

WISLOE GREEN

A PROPOSAL BY THE ERNEST COOK TRUST AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR A NEW SETTLEMENT IN THE DISTRICT OF STROUD



SEPTEMBER 2018

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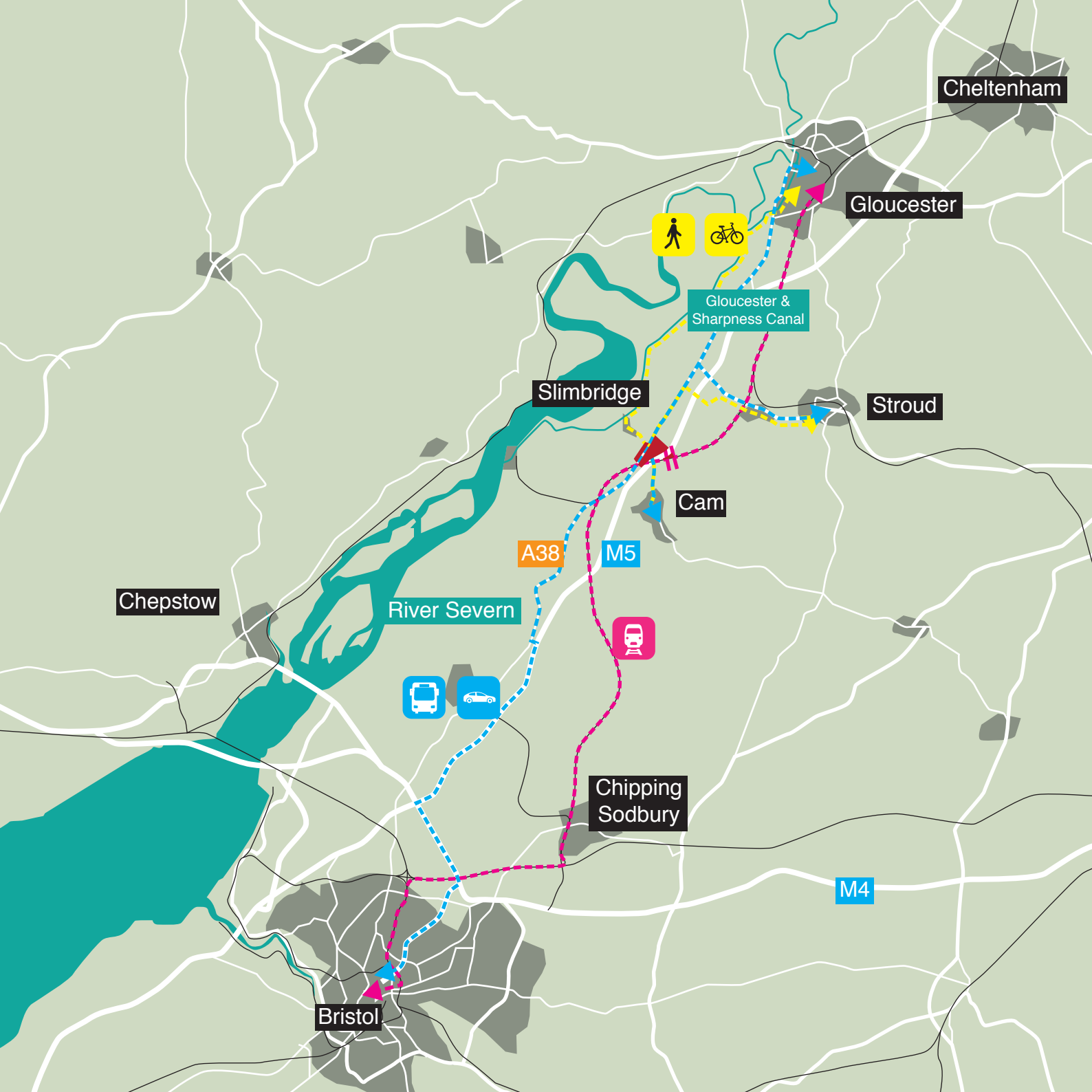
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Cheltenham

Gloucester

Stroud

Cam

Slimbridge

A38

M5

M4

Chipping
Sodbury

River Sever

Gloucester &
Sharpness Canal

Chepstow

Bristol

THE OPPORTUNITY

Wisloe Green presents a significant opportunity to form a new, self contained mid-sized settlement. The principles of place making and the creation of vibrant communities are central to the government definition of a Garden Village.

The vision for Wisloe Green embraces the Garden Village principles at the early concept stage through the creation of a strong sense of landscape identity and integration:

In keeping with many of the early C20th Garden towns and villages, Wisloe Green grapples with the contrast between the manmade and the natural and it is in the bridging of this apparent divide that the development finds its identity.

From inception, this sense of identity is critical to developing the structure of the settlement and laying the foundations for any emerging plans in the future.

Wisloe Green has the potential to be considered as a location for growth and potentially a new Garden Village for Stroud.

