



# Rutland County Council

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**Meeting:** CABINET

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, 30 October 2018 at 10.00 am

**Venue:** COUNCIL CHAMBER, CATMOSE

**Governance Officer to contact:** Natasha Taylor 01572 720991  
email: [governance@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:governance@rutland.gov.uk)

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## A G E N D A

- 1) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
- 2) ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE
- 3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Regulations, Members are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this Agenda and/or indicate if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to them.

- 4) RECORD OF DECISIONS

To confirm the Record of Decisions made at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 October 2018.

- 5) ITEMS RAISED BY SCRUTINY

To receive items raised by members of scrutiny which have been submitted to the Leader (copied to Chief Executive and Governance Officer) by 4.30 pm on Friday 26 October 2018.

## **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

### **6) ST GEORGE'S BARRACKS MASTER PLAN**

Report No. 195/2018

*(Report to follow)*

## **REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR PLACES**

### **7) RUTLAND LOCAL PLAN (KEY DECISION)**

Report No. 194/2018  
(Pages 3 - 76)

### **8) ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

To receive items of urgent business which have previously been notified to the person presiding.

---oOo---

**MEMBERS OF THE CABINET:** Mr O Hemsley Chairman  
Mr G Brown  
Mr R Foster  
Mr A Walters  
Mr D Wilby  
Mrs L Stephenson

### **SCRUTINY COMMISSION:**

**Note: Scrutiny Members may attend Cabinet meetings but may only speak at the prior invitation of the person presiding at the meeting.**

**ALL CHIEF OFFICERS  
PUBLIC NOTICEBOARD AT CATMOSE  
GOVERNANCE TEAM**

**CABINET**

30<sup>th</sup> October 2018

**RUTLAND LOCAL PLAN**

**Report of the Strategic Director for Places**

|                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Strategic Aim:                 | Sustainable Growth   |   |
| Key Decision: Yes              | Forward Plan Reference: FP/260718  |   |
| Exempt Information             | No   |   |
| Cabinet Member(s) Responsible: | Mr G Brown Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Finance, Planning and Property. |   |
| Contact Officer(s):            | Steve Ingram, Strategic Director for Places  | Tel: 01572 758868<br>singram@rutland.gov.uk |
|                                | Roger Ranson, Planning Policy Manager  | Tel: 01572 758238<br>rranson@rutland.gov.uk |

**DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Cabinet considers this report setting out progress with the preparation of the Local Plan for Rutland and agrees to:
  - a. Fully consider consultation responses received;
  - b. Take account of the revised housing requirement and Government’s proposed consultation on the methodology to determine what our “minimum” requirement will be and the subsequent implications for making appropriate and suitable allocations in the Pre-Submission Local Plan accordingly, noting that the timing of this consultation remains uncertain;
  - c. Consider the Woolfox Proposal to determine whether it is realistic and deliverable and if so undertake the appropriate site assessments, update the evidence base and consultation.
2. That Cabinet delegates to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Finance, Planning and Property in consultation with the Interim Director for Places to agree the form and nature of any additional consultation which may be required to produce the Pre-Submission Local Plan with respect to the Woolfox Garden Village should the site be considered as a realistic and deliverable proposition.
3. That a revised Local Development Scheme is prepared for approval by Cabinet at the earliest opportunity

## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Following reports presented to Cabinet in April (Report no: 71/2018) set out a revised timetable for the delivery of the Local Plan and in July regarding additional focussed consultations on the Local Plan (Report no: 134/2018). This report seeks to update Cabinet on progress with the preparation of the Local Plan and recommends the next steps to be followed. These recommended steps are intended to ensure that the plan is sound, positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy and legally compliant.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Local Planning Authorities must prepare a Local Plan that sets out the local planning policies for their authority area. These policies are important material considerations when deciding planning applications, as all decisions must be made in accordance with the policies unless there are very strong reasons not to do so.
- 2.2 Government guidance requires that Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy, in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.3 In July this year, the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework. The timing of this overlapped with the additional focussed consultations on the Local Plan approved by Cabinet on 31<sup>st</sup> July and which were undertaken during August and September. Whilst the references in the focussed consultations to the draft NPPF have remained significantly intact, the Local Plan will need to fully take account of the revised NPPF to ensure its compliance to national policy. The Local Plan is being re-drafted accordingly.
- 2.4 In late September this year, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) issued the 2016 household projections for local authority areas. It is proposed that these should form the basis of calculating our minimum housing requirement for the Local Plan, although the Government has announced its intention to further consult on the standard methodology for calculating this minimum housing requirement. This consultation was expected to commence in September but is yet to start at the timing of writing this report. Planning consultants, Lichfields have analysed the latest household projections and applied the current standard method of calculating minimum housing requirement based on the current Planning Practice Guidance (Sept 2018). This can be found through this link to the internet: <https://lichfields.uk/content/insights/the-2016-based-household-projections-for-england>. Their research suggests that the “potential standard method figure” for Rutland should be **179 dwellings per annum** for the period 2018 to 2028, considerably in excess of both the current minimum requirement using the standard method of 130 dwellings and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment of 160 dwellings. Some caution needs to be exercised regarding this figure given the intended Government consultation on the methodology. The Local Plan needs to be based on the latest available population and household projections, and so we will need to consider the Government’s consultation prior to producing the Pre-Submission Local Plan under Regulation 19 of the Local Plans regulations.



- 2.5 Members will be aware of the additional focussed consultations undertaken during August and September. These have generated a high level of response (almost 1,750 response forms and letters about the Focussed Changes and a further 308 forms and letters about the additional sites). The Local Plan regulations requires that the Council “considers” all responses made through early engagement stages and will need to demonstrate how consultation responses have shaped the revised version of the Local Plan in a statement of community engagement. Work is ongoing to review all comments made through the consultations to ensure these are appropriately taken into consideration in producing the Pre-Submission Local Plan.
- 2.6 In the last hour of the focussed consultations prior to the closing of consultation, a proposal was submitted for the development of a Garden Village at Woolfox. Legal advice has been sought as to how the preparation of the Local Plan needs to consider and assess this proposal as to its deliverability and viability. Current National Planning Policy Guidance states that any proposals must be realistic and deliverable within the plan period, and so a first step is to examine available evidence to determine whether the Woolfox proposal might be considered as a “reasonable alternative” under the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment requirements. If it is considered to be a realistic and deliverable proposal then the suitability of the site will need to be assessed on a sound and consistent basis to that undertaken for the St. Georges site.

#### Next Steps

- 2.7 Given the outstanding issues set out above, there is considerable additional work and assessment required to be completed in order that a sound Local Plan can be recommended to Cabinet to approve for its statutory Regulation 19 consultation prior to submission to the Secretary of State. These include:
- Fully considering consultation responses received and demonstrating how they have shaped the next version of the plan;
  - Taking account of revised housing requirement and Government’s proposed consultation on the methodology to determine what our “minimum” requirement will be and the subsequent implications for making appropriate and suitable allocations in the Pre-Submission Local Plan accordingly, noting that the timing of this consultation remains uncertain;
  - Considering the Woolfox Proposal to determine whether it is a realistic and deliverable alternative, and if so then subsequently undertaking appropriate site assessments and consultationFully considering consultation responses received and demonstrating how they have shaped the next version of the plan;
- 2.8 At present, due to the nature and complexity of the remaining work to be undertaken, it is not possible to set a timescale for the completion of the Pre-Submission Local Plan. Officers will continue to strive to produce the Pre-Submission Local Plan as quickly as possible ensuring it can be considered to be sound, positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. This will include that the plan is supported by appropriate evidence, including Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment as well as demonstrating effective joint working with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary strategic matters as evidenced by appropriate statements of common ground.

- 2.9 Should it be determined that the proposal to develop a garden village at Woolfox as set out in Appendix 1 is realistic and deliverable, it may be considered appropriate to undertake further additional consultation under Regulation 18 of the Local Plan Regulations so that the views of the public and statutory organisations can be made. It is recommended therefore that Cabinet delegates the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Finance, Planning and Property in consultation with the Interim Director of Places Director to agree the form and nature of any additional consultation required with respect to the Woolfox Garden Village with respect to producing a Pre-Submission Local Plan.

### **3 CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 Three stages of consultation have already taken place on the Local Plan through the Issues and Options in 2015, the Consultation Draft in 2017 and the focussed consultations in 2018 regarding additional sites promoted for development as well a tailored consultation regarding the implications of incorporating the proposed garden village at St. George's into the Local Plan. A further specific consultation on the land promoted for development at Woolfox may be required to be undertaken under Regulation 18 of the Local Plans Regulations. The objective is to ensure that the Local Plan is found sound at examination. In addition to ensuring that the evidence base, particularly the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment work which underpins the Local Plan process is undertaken appropriately to avoid potential legal challenge, a key element is also to ensure appropriate and timely community engagement in the evolution of the policies and proposals within the plan. There will be a subsequent opportunity for consultation on a full version of the Local Plan when it is published prior to its submission (the "Pre-Submission Local Plan") to the Secretary of State during 2019

### **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 An alternative option would be to take forward the production of the Local Plan without considering the Government's proposed consultation on the standard methodology for housing requirements, without due consideration and assessment of the late submission of development proposals at Woolfox and without fully taking account of all consultation response. This has been rejected as there are significant risks that the Local Plan may be found to be unsound at examination. If the Local Plan is not found to be sound it will leave the County vulnerable to inappropriate unwarranted development proposals coming forward in an uncoordinated way.
- 4.2 Another option would be for the Council not to undertake the production of the Local Plan. This would not be in line with Government expectations and would inevitably lead to direct Government intervention in the local planning process and also lead to development proposals coming forward in an uncoordinated way with no long term strategic direction to guide growth. This is not considered to be in the best interests of the County, its communities, residents and businesses.

## **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The estimated cost of the production of the Local Plan was included in the existing budget for 2018/19. Based on current projections, an additional cost of c£110k may be incurred either in 18/19 or the following year. This is still an estimate but is based on experiences elsewhere. The budget was prepared on the basis that the Local Plan would proceed to submission and examination without the requirement for the additional steps as outlined above and in the report to Cabinet in April. The recommended approach and timetable agreed by Cabinet in April 2018 will now be re-programmed, resulting in a significant proportion of these costs possibly falling in 2019/20, particularly the examination costs.

## **6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The Local Plan is required by statute and the Council's constitution to be adopted by Full Council. Before the draft Local Plan can be considered for adoption, the process for preparing the Local Plan must follow is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations). Section 18 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for consultation - there is are requirement to consult with:

- specific consultation bodies which the Council considers have an interest in proposed local plan;
- general consultation bodies which the Council consider appropriate;  
*and*
- residents or other persons carrying on business in the authority's area which the Council considers it appropriate to invite representations.

- 6.2 In addition, the Council must comply with any commitments it has made in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Council must also publicise its intended timetable for producing the Local Plan. This information is contained in the proposed Local Development Scheme (LDS) which authorities should publish on their web site and must keep up to date. The latest version of the LDS is on the Council's website [Local Development Scheme | Rutland County Council](#)

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening was prepared for the Consultation Draft Local Plan (2017) and will be updated as the Local Plan progresses to adoption by the Council. The screening report is available as a pdf alongside other evidence documents published with the Consultation Draft Local Plan at [Local Plan Review | Rutland County Council](#)

## **8. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Strategic Objective 6 of the Consultation Draft Rutland Local Plan is: "To develop a stronger and safer community by designing out opportunities for crime and implementing measures to improve road safety to ensure that people can live, work and

relax where they feel safe and enjoy a better quality of life.” This is promoted through the policies to be finalised in the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

## **9. HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Strategic Objective 5 of the Consultation Draft Rutland Local Plan is: “To support healthy and thriving communities by protecting existing and providing new, high quality local and accessible access to health, leisure, recreation, sport, green infrastructure and cultural activities.” This is promoted through the policies to be finalised in the Pre-Submission Local Plan

## **10. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 This report sets out the implications for the Local Plan regarding :

- The new National Planning Policy Framework;
- The new 2016 household projections and the Government’s intention to consult on a revised standard methodology for calculating the minimum housing requirement;
- The late submission to propose a Garden Village at Woolfox;
- All aspects of public consultation.

10.2 The next stage in the process of preparing the Local Plan will be the publication of Pre-Submission Local Plan. Given the additional work required to produce this, the timetable for production of the Local Plan is uncertain and it is recognised that the Regulation 19 statutory consultation may now have to be delayed until after the local government elections in May, prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 None

## **12. APPENDICES**

12.1 Appendix 1 – Proposal submitted with respect to Woolfox

Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.





**WOOLFOX**  
 **GARDEN  
COMMUNITY**

POSITION STATEMENT AND VISION DOCUMENT  
SEPTEMBER 2018 • M.0384\_02B





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***Woolfox Garden Community will challenge the existing way of working and thinking to push the boundaries of residential led design quality to create a highly desirable new settlement. The aim is to achieve a high-quality development with strong identity, activity and 'sense of place'. Woolfox Garden Community will become a place people will want to live and a destination worth visiting.***

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# 01 THE VISION

1.1 Woolfox Garden Community will be designed to be inclusive of all users and encourage environmental sustainable travel choice and a transportation modal shift. Woolfox Garden Community will be more than just a housing development, it will be underpinned by the core values of Garden City principles but utilise the best and latest design guidance and be driven by sustainability. The key objectives are to:

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- Create an exemplary new settlement, including complementary facilities to serve the new and existing communities, eg. schools, sports and recreation facilities;
- Minimise the need to travel;
- Ensure the development relates with the surrounding neighbourhoods and smaller villages;
- Deliver a range of high-quality, well designed homes to meet the needs of local people;
- Provide an appropriate amount of affordable housing;
- Promote sustainable modes of transport;
- Establish a network of green routes and create new parks and recreation spaces; and
- Create employment opportunities and facilitate economic growth.







# 02 INTRODUCTION

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2.1 Rutland District Council are in the process of reviewing its Local Plan that will guide the development in the district up to 2036. As part of that, the Council is carrying out additional consultation to consider the implication of potential development. This includes the St George's Barracks Site and other sites that have been promoted for development since the Consultation Draft Local Plan was issued for public consultation. Following this, the opportunities for the development of a new Garden Community at Woolfox have been explored. A range of specialist consultants have been commissioned to consider specific factors and the resulting work is summarised within this Position Statement.

2.2 There is one landowner that is committed to exploring the opportunities presented by the development of a new settlement and is prepared to engage with the Council with an aim to present the proposal as a credible alternative for the housing development. This would meet the future needs of the Rutland County Council and neighbouring planning authorities subject to the future housing need. The proposal would be highly sustainable delivering jobs and key infrastructure and services such as education and local healthcare as well as providing homes.

## THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO NEW SETTLEMENTS

2.3 The Taylor report on Garden Villages in 2015 identified the benefits of delivering new garden villages in order to boost housing supply and respond to the housing shortfall nationally. In particular, the report noted the problems associated with developments adjacent to existing settlements in terms of political support, delivery rates and infrastructure provision and recommended the delivery of new garden villages as an alternative.

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - July 2018) identifies that the supply of new homes can sometimes best be achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements.

2.5 The Garden Communities Prospectus (MHCLG August 2018) is supportive of new garden communities. The Prospectus invites proposals for new Garden Towns (more than 10,000 homes), whilst proposals for Garden Villages are (1,500-10,000 homes)

2.6 The identified option area is large enough to accommodate a new settlement and is compatible with the NPPF objectives: "The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements..."(para 72). The scale and complexity of this new settlement warrants it to be considered a new garden community with well-designed places and homes, sustainable location offering healthy living and clear identify.

2.7 By virtue of being located near the strategic A1 corridor its location provides great connectivity within the local area but also regionally and nationally. The Site and its characteristics offer great opportunities for creating healthy places and green infrastructure that would link with the existing landscape framework creating a permeable settlement where the focus is on integrated transport. The pedestrian and cycle use would support the wellbeing of the residents creating a strong and resilient garden community.

2.8 The Government are supportive of the large-scale proposals as these provide another mechanism to address the housing shortfall nationally, as well as providing for self-contained communities in comprehensively designed and landscaped communities with the services provided within walking distance of all properties.





