42
4 bedroom	10%	14
5 bedroom	10%	14

Table 6: Housing mix.

4.3.1.3. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 7.17 hectares of which 1.2 hectares is not developed for housing and 1.2 hectares is allocated as new open green space. The remaining 4.59 hectares hosts 139 homes - mostly houses with gardens - with a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph).

The gross (whole site) density for this option is 19 dph.

Site 1 - option A	Area (Sqm)	Area (ha)	Percentage	Density (Net)	Total units
Existing landscape	12,801	1.2	16%		
Open green space	12,956	1.2	16%		
Development parcel	45,958	4.59	64%	30	139
Total	71,715.54	7.17	100%		

Table 7: Land use budget.

4.3.2. Site WL1 - Option B

4.3.2.1. Key design principles

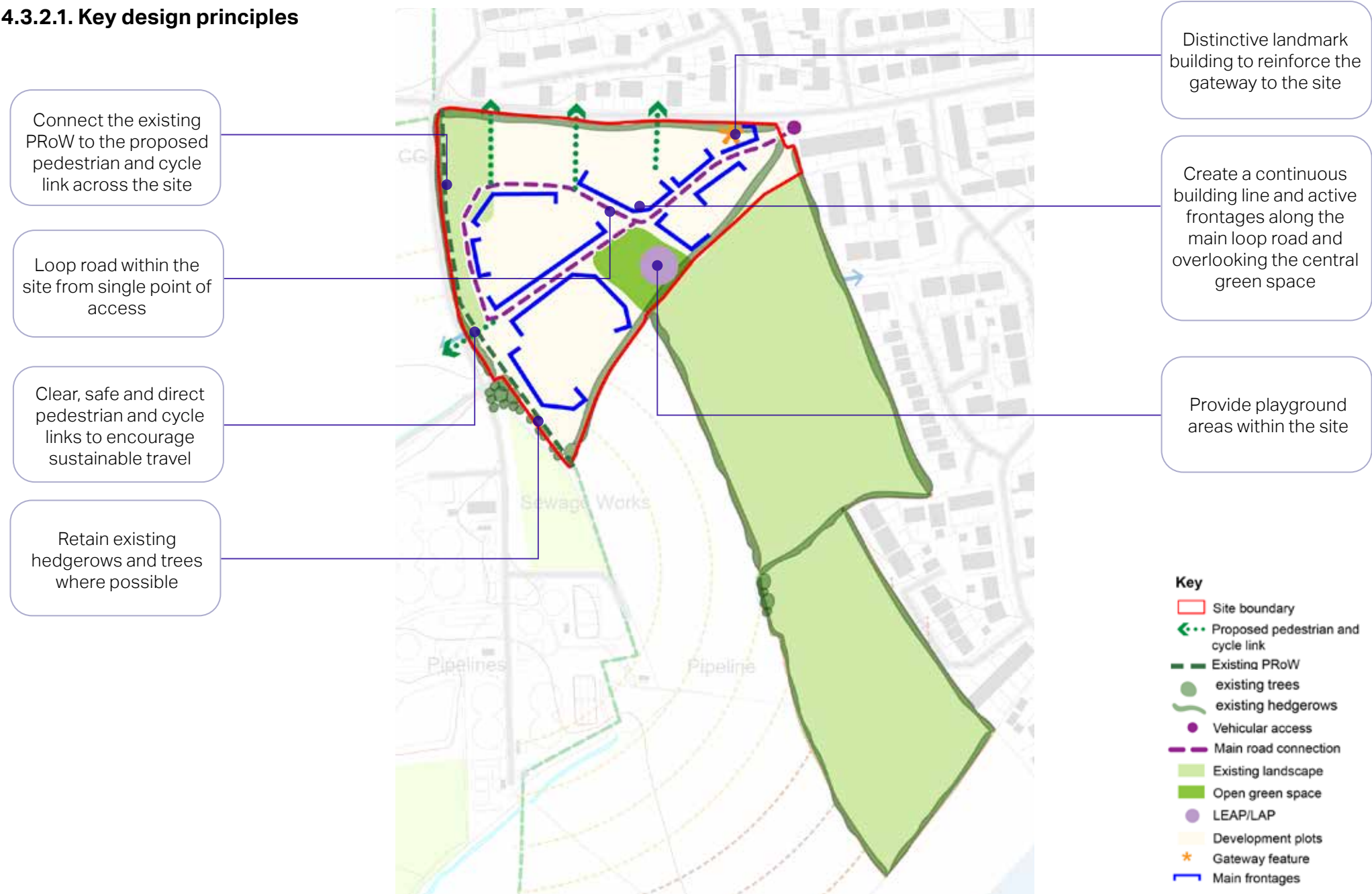


Figure 14: Framework for site WL1 - option B.

4.3.2.2. Housing mix numbers

The number of units are calculated based on AECOM’s HNA Report. As with all options, the majority of the units are 2 bed and 3 bed, with 26 units for each. There are two apartment blocks proposed for this option which accommodates all 1-bed and some 2-bed units. 4 and 5 bed houses occupy 10% each of the overall housing mix.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Assumed housing number
1 bedroom	20%	18
2 bedroom	30%	26
3 bedroom	30%	26
4 bedroom	10%	9
5 bedroom	10%	8

Table 8: Housing mix.

4.3.2.3. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 2.99 hectare of which 0.2 hectare allocated to open green space. The remaining is 2.47 hectare with 87 units and with a net density of 35 dwelling per hectare (dph).

The gross density for this option is 29 dph.

The table below shows the land use budget within the site boundary of option B.

Site 1 - option B	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Existing landscape	3,278	0.32	10%		
Open green space	1,978	0.2	6%		
Development parcel	24,683	2.47	82%	35	87
Total	29,939	2.99	100%		

Table 9: Land use budget.

4.3.3. Site WL1 - Option C

4.3.3.1. Key design principles

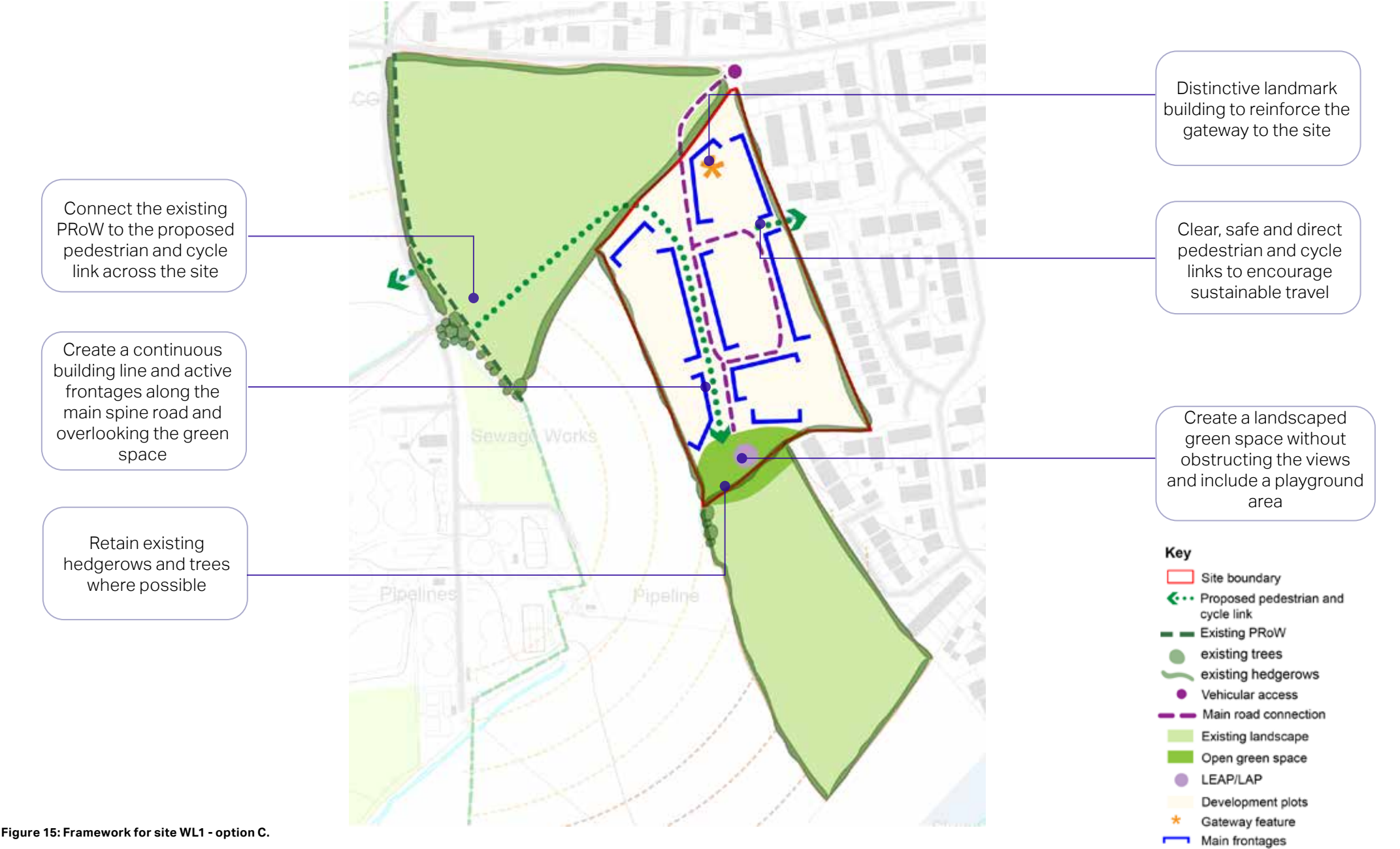


Figure 15: Framework for site WL1 - option C.