	By Rail	By Bus	By Car	By Cycle	By Foot
Gloucester	16 min	49 min	25 min	1hr 7 min	-
Bristol	35 min	-	37 min	-	-
Stroud	-	45 min	19 min	46 min	-
Cam	-	16 min	5 min	14min	45 min



PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The emerging vision for Wisloe Green takes its cue from planning policy at a national and local level and presents the opportunity to deliver a new settlement which accords with key principles of the new NPPF and the Stroud Local Plan as it is being reviewed.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK, JULY 2018

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development across three dimensions:

- Economic – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- Environmental – protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment.

The Framework holds a presumption in favour of sustainable development and for plan making this means local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.

The NPPF addresses (at paragraph 72) that the supply of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for large scale developments which includes new settlements.

STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Stroud District Local Plan was adopted in 2015 and covers the period to 2031. The Local Plan is being reviewed and the first stage of this was the Issues and options public consultation in autumn 2017. The Issues and Options Paper (2017) posed a series of questions to help focus consultation feedback. This included questions about the future growth strategy with a New Growth Point, in effect creating a new community (possibly a Garden Village), being one of the options. The Preferred Options Consultation is due to take place in autumn 2018, alongside the publication of the Strategic Assessment of Land Availability (SALA).



PARTNERING TO DELIVER

Gloucestershire County Council and the Ernest Cook Trust own the land which together comprises the area for the new settlement: Wisloe Green. This presents a significant opportunity to undertake a comprehensive approach to development with the joint owners working in partnership to develop a vision from this early inception stage, potentially through to delivery and ongoing management and stewardship.

THE ERNEST COOK TRUST

Historically, the Ernest Cook Trust was established in order to encourage learning from the land and it continues to actively pursue this endeavour in a variety of ways today.

A vision for a new settlement provides a unique opportunity to embody this endeavour in a new way, reinterpreting what it means to provide the opportunity to learn from the land in a very direct way by designing a place around its landscape. A fertile seed bed in which families grow and community values thrive: Living & Learning in the Landscape.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Gloucestershire County Council has an important role in helping to support sustainable growth in the county. This means taking a proactive approach, planning ahead for the future to improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire people and communities.

The vision for a new settlement allows Gloucestershire County Council to facilitate sustainable and high quality development through a partnership approach and provide a positive legacy for Gloucestershire.



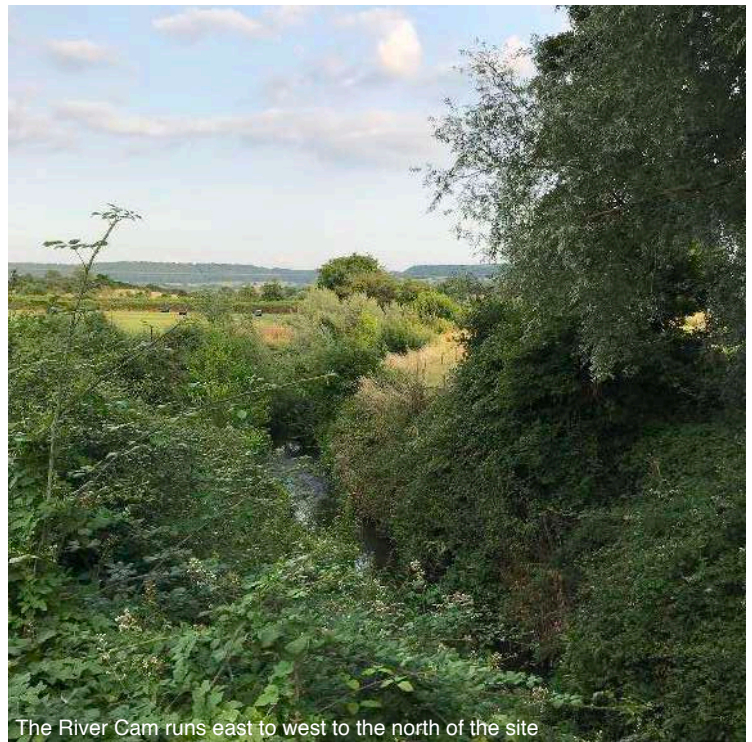
The M5 motorway defines the eastern boundary to the site



Surrounding settlements include some individual historic farm buildings



The A38 defines the western boundary to the site



The River Cam runs east to west to the north of the site

THE SITE & LOCAL CONTEXT

The site (a combination of Gloucestershire County Council and Ernest Cook Trust owned land), is located between Bristol and Gloucester adjacent to the A38 and the M5. The site is approximately 10km from the banks of the River Severn at Sharpness to the west and 15km from Stroud to the east. A number of smaller settlements surround the site within reach by road, cycle or by foot.

The surrounding area is primarily agricultural with a mix of pastoral and arable use. The land is low lying with long views to the west across the Severn Flood plain. The site itself is not within an area identified for flooding by the Environment Agency.