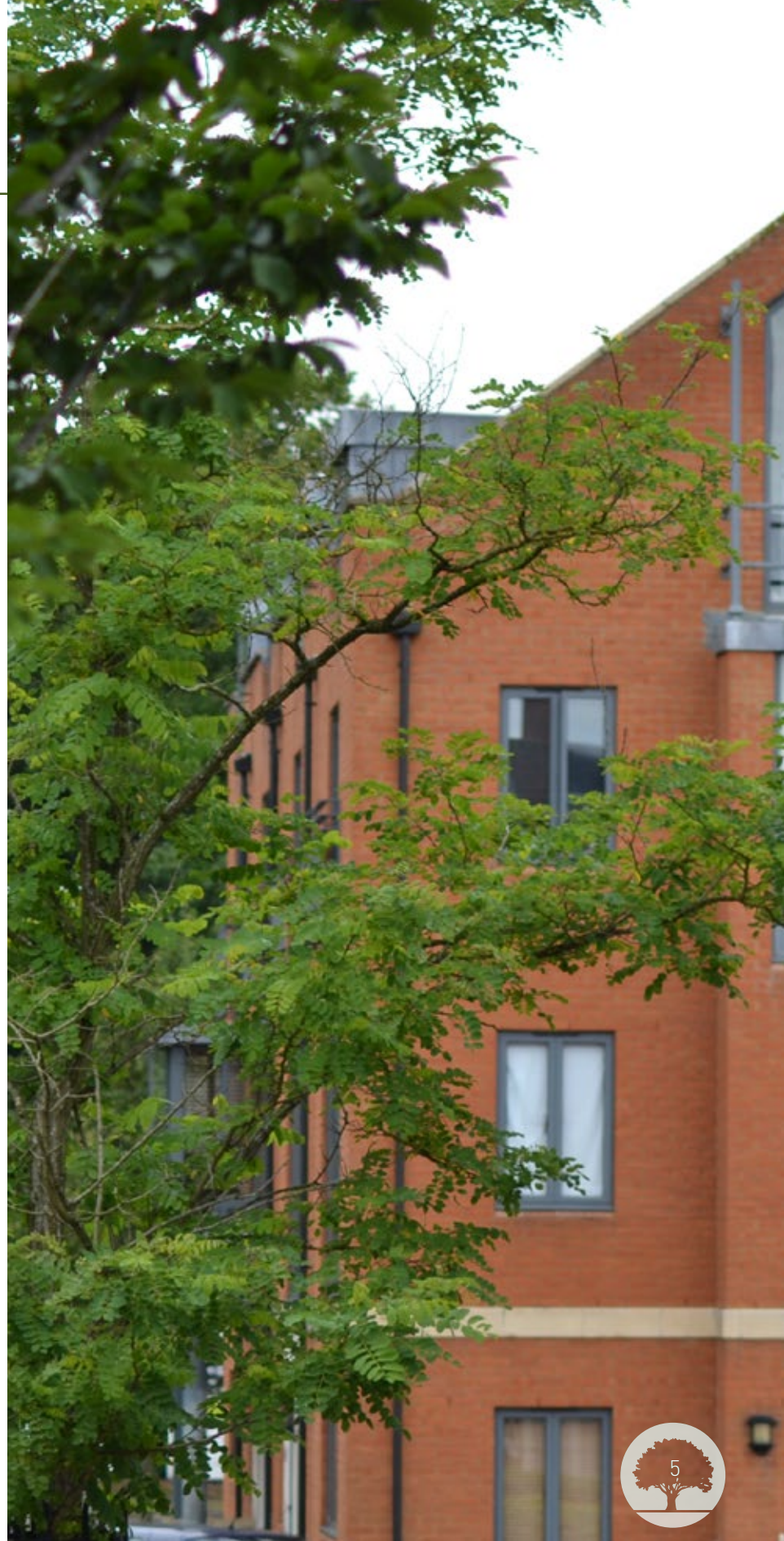


# 03 A NEW SETTLEMENT

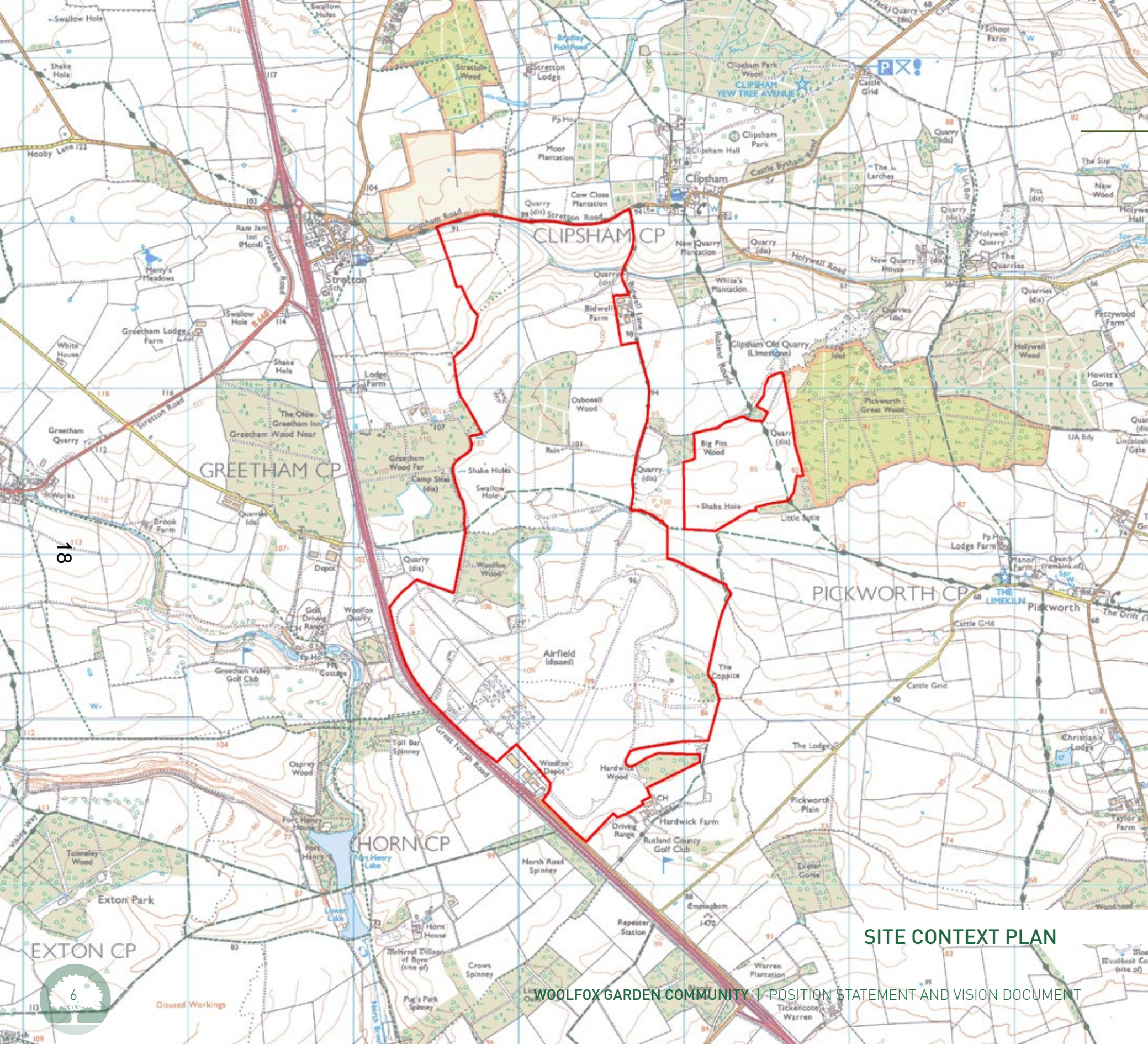
## WHY DELIVER A NEW SETTLEMENT IN RUTLAND?

- 3.1 The delivery of a new settlement provides the opportunity to meet the needs of rural settlements in a sustainable location without placing a burden on the existing infrastructure of these settlements.
- 3.2 The Taylor report has identified the benefits of a new freestanding Garden Community as compared to the expansion of an existing settlement. These include:
- the ability of a new Garden Community to maximise community benefit in the form of infrastructure rather than the infrastructure being prejudiced by artificially high land values;
  - the ability of a new Garden Community to deliver rather than being subject to competition from sequential sites;
  - political resistance to extensions as politicians look to address local opposition;
  - the slow build-out rates of extensions;
  - the ability of a new Garden Community to deliver to a planned schedule, providing services as and when they are required rather than relying on the existing services of a settlement; and
  - a choice of location for home owners/occupiers.

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### SITE CONTEXT PLAN

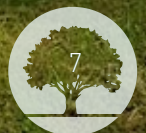




# 04 SITE CONTEXT

4.1 Woolfox Garden Community presents an excellent opportunity to create a sustainable development in a strong landscape framework which is well connected to the local highway infrastructure namely the A1 Great North Road. The development can create a dynamic new place and an exemplar development. With additional land there is the prospect that a Garden Community can be created therefore bringing all the benefits of creating a larger sustainable community consistent with the NPPF (July 2018) and the Garden Communities Prospectus (August 2018).

19 4.2 The Site benefits from direct access to the A1, which is a major transport corridor and strategic route linking with Grantham and Newark to the north and indirectly connecting to Peterborough to the south east. On a strategic level the A1 links with Newcastle upon Tyne in the north and London to the south. The Site benefits from being close to two railway stations namely Oakham and Stamford which are both linked to the strategic rail network.





**WIDER CONTEXT PLAN**





## 04 SITE CONTEXT

- 4.3 The new settlement is located within open countryside and the southern site boundary runs through the airfield and parallel to a number of industrial buildings. The site lies within the Minerals Safeguarding Area for Limestone Aggregate which allows the extraction of crushed rock (limestone). Only a small part of the site is affected by the safeguarding area as a significant part of the site previously accommodated a second world war airfield and as a consequence the site is Previous Developed Land (PDL).

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GARDEN  
COMMUNITY

AERIAL CONTEXT PLAN





# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

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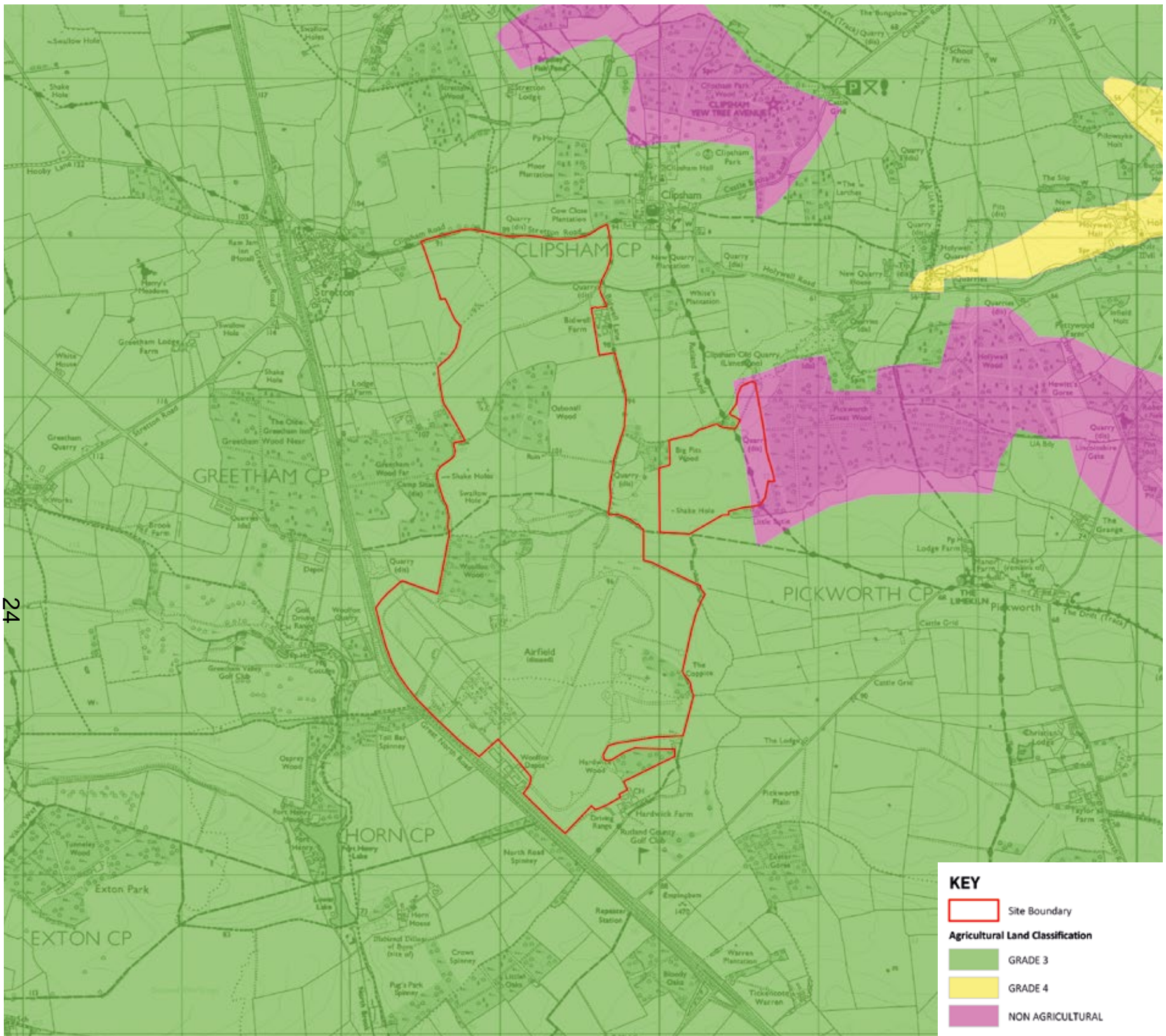
5.1 The proposed Woolfox Garden Community exhibits a number of opportunities in landscape and visual terms including land use, planning policy, landscape character, topography, watercourses, vegetation, Public Rights of Way (PROW), agricultural land classification (ALC) and green infrastructure (GI).

## LAND USE

5.2 The disused Royal Air Force Woolfox Airbase is located within the southern extent of the site, areas of hardstanding and derelict buildings associated with the former airfield still remain in the southern part of the site. The current land use across the remainder of the site is predominately medium scale arable farmland with field boundaries defined by well-established hedgerows which include hedgerow trees; blocks of woodland; tree belts; ditches and; post and wire fencing.







## AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION PLAN

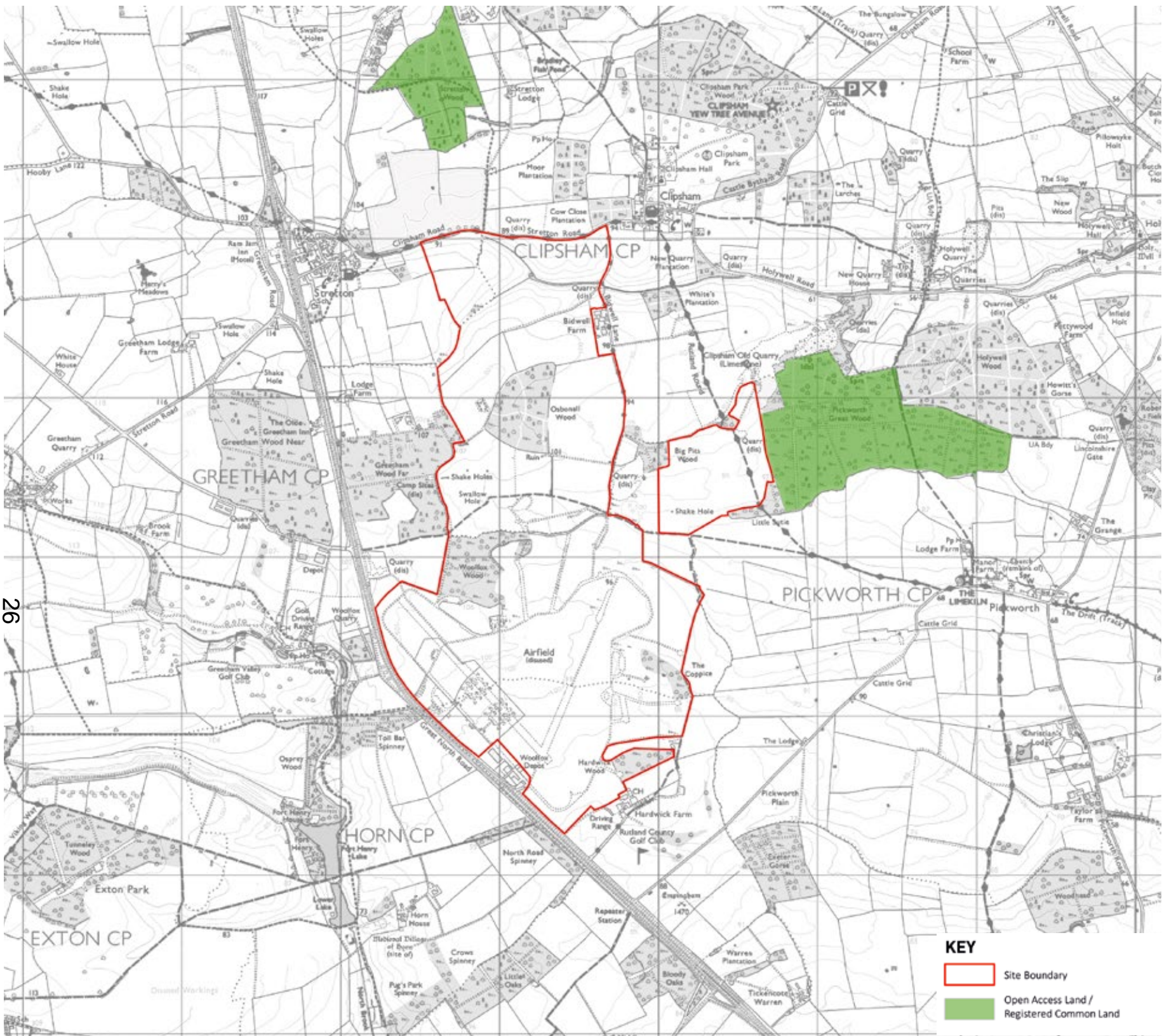


# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

## AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 5.3 Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) across the site is predominately Grade 3. This is good to moderate quality agricultural land, however this is undifferentiated between 3a and 3b. A small area of land in the far east of the site is classified as non-agricultural land. The ALC mapping was undertaken by MAFF and as a consequence it is somewhat dated. This was a desktop exercise undertaken at a high level and therefore the findings are at best, broad brush.
- 5.4 The brownfield nature of the former airfield, its runways and taxiways indicates that the soil condition and quality have been degraded and is now likely to be lower than the Grade 3 estimated in the Agricultural Land Classification.





