

Former Fire Station and Police Station,  
Bletchley  
Development Brief  
(Consultation Draft)



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This document has been prepared by Milton Keynes Council's Urban Design and Landscape Architecture Team and Milton Keynes Development Partnership who own the land.

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# Contents

## SECTION 1

### INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background	5
1.2	Bletchley	6
1.3	Purpose of the Development Brief	9
1.4	Vision	9
1.5	Structure of Brief	9

## SECTION 2

### POLICY CONTEXT

2.1	Introduction	11
2.2	Development Plan	11
2.3	National Planning Guidance	14
2.4	Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework	16
2.5	Central Bletchley Prospectus	16
2.6	Other Planning Guidance	17
2.7	Planning Assessment	17
2.8	Planning Summary	17

## SECTION 3

### CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1	Introduction	19
3.2	Location	19
3.3	Site Description	21
3.3	Description of Surrounding Area	23
3.4	Landscape and Environmental	24
3.6	Utilities	24
3.7	Land Uses	25
3.8	Access and Transport	27
3.9	Local Character	28
3.10	Opportunities and Constraints	31

## SECTION 4

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.1	Introduction	33
4.2	Land use and Housing Mix	33
4.3	Layout	33
4.4	Density and Building Heights	35
4.5	Landscape and Open Space	35
4.6	Architectural Approach	36
4.7	Residential Amenity	36
4.8	Access and Movement	36
4.9	Servicing and Utilities	37
4.10	Sustainable Design	37
4.11	Ecology	37
4.12	Flooding and Drainage	37

Appendix A	Ownership Plan	38
Appendix B	Tree Constraints Plan	39
Appendix C	Phase 1 Ecology Map	40
Appendix D	Utilities Plan	41
Appendix E	Additional Planning Policies	42

# **SECTION 1:** **INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Background

1.1.1 This Development Brief sets out the guidance and design principles for the redevelopment of the former Police Station and Fire Station sites in Bletchley, a strategically located development opportunity next to Bletchley Station (see fig 1 & 2). It should be read in conjunction with planning policy documents, including Plan:MK and the West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan, alongside guidance documents, such as the Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

1.1.2 Milton Keynes Council (MKC) and the landowner Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) have high aspirations for these two strategic sites. They can help contribute to an attractive, vibrant, prosperous and well-designed Central Bletchley providing a good quality of life for residents, workers, shoppers, as well as being seen as a destination for visitors. It will offer sustainable lifestyle options and choices fit for the 21st century that is alternative but complementary to much of the Milton Keynes offer.

### Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Deal

1.1.3 In November 2019 the Government published a prospectus detailing how it was planning to manage a £3.6 billion national fund to support towns to build prosperous futures, known as the Towns Fund.

1.1.4 The delivery of East West Rail and Bletchley's enhanced connectivity at the heart of the Government's flagship Ox-Cam Arc, the proposed development of South Central Institute of Technology at Milton Keynes (MK) College, transformation at Bletchley Park and a number of vacant sites with redevelopment potential located near to Bletchley Station all combined to provide a favourable context for a Towns Fund bid. Consequently, in December 2019, alongside a decision to approve publication of the Central Bletchley Prospectus, MKC confirmed that Bletchley would be the focus of Milton Keynes' Towns Fund bid.

1.1.5 Informed by an extensive stakeholder engagement process, the Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Investment Plan, seeking £25 million to progress and deliver nine projects, was completed and submitted to government in October 2020. The Government's Town Fund investment offer was received in March 2021 and a Town Deal in the sum of £22.7 million was formally agreed the following month.

1.1.6 Redevelopment of the former Fire and Police Station site is a key project within the Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Deal programme. Utilising Town Deal 'accelerated capital project' funding Milton Keynes Development Partnership has already overseen the demolition of the Fire Station and associated site remediation, thereby helping to de-risk development of the Fire and Police Station sites.



**Figure 1: The Site**

## 1.2 Bletchley

- 1.2.1 Bletchley is situated on the southern edge of Milton Keynes which is strategically located within the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Arc (See figure 2) where a population of 410,000 and 50,000-90,000 new jobs are proposed by 2050 with the provision of 30,000-35,000 new homes in addition to the 25,000 already planned.
- 1.2.2 The site is located in a key strategic location within Central Bletchley adjacent to the railway station (see figure 3). The development opportunity comprises the former Fire Station and Police Station in Central Bletchley (see figure 1). Both emergency services have been relocated to the Blue Light Hub in West Ashland.
- 1.2.3 The sites are owned by Milton Keynes Development Partnership (a company wholly owned by Milton Keynes Council). The land ownership is set out in Appendix A and shows two parcels of land although they can be treated as one site. For simplicity the land west of the Fire Station site has been altered on the drawings in this document.