4.3.3.2. Housing mix numbers

The number of units are calculated based on AECOM’s HNA Report. As set in the table below, the majority of the units are 2 bed and 3 bed with 22 units for each. There are two apartment blocks proposed for this option which accommodates all 1-bed and some 2-bed units. 4 and 5 bed houses occupy 10% each of the overall housing mix.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Assumed housing number
1 bedroom	20%	16
2 bedroom	30%	22
3 bedroom	30%	22
4 bedroom	10%	7
5 bedroom	10%	7

Table 10: Housing mix.

4.3.3.3. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 2.4 hectare of which 0.2 hectare allocated to open green space. The remaining is 2.2 hectare with 73 units and a net density of 33 dwelling per hectare (dph).

The gross density for this option is 30 dph.

The table below shows the land use budget within the site boundary of option C.

Site 1 - option C	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Open green space	1,865	0.2	9%		
Development parcel	22,025	2.2	91%	33	73
Total	23,890	2.4	100%		

Table 11: Landuse budget.

4.3.4. Site WL1 - Option D

4.3.4.1. Key design principles

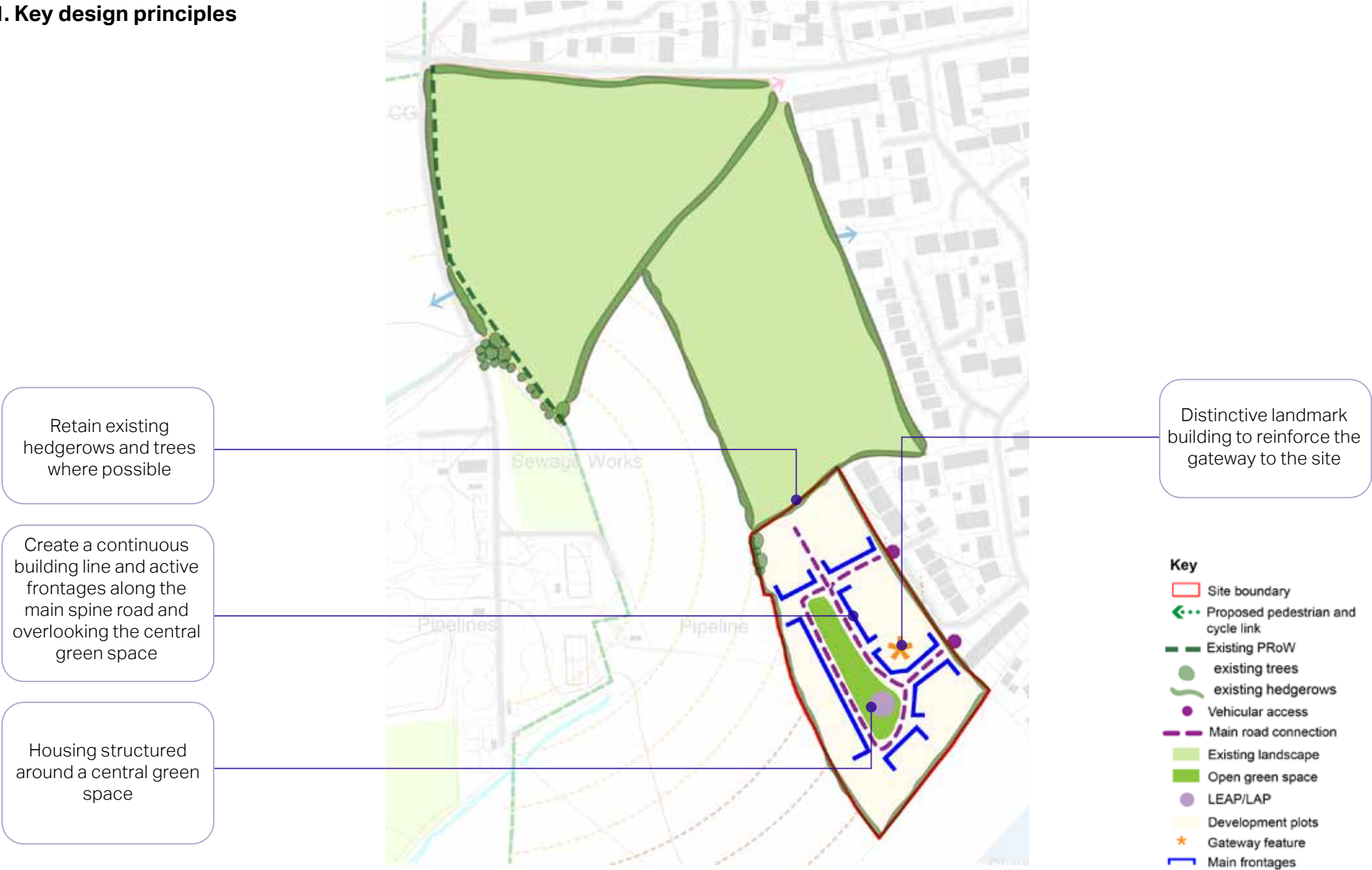


Figure 16: Framework for site WL1 - option D.

4.3.4.2. Housing mix numbers

Again, the number of units are calculated based on AECOM's HNA Report. The majority of the units are 2 bed and 3 bed with 17 units for each categories. There are two apartment blocks proposed for this option which accommodates all 1-bed and some 2-bed units. 4 and 5 bed houses occupy 10% each of the overall housing mix.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Assumed housing number
1 bedroom	20%	11
2 bedroom	30%	17
3 bedroom	30%	17
4 bedroom	10%	6
5 bedroom	10%	6

Table 12: Housing mix.

4.3.4.3. Landuse budget

Overall the site area is 1.78 hectare of which 0.8 hectare allocated to open green space. The remaining is 1.63 hectare with 57 units and with a net density of 34 dwelling per hectare (dph).

The gross density for this option is 32 dph.

The table below shows the land use budget within the site boundary of option D.

Site 1 - option D	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Open green space	1,543	0.15	8%		
Development parcel	16,338	1.63	92%	34	57
Total	17,881	1.78	100%		

Table 13: Landuse budget.

4.3.5. Site WL1 - Proximity to bus stops

The opposite image shows the location of site WL1 in relation to existing bus stops.

There are a number of bus stops within a 10 minute walking distance (800 m) from the centre of the site. This includes two bus stops on Portway to the north-west of the site, two bus stops located on Balch Road to the north-east and two bus stops situated on Glastonbury Road to the south-east of the site.