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## LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS PLAN



# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

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## LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

- 5.5 The site is not covered by a statutory landscape designation however, the northern portion of the site was located within the 'Areas of Particularly Attractive Countryside' a non-statutory designation as defined in the now superseded Rutland Local Plan (2001).

## WOODLAND, HEDGEROWS AND TREES

- 5.6 The new settlement area is well enclosed by existing vegetation which includes Greetham Wood Far and Pickford Great Wood both classified as ancient woodland and located to the west and east of the site respectively. Within the site there are a number of mature blocks of broadleaved woodland including Osbonall Wood and Woolfox Wood which are designated as ancient woodland. The medium scale agricultural fields towards the northern area of the site are bound by mature hedgerows which often include hedgerow trees. A belt of vegetation comprised of outgrown shrubbery and semi-mature trees is located alongside the A1 Great North Road directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. The woodlands, hedgerows and trees could be effectively retained and accommodated within the new settlement and would form part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy to link into the wider surrounding landscape.

## LANDSCAPE POLICY

- 5.7 The relevant landscape planning policies which relate to the new settlement are detailed within the adopted Rutland Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2011).

- 5.8 Policy CS19 Promoting Good Design states that:

*"All new development will be expected to contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials, and its relationship to adjoining buildings and landscape features, and shall not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, light pollution or other adverse impact on local character and amenities."*

- 5.9 Policy CS21 relates to the natural environment and states that:

*"Development should be appropriate to the landscape character type within which it is situated and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features."*

*The quality and diversity of the natural environment of Rutland will be conserved and enhanced. Conditions for biodiversity will be maintained and improved and important geodiversity assets will be protected..."*

- 5.10 Policy CS21 goes on to state that all developments will be expected to:

*"a) Provide an appropriate level of protection to legally protected sites and species;*

*b) Maintain and where appropriate enhance conditions for priority habitats and species identified in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan;*

*c) Maintain and where appropriate enhance recognised geodiversity assets"*

*d) Maintain and where appropriate enhance other sites, features, species or networks of ecological interest and provide for appropriate management of these;*

*e) Maximise opportunities for the restoration, enhancement and connection of ecological or geological assets, particularly in line with the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan;*

*f) Mitigate against any necessary impacts through appropriate habitat creation, restoration or enhancement on site or elsewhere;*

*g) Respect and where appropriate enhance the character of the landscape identified in the Rutland Landscape Character assessment;*

*h) Maintain and where appropriate enhance green infrastructure.”*

- 5.11 Policy CS23 relates to green infrastructure, open space, sports and recreational activities and states that:
- “The existing green infrastructure network will be safeguarded, improved and enhanced by further provision to ensure accessible multi-functional green spaces by linking existing areas of open space. This will be achieved by:*
- ... b) requiring new development to make provision for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of an appropriate size and will also provide links to the existing green infrastructure network...”*

5.12 The Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document was adopted by Rutland County Council in October 2014 and now forms part of the statutory development plan, which provides the framework for the Council’s decisions on future development proposals in Rutland.

5.13 There are a number of strategic objectives considered relevant to the new settlement area. Objective 11 relates to the natural and cultural environment and seeks to:

*“To safeguard and enhance the natural resources, landscape and countryside, cultural heritage and the diversity of wildlife and habitats, including green infrastructure and special protection for Rutland Water to improve our quality of life and make a full contribution to global sustainability.*

5.14 Objective 13 covers high quality design and local distinctiveness and seeks to:

*“To ensure that design of new development is of the highest quality to provide attractive and safe places to live, work and visit and reflects the local character, identity and distinctiveness of the towns and villages.”*



## 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

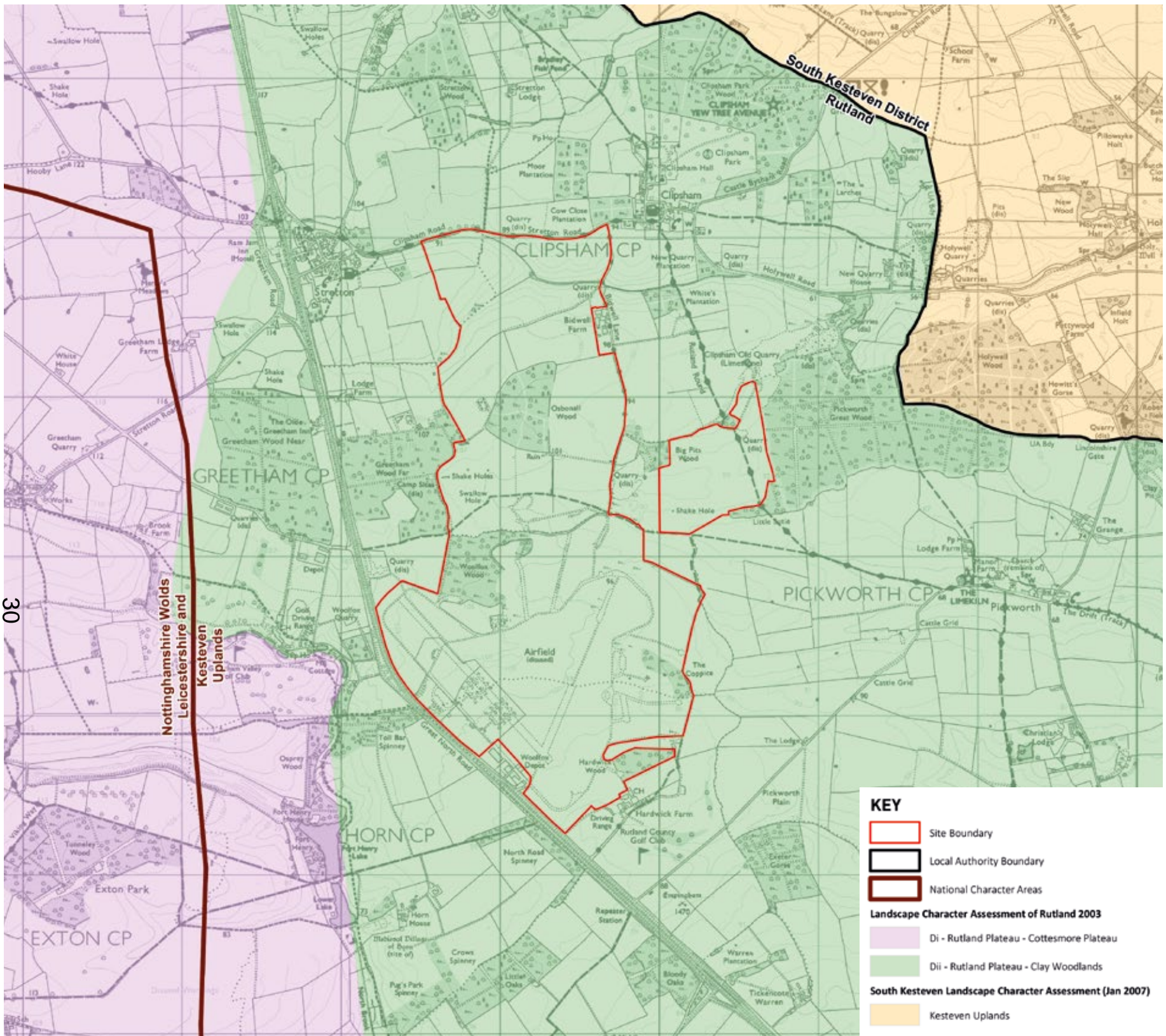
- 5.15 Policy SP23 relates to landscape character in the countryside and states that:

*“New development in and adjoining the countryside will only be acceptable where it is designed so as to be sensitive to its landscape setting. Development will be expected to enhance the distinctive qualities of the landscape character types in which it would be situated, including the distinctive elements, features, and other spatial characteristics as identified in the Council’s current Rutland Landscape Character Assessment. Proposals will be expected to respond to the recommended landscape objectives for the character area within which it is situated.”*

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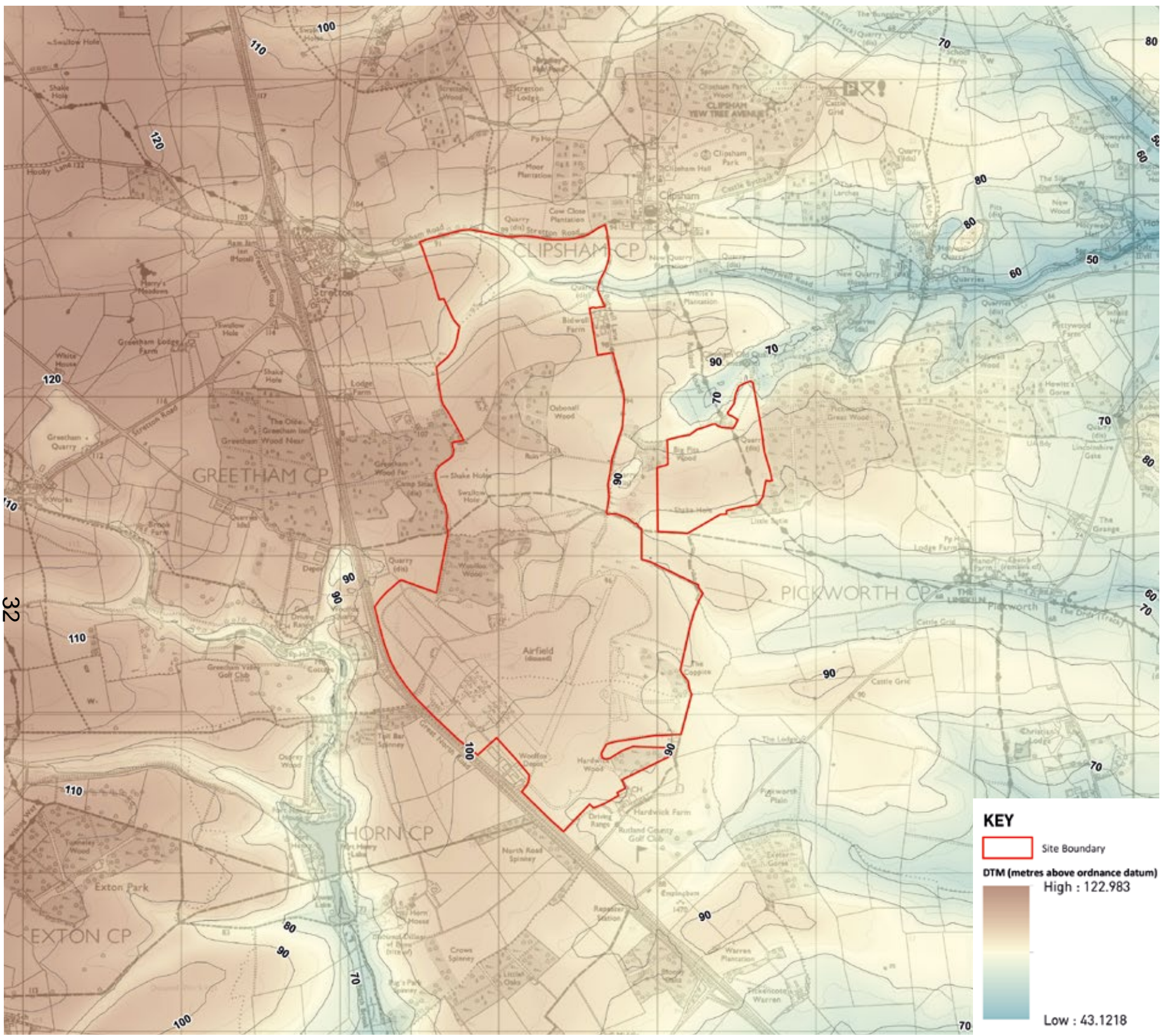
## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PLAN

# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 5.16 At a national level the new settlement is located within National Character Area 75: Kesteven Uplands which is described as a  
*“Medium-scale, undulating mixed farmland landscape”.*  
*The Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (published in 2003) locates the site within Rutland Plateau Landscape Character Type (LCT), and at a finer level of study within Clay Woodlands (Dii) Landscape Character Sub-Area (LCSA).*
- 5.17 The Clay Woodlands LCSA is described as:  
*“extensive area of gently undulating, predominantly arable countryside...”. Medium to large scale broadleaved woodland formed of predominately ash and sycamore with oak and blackthorn, are conspicuous features in most views within or into this area. Close to, they enclose views whilst providing an extensive backdrop in most distant views across well maintained farmland. Mature tree-lined roads are also a feature in the north of the LCSA. The new settlement is located within the central area of the clay woodlands which is described as “...a transitional area between the settled estate woodlands to the north and west, and the more open, modern unsettled claylands to the east and south.”*
- 5.18 Recommended Landscape Objectives Rutland Plateau - Clay Woodlands seek:  
*“To conserve and enhance the large-scale, gently undulating, agricultural landscapes with substantial woodlands and avenues, to enhance the sustainable management of existing woodlands and to create new woodlands in the less wooded parts around the Gwash Valley, especially where they would create skyline features. To improve the edges of the settlements and integrate large structures and modern buildings into the landscape where necessary. To protect historic features such as earthworks and restore characteristic drystone walls.”*