To the east the immediate area remains low lying with an increase in residential use and equestrian activities resulting in paddocks and smaller field boundaries. After a km the land gently rises on the approach to the eastern fringes of the Cotswold AONB.

The site is constrained primarily by the roads which surround it. The M5 and the A38 create significant boundaries to the to movement from the east and the west and define where access

to the site can be taken from and provided. Likewise the railway line constrains the site to the south. Some land within the partnership's ownership is of limited or viable use within the proposal for the new settlement as it lies beyond these barriers.

These constraints also ensure that the new settlement forms a compact entity. It can be distinct within its designated land area and not risk merging with the nearby settlements of Cambridge, Slimbridge, Gossington or Cam.

Given the low lying land opening out to the west the site enjoys a wide horizon and long views of the evening sun and sunsets.

The site is located in the Settled Unwooded Vale landscape character type and the Vale of Berkeley landscape character area (SV6A) of the Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment. This comprises an open, gently undulating landscape that is broadly bounded by the rising landform of the Cotswolds escarpment to the east and by the flat, low-lying floodplain landscape of the River Severn to the west. Low hedgerows form a common boundary treatment in the character area, with their

management and condition varying across the landscape. Although a patchwork pattern of land uses and tree cover in this vale give the area a strong rural character, the presence of major transportation corridors are disruptors, such as the M5 motorway and A38 which bisect the vale landscape. Settlement is a strong influence on the area's overall character, with views towards built form commonly occurring in the wider landscape.

There are no landscape designations upon the site. The Cotswolds AONB is located to the east of the site, at approximately 3.8km from the site.

LANDSCAPE HERITAGE ASSETS

The site is not listed on the Register of Park & Gardens of Special Historic Interest (RPG). The nearest RPGs are Frampton Court (Grade II*) approximately 4.4km to the north of the site, and Woodchester Mansion (Grade II) approximately 4.5km on raised landform to the east-southeast of the site. The A38 follows the route of an old Roman road.

ROAD

The M5 borders the south eastern boundary of the site on a raised embankment with it lying roughly equidistant between Junctions 13 and 14.

The site has very good access to the local road network given that the A38 borders the western boundary of the site either side of the roundabout it forms with the A4135.

The A4135 extends from its junction with the A38 on a northwest southeast alignment to bisect the site. This link then passes over the M5 towards Draycott, Lower Cam and Dursley.

Dursley Road and Wisloe Road are minor unclassified roads that extend across the site to link the A4135 with Cambridge to the north.

RAIL

Cam & Dursley railway station is located to the southeast of the M5 where it borders the site. As a result, the station is within a 400 metre walking distance of the southern eastern edge of the site as the 'crow flies'.

The railway station is located on the main Bristol-

Birmingham line. As a result, regular northbound services are available to Gloucester with alternate services continuing on to Cheltenham, Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Worcester Shrub Hill and Great Malvern. To the south regular services are available to Bristol Temple Meads and onwards to Bath and Westbury, with some services carrying on to Weymouth and occasionally Southampton Central and Brighton

CYCLE & PEDESTRIAN

To the west of the site a footway extends along western side of the A38 either side of its junction with the A4135.

The A38 / A4135 roundabout has a shared foot/cycleway facility that extends round the junction to tie in with the footway facilities that extend along the A4135 and St Johns Road towards Slimbridge. This shared foot/cycleway provision then ties in with on road cycle lanes that extend along both sides of the A38 to the north of the roundabout

A footway extends along the northern side of the A4135 from its junction with the A38. This provision extends across overbridge that passes

over the M5 prior to narrowing where it passes over the adjacent railway line. At this point it ceases prior to recommencing a short distance to the east in order to extend into Draycott and tie in with the provision on Box Road which serves Cam & Dursley railway station

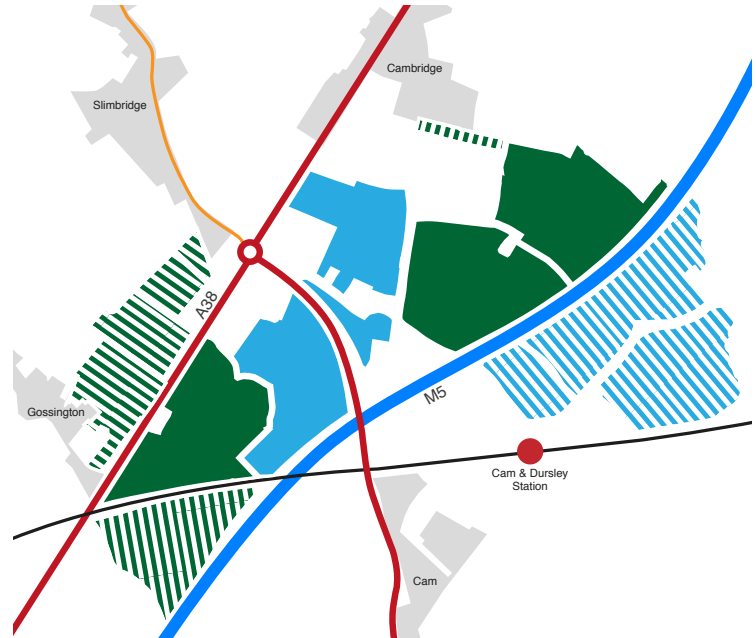
An agricultural track currently passes across the site to the southeast of the junction of Dursley Road and Wisloe Road. This track extends up to the M5 where an underpass is present to transfer cattle etc to the agricultural track and fields that are located on the south side of the M5. The track extends southeast to meet with Box Road just to the north of where Box Road passes over the railway line next to Cam & Dursley railway station.