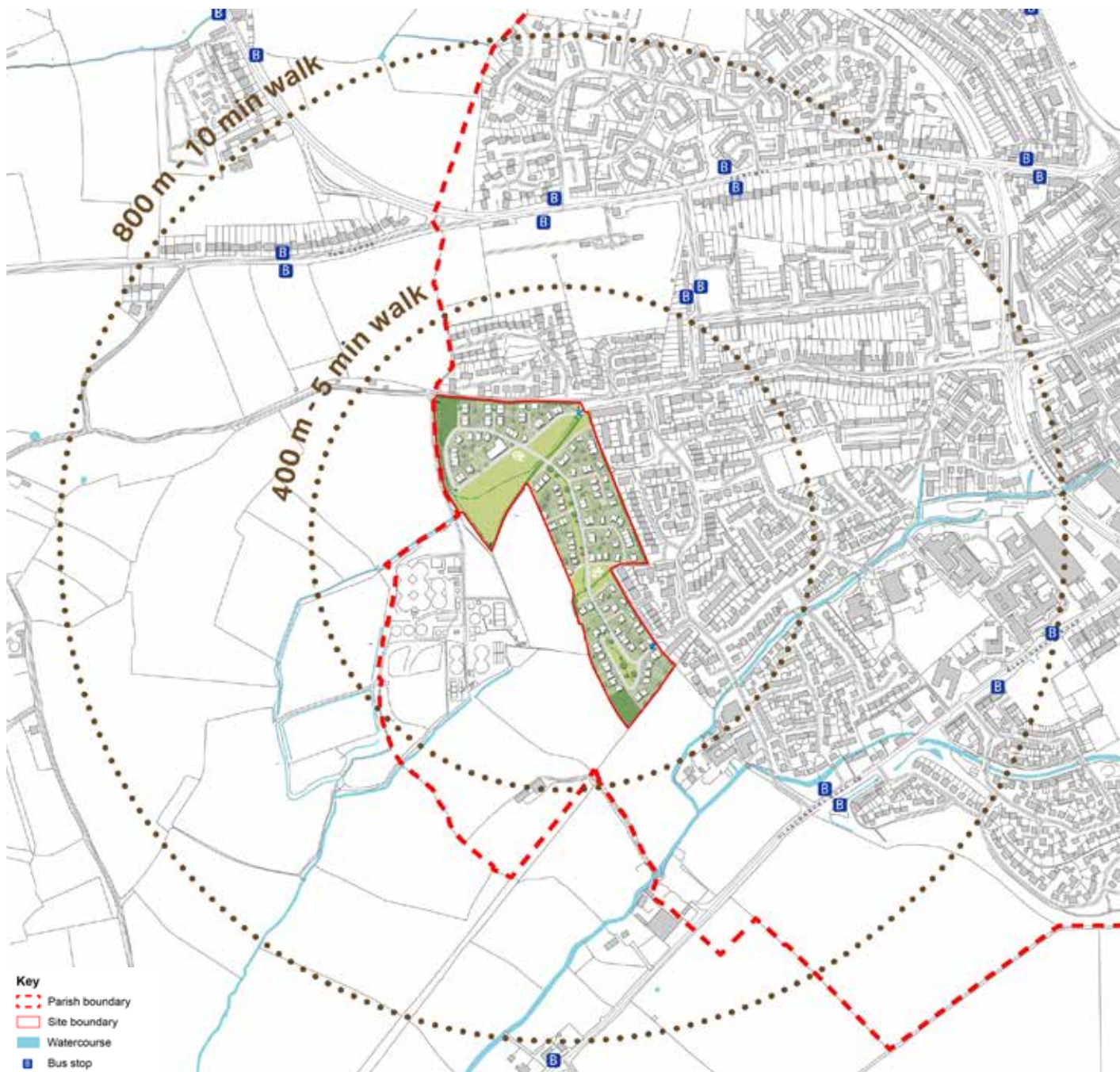


Figure 17: The bus stops and 5 minute walk distance for site WL1.

4.3.6. Site WL1 - Proximity to green spaces

There are a wide variety of green spaces within a 5 and 10 minute walk from the centre of site. This includes open space categorised as green open fields, open space of local significance, and formal and informal recreation space identified for protection.

Mendip District Council identified sixteen sites in Wells which, in its view, merited Local Green Space (LGS) designations¹. Those located near to the WL1 site include:

- LGSWELLS012 (Land alongside Glastonbury Road) and LGSWELLS013 (Land at Jocelyn Drive and Glastonbury Road): The sites are important pockets of green space which create a sense of openness, with views to the Keward Brook stream. They also support a number of protected species.
- LGSWELLS014 (Wells Cemetery): The site is an important area allowing views out of Portway. It has a sense of tranquillity appropriate to its use and cultural and historical significance. It also supports a number of protected species.

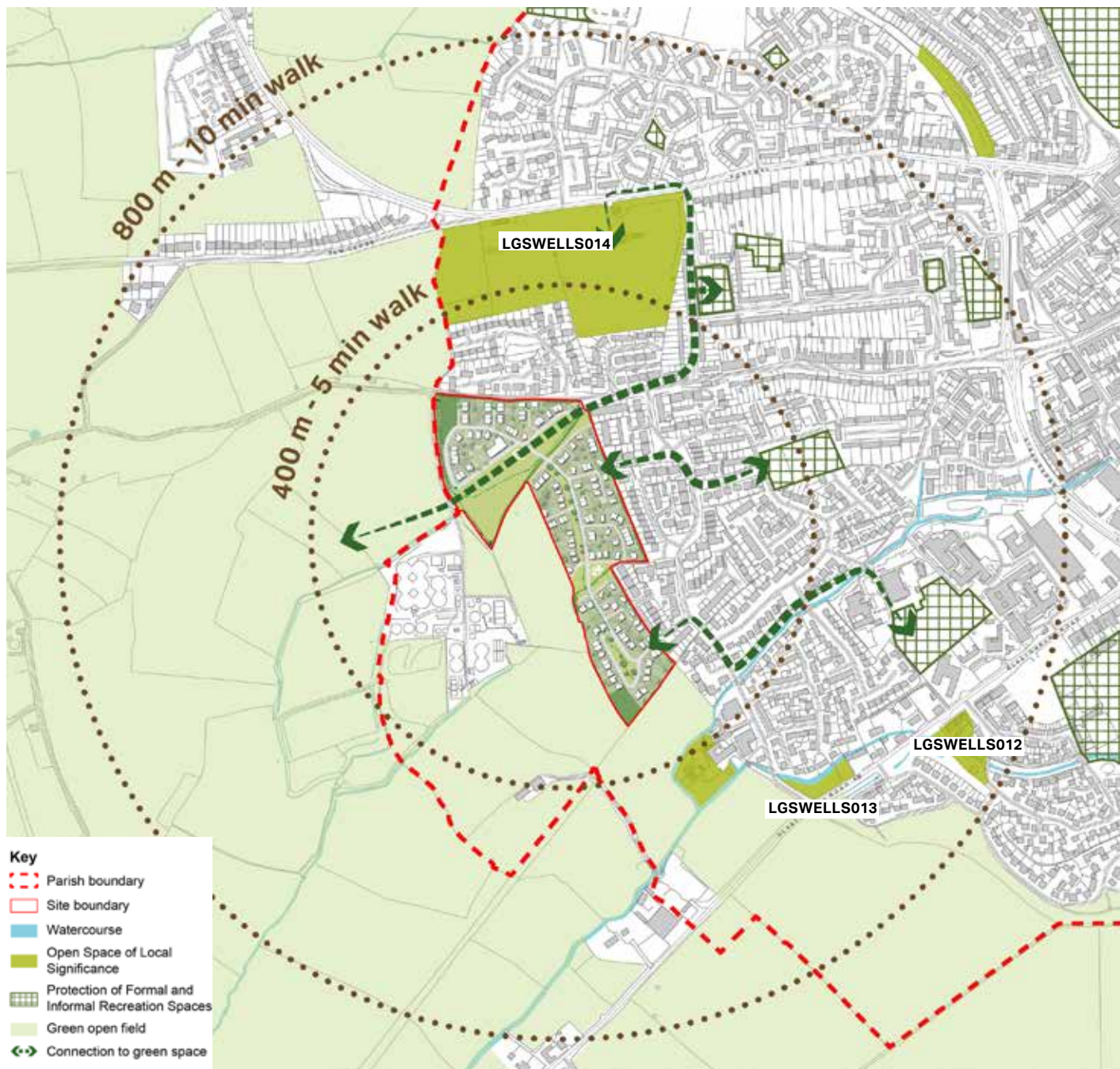


Figure 18: The green spaces around site WL1.

1. Mendip District Council, Local plan Part II (Sites and Policies), Designation of Local Green Spaces, December 2017.



Site WL2 Masterplanning

05

5. Site WL2 - Land at Wells Rugby Club masterplanning

5.1. Introduction

This section introduces Site WL2, which is allocated in the Local Plan and proposes an innovative masterplanning approach for its redevelopment.

5.2. Site analysis

5.2.1. Site analysis

- The site consists of sports pitches and a club building, enclosed on three sides by residential development and the Wells Leisure Centre to the west.
- This is a greenfield site within the urban area which is accessible to the town centre and local facilities.
- Redevelopment of the site's club building and sports pitches for housing is linked to the relocation of Wells Rugby Ground to a new facility at Haybridge (Policy WL3).
- The site predominantly comprises amenity grassland with some hedgerow. A PRoW runs to the north and east side.
- The site can only be accessed through the Charter Way estate which links to the A371.