**TOPOGRAPHY MAP**



# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

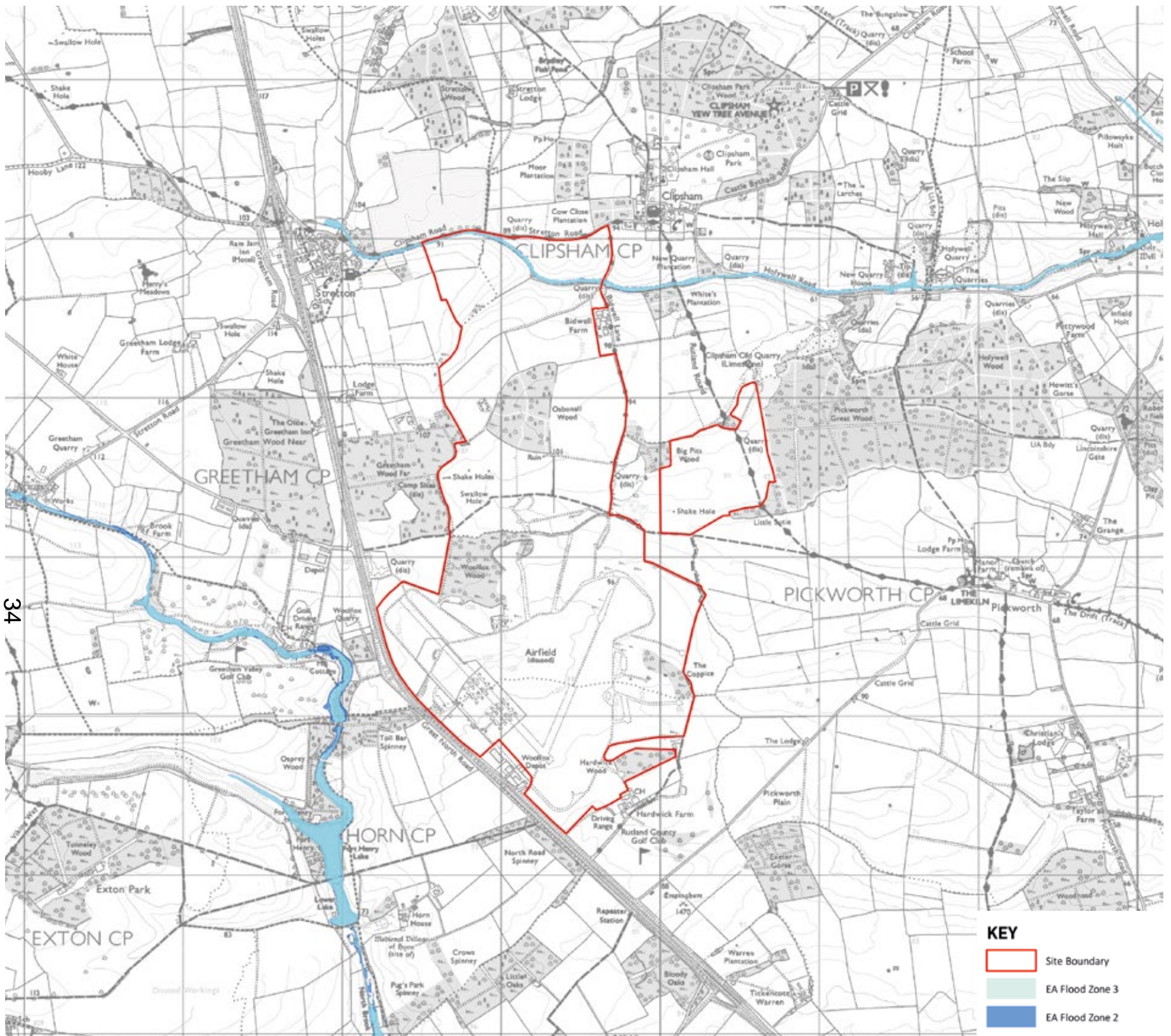
## TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.19 The proposed Woolfox Garden Community is located within the gently sloping transitional landscape situated between an area of open plateau to the west and the undulating valley landscape to the east. Across the southern extent of the site there is little topographic variation, between 100m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and 90m AOD. In comparison, the landform in the far northern extent of the site is more varied with rounded hills and shallow valleys situated between 100m AOD and 80m AOD. The Concept Masterplan illustrates how the far northern extent of the site is to accommodate an area of informal leisure parkland, development being proposed on the areas of the site with little topographic variation.

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## FLOOD MAP

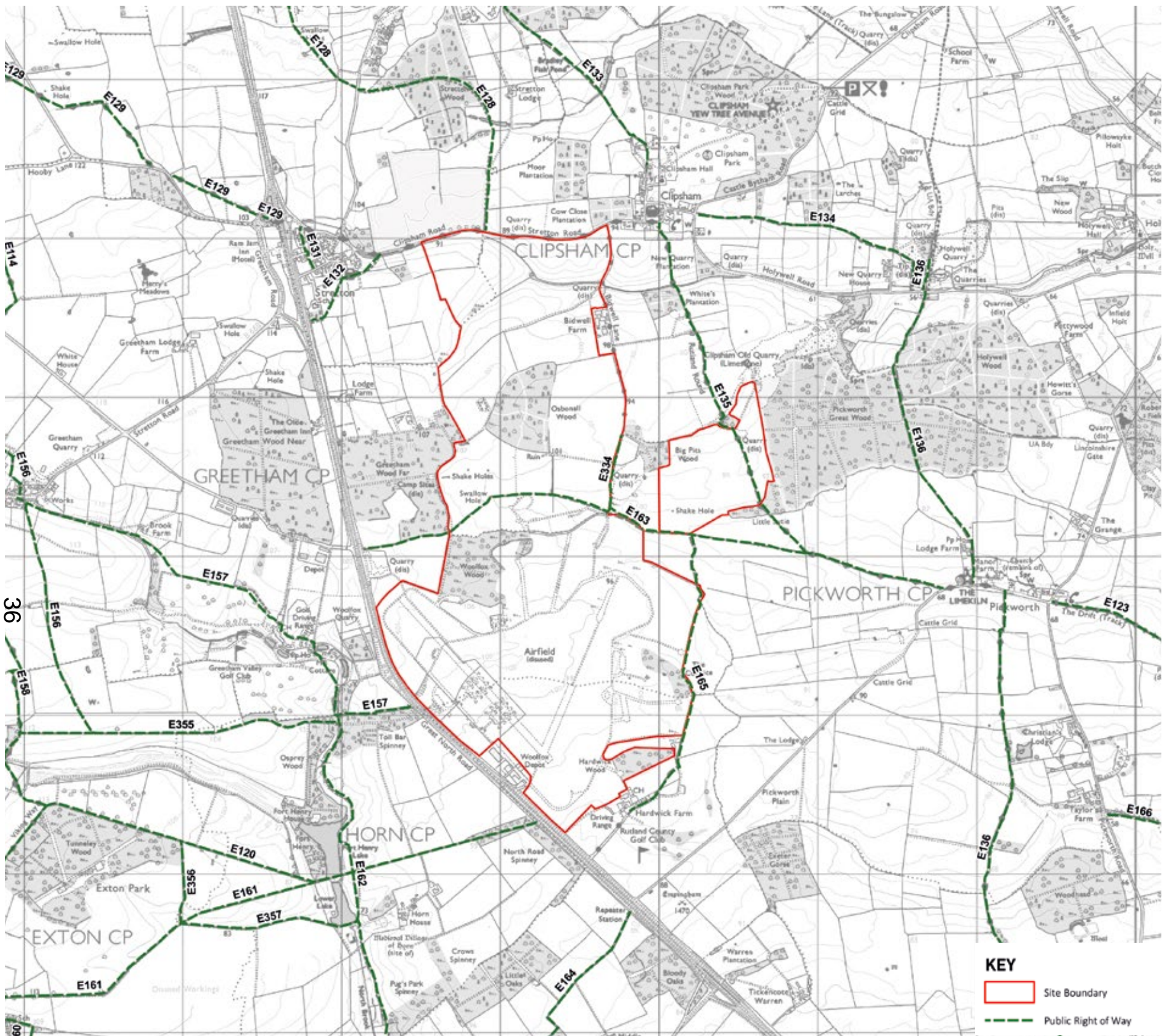


# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

## WATERCOURSES

- 5.20 There are a small number of short sections of watercourses defining field boundaries within the central and northern portions of the site. The watercourse in the far northern extent of the site is covered by Environment Agency Flood Zone 2 and 3 that could be integrated into a Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy (SUDS) for the proposed Woolfox Garden Community. The local flooding parameters would not present a constraint to the development of this new village.





**PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY PLAN**



# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

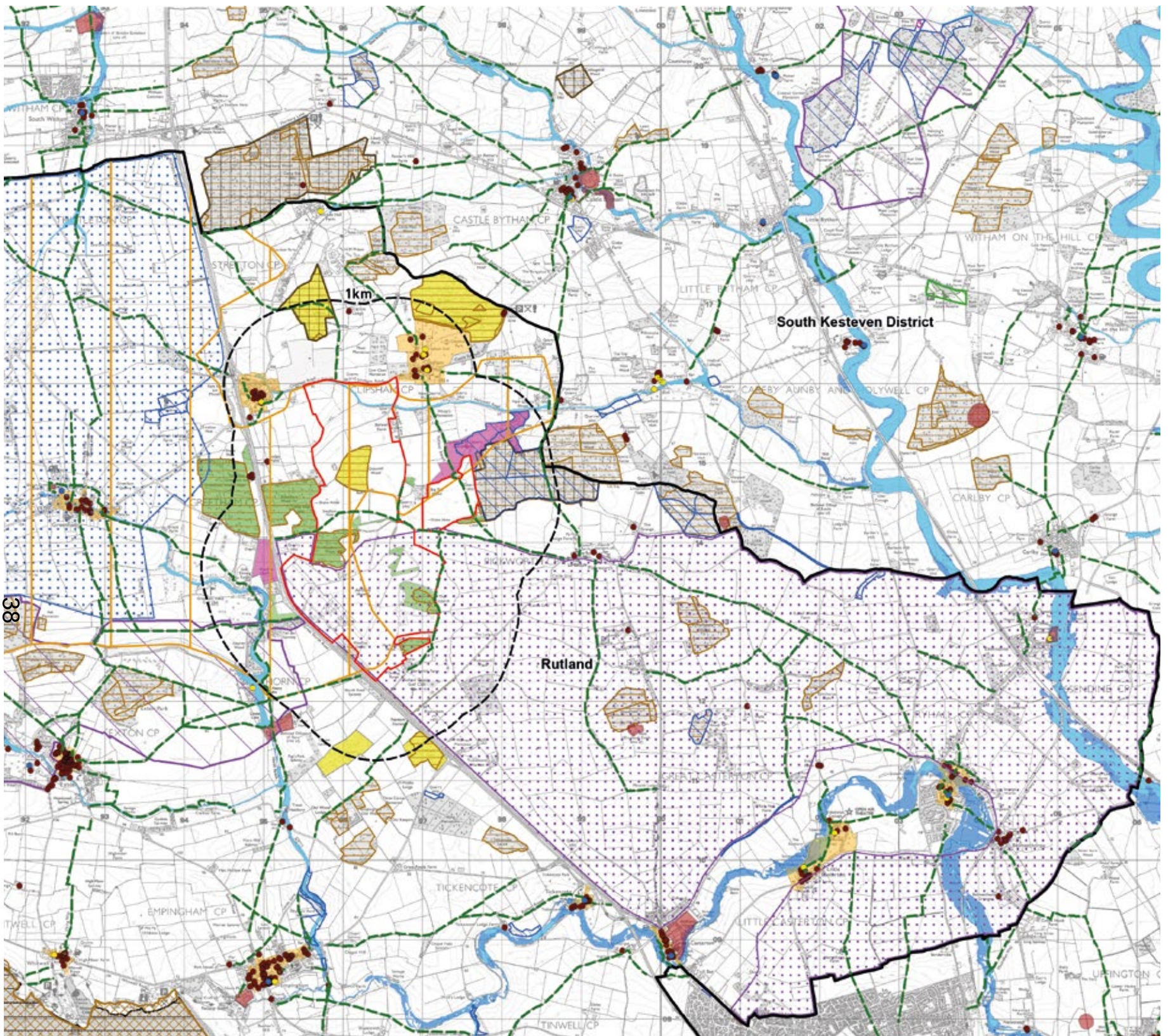
## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

5.21 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) located in close proximity to the location of the new settlement. Bridleway (E163) crosses the central portion of the site in a broadly east west alignment, from a layby on the A1 Great North Road to the village of Pickworth. Bridleway (E334) continues beyond the end of Bidwell Lane in a southerly direction alongside a section of the sites western boundary. Further to the south bridleway (E165) is located along the boundary of the course at Rutland County Golf Club and the site. Beyond the site to the east the Rutland Round recreational route (E135) from Clipsham to the northeast of the site, through Pickworth to the east. Beyond the site there is a comprehensive network of PRoWs across the surrounding landscape. The existing Public Rights of Way could be effectively assimilated into the green infrastructure of the new settlement. It is apparent that much of the site is fairly level with gentle gradient which would allow good access and circulation of both pedestrians and cyclists alike.

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**CONSTRAINTS PLAN**



# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

## LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES

5.22 The Site is visually well contained by surrounding woodlands. Nonetheless, the design and siting of the proposed development has taken into consideration landscape and visual aspects and take advantage of the landscape and visual opportunities present within the Site and its locality.

5.23 The proposed new settlement provides opportunities to create a multi-functional, holistic environment which has been informed by the existing landscape character and features. Opportunities identified for Woolfox Garden Community include:

- Ensuring the new settlement would be designed to respect and compliment the character of the site and its locality via: the use of local building materials; the enhancement and retention of the existing landscape structure; retaining important public views and; local skylines;
- Emphasis would be placed on creating a sense of place and distinctiveness whilst retaining and restoring landscape features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland through new green infrastructure and restoration of existing landscape features to reinforce character and a sense of place;

- Retained woodlands, hedgerows and trees would be enhanced for landscape and ecological interest;
- Incorporating the Environment Agency Flood Zone 2 and 3 and network of smaller watercourses into a Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy (SUDS);
- Including biodiversity, habitat protection and enhancement measures along wildlife corridors as part of the strategy;
- The new settlement would provide legibility and permeability across the site with a network of public recreational routes, including the enhancement of the existing PRoW network;
- The creation of a variety of open spaces to include formal sports, play areas, allotments, trim trails, amenity space, enhanced ecological habitats, semi-natural open space and additional areas designated for sustainable urban drainage;
- Provide a scheme that is responsive to the existing topography and landform of the site, as appropriate; and
- Preserving the townscape and visual setting of the existing villages of Clipsham and Stretton by pulling back development from the far northern extent of the Site.

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### KEY

|  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  Site Boundary  |  Area 1 - Suitable for small-sized turbines (single, small and small-medium groups); medium-sized turbines (single, small groups); and large-sized turbines (single) Local Plan Review : Consultation Draft |  Open Access Land / Registered Common Land |  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)  |  EA Flood Zone 2   |
|  Public Right of Way  |  Area 2 - Suitable for small-sized turbines (single, small groups); and medium-sized turbines (single) Local Plan Review : Consultation Draft   |  Country Park                              |  Ancient Woodland  |  Conservation Area |
|  Local Authority Boundary   |  Grade I Listed Building  |  Registered Park / Garden                  |  Local Wildlife Site SP19 (within 1km of Site)   |   |
|  Minerals Safeguarding Area- Limestone Aggregate Local Plan Review : Consultation Draft |  Grade II* Listed Building  |  Scheduled Monument                        |  Regionally Important Geological Site SP19 (within 1km of Site)                            |   |
|  |  Grade II Listed Building   |  Local Nature Reserve (LNR)                |  Candidate Local Wildlife Site (within 1km of Site) Local Plan Review : Consultation Draft |   |
|  |  |  RAMSAR                                    |  EA Flood Zone 3   |   |
|  |  |  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)        |   |   |