There are no long-distance routes or national trails within the site or within 1km of the site. The network of public rights of way extends through the wider landscape; with a public footpath crossing the southern corner of the site in a northwest to southeast direction and another public footpath just north of the A4135, linking the lane south of Dursley Road to a small group of dwellings North of the site are public footpaths which follow the corridor associated with the River Cam.



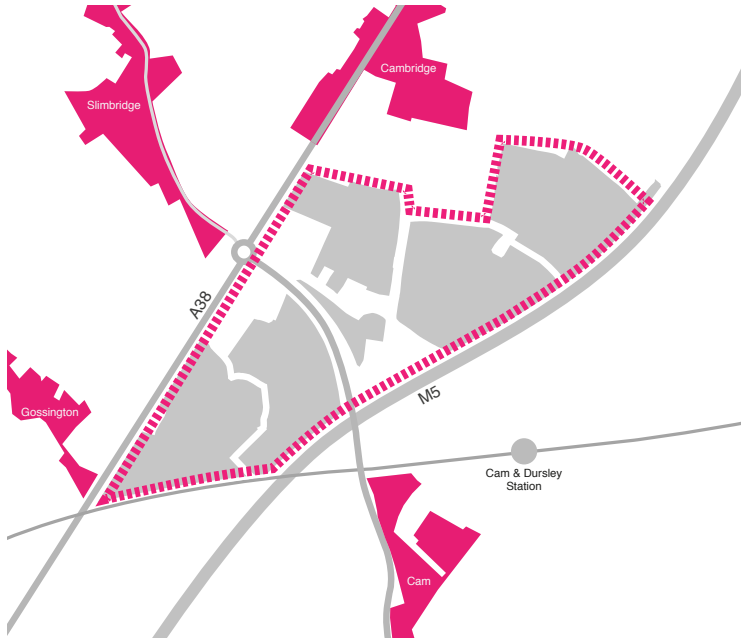
Land Ownership

- Ernest Cook Trust
- Gloucestershire County Council



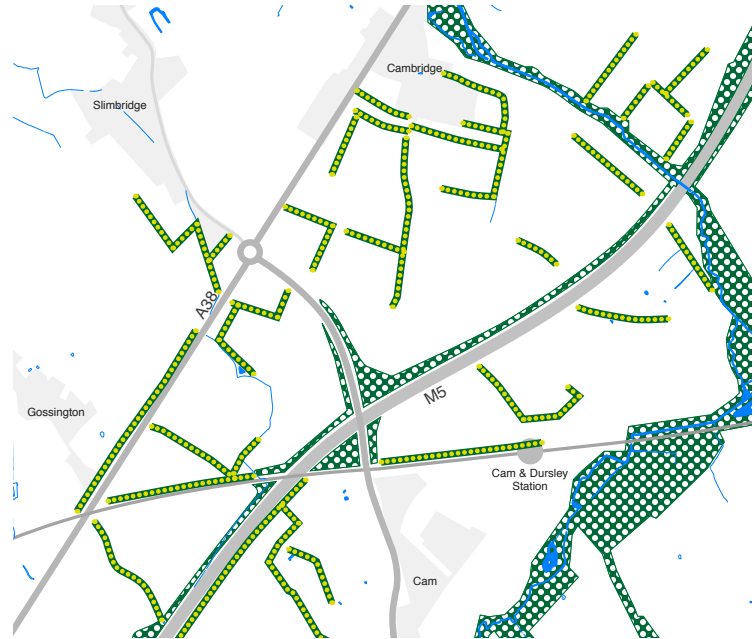
Barriers

Road and rail barriers make parts of the land ownership difficult to integrate into a coherent masterplan strategy.



Surrounding Settlements

The same barriers can help to ensure a new settlement is self contained and does not sprawl or coalesce with the neighbouring villages.