Site No.	HELAA Site	Site Address	Site Area (Ha)	Potential number of dwelling
WL2	WELLS094	Land at Wells Rugby Club	1.96	Minimum c.80

Table 14: Site description.



Figure 19: Aerial view of Site WL2 (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 20: Play area to the east of the site.



Figure 21: The site analysis for site WL2.

5.2.2. Site photographs



Figure 22: The views to the site and surrounding.



Figure 23: View A.



Figure 24: View B.



Figure 25: View C.



Figure 26: View D.



Figure 27: View E.



Figure 28: View F.

5.3. Design response

After reviewing a number of options, the design response illustrated below is one that makes efficient use of land, promoting people friendly streets and community interaction, and enabling high environmental performance. It does not adhere to the rules of much housebuilding in England of the last 60 years, most notably in that it is not designed around the needs of the car, but is a contemporary interpretation of the traditional terraced typology that is a characteristic of some of Wells' most popular housing.

The design approach is also influenced by a recent rediscovery of terraced housing, exemplified by the Stirling Prize winning scheme at [Goldsmith Street](#), Norwich, built as Council housing to Passivhaus environmental standards.

5.3.1. Site WL2 design

5.3.1.1. Key design principles

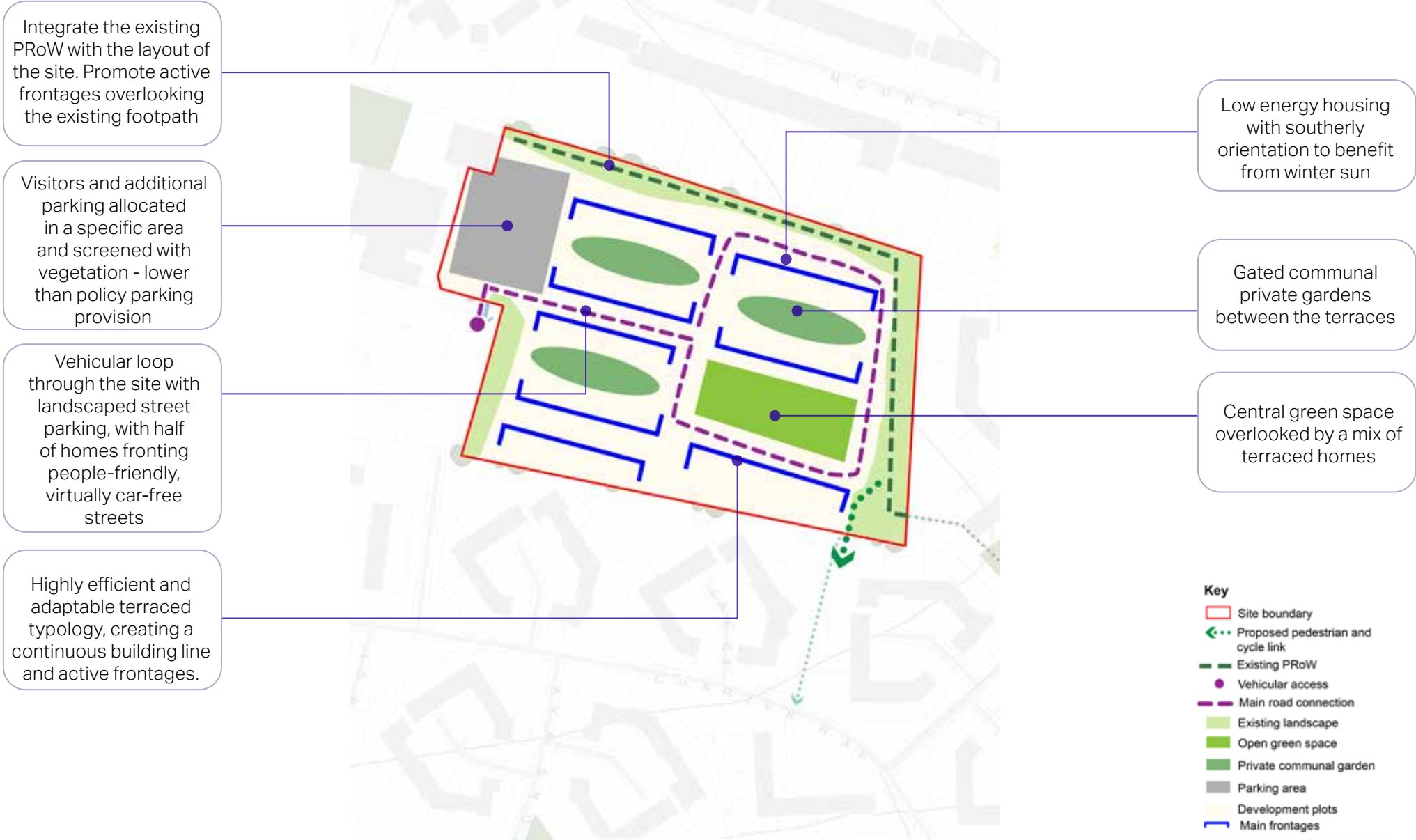


Figure 29: Framework for site WL2.

5.3.1.2. Housing mix numbers

The number of units are calculated based on AECOM’s HNA Report. As shown on the table below, the majority of the units are 2 bed and 3 bed with 30 units for each categories. There are two apartment blocks proposed at each sides of the housing blocks which accommodates some 1-bed and some 2-bed units. 4 bed houses occupy 10% of the overall housing mix.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Assumed housing number
1 bedroom	20%	20
2 bedroom	30%	32
3 bedroom	30%	34
4 bedroom	10%	14

Table 15: Housing mix.

5.3.1.3. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 1.97 hectare of which 0.31 hectare remains existing landscape and 0.13 hectare allocated to open green space. The remaining is 1.51 hectare with 101 units and a net density of 67 dwelling per hectare (dph).

The gross density for this option is 51 dph.

Site 2 - option A	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Existing landscape	3,141.7	0.31	15%		
Open green space	1,339.78	0.13	6%		
Development parcel	15183.43	1.51	66%	67	100
Total	19,664.91	1.97	100%		

Table 16: Land use budget.

5.3.1.4. Development key features

The key features are as follows:

- A mix of highly efficient and adaptable terraced typologies with southerly orientation. The blocks are “bookended” by apartments, with gated communal gardens between the blocks.
- A vehicular loop for cars, refuse and delivery with landscaped street parking.
- The number of car parking spaces is lower than the policy provision, providing 1 car park space per house (100 car parking space) . Visitor car parking is allocated to the north west of the site accommodating 68 spaces, an additional 33 on street landscaped spaces helps to create a people-friendly street.
- Integration of existing PRoW with the layout of the site to encourage a friendly pedestrian and cyclist environment.
- Provision of a centrally located green space overlooked by a mix of terraced homes.
- Provision of 4-bed units to the south west of the site with bigger back gardens.
- Proposing the shared surface branching of the main vehicular loop for access to homes, delivery and refuse.

- A green buffer is proposed to the east, north and west of the site to minimise the negative impact of the development to surrounding area.
- The schedule of accommodation is summarised in below table.

Housing types	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Apartment blocks	20	14	4	
Houses		18	30	14
Total	20	32	34	14

Table 17: Accommodation schedule.



Figure 30: An artist's impression of the key design principles on Site WL2.

5.3.2. Site WL2 - Proximity to bus stops

WL2 is well accessible by various bus stops within a 5 minute walking distance, including 4 stops on Portway to the north of Wells Cemetery. In addition there are some bus stops on Mount Pleasant Avenue, Goodymoor Avenue, and St Cuthbert Avenue.