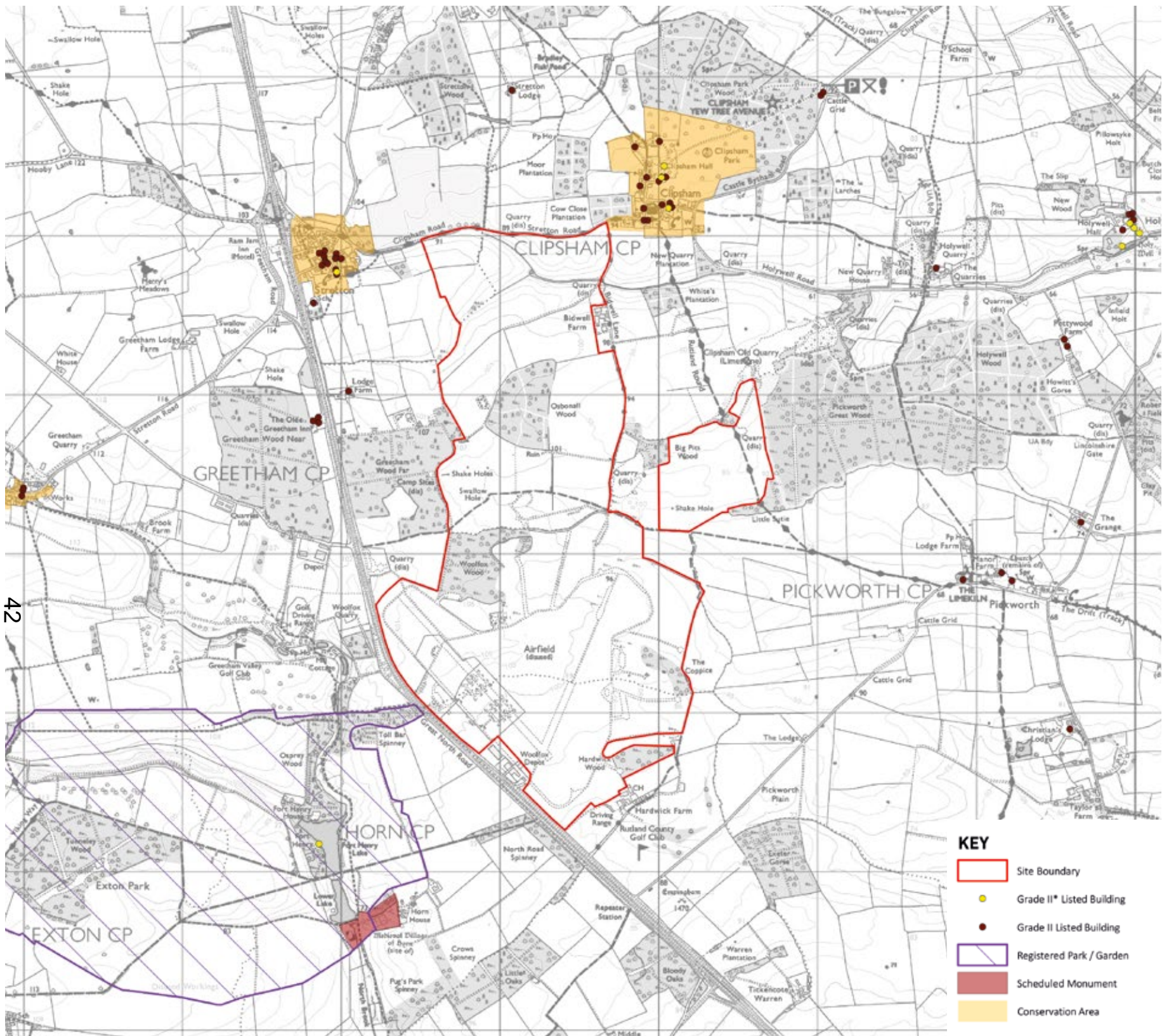
# 05 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 41
- 5.24 Woolfox Garden Community has the capability of being self-sufficient and carbon neutral in terms of energy usage. Specifically there is the capacity to accommodate a biomass facility and solar farm to generate electricity on and near the site to cater for the electricity demand generated by homes, community facilities, employment use and private electric vehicles. This electricity provision can be secured through a private power agreement and private wire and would be a private grid whilst still having connection to the grid to ensure energy resilience. The biomass facility can make effective use of biodegradable waste as well as utilisation of non-organic waste generated by the town. This concept would ensure that Woolfox Garden Community would be a leading exemplar in addressing carbon footprint issues and climate change.
- 6.25 Renewable energy, particularly solar would be integrated into the design of community and employment buildings with the opportunity to introduce solar panels overlaying communal car parks. EV charging points would be located strategically throughout the settlement.
- 6.26 All of this provision would ensure that the town would be highly sustainable in terms of energy generation and consumption.







## HERITAGE PLAN

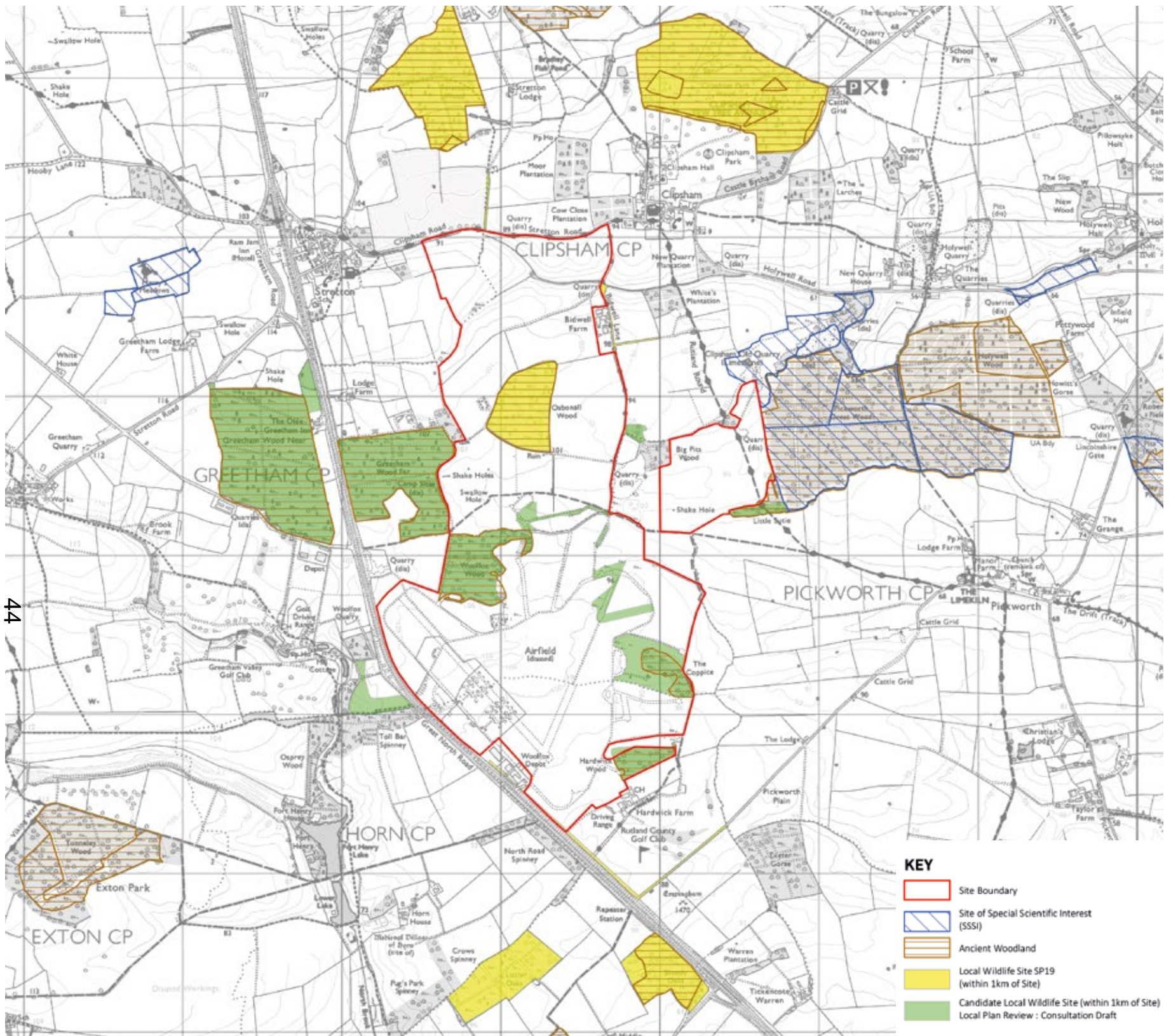


## 06 HERITAGE

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- 6.1 Unusually for a site of this size, no designated heritage assets lie within the new settlement area. A number of assets are located in the vicinity of the area, and the site is likely to be considered to be part of the setting of some of these elements of the historic environment.
- 6.2 Two settlements, Stretton and Clipsham, lie to the west and east of the northern area of the site. These include a number of Listed buildings and are each covered by a Conservation Area. The current Concept Masterplan has avoided development in the areas of the site closest to these settlements.
- 6.3 The settlement of Pickworth lies over 1km to the east of the Site and the settlement of Greetham lies 2km to the west of the Site, beyond the Great North Road. These both contain Listed buildings and Greetham is covered by a Conservation Area. Due to distance, the settings of assets within these settlements are unlikely to represent a constraint to development within the site.
- 6.4 Other Listed building in the vicinity include Listed farm buildings and a roadside inn. The settings of these assets are not considered to be a major constraint to development within the site.
- 6.5 The Grade II Registered Exton Park lies a considerable distance to the south-west of the site, running up to the south-western edge of the site at its eastern extremity, although it is separated from the site by The Great North Road. The House and other historic buildings of the park are focussed some distance from the site, to the west of Exton village. The setting of this asset will be considered in the design of the settlement.
- 6.6 A Scheduled Ancient Monument, the remains of Horn Deserted Medieval village and moated site, lies in the south-eastern area of the parkland, about 1km to the south-west of the site. This is separated from the site by the Great North Road, and its setting is not considered to be a major constraint to development within the site. Likewise, the setting of another Scheduled Monument, Woodhead Castle ringwork, bailey and fishpond, which lies over 2km south-east of the site is not considered to be a constraint to development.
- 6.7 Some non-designated heritage assets lie within the site. The former area of Woolfox Lodge Airfield lies in the southern area of the site and part of this was reused for the Bloodhound Missile Site. The latter area was considered for Scheduling in 2015 but was not designated. Most structures associated with the missile site have been demolished but a few remain and could represent an opportunity for reuse of historic structures within the proposed scheme.
- 6.8 A couple of cropmark enclosures are recorded within the site and whilst they would warrant further investigation, there is no current evidence to suggest archaeological remains within the site would form a constraint to development.





## ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN



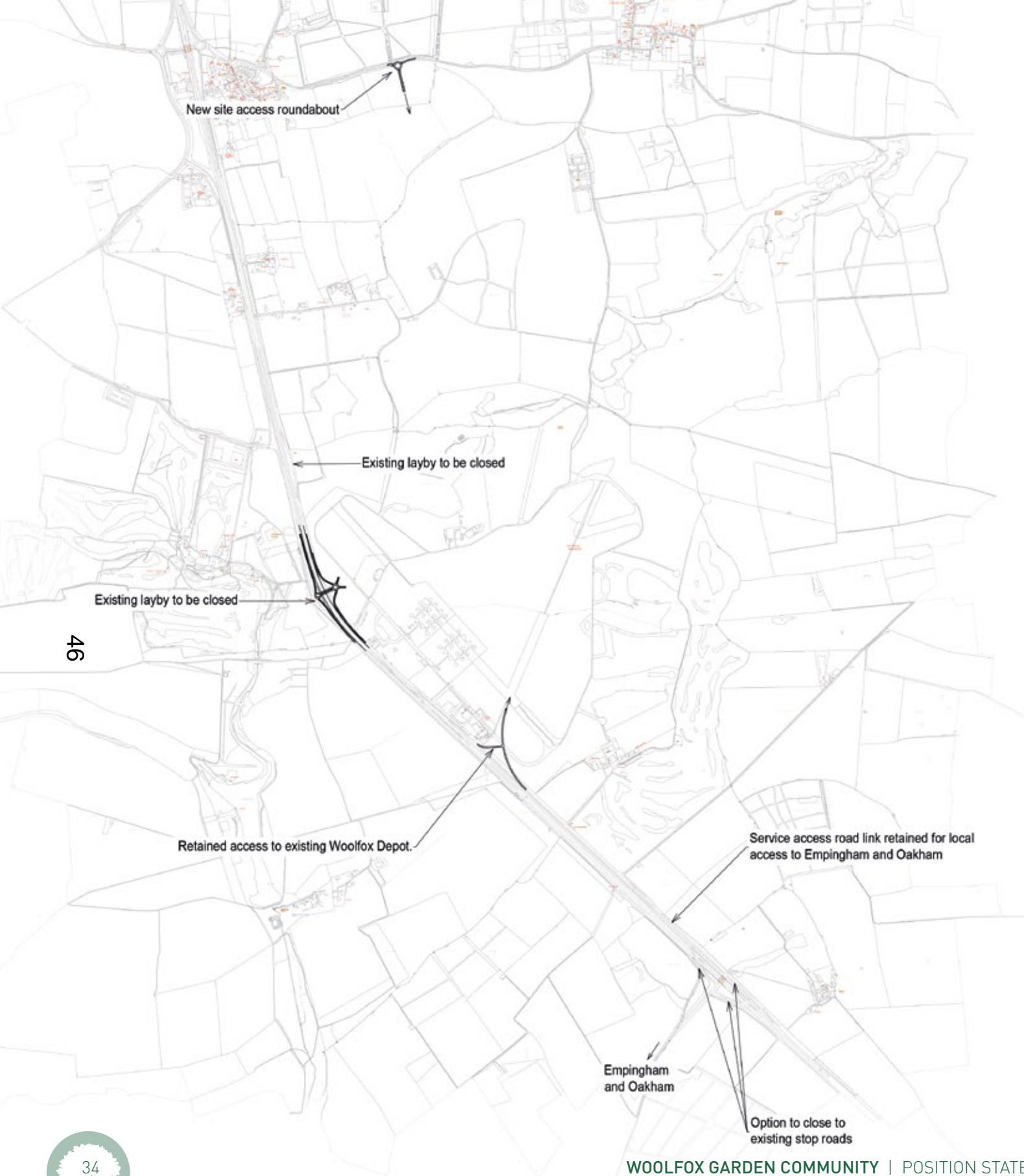
# 07 ECOLOGY

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- 7.1 The new settlement area is comprised of a series of habitat types including: arable farmland; broadleaved woodland; improved grassland; poor semi-improved grassland, neutral grassland, calcareous grassland, scrub and hard standing tracks.
- 7.2 Within the site there are several areas of broadleaved woodland of ancient origin: Osbonall Wood; Woolfox Wood; The Coppice and; Hardwick Wood. Osbonall Wood is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (Policy SP19 – Biodiversity and geodiversity conservation), a non-statutory designation but is recognition of a site’s significance and importance for wildlife.
- 7.3 The dominant habitat type associated with the new settlement is managed arable farmland, cultivated for cereals. Field margins have the possibility to support a limited floristic diversity with species typical of disturbed and cultivated land.
- 7.4 The land within the site between The Coppice and Hardwick Wood is predominantly intensively grazed permanent pasture used for rearing sheep and is assumed to be species-poor semi-improved grassland, as the flora will have been impoverished through agricultural management.
- 7.5 More species-rich areas of semi-improved neutral grassland and ephemeral perennial vegetation has developed over an old hard standing track and supports various grass species, locally abundant perennial species including some herbs. There are several partially vegetated mounds of spoil associated with the grassland.
- 7.6 In the southern extent of the site there are a number of tracks many of which are derived from the disused concrete runways and taxiways of the former Woolfox Lodge Airfield. Locally ephemeral/short perennial vegetation occurs in strips along the margins of these tracks.
- 7.7 Small areas of dense scrub occur towards the southern extent of the site adjacent to the concrete hardstanding, the scrub includes areas of hawthorn, bramble and thistle intertwined with dense ruderal herbs. Elsewhere, between The Coppice and Hardwick Wood there is a dense stand of blackthorn and damson. Across the site scattered bushes of hawthorn can be seen along field margins.
- 7.8 The hedgerow network, woodland, trees and ponds will be retained where appropriate and integrated into the development proposals. The creation of green infrastructure including areas of open space throughout the study area as part of any development proposals, along with the creation of new areas of species-rich grassland, new native hedgerow planting, new native woodland and tree planting, and the creation of new ponds will create new opportunities for a range of wildlife.
- 7.9 Given the site were to be taken forward as Woolfox Garden Community, detailed ecological surveys would be carried out in line with best practice guidance.