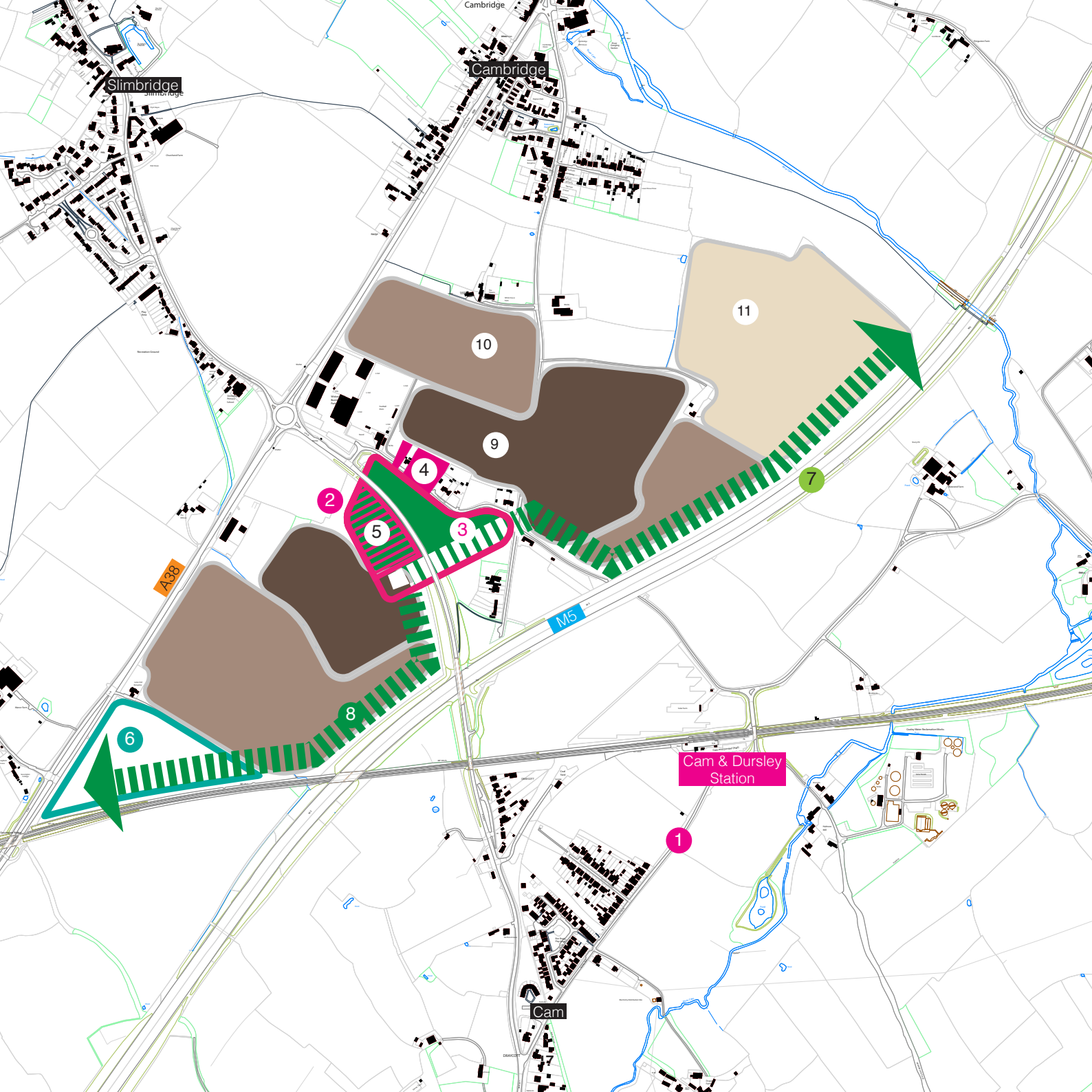


Landscape & Ecology

The surrounding is very flat with ground only rising another 2-3kms to the east. This allows long distance views to the horizon. On site, hedgerows are fragmented and poor quality. The river Cam provides a well connected wildlife corridor and the most dense vegetation locally.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- 1 Rail links are possible from the nearby Cam & Dursley station
- 2 Centre the new settlement around a hub of community activity set within a Central Park
- 3 Create a prominent, sculptural landscape feature at the centre of the settlement
- 4 Community facilities create a Local Centre in a location which is within easy reach of the whole settlement and overlook the Central Park
- 5 A new School is located centrally and within a rich landscape setting
- 6 Employment space located adjacent to the A38 for easy access but also creating a gateway to the settlement from the south
- 7 A landscape and acoustic buffer shields the settlement from the motorway and makes the most of the opportunity to enhance ecological continuity and biodiversity
- 8 A green corridor running parallel to the motorway corridor
- 9 Nearer the centre, development comprises a mix of small and medium sized terraced and semi-detached homes
- 10 Away from the centre and the central park, and where the settlement edge is formed by road or rail boundaries, development reduces in density with the provision of more private green space
- 11 Where the settlement edge meets the landscape and links to the Cam river corridor, development is the least dense



CONNECTIVITY

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PRINCIPLES

- Utilise the existing green corridors and watercourses / ponds within the site to create a robust green infrastructure framework within which to set new development;
- Integrate green infrastructure as a corridor through the development, in contrast to the grey infrastructure of the A38 and the M5 and locating accessible open space away from transportation corridor disruptors (noise and visual effects);
- Keep development away from the River Cam;
- Locate the green infrastructure corridor to link existing and proposed green / green-blue nodes; for example, green-blue node at the River Cam, through to a central landscape feature, and on to a green gateway to the southwest corner of the site;
- Key green infrastructure / landscape principles should include provision of new open space, and new tree, hedgerow and copse planting in the core green infrastructure corridor; and
- A robust green infrastructure framework for the development would contribute to enhancing landscape character of the local area.

CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Walking and cycling modes can offer a real alternative to the private car for short distance trips and play an important role in public transport journeys. The provision of infrastructure for these modes is therefore proposed to be a central component of the access strategy and key to establishing a sustainable travel culture.

Creation of linkages between the site and the existing network of routes along with improvement of them is therefore essential to provide a development which will co-exist with neighbouring communities in Slimbridge, Cambridge and Lower Cam. A key pedestrian and cycle desire line from the site for prospective residents and employees will be to the south/south east in order to access Cam & Dursley railway station, Draycott and Lower Cam as these will be important local destinations.

Currently desire lines to the south east of the site are not particularly well served due to severance by the M5 and the quality of the pedestrian provision along the A4135. This forms part of the existing route to access Cam & Dursley railway

station on foot. Investigation will therefore be made into the potential for pedestrian linkages to provide a safe and direct route between the site and the railway station to ensure that it is accessible by sustainable modes. This linkage is proposed to be tied into a high quality internal pedestrian and cycling provision that is proposed to extend throughout the settlement.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS

Bus provision is proposed to form an important part of the access strategy for the site as it provides a real alternative to the private car in forming either complete journeys or part of longer journeys, for example providing access to Cam & Dursley railway station for onward travel to strategic destinations.

The site is in a prime location to take advantage of the existing bus network as there are good links to Gloucester, Stroud, Lower Cam, Dursley, Stonehouse and Bristol. There are therefore opportunities to make a positive contribution towards improving them further as part of the development proposals in terms of increasing their frequency and in diverting certain ones through the site.

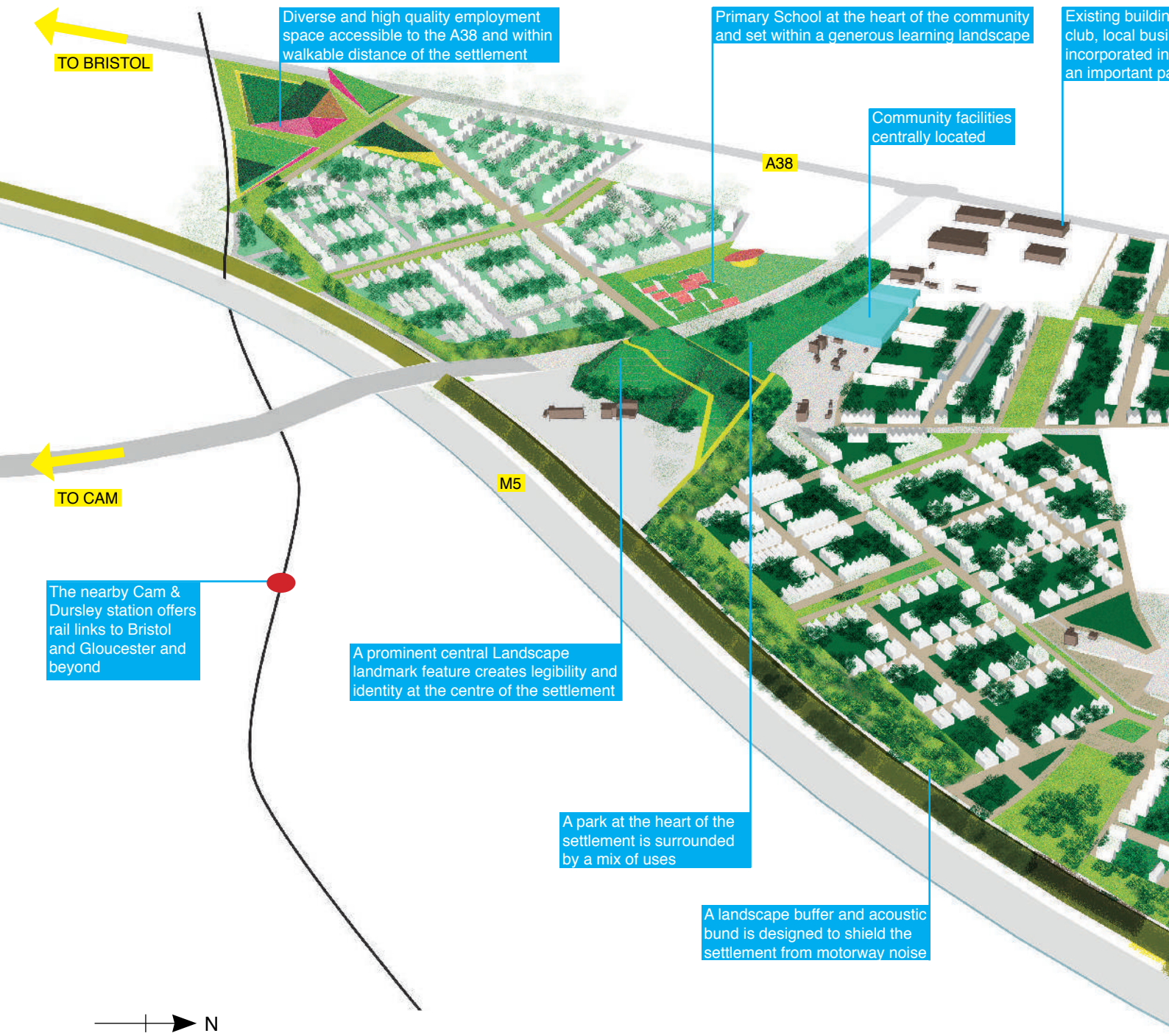
The public transport strategy for the development will seek to deliver an attractive and high quality bus service offer, accessed via local hubs within the development to connect with major employment, retail, leisure and education opportunities in the surrounding area.