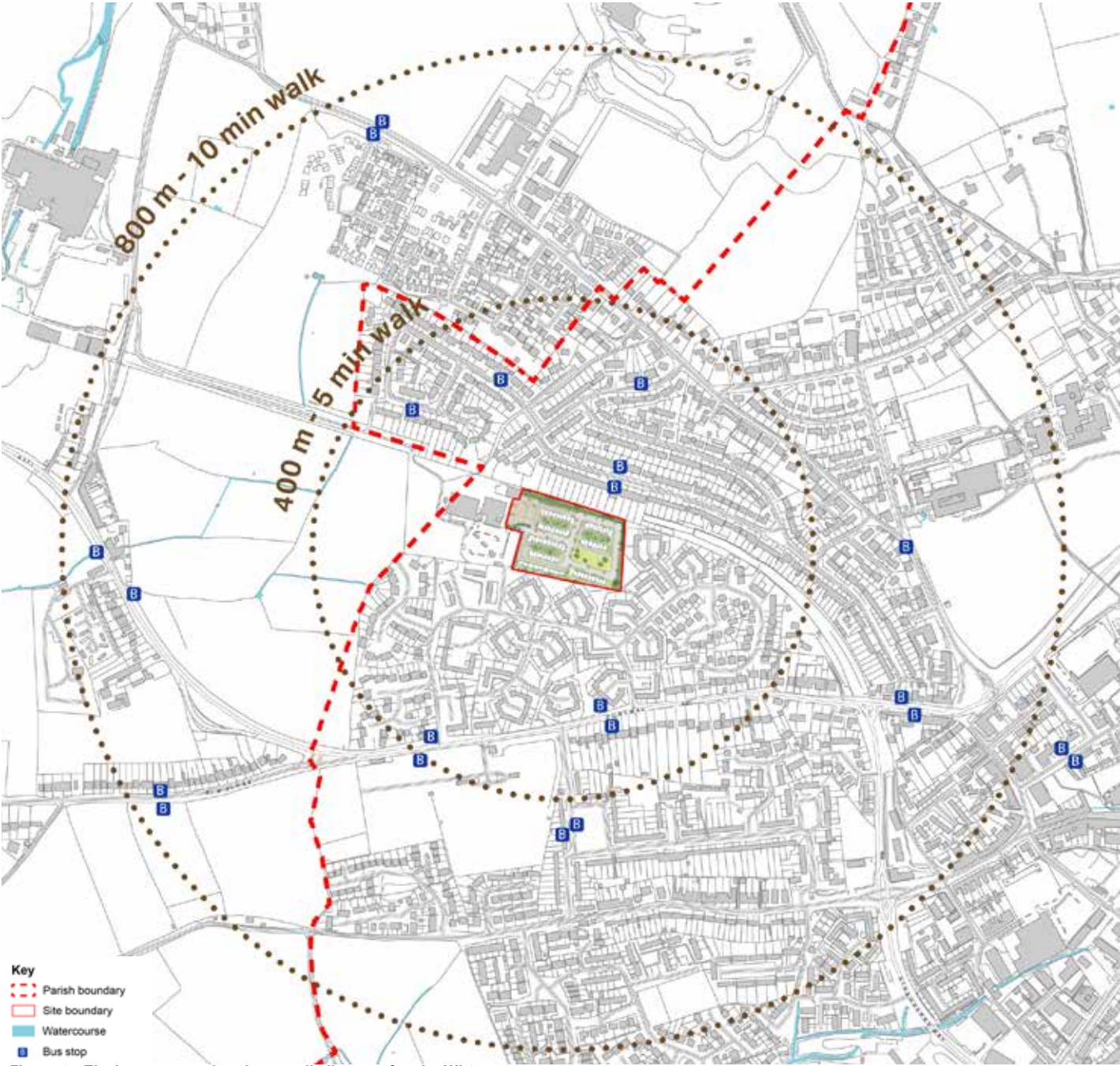


Figure 31: The bus stops and 5 minute walk distance for site WL2.

5.3.3. Site WL2 - Proximity to green spaces

There are a wide variety of green spaces within a 5 and 10 minute walk from the centre of site. This includes open space categorised as green open fields, open space of local significance, and formal and informal recreation space identified for protection. Some of the green spaces around the site which are identified by Mendip District Council¹ includes;

- LGSWELLS001 (Part of Blue School Playing Fields): This site creates a sense of openness alongside the Blue School Playing Fields and contributes to the character and tranquillity of this part of Wells. The site can be accessed via footpath and provides opportunities for informal recreation.
- LGSWELLS014 (Wells Cemetery): This site is an important area allowing views out of Portway. It has a sense of tranquillity appropriate to its use and cultural and historical significance. It also supports a number of protected species.
- LGSWELLS015 (Railway embankment at Portway): The site is an important open area and is a landmark feature on Portway. It frames views of the Cathedral from this direction. It also supports a number of protected species.

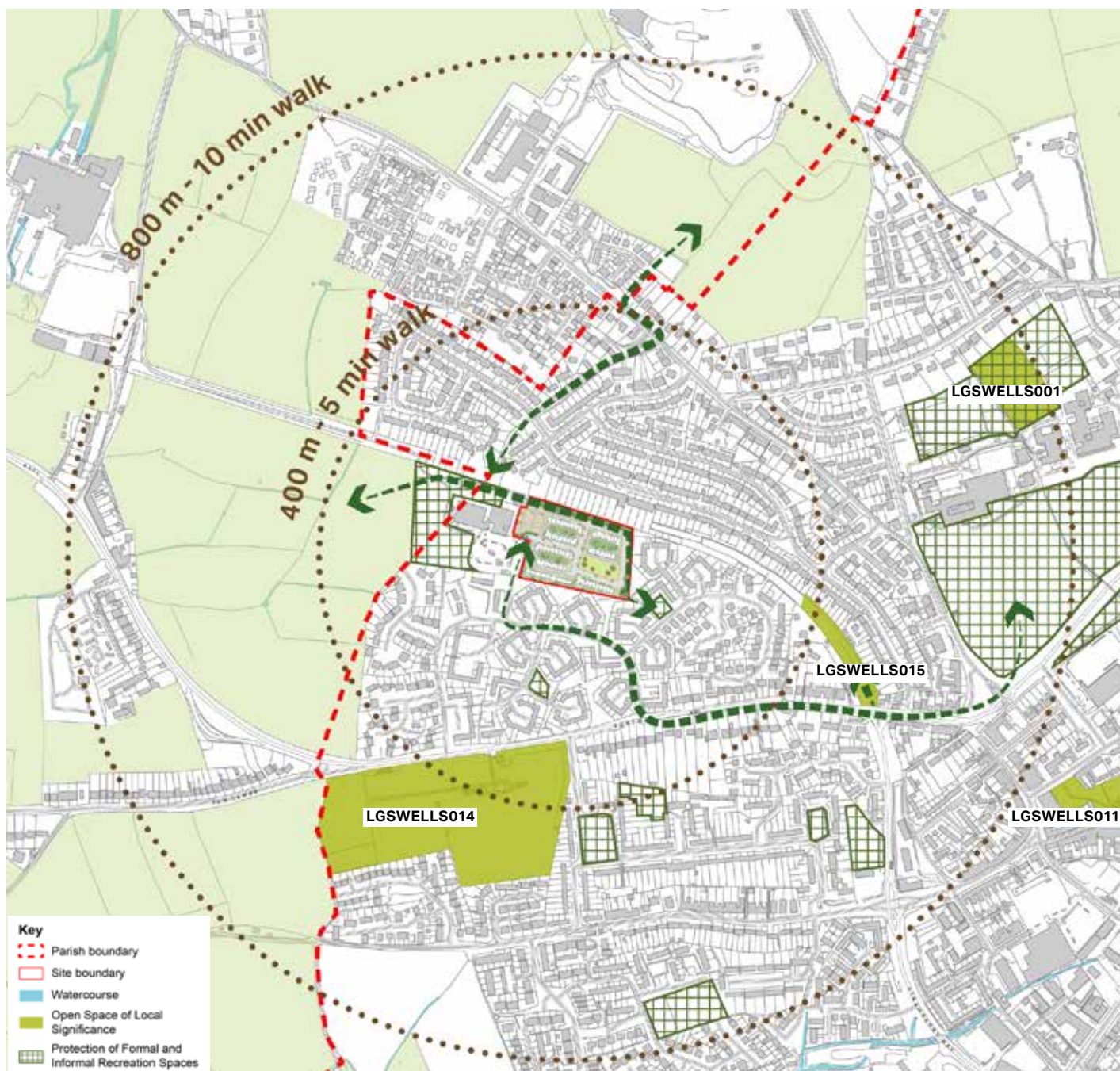


Figure 32: The green spaces around site WL2.

1. Mendip District Council, Local plan Part II (Sites and Policies), Designation of Local Green Spaces, December 2017.



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Site WL4 Masterplanning

06

6. Site WL4 - Tincknells Depot masterplanning

6.1. Introduction

This section introduces Local Plan Site WL4 and proposes two masterplanning approaches for its redevelopment. Although the site is allocated in the Local Plan, Wells City Council has been unable to ascertain that the entire site is actually available for the development. As such, document does not propose any options that assume that the current users will be vacating the site.

- Part of the site falls within flood zones 2 and 3. The extent of development would need to reflect a flood risk assessment on the site.
- As an active brownfield site, there might be localised contamination on the site which would require remediation.