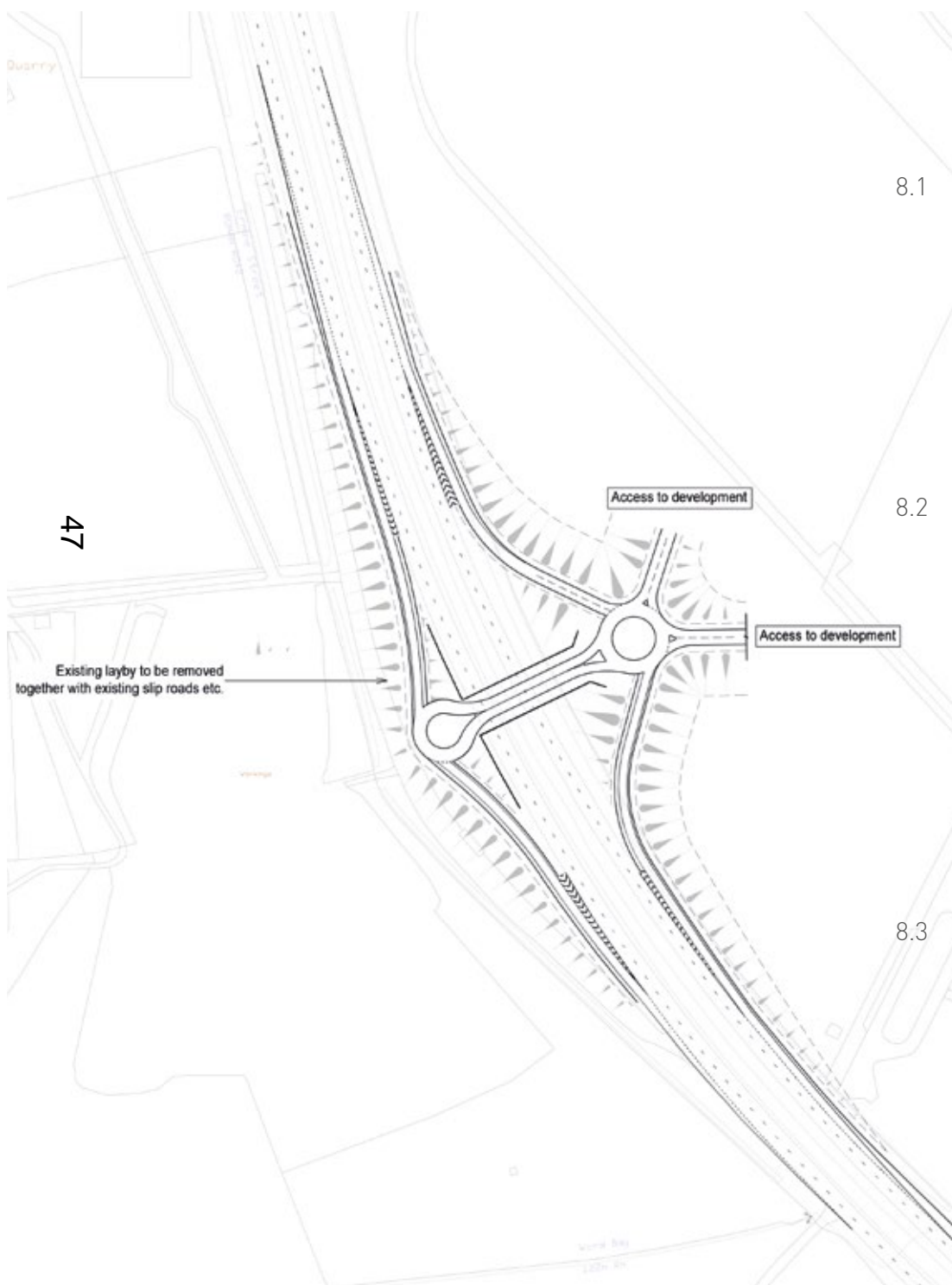


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# 08 TRANSPORT



- 8.1 Woolfox Garden Community is located in the county of Rutland, situated adjacent to the A1 strategic road network and to the south of the villages of Stretton and Clipsham. The site includes farmland, the RAF Woolfox Lodge and Woolfox Wood. Further afield the site sits south of the town of Grantham, east of Melton Mowbray and Oakham, and north of Stamford and the City of Peterborough. The A1 is a strategic route continuing northwards to Newcastle upon Tyne and south to London.
- 8.2 The proposed uses within the Garden Community will include a mix of housing, employment, education and retail facilities which in turn will enable a large proportion of movements to be contained within the development rather than travelling to the broader highway network. The movement within the site will be promoted through a comprehensive travel plan that will encourage residents and visitors to the site to use alternative modes of transport to the private car, although as with such developments, car trips will remain a dominant movement type. This will be achieved through the layout and design of the site ensuring good pedestrian and cycle links are provided and good connections to public transport.
- 8.3 In addition, the existing levels of home working in Rutland is around 16% as such the proposed Garden Community will ensure that appropriate infrastructure and services are available within the new settlement to ensure that residents will have the opportunity to work from home.







# 08 TRANSPORT

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## ACCESS

- 8.4 The primary access to the site will be formed off the A1 via a new grade separated junction and a redesign of the existing access road that currently serves Woolfox Depot. The proposed grade separated junction will be approximately 1km north of the existing access that serves Woolfox Depot and will allow vehicles to access the A1 both northbound and southbound. The existing service road to the east of the A1 will be retained as an access route to Oakham and areas to the west of the A1. A third access will be provided to the north of the site onto Clipsham Road providing connectivity to the existing settlements in this area.

## BUS TRAVEL

- 8.5 The design of the accesses and internal road network will be focused on providing a sustainable transport corridor which will include new bus services that could potentially benefit not only the new settlement but also existing residents who currently have limited access to public transport facilities. Bus routes are likely to focus on links to Oakham, Stamford and Peterborough to the south, both of which include railway stations and other employment opportunities.
- 8.6 It is proposed that bus operators will be encouraged to provide a frequent strategic route linking the site to Stamford and Peterborough as well as a more local bus service that would serve the local area allowing residents to access local facilities by bus where walking or cycling is not possible. This local service could connect the site to the existing local villages as well as Oakham to the west. The bus services will

be provided Monday to Saturday and will be identified early on within the phasing of development to ensure residents make full use of the facilities at an early stage. The use of these services will be further encouraged through the Travel Plan which will include free or subsidised bus travel for a set period of time.

- 8.7 The route of the strategic bus service on the local road network will be reviewed with the potential of providing bus priority measures where required which will benefit both existing and new residents. These measures will be provided to reduce the journey times of bus users and make it more competitive to using the private car.
- 8.8 Within the development site, the bus stops will all include real time information, shelters and seating to make the experience of bus travel more enjoyable.

## CYCLE

- 8.9 The topography of the site and surrounding area is favourable for cycling with a slightly undulating landscape. The design of the Garden Community will facilitate the use of bikes locally within the settlement and make provision for cycling to other destinations including the provision of a sustainable transport corridor. The design of dwellings will incorporate cycle storage and all local facilities (shops, schools and employment areas), including the central bus stops, will be provided with cycle parking. A development brief would provide the latest practice in this regard as Woolfox Garden Community develops.



## WALKING

- 8.10 In the same way as cycling, the topography of the development area can also encourage walking trips within the development. The design and layout of the development will ensure that walking routes are provided at a suitable gradient for all to use and that all dwellings are within a 400m walk of the local bus services. The main routes within the development site will include low level lighting and be of a suitable surface for all able and less able bodied users to use at all times of the day or night and during all weather conditions.
- 8.11 Recreational routes will also be provided within and around the settlement area providing residents with the opportunity to enjoy the local environment as well as linking with the existing Public Right of Ways that are within or close to the edge of the settlement area. These routes are likely to be unlit and will be surfaced more in keeping with their surroundings i.e. gravel or grass, etc. These routes will be designed to allow use by pedestrians and cyclists as well as ensuring suitable access for those less able bodied.

## TRAIN

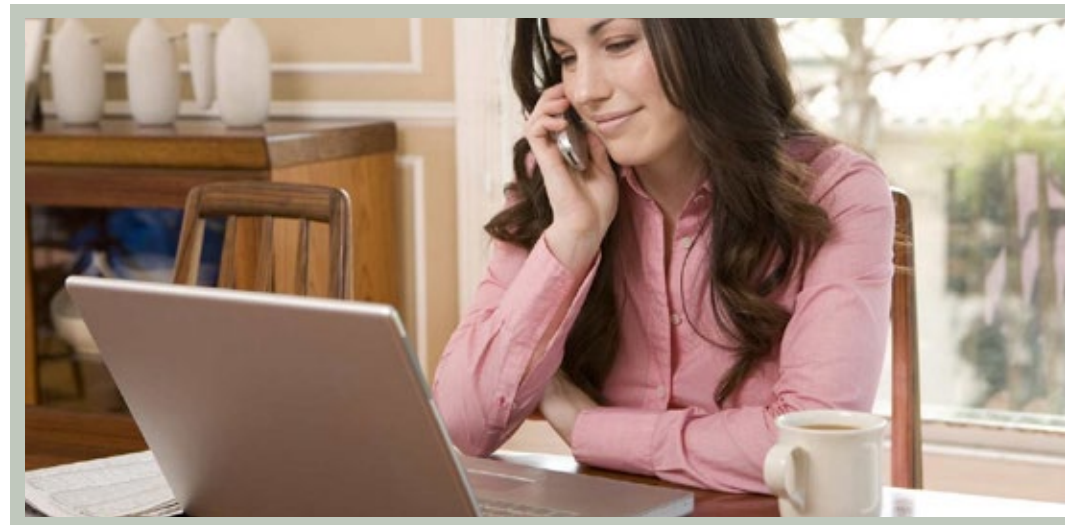
- 8.12 The nearest railway station to the site is situated in Stamford approximately 7 miles (11km) to the south, which is on the Cross Country and East Midlands Train line serving Stansted Airport, Birmingham New Street, Peterborough and Nottingham. To the west Oakham also has a railway station which is approximately 9 miles (14Km) from the site and is also served by Cross County and East Midlands. Further south, Peterborough Station is 20 miles (37Km) from the site

with direct trains to London and a journey time of 50 mins.

- 8.13 In keeping with the objective of reducing car travel the travel plan will encourage journeys to Stamford and Peterborough stations using the new bus service that will be provided.

## WORKING FROM HOME

- 8.14 The promotion of home working is an alternative to travel itself and is facilitated by a number of factors, most especially suitable accommodation within the home and high speed internet. This is further supported by the provision of non-employment facilities e.g. everyday shopping requirements, fast food etc. reducing the need to travel. The layout of the Garden Community will be developed to allow residents to be able to have access to a range of facilities locally such as shops and schools, reducing the need to travel outside of the settlement area during the course of their working day.



# 08 TRANSPORT

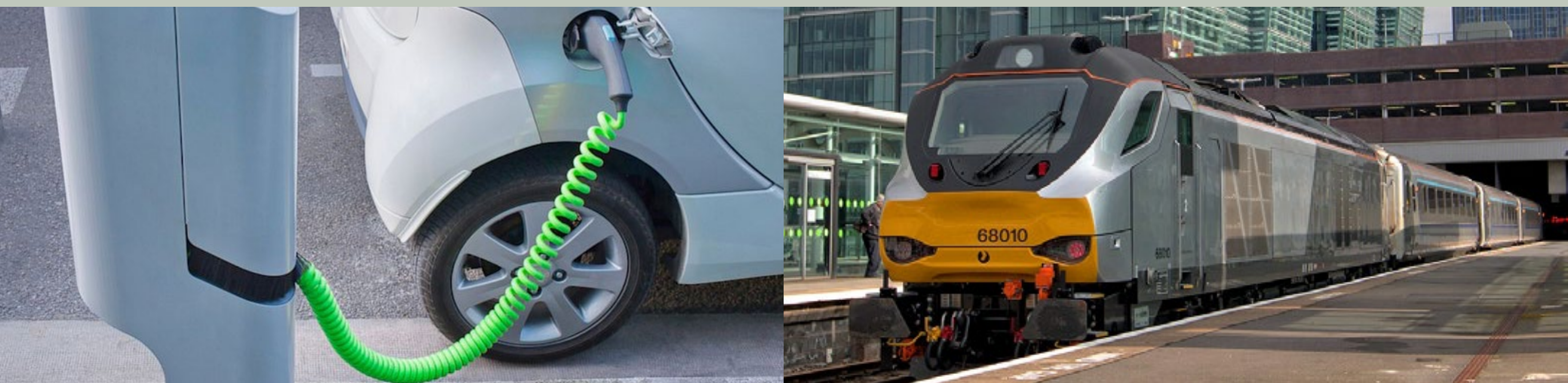
## CAR SHARE

- 8.15 With development potential to accommodate in excess of 10,000 dwellings, the opportunity exists to promote car sharing within the settlement area. This will be developed as part of the Travel Planning process which will include a site based web site allowing local residents to share transport with others. The Travel Plan will also provide details of Rutland's Car Sharing Scheme 'Travel 4Rutland' which enables residents to car share with others within the Rutland area.

## CARBON FREE TRAVEL

- 8.16 Travel and urban infrastructure will be developed to facilitate carbon free living including transport. The trend towards electric vehicles will be encouraged through the provision of comprehensive charging infrastructure as well as encouraging non-car modes such as walking, cycling and public transport through the travel plan and design of the settlement. In addition the developer will work with bus operators to encourage cleaner buses that will serve the site.

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# 09 GARDEN COMMUNITY GUIDANCE

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9.1 As part of the masterplan development, research was undertaken into the Garden City movement. The father of the Garden City movement, Ebenezer Howard, did not prescribe a definitive set of principles or guidelines for the purposes of planning new Garden Cities. Whilst a number of 20th century interpretations stand testament to evolving national priorities for design and delivery of large housing projects, it is the qualities of the original developments and the sentiments expressed by Howard, which drive contemporary policy makers and urban designers, such that:

*“The advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination”.*

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9.2 As the ancestor of the Garden Cities Association, the Town and County Planning Association (TCPA) has reviewed Garden City principles with a view to promoting their use within the planning and delivery of new residential development. The TCPA's report considers lessons learned from previous garden city development including:

- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
- Land value capture for the benefit of the community;
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets;
- Mixed-tenure homes that are affordable for ordinary people;
- Provision for later retirement living and extra care residential provision;
- A strong local jobs offer in the Garden City itself, with a variety of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of homes;
- High-quality imaginative design (including homes with gardens), combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities;
- Generous green space linked to the wider natural environment, including a mix of public and private networks of well-managed, high-quality gardens, treelined streets and open spaces;
- Opportunities for residents to grow their own food, including generous allotments;
- Access to strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods; and
- Integrated and accessible transport systems - with a series of settlements linked by rapid transport providing a full range of employment opportunities.



- 9.3 In the 21st century, Woolfox Garden Community provides the opportunity for more better-quality and sustainable housing to meet changing social needs and an increasingly low-carbon economy: affordable family housing, an increased range of accommodation for older people looking to 'downsize', and truly local services and employment opportunities to provide the basis for a strong community with identity and interaction.
- 9.4 According to the new Garden Communities prospectus published August 2018, new garden communities should offer opportunities for significant long-term housing and economic growth in a local area. Garden Cities shall provide the following features:
- **Clear identity** – a distinctive local identity as a new garden community, including at its heart an attractive and functioning centre and public realm.
  - **Sustainable scale** – built at a scale which supports the necessary infrastructure to allow the community to function self-sufficiently on a day to day basis, with the capacity for future growth to meet the evolving housing and economic needs of the local area.
  - **Well-designed places** – with vibrant mixed-use communities that support a range of local employment types and premises, retail opportunities, recreational and community facilities.
  - **Great homes** – offer a wide range of high quality, distinctive homes. This includes affordable housing and a mix of tenures for all stages of life.