- 1.2.4 Large parts of Bletchley will be undergoing significant change in the near future with investment by the public and private sector. An important driver behind this change is East West Rail, which will deliver new and improved services into the heart of Bletchley, and right next to the site. The Oxford to Bletchley stage is currently under construction with trains due to run between Oxford and Milton Keynes by 2025, with the Bletchley service potentially opening in 2024. Consultation and design work on the links to Bedford and Cambridge is currently underway. Bletchley Station will be revamped whilst there are also plans to provide a new station entrance on the eastern side of the railway, next to Saxon Street, in order to better connect with the town centre.
- 1.2.5 Public money is also being invested at the National and local level. The Towns Fund will help stimulate renewal, deliver a new Innovation Centre, provide land for a new bus station, and change/improve Saxon Street as part of the proposed eastern entrance. MK College Group continues to invest in its Bletchley Campus with a Government grant helping to establish its South Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT)

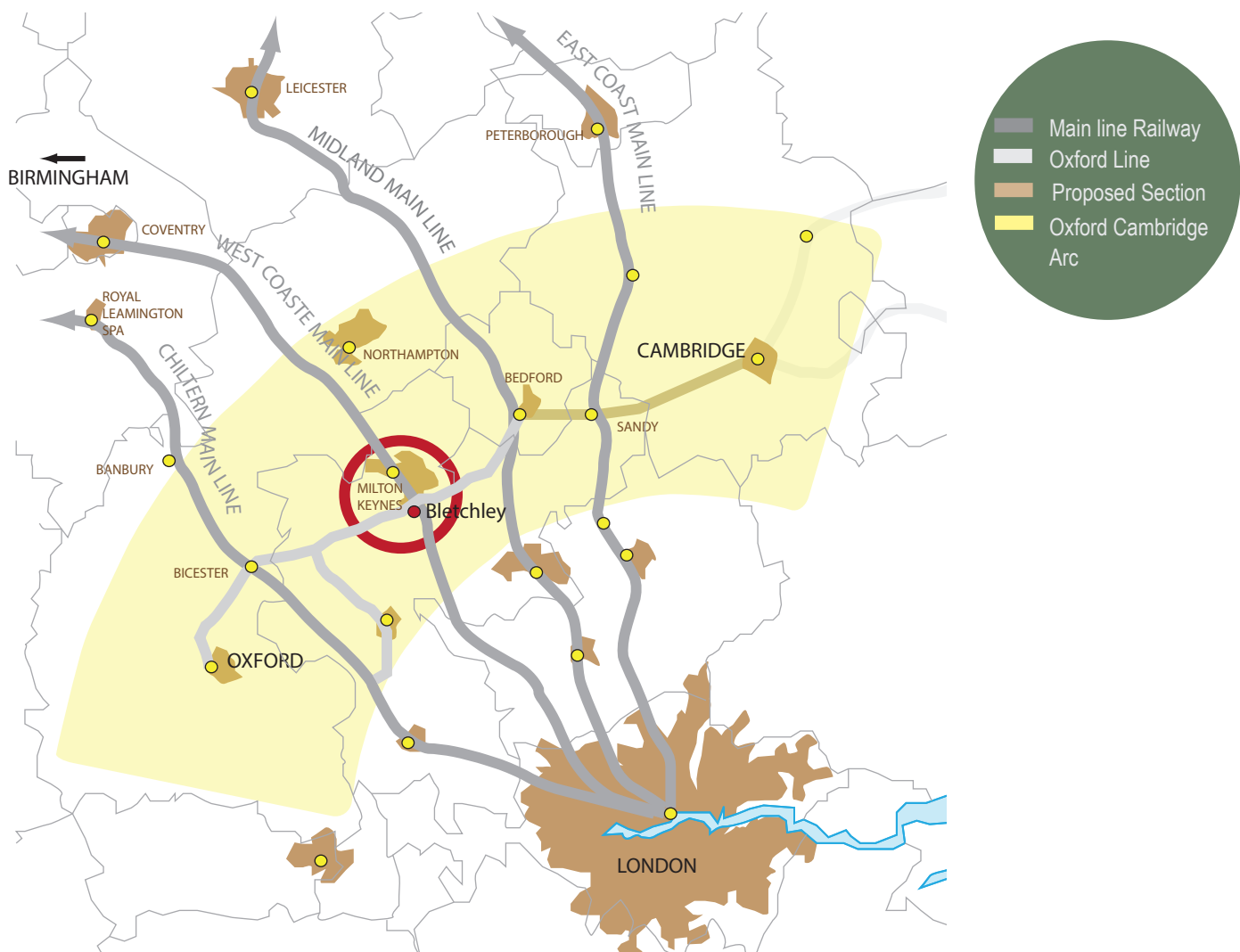


Figure 2: Bletchley location within the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Arc

opposite the Fire Station on Sherwood Drive. Work has recently commenced on this project.