6.2. Site analysis

6.2.1. Site analysis

- This is a large edge of centre site bounded by Glastonbury Road and Strawberry Way.
- Part of the site is used as a shop with an extensive depot to the rear (mix of shed/storage buildings).
- A row of protected trees in the north-west corner of the site, north of St Andrews stream, should be retained.
- This brownfield site comprises of hard standing and buildings and is of low biodiversity value.
- Several listed buildings are located within the proximity of the site such as Priory Hospital and Sherston Pub. WL4 is adjacent to the Wells Conservation Area boundary.

Site No.	HELAA Site	Site Address	Site Area (Ha)	Potential number of dwelling
WL4	WELLS116M	Tincknells Depot	1.99	Minimum c.25+employment

Table 18: Site description.



Figure 33: Aerial view of Site WL4 (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 34: View A to site WL4.

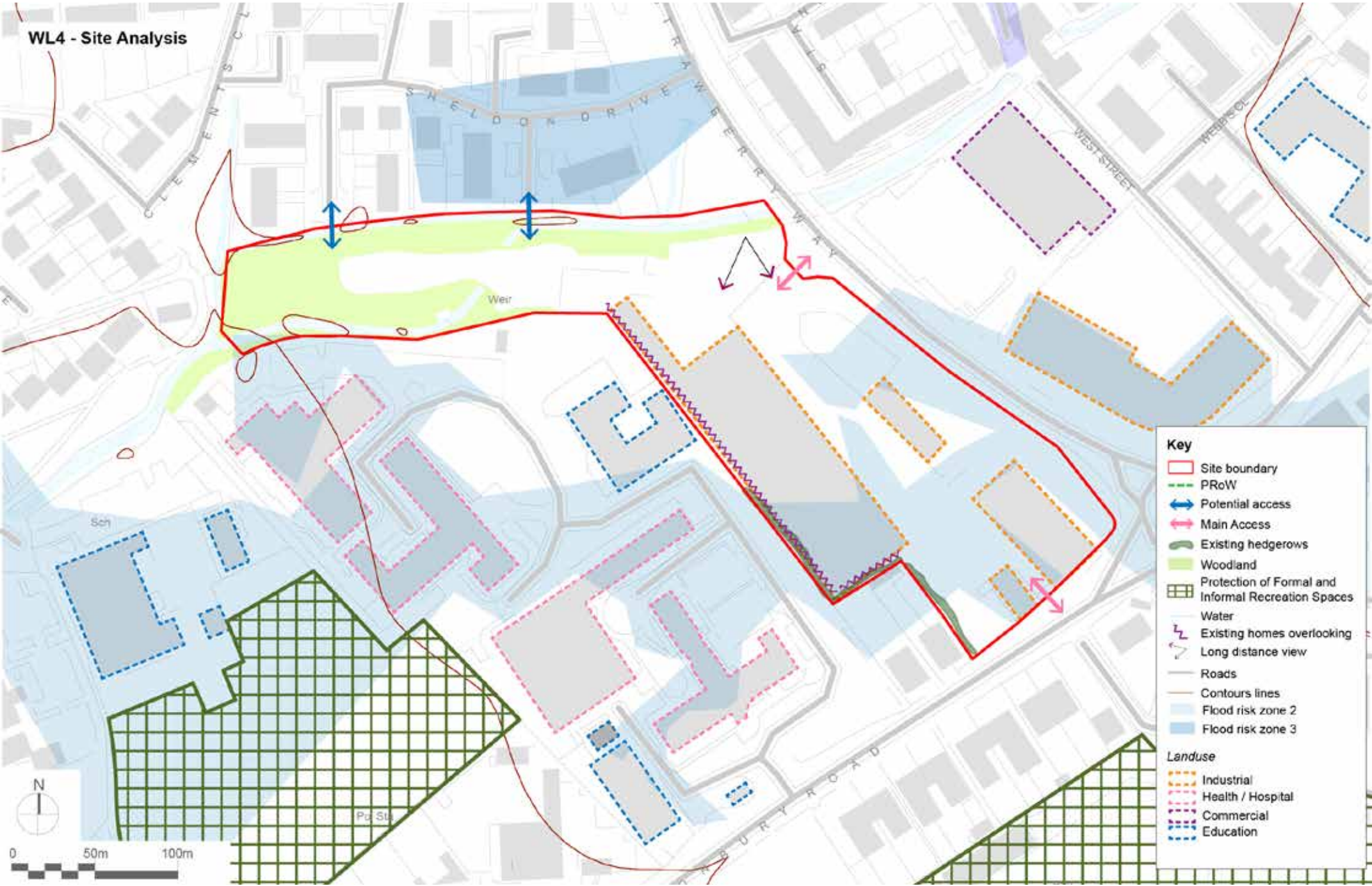


Figure 35: The site analysis WL4.

6.2.2. Site photographs



Figure 36: The views to the site and surrounding.



Figure 37: View C.



Figure 38: View D.



Figure 39: View E.



Figure 40: View F.



Figure 41: View G.



Figure 42: View I.

6.3. Option studies

The following pages illustrate two options for the Tincknells site. They have common elements:

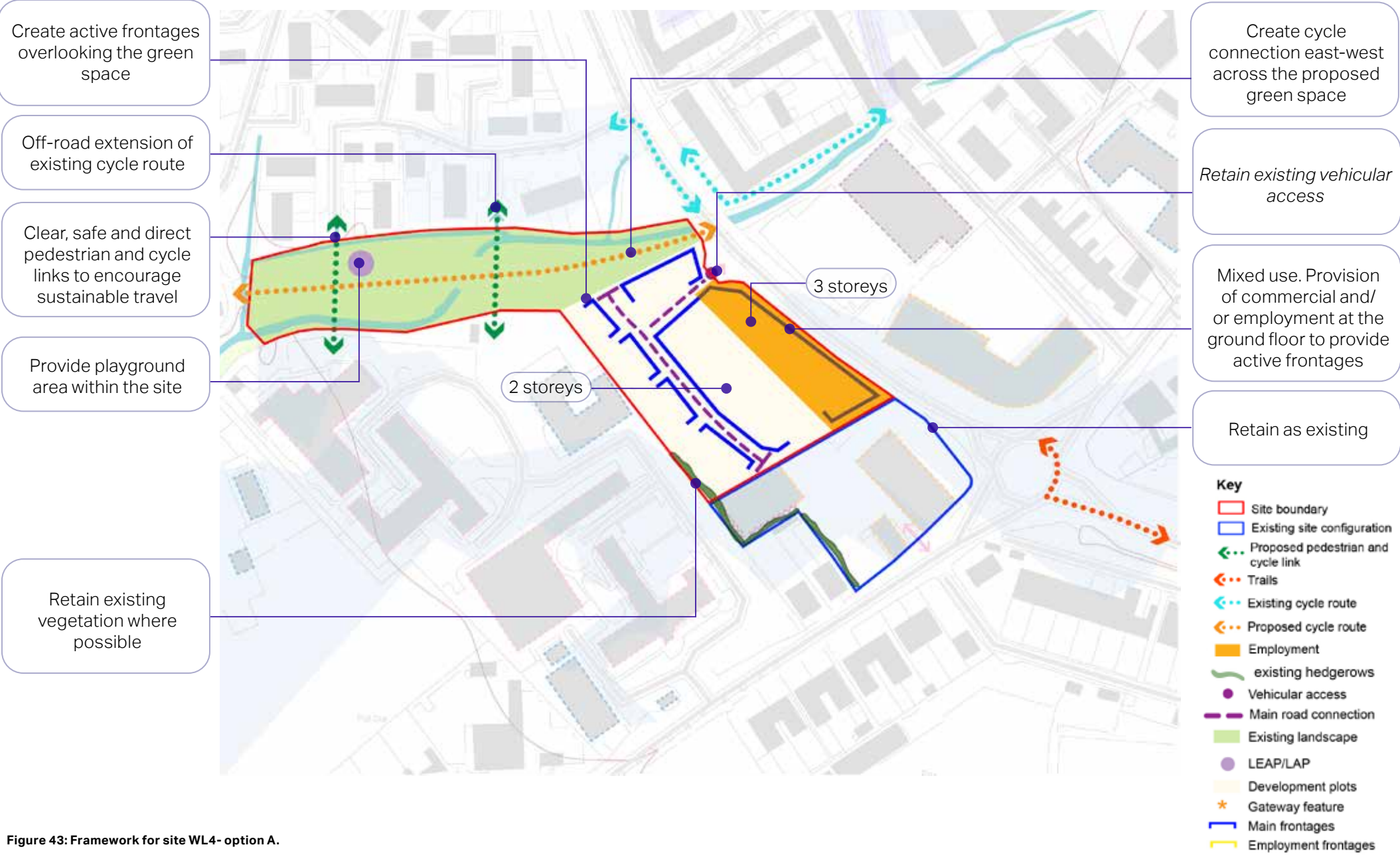
- Both assume that the retail use, and indeed the landmark redbrick building, are retained.
- Both take the opportunity to open up a green east-west connection along St Andrews Stream on the northern edge of the site.