VEHICULAR ACCESS

As the site fronts onto the eastern side of the A38 in two locations to the north and south of its junction with the A4135 there is the potential to provide vehicular (incl. bus), pedestrian and cycle access at each of these points.

In addition with the A4135 bisecting the site there is the potential to provide vehicular (incl. bus), pedestrian and cycle accesses to serve both the north eastern and south western development parcels.

These access points can then be linked via a network of high quality internal streets which would allow residents to access the A38 and A4135 via a number of internal routing options to ensure that an accessible and permeable internal layout is provided.



Uses and uses (eg. the football pitches and housing) are brought into the design and become part of a new community

Green streets and spaces create an attractive and sustainable network



PLACE MAKING

Wisloe Green looks to create a mix of uses which support a diverse community and sustainable living.

The new settlement will be distinct and separate from surrounding communities but nevertheless will include facilities and benefits accessible to neighbouring communities: employment, green space and community facilities.

The new settlement will be founded around a series of garden neighbourhoods whose architecture and density vary creating a variety of house types and neighbourhood characters.

Overall the new settlement will look to sit subtly in the surrounding landscape enhancing the character and making the most of open views across the low lying surrounding countryside. Where previously the areas landscape character and quality has been lacking, Wisloe Green will introduce distinctive and rich landscape character to the heart of community living.





KEY TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

ACOUSTICS

The proposed development is likely to include both residential and educational development. The uses are considered to be noise sensitive and therefore a suitable noise environment for future residents will need to be provided.

The development site is located adjacent to the M5 which is likely to be the dominant noise source across the site.

Additional noise sources are likely to consist of:

- A4135;
- Bristol Road;
- Railway line from Cam & Dursley Station; and
- Wisloe Business Park.

Noise associated with vehicular movements on the M5 is likely to result in exceedances of relevant guidance where private outdoor amenity areas are located close to the M5.

The indicative masterplan allows for an acoustic bund to be positioned adjacent to the M5 to reduce the likely noise impact across the site. The height of the bund would be determined as part of the design of the scheme. In addition,

to assist with reducing noise levels in private outdoor amenity areas the following mitigation measures should be considered:

- Suitable set back from the M5;
- Considerate location of dwellings and amenity areas so that they are screened from dominant noise source;
- The use of acoustic barriers, bunds or landscaping so as to provide suitable mitigation in areas closest to M5.

Layout and orientation of dwellings should also be considered for residential uses proposed adjacent to the railway line, A4135 and Bristol Road.

Glazing and ventilation specifications should be determined at the appropriate stage of the design process once window and room dimensions and finishes are known. It is likely that areas in close proximity to the M5 are likely to require uprated glazing and acoustically treated ventilation methods or MVHR.

For educational uses it is recommended that these are situated away from the transportation sources and located centrally within the site such that it benefits from screening provided by dwellings.

FLOOD RISK

The river Cam classified as a main river runs along the eastern boundary of the site. According to the Stroud District Council SFRA, for flood zones 2 and 3 the flood hazard is predominantly moderate to significant for the range of modelled events. This indicates that all flood areas up to and including Flood Zone 2 should be kept as open space.

The vast majority of the proposed site is within flood zone 1 and so the risk to fluvial flooding from the river Cam will be minimal. The sequential test is therefore passed, as the small area within flood zone 2 can be developed in a water compatible manor. The area is also at very low risk to surface water flooding according to the Gov.uk Surface Water Flood Mapping.

