

# Land at New Road, Chiseldon

## Introduction

### Background

Castlewood Investments Inc has decided to apply for outline planning permission for up-to 40 new homes on land south of New Road Chiseldon. The reason for this application is essentially to assist with the supply of new homes as a result of the severe housing land supply shortage being experienced across the Borough.

The Borough Council is significantly failing to meet the Government's national housing supply policy and this application is regarded as a positive response.

This exhibition is intended to inform local residents of the scheme, its approach to the landscape quality of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the provision of affordable homes, traffic generation and drainage, as well as the potential design and layout of the site.

Castlewood Investments Inc is a private development company with a large portfolio of strategic land and property assets throughout the UK. It is committed to working with local people and their community and Council representatives to bring forward high quality development proposals that provide new homes within sustainable communities.



Site Location Plan.

### Planning Context

The proposed application site does not feature as a residential allocation within The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (SBLP). That Plan however has been found to be significantly failing in the delivery of new housing contrary to national planning policy.

This is expressed within paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing, and at paragraph 49 regards relevant development plan policies for the supply of housing as out-of-date in circumstances where the local planning authority, in this case Swindon Borough Council, cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Further to a recent public inquiry (January 2017) into appeal proposals for residential development at Wroughton, it was established that at best the Borough Council could only demonstrate a 3.04 years' supply, and at worst had fallen to as little as a 1.88 years' supply of deliverable housing sites. This represents a parlous and increasingly deteriorating position, essentially as a consequence of significant stalled delivery amongst a number of major local plan allocations around Swindon.

This hiatus in housing supply has not led to any prompt attempts to deal with what is essentially a Borough-wide housing land supply crisis. The Borough Council's position is fundamentally at odds with the thrust of Government policy and, as a consequence alternative suitable and appropriate residential sites must be considered on their merits. This planning application will therefore be submitted on the basis that Swindon Borough Council currently has a housing land supply shortfall, and the proposals would assist in meeting the housing supply shortfall.

National planning policy which seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing is not being met within Swindon Borough. This

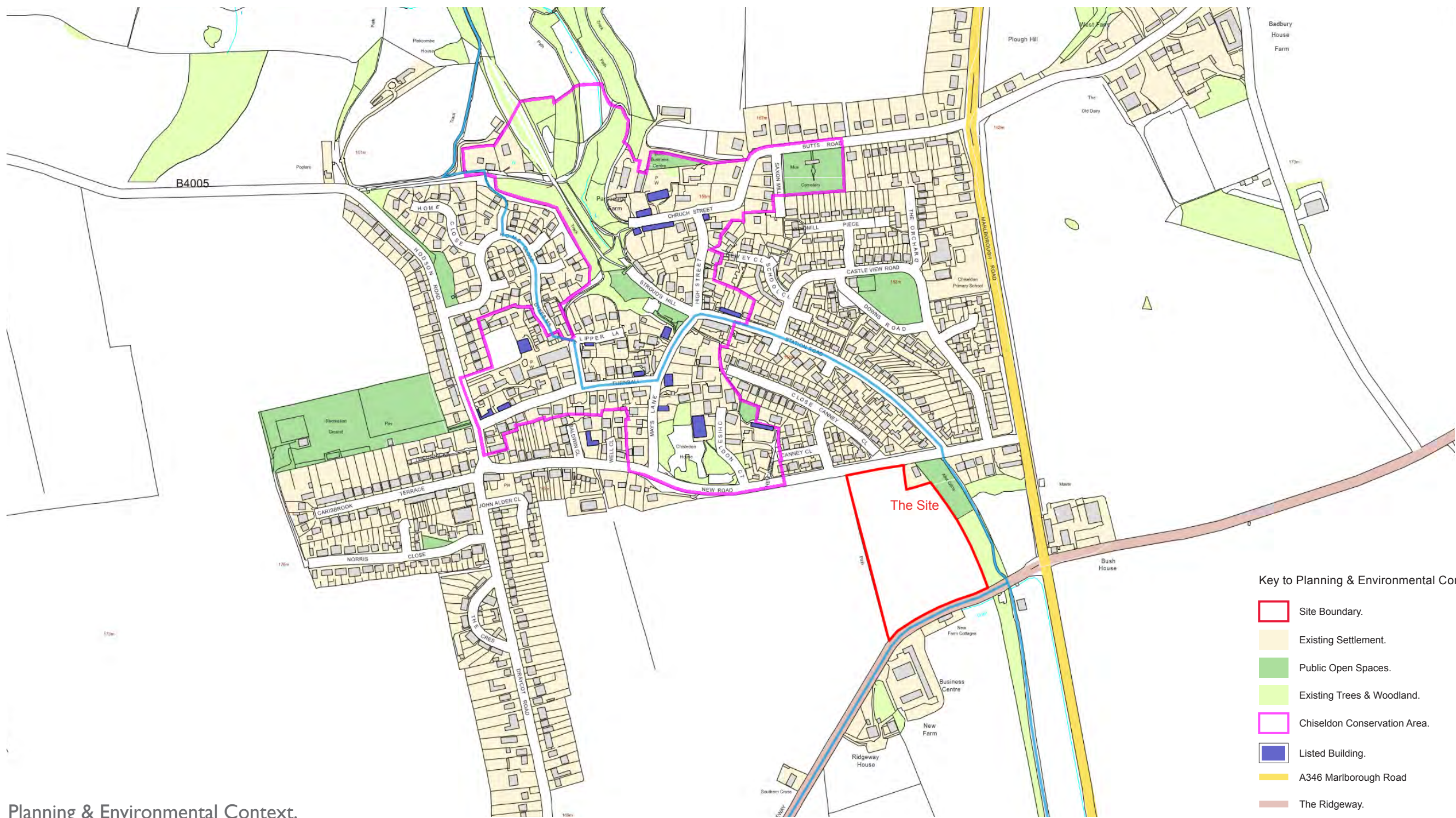
in turn means that relevant policies for the supply of housing should be considered out-of-date. In such circumstances, national planning policy anticipates the granting of planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against other all national or where national policy restriction applies. In this case, such restrictive policy is in place. This policy relates to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (an AONB).