1.2.6 MKDP is also making further acquisitions in the area. In January 2022, MKDP acquired Brunel Shopping Centre, the former Sainsburys' Car Park and Wilko to help deliver the Town Deal. The private sector is also investing. Examples include Caspian View, an office to residential conversion to 112 apartments to the south of the site, and Bletchley View, a new-build development of 184 dwellings just north of the Bus Station, which has recently commenced.

1.2.7 The recent development activity, new rail infrastructure, public/private funding, recently adopted SPD and forthcoming sale of the former Fire and Police Station sites will all combine to create momentum for the renewal of Bletchley.



Figure 3: Site Location



Figure 4: Site Boundary



### 1.3 Purpose of the Development Brief

- 1.3.1 The purpose of this document is to provide planning guidance and key design principles that should underpin any proposal and which will result in a high quality placemaking led scheme. The outlining of key design principles only, means that the Brief isn't seen as stifling the creativity of developers regarding more detailed design.
- 1.3.2 The Brief provides planning and design guidance applicable for the development which will aid the development process. It provides clarity and certainty to developers such that if they adhere to the principles contained within the Brief which reflect Council (MKC), and other local stakeholder expectations for the site, and respect the requirements of MKC planning policy, their proposals will likely be seen favourably by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.3.3 The Brief has been prepared to help deliver on the policies relating to Central Bletchley in Plan:MK as well as the Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD, and the West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3.4 The Development Brief has been commissioned, not by the Planning Authority, but rather by the landowner and it has not been subject to all the statutory requirements that a planning document would have to undergo. The Brief has, however, been prepared to accord with current national and local Planning Policy, and will be subject to formal public consultation. In addition, it will be submitted for approval by MKC Cabinet and, if approved, will become a material consideration in helping determine planning applications albeit with limited weight.
- 1.3.5 Once approved by Milton Keynes Council Cabinet, the guidance contained within the Brief will assist with the marketing of the site by MKDP.

### 1.4 The Vision

- 1.4.1 The aim is to create an attractive new development within an landscape framework, with a strong sense of place, which is based upon a thorough understanding of the context.
- 1.4.2 The scheme will be built at a high density, reflecting its sustainable location and planning policy. There will be new and distinctive frontages along Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road, improving the quality of these streets and the approach into the town centre.
- 1.4.3 The main use is most likely to be residential although planning policy allows other uses which would help increase vitality whilst benefitting from being adjacent to the town centre, MK College, and the excellent rail links, which will be improved by East West Rail.

### 1.5 Structure of the Brief

- 1.5.1 The Brief is divided into four sections:
- Section 1 outlines the purpose of the brief, as well as its location and ownership.
- Section 2 describes the planning policy context.
- Section 3 provides a site analysis of the site itself and the surrounding area. A thorough understanding of this will have an important bearing on the key design principles and parameters.
- Section 4 outlines the key design and development principles that should inform any development proposals.

# **SECTION 2:** **POLICY CONTEXT**

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section of the Brief outlines the key relevant planning policies that underpin the brief and inform the development proposals for the site.

## 2.2 Development Plan

### Plan:MK

2.2.1 Plan:MK was adopted in March 2019 and forms part of the Development Plan guiding future planning applications. Key policies are set out below with additional text in Appendix E.

2.2.2 Policy SD16: Central Bletchley Prospectus Area provides the strategic policy for the area within which the former police and fire stations lie. Part A.5 refers to 'Exploring options for the early redevelopment of the Police and Fire Station sites'. Policy SD16 states: 'Development within the Central Bletchley Prospectus Area will be guided by the following principles:

1. The density of residential development to be 150-250 dwellings per hectare.
2. Improved pedestrian connections and legibility.
3. Improved public realm.
4. Refurbishment and/or redevelopment of key sites and buildings.
5. Exploring options for the early redevelopment of the Police and Fire Station sites.
6. Exploring the potential of existing infrastructure to help enable and unlock residential-led mixed use development opportunities.
7. Further improve the quality of pedestrian routes to and from Bletchley Station.
8. Development should not preclude the delivery of an 'eastern entrance' to Bletchley railway station.
9. The development will provide green infrastructure in line with Policy NE4, providing wellbeing benefits through access to nature.'