The options differ in what happens in the middle part of the allocated site, along Strawberry Way:

- Option A includes commercial/employment uses at ground floor on the Strawberry Way frontage, with flats above. This would be a 3 storey building with 2 storey houses behind.
- Option B has a similar massing but just flats (along Strawberry Way) and houses to the west of the site.

6.3.1. Site WL4 - Option A

6.3.1.1. Key design principles



6.3.1.2. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 1.5 hectare of which 0.67 hectare remains existing landscape to be enhanced. The remaining is 0.8 hectare with 60 house and apartment units with a net density of 75 dwelling per hectare (dph). The gross density is 40 dph.

This option is for a mix of house and apartment units providing 520 sqm of employment space at ground floor with 54 apartments above. The block facing Strawberry Way is 3 storeys and the block behind is 2 storeys.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Houses/units no.
1 bedroom	20%	3
2 bedroom	30%	4
3 bedroom	30%	4
4 bedroom	10%	2
5 bedroom	10%	2
Flat units	-	45
Total	-	60

Table 19: Number of units.

Site WL4-Retained as existing (blue boundary)	Overall site area (sqm)	Overall site area (Ha)	Built-up area (sqm)	Built-up area (Ha)	Total units
Commercial	1,600	0.16	1,600	0.16	2 warehouses
Residential	203	0.02	146	0.01	2
Parking and manoeuvring space	3,114	0.31	-	-	-
Total	4,917	0.5	1,746	0.17	-

Table 20: Land use budget for retained existing commercial area.

Option A	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Residential	7,790	0.8	53	75	60
Apartments	3,741	0.4	66	-	45
Houses	4,049	0.4	24	-	15
Existing landscape to be enhanced	6,733	0.67	44	-	-
Retail	520	0.05	3	-	-
Total	15,043	1.5	100	-	60

Table 21: Land use budget.

6.3.2. Site WL4 - Option B

6.3.2.1. Key design principles

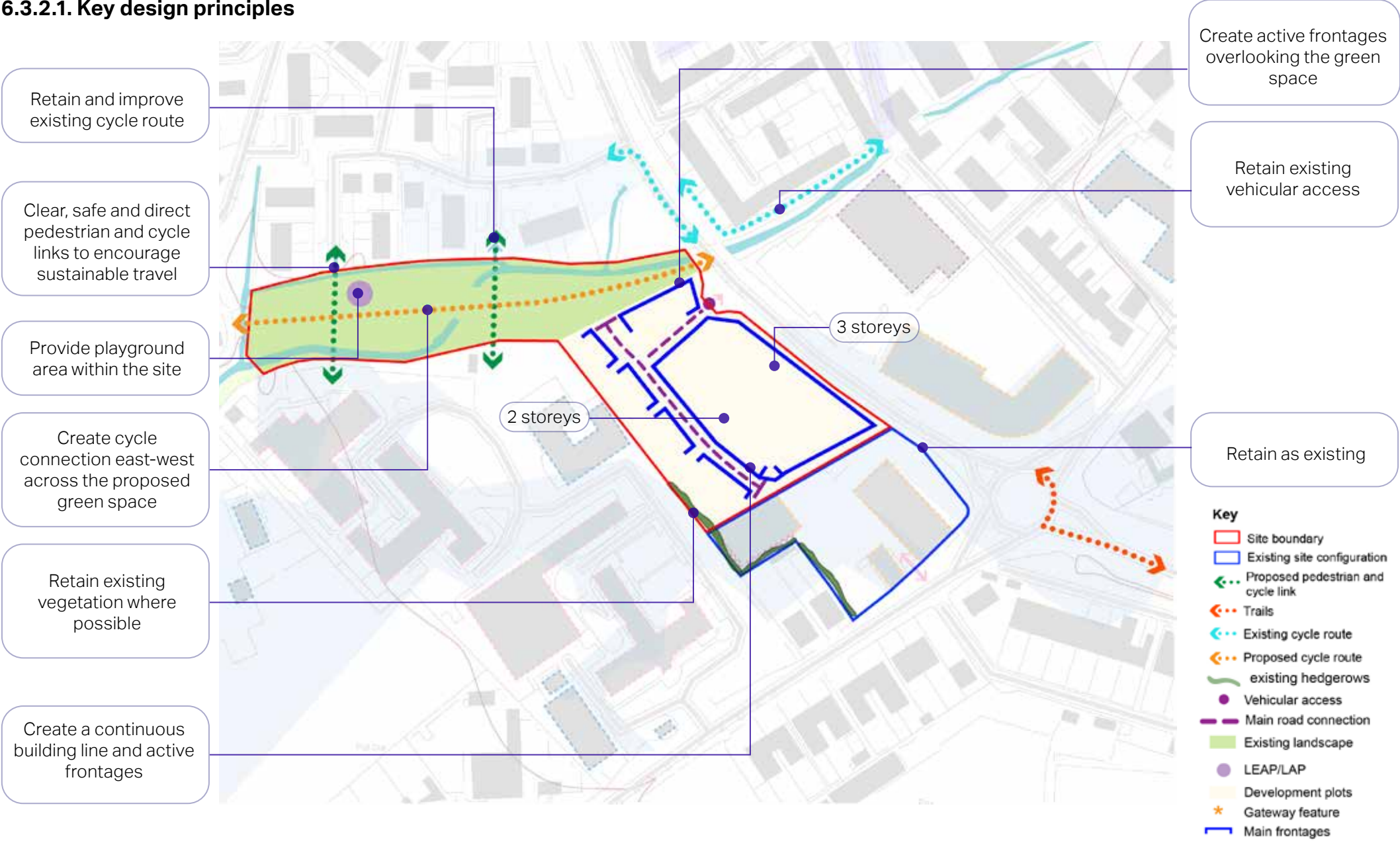


Figure 44: Framework for site WL4- option B.

6.3.2.2. Land use budget

Overall the site area is 1.51 hectare of which 0.67 hectare remains existing landscape. The remaining is 0.83 hectare with 70 house and apartment units with the net density of 84 dwelling per hectare (dph). The gross density is 46 dph.

The block facing Strawberry Way is 3 storeys and the block behind is 2 storeys.

Site WL4 - option A	Sqm	Ha	%	Density (Net)	Total units
Landscape / buffer	6,733.34	0.67	34%		
Development parcel	8,392.02	0.83	42%	84	70
Total	15,125.36	1.51	100%		70

Table 22: Land use budget.

Dwelling size mix	Percentage requirements	Houses/units no.
1 bedroom	20%	3
2 bedroom	30%	4
3 bedroom	30%	5
4 bedroom	10%	2
5 bedroom	10%	2
Flat units	-	55
Total	-	70

Table 23: Number of units.

6.3.3. Site WL4 - Proximity to bus stops

The opposite image shows the existing bus stops within a 5 and 10 minute walking distance from the centre of the site. There are two bus stops within 5 minutes walking distance on Glastonbury Road. The majority of bus stops within a 10 minute walking distance are concentrated to the north of the site.