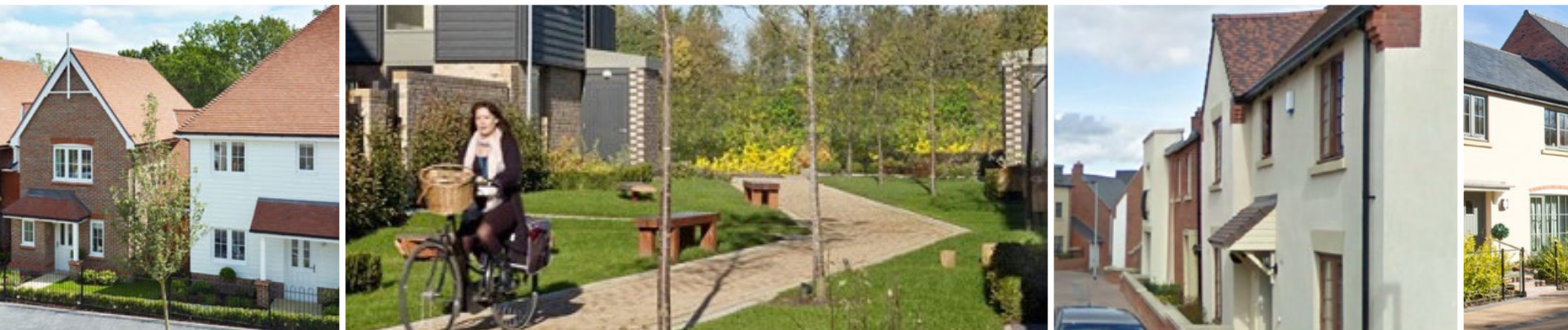


# 10 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

10.1 Woolfox Garden Community will be planned in a comprehensive and integrated manner and will set out the phasing of development along with timely provision of supporting infrastructure. The new place will be designed by the following principles:

- **Development density** - High density residential and mixed-use development to be focused along public transport corridors and in neighbourhood centres with lower densities provided elsewhere to deliver an overall range and choice to meet different needs;
- **Sustainable transport corridors** - Dedicated sustainable transport corridors including provision for public transport, cycling and walking will form key elements of the overall masterplan and effectively link into the wider network;
- **Sustainable travel choices** - Walking, cycling and public transport will be attractive, practical and convenient travel choices for all;
- **Neighbourhood centres** - Provision of a full range of social and community facilities will be concentrated within mixed use neighbourhood centres located along public transport corridors and easily accessed by walking and cycling;
- **High Quality Sustainable Design and Distinctive Character** - The masterplanning process will effectively respond to the local context. It will also address climate change. New well designed neighbourhoods will be created which have a distinctive character which residents will be proud of;

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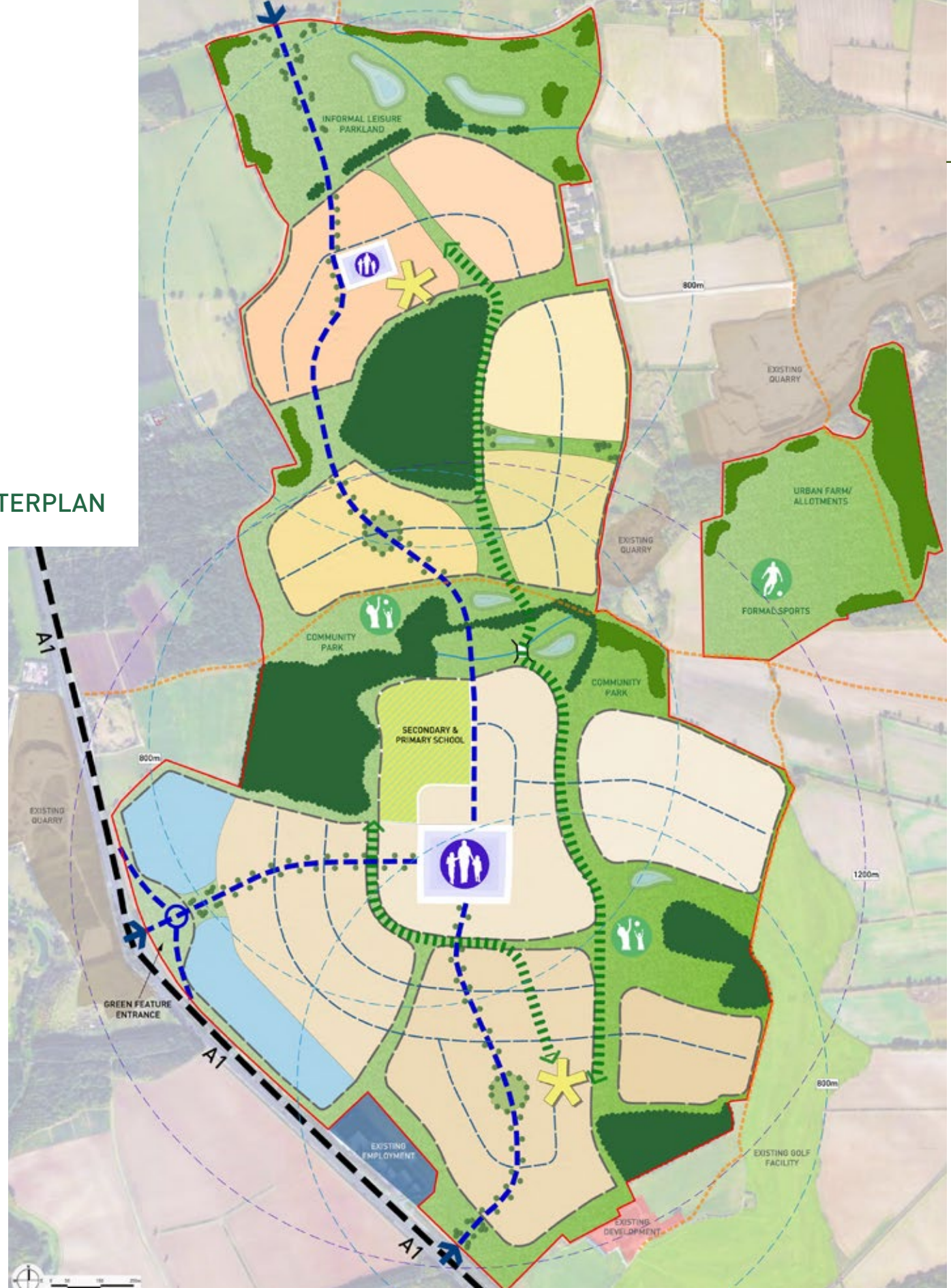
- **Integrating with Neighbouring Areas** - The new development will respond to local deficiencies and provide good connectivity to adjoining areas and be informed by feedback from existing communities;
- **Connected strategic green open spaces** - Multifunctional and connected green open spaces will form strategically important links to the surrounding area to provide routes for people, wildlife and open spaces for sports, recreation and play;
- **Landscape, biodiversity and heritage** - The place will sympathetically integrate existing landscape, biodiversity and historic features of the site into the development; taking opportunities to protect, enhance and manage important features along with mitigation and enhancement measures to provide satisfactory compensatory measures;
- **Resource efficiency** - Innovative and creative management of surface water and waste management solutions will be adopted to make the place more environmentally sustainable. Solar panels, either roof or ground mounted would be incorporated into the fabric of the new Garden Community creating a dynamic new place and an exemplar development. Managing the natural resources is not the only aspect of sustainable living. Energy efficiency and independent renewable energy sources are one of the key aspirations of Woolfox Garden Community.
- **Allotments** -The residents of Woolfox Garden Community would benefit from access to urban farm / allotments, which would provide opportunities for increased well-being but also opportunities for foraging and 'grow your own' produce, reinforcing the relationship between the land, agriculture, and food production on a domestic scale.





# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

- KEY**
-  SITE BOUNDARY
  -  RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS
  -  EMPLOYMENT (LOGISTICS B1, B2 & B8)
  -  DISTRICT CENTRE
  -  SECONDARY & PRIMARY SCHOOL
  -  PRIMARY SCHOOL
  -  PROPOSED DESTINATION PLAY AREA
  -  PROPOSED FORMAL SPORTS
  -  EXISTING VEGETATION
  -  PROPOSED VEGETATION
  -  PROPOSED GREEN OPEN SPACE
  -  PROPOSED TREES
  -  PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLIST BRIDGE
  -  PROPOSED VEHICULAR ACCESS
  -  PROPOSED MAIN ROAD
  -  PROPOSED SECONDARY ROAD
  -  PROPOSED GREEN PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLIST ROUTE
  -  EXISTING PROW
  -  WALKING DISTANCES



# 11 CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

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- 11.1 The Concept Masterplan within this document is not a detailed masterplan and is not a fixed layout, but the first step in shaping a design that is flexible enough to provide guidance on the development of the area whilst providing specific enough guidance to ensure the area is designed appropriately.
- 11.2 The Woolfox Garden Community Concept Masterplan shows the general disposition of lands uses and the proposed structure of the development. At this stage there are options to provide access from the A1 (Great Northern Road) and Clipsham Road. These access points would lead to a centrally positioned main district centre and a smaller retail centre within the northern parcels, both would provide radiating routes to the neighbouring development parcels and provide safe and attractive routes within 800m of the majority of the dwellings. To promote the creation of a walkable place, a well-connected movement network, accessible by all users, is proposed which helps ensure that all areas of the development are easy to navigate, safe and secure.
- 11.3 As a new settlement, the scale of the proposed development, combined with its strategic location and being well related to Stamford, Oakham and Peterborough, means that a hierarchy of transport connections is required. This includes a framework of multi modal connections at regional and local levels.
- 11.4 Consistent with transport objectives, the infrastructure will support the use of sustainable transport modes in preference to single occupancy car trips. The proposal has been designed to provide sustainable transport corridors through the site which will connect the residential areas with the facilities provided throughout the site, thereby accommodating bus-based rapid transit, pedestrians and cyclists routes. Bus provision will be made to Stamford Parkway Railway Station, Oakham Railway Station and Peterborough.
- 11.5 Landscape is an integral part of the design of the development proposals through integration of a strong landscape structure across the site. Through the considered location and use of open space across the development, the landscape structure also provides a clear definition to public and private spaces, whilst adding colour and seasonal interest to the residential environment. The development will look to sensitively integrate the existing landscape structure and will seek to preserve the townscape and visual setting of the existing villages. A working environment where biodiversity is protected and enhanced will be created. The community, particularly schools will be encouraged to get involved in schemes to manage the environment, particularly involving schools.





# 11 CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

11.6 The green infrastructure will provide recreational opportunities for the existing and new population and include formal sports, play areas, allotments, trim trails, amenity space, enhanced ecological habitats, semi-natural open space and additional areas designated for sustainable urban drainage. The scale and massing of the planting will aim to create a natural urban edge to the site, accommodating both areas of thick and denser planting suitable for screening development and thinner areas allowing for framed and glimpsed views into and out of the site. Where possible, the larger and more dense areas of planting will connect into a larger landscape structure of open spaces, trees and verge.

11.7 Woolfox Garden Community will provide long term direct employment opportunities through the proposed employment space, district centre and northern retail centre creating connected, flexible and integrated spaces. Attractive, safe and direct cycle routes in combination with an efficient and frequent community bus system will create a new and more attractive commuter lifestyle reducing dependency and necessity of the car.

11.8 Further design proposals include:

- In excess of 10,000 dwellings.
- Approximately 19.0Ha of employment land, B1, B2 and B8 (logistics).
- A mixed use district centre and smaller local centres.
- New primary schools and a Secondary School.
- Generous amount of green open space.

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- 12.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) represents an approach to development that has a critical role in meeting environmental, social and economic challenges. For Green Infrastructure to be effective it needs to be carefully planned through a series of interconnected spaces and features. The following section addresses the opportunities and objectives for the GI strategy for the proposed Woolfox Garden Community.

### Definitions

- 12.2 Green Infrastructure is described within the Government's planning practice guidance note as:
- "A network of multi-functional greenspace, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities."*
- 12.3 The Natural England guidance (2009) states that green infrastructure is:
- "A strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features"*
- 12.4 Natural England also recognises that:
- "Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland."*

# 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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## Principles

12.5 Green infrastructure principles include:

- Multi-functionality - an ecosystem services led approach to integrate with, contribute to and enhance natural systems; Interconnectivity - between urban and countryside areas whilst creating new recreational facilities;
- Connectivity - avoid fragmentation of existing habitats and natural features;
- Protection, conservation and management - of landscape character and biodiversity;
- Social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning; and
- High quality design to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.

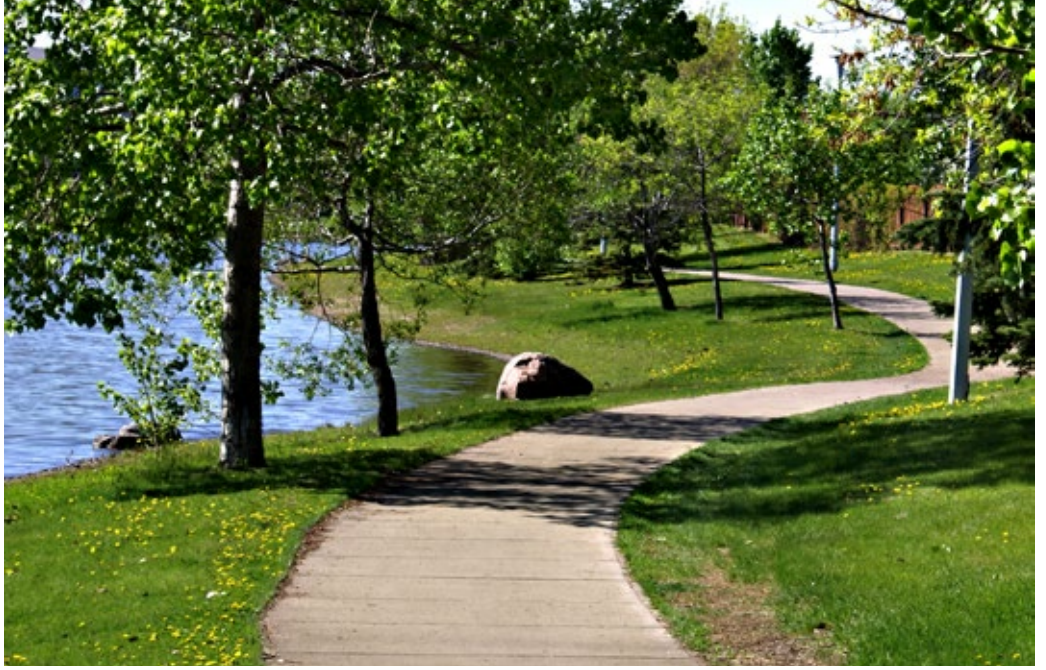
## Benefits

12.6 Typical Green Infrastructure benefits include:

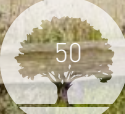
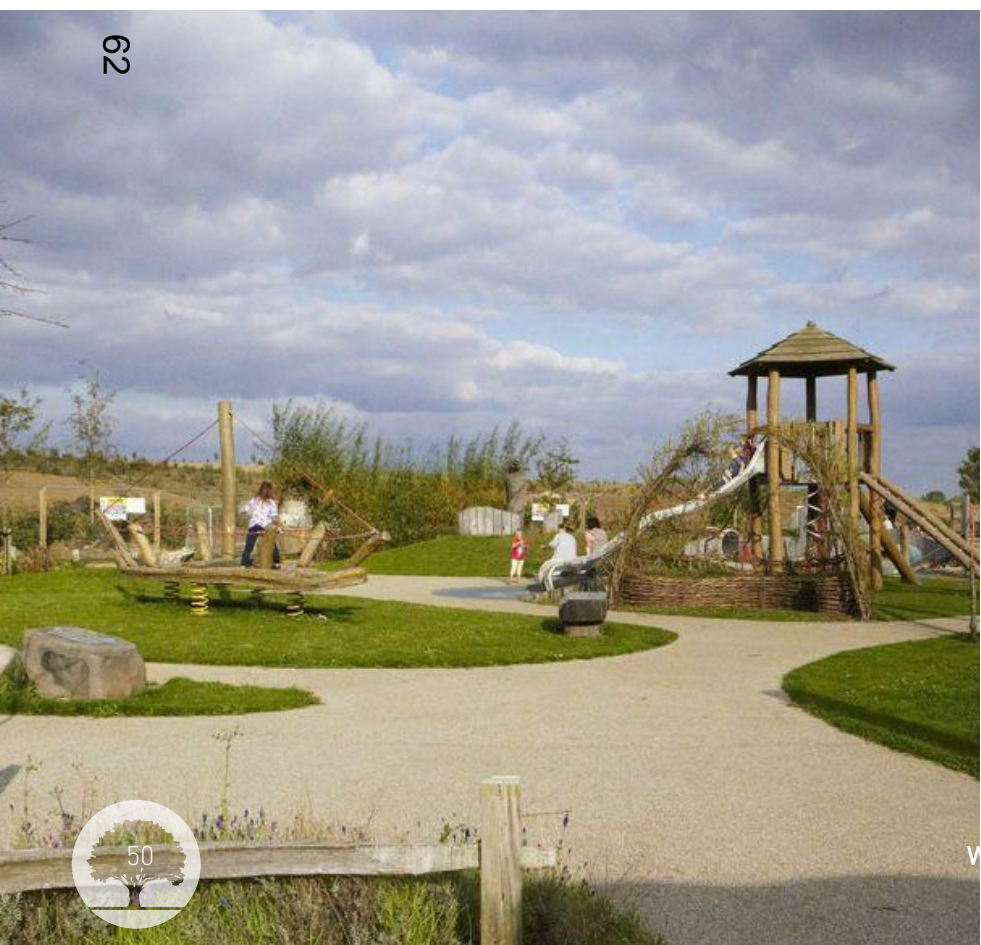
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation including tree planting for natural air cooling and CO2 absorption.
- Flood alleviation and water management including installing Sustainable Urban Drainage systems, permeable surfaces and open spaces in urban areas.
- Improving quality of place by using the natural environment to create high quality living and recreational environments for where we live and work.

- Improving physical and mental health in addition to social well-being by creating good quality green space and opportunities for relaxation and healthy physical activity as well as providing the infrastructure necessary to encourage people to walk, run, cycle and play.
- Investment in GI can provide multi-functional open spaces and parks bringing benefit to people, wildlife and the environment.
- Improving skills and educational attainment by providing an 'outdoor classroom' to learn new skills or understand more about the way we live.
- Increasing land and property values by creating attractive environments around new and existing residential, commercial and employment areas.
- Sustaining economic growth and investment. High quality environments offer comparative location advantages to attract and retain business and a skilled labour pool.
- Protecting and enhancing landscape character and biodiversity by using land improvements and management to deliver biodiversity gain and overall landscape enhancement.
- Obtaining products from the land by using natural assets sourced locally in favour of imported goods.