Great importance is placed on conserving the scenic beauty of AONBs, which have the highest protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The proposal has therefore been planned and designed in the light of the recommendations of a

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared in line with best practice guidance and with the aim of minimising visual impact.

In summary, it is considered that the need to urgently address a failing housing land supply within Swindon Borough, and the resultant public benefits which would arise from the proposed development and limited impact, collectively outweigh the great weight accorded the AONB's protection.

It is on this basis that these draft development proposals have been prepared and are respectfully presented for public scrutiny and feedback as part of this exhibition.



Planning & Environmental Context.



# Land at New Road, Chiseldon

## Site & Context Appraisal

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### Local Facilities & Land Uses

While the site is not currently accessible to the public, there is a footpath immediately adjacent to the western boundary, and well used allotment gardens to the east. It will be important to ensure that users of the public footpath and allotments can continue to do so safely throughout the construction period and beyond.

There is a meeting hall located adjacent to the northwest corner of the site and the design and layout of new development will need to take account of this facility to ensure it can continue to operate without nuisance and to maintain its security.

The accompanying diagram illustrates the relative accessibility of a range of community services and facilities within the village, which include the convenience stores, farm shop, petrol station, schools, nursery and surgery which are all within walking distance of the site.

Given the principal desire line will be north towards the village centre, it will be important to ensure the layout can accommodate safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access across New Road.

The Unicorn Business centre is located immediately to the south of the site, and the wider employment market within Swindon is accessible via existing public transport routes and the A346 Marlborough Road located 150m to the east of the site.



### Opportunities & Constraints

Given its agricultural use, the site is largely unconstrained and has no natural features that require preservation apart from the mature trees that form part of its vegetated boundaries. There is an 11KV overhead powerline that crosses the site in two directions, and will require diversion or grounding.

The site falls gently from a high point midway along its western boundary and drains towards the southeast corner where a surface water balancing pond will need to be located.

The site is currently accessed via a field boundary with The Ridgeway, and there is an opportunity to formalise this into an adoptable road access to serve the development, with a second point of access from New Road.

While the route of the public footpath alongside the western boundary will not be directly affected, it will be important to ensure the amenity of this footpath is maintained and if possible enhanced by development of the site. There is an opportunity to create a new pedestrian connection to this footpath, and potentially a direct link to The Ridgeway via the southern boundary.

There is an opportunity to provide a large area of open space adjacent to the southern boundary where it would form a buffer to The Ridgeway.

In conclusion, the site is unconstrained by natural features, with good opportunities to deliver new homes alongside a substantial amount of green infrastructure which respects the semi-rural setting of the site and provides an attractive public realm.