2.2.3 The key relevant planning policy within Plan:MK for the site is as follows:

#### Policy DS1 Settlement Hierarchy

'The provision of new homes and jobs will take account of the settlement hierarchy set out in Table 4.2. The majority of development will be focussed on and adjacent to, the existing urban area of Milton Keynes at the locations specified in Table 4.2 and in the context of Central Bletchley from selective infill, brownfield, regeneration and redevelopment opportunities.'

2.2.4 Policy ER2 Protection of Existing Employment Land and Premises. This policy seeks the protection of existing employment land. The Police and Fire Stations Sites are designated on the Plan:MK Policies Map as 'Existing Employment'.

2.2.5 Policy CC3 Protection of Community Facilities. This policy seeks the protection of existing community facilities of which the Police and Fire Station sites are such uses. Loss of community facilities will only be supported where :

1. There is no longer a need for the facility for any type of community use, and this has been robustly evidenced by research and consultation; or
2. An acceptable alternative facility can be provided elsewhere

2.2.6 Policy DS2: Housing Strategy Plan: MK will deliver a minimum of 26 500 net dwellings across the Borough of Milton Keynes over the period 2016-2031. The policy states that new housing development will be focused on, and adjacent to, the existing urban area of Milton Keynes as well as the 3 key settlements, and will be delivered by a range of interventions, including no10: "Regeneration opportunities around the centres of Wolverton and Bletchley."

2.2.7 Policy DS4 Retail and Leisure Development Strategy, Part D. In Bletchley, this section of the policy refers to Milton Keynes Council preparing a Central Bletchley Prospectus to facilitate and promote mixed-use development around Bletchley Station and the intensification of development at sustainable locations with good access to public transport hubs, building on the opportunities created by the development of East-West Rail and the work undertaken in the Bletchley 'Fixing the Links' project.

2.2.8 Policy CT10 Parking Provision

'A. Development proposals should meet the following parking requirements:

1. All development should meet the Council's full parking standards, unless mitigating circumstance dictate otherwise.
2. On-site parking should not be reduced below the Council's full expectations if this would increase additional pressure in off-site parking that could not be resolved by on-street parking controls.
3. Parking areas should be well designed in terms of safety, circulation, appearance and assist access by pedestrians and cyclists.
4. All residential, retail and employment uses should provide electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs) in accordance with the current Milton Keynes Parking Standards, and provide a forward thinking approach. For locations of rapid and fast charging points see policy CT6 D.'

2.2.9 Policy HN1 Housing Mix and Density.

'Part D of this policy refers to a net density of 150-250 dwellings per hectare in the area covered by the Central Bletchley Prospectus. Part E notes "where no or low levels of parking are proposed, to achieve densities that help realise wider strategic objectives, they will be required to demonstrate the site has good accessibility to frequent public transport services to public transport nodes, district/town/local centres, schools and employment areas.'

2.2.10 Policy HN2 Affordable Housing.

Proposals for 11 or more homes should provide 31% of those homes as affordable housing. Proposals that provide greater than 31% of homes as affordable housing will be strongly supported. However, proposals consisting of 50% or more affordable housing will only be supported provided that they would maintain (or help create) a mix of housing tenures and therefore a mixed and sustainable community within the wider neighbourhood the proposal is situated in.

2.2.11 Policy INF1 Delivering Infrastructure.

A new development that generates a demand for infrastructure, facilities and resources will only be permitted if the necessary on and off-site infrastructure required to support and mitigate the impact of that development is either:

1. Already in place; or,
2. There is a reliable mechanism in place to ensure that infrastructure, facilities and resources will be delivered in the most appropriate places and at the earliest opportunity, to the required minimum high standards demanded by this Council and its partners. This might include improvements for highway schemes such as bus and rail provisions and enhancement for walking and cycling facilities, or the provision of improved and better connected green infrastructure, local health, shopping and recreational facilities.

2.2.12 Policy NE4 Green Infrastructure

A The network of green infrastructure throughout the Borough will be protected, extended and enhanced for its biodiversity, recreational, accessibility, health and landscape value and for the contribution it makes towards combating climate change. This is in accordance with the vision and principles (and the large-scale zone maps of Green Infrastructure Opportunity(39)) set out by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes NEP.

B Development proposals will provide new green infrastructure or, if it is not possible, will contribute to the enhancement and strengthening of existing green infrastructure to provide wellbeing benefits to people through access to nature.