The areas within the flood zones will be utilised as natural parkland along the rivers' edge. This will add value to the land as an ecological enhancement and an area of green space for the residents, while allowing for the flood plain to be utilised when necessary. This water compatible development is deemed an acceptable use of flood zone 2 as described in the Gov.uk Table 3: Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone

'compatibility'.

The site is upon superficial deposits of a sand and gravel formation with a mudstone bedrock meaning it is possible that an infiltrating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) design may be useable, subject to further testing.

Further measures across the site where suitable will be taken to ensure the appropriate level of drainage is met, especially if an infiltration design is not possible. This can be incorporated into the green corridor that runs through the development in the form of SuDS techniques such as attenuation basins, swales or permeable paving.

This allows the surface run off to be calculated at the local Greenfield runoff rate and for the water to be appropriately treated before naturally re-joining the water course. This results in a smaller scale contribution from the surface run off to the existing drainage.

ECOLOGY

The site is largely set within a landscape of agricultural land, with scattered residential properties. Some small woodland blocks are also present, with the River Cam forming the north-eastern site boundary.

Within 10 km of the Site, two internationally designated areas for nature conservation are located. These comprise:

- Severn Estuary Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) located approximately 2.7 km north west at the closest point. The Severn Estuary is designated on many counts including protected habitats and species (aquatic species and birds); and
- Rodborough Common SAC located approximately 8.7 km north east at the closest point. Rodborough Common is designated on account of its grass and scrubland habitats.

No statutory designated areas for nature conservation are located within 2 km of the Site; however, the Site is located within the Impact Risk Zone for at least one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within the wider

area. The Impact Risk Zone is a tool used to identify when a certain development type may result in an impact on a designated area and where further consideration may be required. In this case, the nearby SSSI (of which there are 5 within 5 km) may be at risk from various development types, including any residential development with a total gain in residential units.

Further to this, numerous parcels of notable habitat are also present within 2 km, and it is anticipated that non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)) may also be present.

The Site itself looks to be dominated by agricultural land (crop and pasture), the quality of which is not possible to determine through a review of aerial photography. Hedgerows, trees and drainage ditches are present across the Site, with the corridor of the River Cam forming in part the northern and eastern boundary. At least three ponds also appear to be present.

Ecological Issues	Potential Constraint	Potential Opportunity	Risk Assessment
Internationally and nationally designated areas for nature conservation; non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation; and notable habitats.	<p>The Site is located within 10 km of three internationally designated areas for nature conservation and within the Impact Risk Zone for nationally designated areas for nature conservation. In addition, the Site is located within 2 km of a number of notable habitat parcels, and is anticipated to be located within 2 km of a number of non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation.</p> <p>Consideration as to the potential effects of future development on the features for which these areas are designated will be required. Such effects could arise as a result of increased recreational pressure, changes in air and water quality etc. Should they be required, mitigation measures might include financial contributions into strategic management schemes.</p>	<p>The Site provides the opportunity for inclusion of significant areas of ecologically informed open space provision within the scheme design. This could increase capacity for on-site recreation and could also deliver against SuDS requirements, e.g. through swales, soakaways etc.</p>	Varies from 'High' to 'Low', dependent on designation.
On-site habitats	<p>The Site is dominated by agricultural habitat types anticipated to be of low intrinsic ecological value although boundary habitats and ponds are likely to be of higher intrinsic ecological value and these may fall into notable habitat categories.</p>	<p>Habitats of higher intrinsic ecological value (to be confirmed by survey) should be retained and enhanced through scheme design, with opportunities sought for inclusion of new biodiverse habitats (e.g. biodiverse SuDS, green infrastructure etc.), where possible. These should be designed to enhance habitat</p>	Low

Ecological Issues	Potential Constraint	Potential Opportunity	Risk Assessment
European Protected Species	The habitats on site (namely boundary / linear habitats and waterbodies) may be utilised by foraging and commuting bats, dormice <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> and / or great crested newts <i>Triturus cristatus</i> . The River Cam and associated ditches may be suitable for use by otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> .	Depending on the species found to be present, the habitats utilised should be retained and enhanced through scheme design where possible, or recreated elsewhere within the Site. Opportunities could also be sought for incorporation of new species-specific features (e.g. bird and bat boxes) for species either known to be present or with potential to occur.	Medium
Nationally Protected Species	The habitats on-site may be utilised by breeding birds, badgers <i>Meles meles</i> and, depending on the management of the habitat present; common and widespread reptile species. The River Cam and associated ditches may be suitable for use by water		Medium
Notable species	The habitats on-site may be utilised by a range of notable species, possibly including: brown hare <i>Lepus europaeus</i> , hedgehogs <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i> and notable invertebrates.		Low

NEXT STEPS

In progressing the Stroud Local Plan Review, further consideration should be given to Wisloe Green as a new settlement and possibly a Garden Village to help meet the future needs of the District. It is important that the growth needs of the District are met through a plan led approach and further technical work and subsequent consultation will be undertaken as the site emerges through development plan process.