### Illustrative Masterplan

Drawing directly on the site and context assessment, the illustrative masterplan shows how the development of the site can be undertaken in accordance with the accompanying development objectives. The masterplan has been informed by a detailed assessment of the local townscape along with the recommendations of the Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, with the aims of creating a small scale development that both protects the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB and is fully integrated and physically well connected with the village.

Protects the setting of the AONB via a low density form of development and a carefully considered landscaping scheme.	Enhances the accessibility of the adjacent meeting hall and allotments by providing additional car parking for these facilities.
Protects the privacy of nearby homes by adopting appropriate set back distances and landscaping.	Minimises traffic impacts on the adjoining highway network by sharing vehicular access between New Road and The Ridgeway, while creating a shared surface public realm that encourages low vehicles speeds and favours pedestrian movement.
Creates an attractive gateway space at the site entrance and makes a positive contribution to the character of New Road.	Provides on-site children's play areas along with informal public open space to ensure new residents have good access to outdoor spaces for health and doorstep recreation.
Protects the route of The Ridgeway by creating a significant area of public open space alongside the southern boundary where it will act as a green buffer to this route.	Minimises flood risk by setting aside space for surface water balancing ponds and swales as part of a site-wide sustainable urban drainage system.
Maintains and enhances the route of the public footpath that runs parallel with the western site boundary.	Provides an accessible public realm focused around the creation of a central green space designed to anchor the proposals and help create development with a distinctive sense of place.

Development Objectives

Illustrative Masterplan (NTRS)





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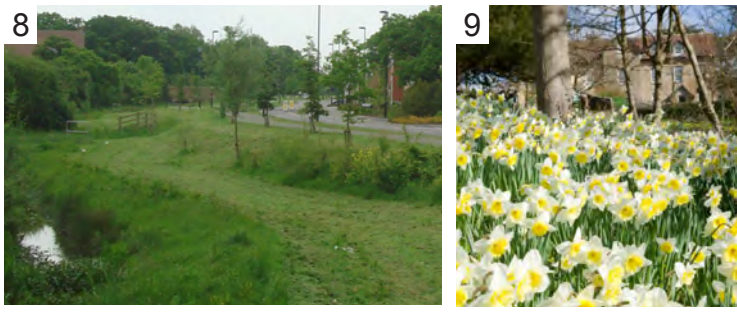
## Visualisation

### Illustrative Views

The accompanying sketches and illustrative material provide an indication of the type of landscape features and natural habitats that would inform the detailed design of the public realm. It is envisaged that the appearance of the development will draw on the qualities of the local area when selecting the type of materials to be used in the construction of the new homes and public spaces.

The design principles underpinning the proposed landscape strategy will help support the creation of a safe and attractive public realm, and incorporate the strategic recommendations of the landscape and visual appraisal. These accompanying diagram illustrates the overall landscape strategy for the site.

#### Landscape Strategy



**New Road Frontage:** The proposals create a new green space forming a gateway into the site from New Road. There is potential for a mixture of specimen trees and swales (8) along the site frontage under planted with spring bulbs (9).



**Public Right of Way:** The proposals create new links to the existing public right of way alongside the western site boundary (7). There is scope to widen this route to create a broad sweep of meadowland and accompanying tree planting to safeguard and enhance this route.



**Local Equipped Area of Play:** There is scope to incorporate a LEAP into the design of the public open space, and an opportunity for this to be designed in accordance with the principles of natural play space as shown here (6).



**Village Street & Square:** The proposals create a simple network of shared surface lanes enclosed by new homes and with space for landscaped front gardens (10) to soften the appearance of the street. Regular opportunities for street tree planting (11) will help ensure a green and attractive public realm.



**Public Open Space:** This space would be designed with a mix of uses and landscape features, which would include specimen tree planting (1) along with selectively positioned woodland copse (5). There is scope to manage parts of the grassland as wildflower and damp meadow (2) associated with the creation of a surface water balancing pond (4). Informally surfaced hoggan pathways (3) would provide good pedestrian access with opportunities for seating areas.

View 1. New homes overlooking the public open space.



Larger detached homes overlook the principal public open space to the south where they create a low density building line with large front gardens enclosed by soft boundary treatments.

View 2. Shared surface streets and squares.



Homes are arranged to front and enclose the public realm to create a network of small scale streets and squares. A central green provides an attractive focal point and local community space for informal doorstep play and passive recreation.



Homes are set back from New Road and overlook a new open space and small play area. This approach creates a green frontage, with space for new tree and shrub planting to help create an attractive gateway space at the entrance to the development.