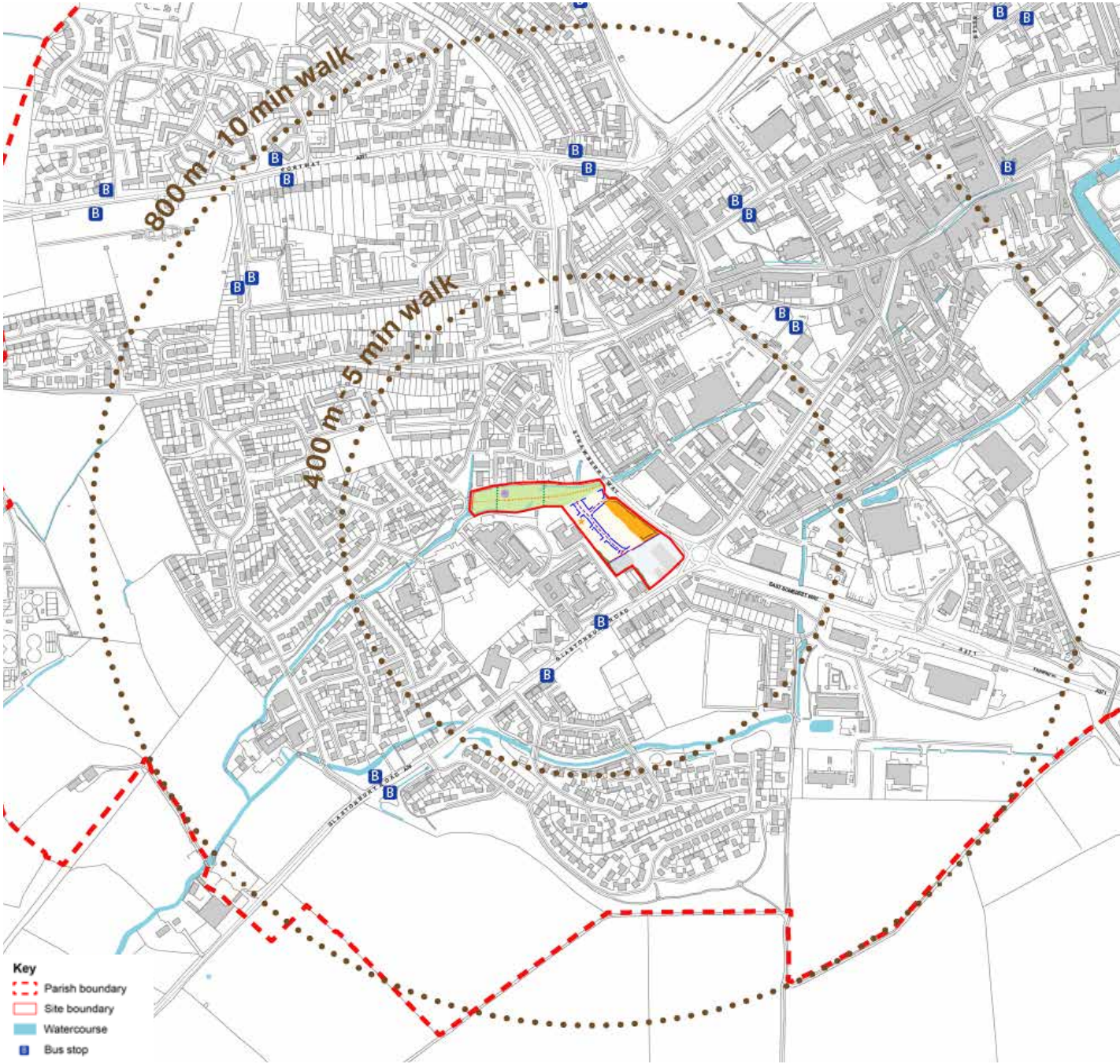


Figure 45: The bus stops and 5 minute walk distance for site WL4.

6.3.4. Site WL4 - Proximity to green spaces

There are a wide variety of green spaces within a 5 and 10 minute walk from the centre of site. This includes open space categorised as green open fields, open space of local significance, and formal and informal recreation space identified for protection. Some of the green spaces around the site which are identified by Mendip District Council¹ includes:

- LGSWELLS011 (Church and Churchyard of St Cuthbert's Church): The site is an important open space within the built up area of Wells and is important to the setting of a number of listed buildings. It allows views out of surrounding street creating a sense of openness. The church and church yard are important features in the street scene in their own right. It also supports a number of protected species.
- LGSWELLS012 (Land alongside Glastonbury Road): The site is an important pocket of green space within along Glastonbury Road. It creates a sense of openness and allows the stream to be seen. It also supports a number of protected species.
- LGSWELLS013 (Land at Jocelyn Drive and Glastonbury road): The site is an important pocket of green space within along Glastonbury Road. It creates a sense of openness and allows the stream to be seen. It also supports a number of protected species.

1. Mendip District Council, Local plan Part II (Sites and Policies), Designation of Local Green Spaces, December 2017.

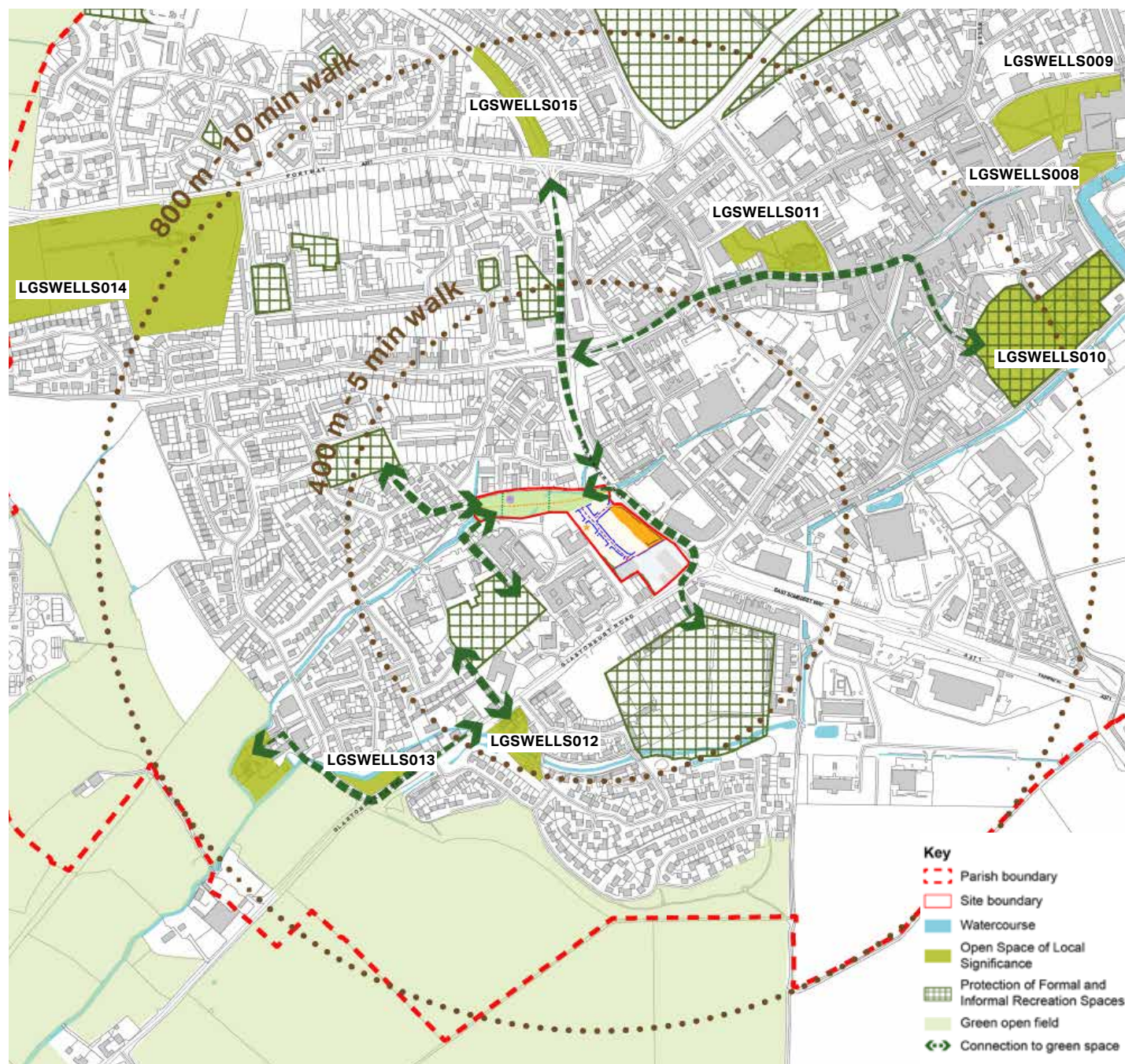


Figure 46: The green spaces around site WL4.



Delivery

07

7. Delivery

7.1. Delivery

The Design Guidelines set out in this report will be a valuable tool for securing context-driven, high quality development in Wells, especially on allocated sites that might come forward in the future.

The guidelines give more certainty to both developers and the community in securing developments that are designed to the aspirations of the community, potentially speeding up the planning process. They are anticipated to be used by different actors in the planning and development process in various ways, as summarised in the table opposite.

The next steps for Wells City Council are to (1) engage with landowners, Mendip District Council and other stakeholders; and to (2) transpose the principles set out in this report into statutory policies within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. This could be done by including thematic design-based policies which address placemaking, urban design, local character and environmental principles.

ACTORS	HOW THEY WILL USE THE DESIGN GUIDELINES
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authorities expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.
City Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

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