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## Assets

- 12.7 Typical Green Infrastructure assets include:
- **Parks and gardens** – urban parks, country and regional parks and semi-natural urban green spaces – woodland and scrub, grassland (e.g. downland and meadow), heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water, waste lands and disturbed ground, bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs and quarries).
  - **Green corridors** – watercourses including their banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, and public rights of way.
  - **Sports playing fields** – sport and recreation including football pitches, cricket pitches and tennis courts.
  - **Other** – allotments, community gardens, city farms, cemeteries, churchyards, canals, registered commons, village and town greens and heritage sites.

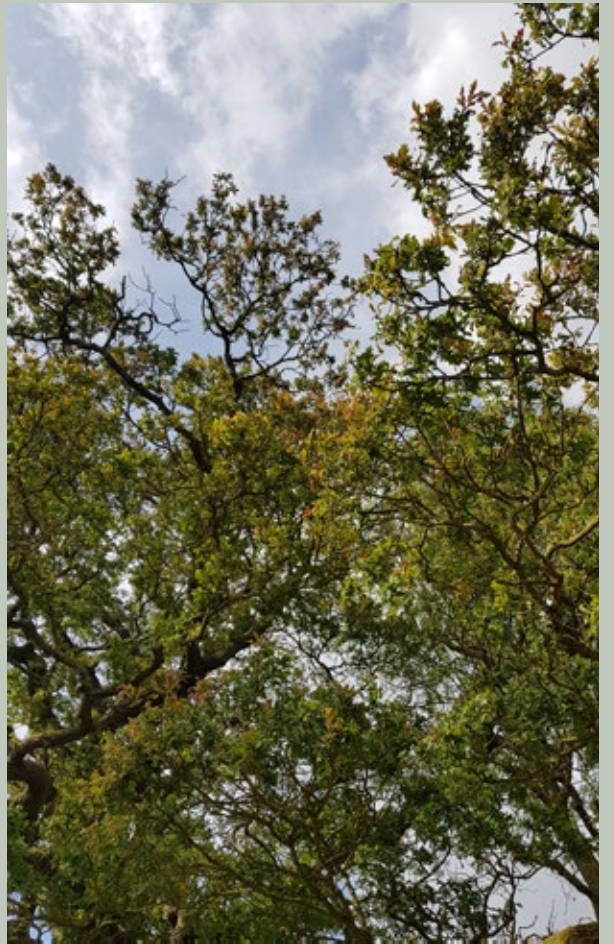
## Green Infrastructure Policy Context

- 12.8 As a term, Green Infrastructure means different things to different people depending on the context in which it is applied, with many definitions and common parameters of understanding. In this way, support has grown within the UK following policy guidance at the national and district level.

## National Planning and Guidance

- 12.9 The recently published updated NPPF aims to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth stating in paragraph 96 that:
- “Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well being of communities.”*
- 12.10 The Natural Environment White Paper, The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011) outlines the Government’s vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years and recognises the need for:
- “Urban Green Infrastructure to complete links in our national ecological network. Urban green space allows species to move around within, and between, towns and countryside.”*
- 12.11 The Natural England (2009) guidance states that green infrastructure:
- “Should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability.”*
- 12.12 In principle, the National Planning Policy Framework states in paragraph 11 that:
- “At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*
- 12.13 Green Infrastructure is described within the Government’s planning practice guidance notes as:
- “A network of multi-functional greenspace, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.”*







# 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

12.14 The following section addresses the opportunities and objectives for the Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy for the proposed Woolfox Garden Community. The new settlement would incorporate the guidelines and strategic objectives from the: Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy (2001) and; Keepers of Time – A Statement of policy for England’s Ancient and Native Woodland (first published 2005).

12.15 The guidelines from the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy relevant to the new settlement area include:

- Increasing woodland cover in medium to large blocks and provide links between ancient semi-natural woodlands;
- Strengthening the hedged field pattern through improved hedgerow management and restoration/replanting of degraded hedgerows;
- Encouraging new hedgerow tree planting to increase tree cover in areas with few hedgerow trees and maintain long term cover in areas with existing mature hedgerow trees; and
- Managing species-rich limestone grassland verges to maintain and enhance their diversity, and re-create species diversity on adjoining verges where possible.

12.16 The strategic objectives from the Keepers of Time – A Statement of policy for England’s Ancient and Native Woodland policy relevant to the new settlement area include:

- Increasing opportunities for the public to visit and walk in ancient and native woodland;
- Improving the quality of recreational experience in those woods which are open to public access;
- Enhance the contribution of native woodland and ancient trees to urban environments and rural landscape;
- Creating new native woodland to extend, link or complement existing woodland and other habitats;
- Create semi-natural habitats in locations where they will benefit species which use both woodland and non-woodland habitats;
- Reduce or buffer the impacts of intensive land uses and development which adjoin ancient or native woodland;
- Work towards creating landscapes that are ‘ecologically functional; and
- Ensure the management and creation of ancient and/or native woodland conserves and enhances the natural beauty and character of landscapes.





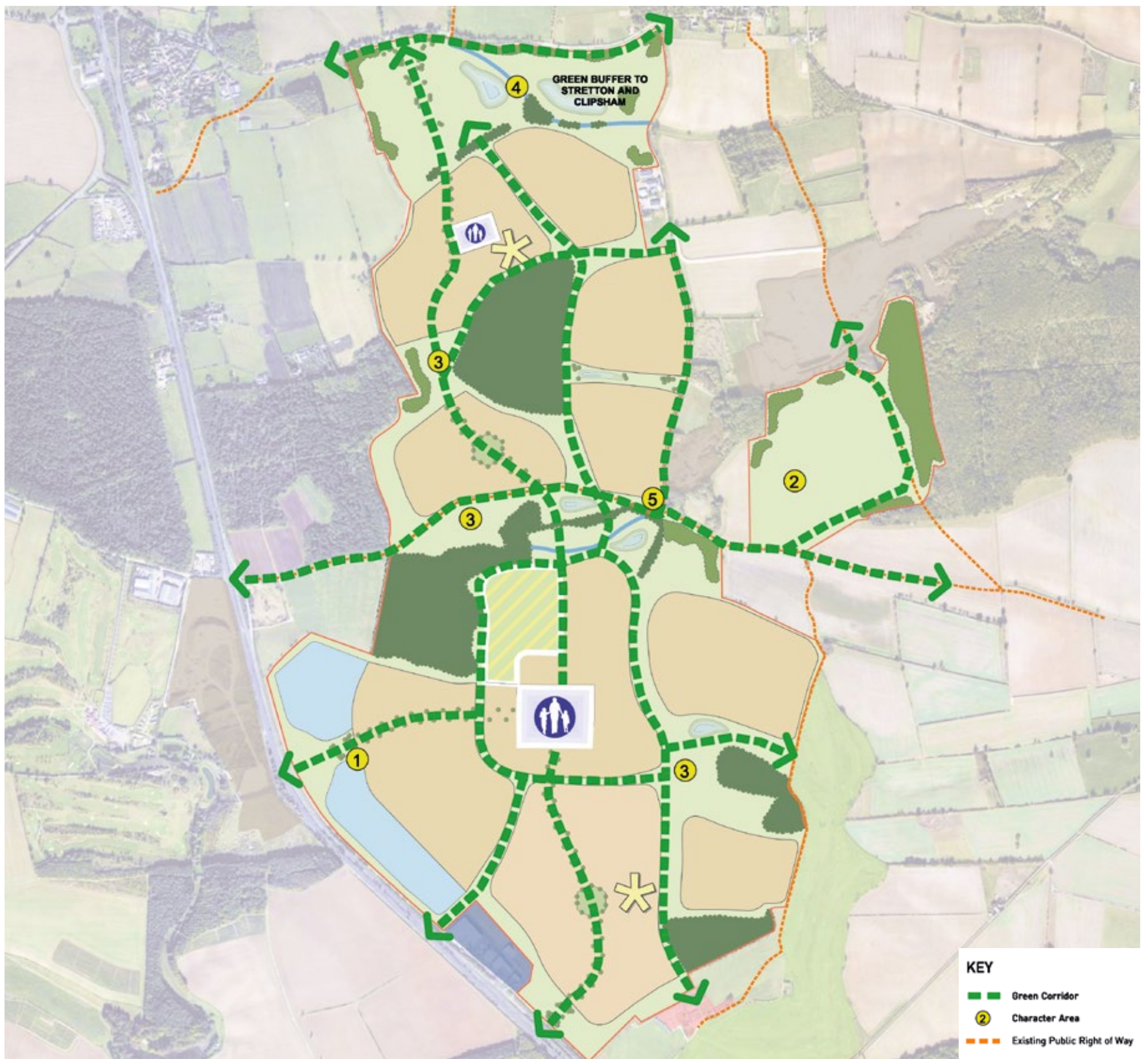


# 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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- 12.17 The guidelines and strategic objectives from the: Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy and Keepers of Time – A Statement of policy for England’s Ancient and Native Woodland will be incorporated into the new settlement through:
- Enhancement of the existing landscape framework within the new settlement to develop green corridors to enable access, recreation and to enhance biodiversity;
  - The incorporation of community parks as buffers between the existing ancient woodland and proposed development;
  - The ancient native woodlands within the new settlement would be managed as community woodland, increasing the opportunities for recreational activities and providing an educational resource for local school children;
  - Creation of a parkland landscape in the north of the site to provide a buffer to the villages of Clipsham and Stratton;
  - The Environment Agency Flood Zone would be accommodated in the north of the site, across the site. Areas for surface water attenuation (SUDS basins) will be designed to enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the site and manage surface water run-off rates;
  - Enhancement of the existing ecological resource through habitat protection, enhancement and creation including: proposed native shrub and tree species;
  - Integration and enhancement of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network across the new settlement to create a wide range of safe and accessible walking, cycling and horse riding routes;
  - Development of connections to the existing and proposed highways with opportunities to improve the pedestrian and cycle network; and
  - Provision of a network of public open space which compliments the existing green links providing for the needs of the new community including provision of play, sports areas and an urban farm or allotments.





### GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY PLAN

# 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK OPPORTUNITIES:

- Existing trees and hedgerows would be retained and enhanced for landscape and ecological interest;
- Enable the integration of the proposed development into the surrounding landscape by replicating the local landscape character and strengthening the existing landscape framework;
- Create a diverse range of green spaces which successfully combine function, ecology, drainage and existing Green Infrastructure assets;
- Increase biodiversity with habitat protection and enhancement measures along wildlife corridors;
- Improve legibility and permeability with a strong movement network, enhancing and improving the existing Public Rights of Way network as well as the creation of new routes;
- Create a variety of play and education opportunities across the development; and
- Improve existing Green Infrastructure assets with the creation and enhancement of wildlife corridors to define transition from the urban to rural edge.

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# 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

12.18 The Green Infrastructure Strategy has developed a number of character areas including:

## Character Area 1: Garden Community Gateway

12.19 A green gateway entrance off the A1 Great North Road, where the development has been set back from the site boundary to create an entrance feature.

## Character Area 2: Sports and Recreational Areas

12.20 Provide the opportunity for local residents and school children to enjoy sporting and recreational activities within the new settlement within the areas of public open space.

## Character Area 3: Community Parks

12.21 Located alongside the blocks of native ancient woodland the parks also function as wildlife and biodiversity enhancement zones as well as form part of the ecologically important green corridors network across the site.

## Character Area 4: Woolfox Parkland

12.22 Situated at the northern extent of the new settlement, the parkland enables the new settlement area to respect the setting and the rural approach to the villages of Clipsham and Stretton. This multifunctional green space accommodates the Environment Agency Flood Zone, alongside additional attenuation features, open space and proposed native planting.

## Character Area 5: Rutland Round Green Corridor

12.23 Provides green linkages through the Garden Community to enable recreational users to connect to the existing Rutland Round recreational route.







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# 13 DELIVERABILITY

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- 13.1 Woolfox Garden Community provides the most sustainable location to respond to the demand for housing in the area. Moreover, as the site is in single ownership comprising approximately 1,000 acres it is therefore the case that this development is firstly achievable secondly available and thirdly, deliverable in the short term.
- 13.2 The site benefits from access to the strategic road network, namely the A1 Great North Road which is contiguous with the site and allows a straight forward strategic access for the site.
- 13.3 It is not subject to any physical limitations or constraints associated with infrastructure. The scheme can also be designed to address flood risk, landscape and heritage factors. Woolfox Garden Community is a sustainable solution for housing subject to it being identified in the Local Plan, in accordance with the PPG.
- 13.4 There is only one landowner who is committed to exploring the opportunities presented by the concept of a new settlement and is prepared to engage and work with the Council with this objective in mind. The landowner is also liaising with other local landowners in the locality to explore their interest and support for such a scheme. The identified option area is large enough that it can flex to take account of the landholding whilst still providing for the critical mass to deliver a new settlement.
- 13.5 This general location is known to be attractive to developers and there is a high demand for housing across the district. Woolfox Garden Community can therefore be demonstrated to be achievable in accordance with the PPG.
- 13.6 Woolfox Garden Community is demonstrably deliverable within the plan period and would be expected to deliver at least 5,000-7,000 dwellings in this time frame. However, there are also opportunities for additional dwellings to be delivered either within or beyond the plan period to accommodate additional dwellings in a sustainable environment.



# 14 SUMMARY

- 14.1 Woolfox Garden Community presents an excellent opportunity to create a sustainable development in a strong landscape framework which is well connected to the local highway infrastructure namely the A1 Great North Road. The development can create a dynamic new place and an exemplar development.
- 14.2 The development will comprise of a combination of new neighbourhoods providing education, community facilities as well as provision for employment which capitalises upon the local highway infrastructure.
- 14.3 Woolfox Garden Community will also provide the opportunity to provide new jobs, open space, education and logistic facilities. The design proposals include various substantial areas of open space including community woodland within the site and on the northern portion of the site towards Stretton and Clipsham. Linkages between existing areas of ecology particularly the woodlands can be managed to retain the most valued characteristics of the wooded areas.
- 14.4 This document has identified that it is possible to develop the land to the east of the A1 in a sensitive and sustainable way.
- 14.5 The site is well located for travel to Stamford and Peterborough to the south east, Leicester to the south west and Nottingham to the north west. The distances to these settlements could be successfully achieved with bus travel.

- 14.6 The level topography of the site lends itself to walking and cycling, which will be encouraged by the internal layout of the site and by provision of everyday facilities within the village, thus travel outside the village will be a choice not a necessity.
- 14.7 The Village will be developed with infrastructure for carbon free travel, most notably provision for electric vehicles, and with local facilities and high-speed broadband to encourage sustainable choices that minimise the need for travel altogether.
- 14.8 The advantages of sustainability, in the form of bus services, infrastructure for electric vehicles, car share opportunities and the ability to create short local journeys for everyday needs including employment and education are a result of focusing development in one location rather than dispersing the same scale of development over a wider area. The proximity to the major centres mentioned above adds to this scheme's sustainability.
- GARDEN COMMUNITY**
- 14.9 The Woolfox site provides a clear opportunity to provide a garden community which can be holistically planned, self-sustaining and characterful. Importantly this new garden community could make a significant contribution to addressing housing supply in the area. This would be a discreet and new settlement of a sufficient scale to be largely self-sustaining based on a mixed use development. It could meet the criteria set out in the government's Garden Communities prospectus dated August 2018.
- 14.10 This new garden community would provide significant long term housing and economic growth in the local area and assist with addressing future population growth. It would also be strategically integrated with wider strategies to support economic growth.
- 14.11 The Woolfox garden community would reflect high quality placemaking as an exemplar. The proposals would reflect a number of key qualities and characteristics delivering: clear identity; sustainable scale; well-designed places; great homes; strong local vision and engagement; integrated transport, healthy places; green spaces; community engagement; whilst being resilient yet flexible to allow for changing demographics.
- 14.12 The Woolfox garden community would take an integrated approach to infrastructure, housing and employment. Woolfox is deliverable and viable and a credible proposal.
- 14.13 This proposal requires long term strategic planning and is robust in terms of delivery with over a thousand acres being in a single ownership. The land owner will liaise with neighbouring land owners where appropriate to ensure delivery of this strategic project and liaise with the local planning authority at all stages to facilitate effective delivery.
- 14.14 In this context, the Proposed Development will respect the area's local character and setting, and will accord with the principles of high quality design and best practice to create a settlement that is rich, varied and sympathetic to its environment. The scheme will create a high quality place with a strong identity, activity and a strong 'sense of place'.



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