View 3. New homes overlooking the proposed public open space and local play area fronting New Road.

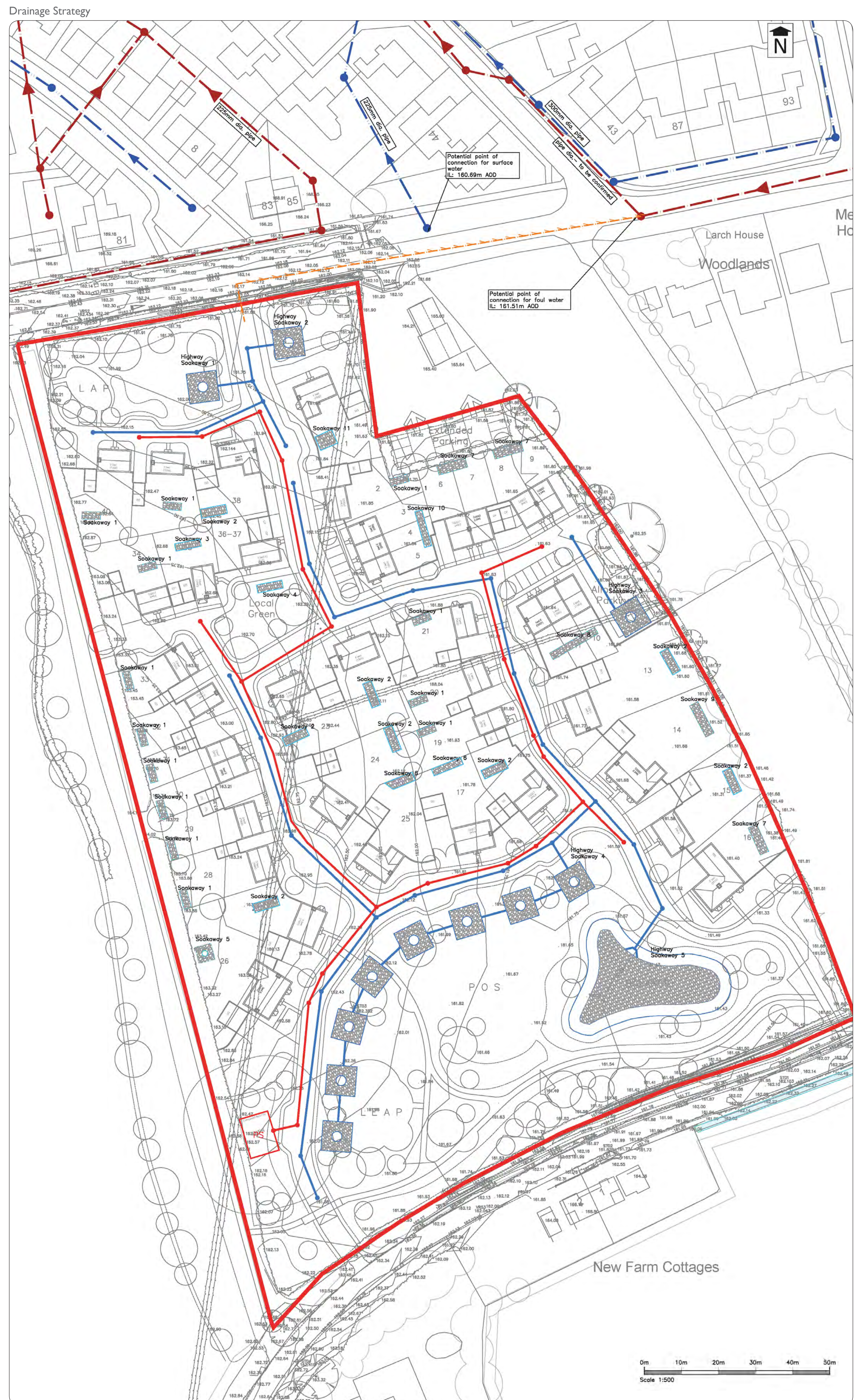


## Highways & Transport

- A Transport Statement is being carried out in consultation with the planning and highway authorities as an essential part of the planning process.
- The Transport Statement will involve a thorough assessment of the transport implications of the proposed development.
- Measures to mitigate the transport impacts of the proposed development will be identified where necessary in order to promote sustainable development.
- The site access will be from both New Road and The Ridgeway.
- An appropriate level of vehicle and cycle parking will be provided.

## Flood Risk & Drainage

- A sustainable drainage strategy, involving the implementation of SUDS, is being designed for managing the disposal of surface water runoff from the proposed development on the site.
- The drainage strategy will ensure that surface water from the developed site will be managed in a sustainable manner to mimic the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development, while reducing the flood risk to the site itself and elsewhere, taking climate change into account.
- By limiting the surface water runoff, the proposed development will reduce flood risk overall when compared to existing greenfield rates.
- The drainage measures will therefore ensure the development would have adequate flood protection for extreme events over its lifetime.







Landscape & Visual Summary

A landscape and visual assessment has been carried out by a Chartered Landscape Architect and a full technical report prepared in line with best practice guidance will be submitted with the planning application.

Visual receptors where potential views of the development would be available include residential development within Chiseldon close to the Site and road users along New Road and The Ridgeway minor road passing the Site. Users of the nearby Allotments and Plymouth Brethren Meeting Place would also have visibility of the

proposed development. Localised and restricted visibility further afield would occur from National Cycleway 45, the Ridgeway National Trail (and Aldbourne Circular Route) and the hill forts at Liddington and Barbury Castle and other isolated locations.

The design of the proposed development has incorporated a range of impact avoidance, reduction and mitigation measures to minimise adverse landscape and visual effects. These measures include an enhanced landscape frontage to New Road, provision of naturalistic public open space and new planting at the southern

end of the Site and retention and enhancement of vegetation along the eastern and western boundaries of the Site.

The assessment indicates that due to the contextual relationship of the site to existing built development on three sides and mature landscape buffers at the perimeter of the Site, a residential development can be accommodated that would not create an unacceptable impact upon the AONB designation. Enhancements in terms of public open space and improved permeability of access to public rights of ways and others routes could be achieved.

Selected viewpoints.



Viewpoint A - View southwest from New Road at junction with the National Cycleway.

The view illustrates the main frontage of the Site. The existing species poor Hawthorn hedgerow would be removed to accommodate the access road and associated visibility splays. The frontage of the Site would be enhanced with a new landscaped gateway that could include public access and a small play area set back into the Site. New housing is proposed behind the new landscaped area with filtered views from existing properties on the northern side of New Road so that there would be generous separation distances to existing residents.



Viewpoint B - View northwest from the Ridgeway minor road near the proposed access.

The close range view illustrates the development context of the Site as seen beyond the allotments. To the left of centre the ground level of the Site is visible with the hedge along the eastern boundary of the Site. New Road (B4005) can be seen in the far right side of the view. Part of the development proposals includes parking for allotment users. The Proposed Development would be intermittent visible, comprising new 2 storey residential properties set within an enhanced landscaped framework.



Viewpoint C - View west from Liddington Castle Fort.

The view was taken from the Hill-fort at approximately the closest point to the Proposed Site which is 1.5km distant. There is a range of built development in the vicinity of the Site including lighting columns along the A346, the Service Station and Bush House located in front of the Site. The mature vegetation associated with the disused railway restricts visibility of the Site. The proposed development would not increase the overall horizontal extent of Chiseldon in the view as properties on Draycot Road already extend further south. Within the context of the overall village the Proposed Development would appear modest.



Ecological Summary

Biocensus were commissioned by Impact Planning Services to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of land at Chiseldon. Agricultural land to the south of the existing settlement has been identified as offering potential for development.

Two statutory designated sites in addition to a number of Local Wildlife Sites were identified within 2 km of the site (Coate Water and Burderop Wood Sites of Special Scientific Interest). Development of the site for housing is unlikely to impact any statutorily designated site.

The Chiseldon and Marlborough Railway Path LWS forms the eastern boundary of the site. This LWS supports a mosaic of habitats and adjacent to the study area it supports scrub and small trees. No direct impact is envisaged and sympathetic design such as creating an undeveloped buffer beside the LWS would also limit the significance of any indirect impacts.

The Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) data search included 140 records of protected or otherwise notable species. None of the records directly related to the study area.

Habitat associated with the site was considered to offer low habitat potential for bats although field boundaries would be expected to support commuting or foraging bats. A number of farmland specialist bird species including Corn Bunting, Skylark and Yellowhammer were noted during the site visit. Further survey will be required to determine the status of the site for these (section 41 NERC Act 2006) species.

Proposals should aim to retain existing field boundaries and introduce landscape buffering to boundaries to minimise light spill. Opportunities for roosting could be created by designing inbuilt bat boxes to some buildings as well as by introducing foraging potential such as tree lines and attenuation ponds.



Visual summary of ecological habitats.