C Development proposals will ensure that existing ecological networks are identified and wherever

possible maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and that ecological corridors, including watercourses, form an essential component of their green infrastructure provision to support habitat connectivity.

D Green infrastructure protection, improvements and creation must be prioritised in locations where it can deliver most benefits. It should be multi-functional to deliver as many ecosystem services as the site requires, for example flood mitigation, access to nature (wellbeing benefits), plants for pollinators, carbon sequestration, and habitat for wildlife.

2.2.13 Policy CC1 Public Art

A. The provision of public art and cultural activity can not only enhance the environment but also create a wide variety of other important benefits such as:

1. Improving the quality of life for local people.
2. Creating a local distinctiveness and a sense of place.
3. Enriching the cultural life of Milton Keynes and raise its profile.
4. Providing a focus and stimulus for tourism.

B. A minimum of 0.5% of the gross development cost of proposals for 11 or more dwellings or non-residential development of 1,000 sq m or more should, subject to viability, be allocated towards cultural wellbeing. This includes public art that enhances the cultural offer and appearance of the development, its surroundings and Milton Keynes as a whole, and engaging local residents throughout.

2.7.14 Developers should explore the potential for providing public art as part of their proposals. This could be about Bletchley Park but does not necessarily mean Alan Turing and other options should be explored (i.e. history of computing, LGBT rights, women's role in WWII, etc) which would form part of a wider arts initiative within Bletchley and Fenny Stratford. Developers will need to engage with the relevant parish and Council teams early in the design process.

2.2.135 Policy SC1 (Sustainable Construction)

This sets out the Council's requirements for sustainable construction, with further detail provided within the forthcoming Sustainable Construction SPD 2021.

2.2.16 Milton Keynes has a unique selling point around its design and therefore its Design Policies are key to inform any proposal. These include:

Policy D1: Designing a High Quality Place, Policy D2: Creating a Positive Character Policy D3: Design of Buildings, Policy D4: Innovative Design and Construction and Policy D5: Amenity and Streetscene.

## West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan

2.2.17 The West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan was made part of the Development Plan in March 2019.

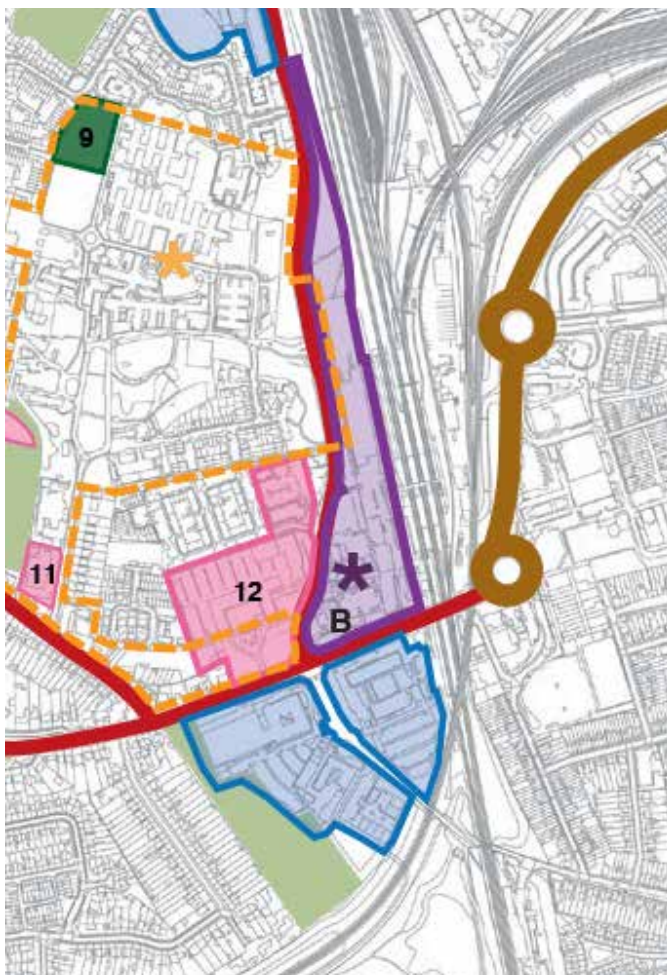
2.2.18 The plan identifies the opportunity to enhance the Station Area (see Figure 5 below). Importantly, it identifies that there is a new catalyst for change. “East-West rail services will be re-instated on a stretch of the old ‘Varsity Line’ between Oxford and (initially) Bedford through Bletchley and eventually on to Cambridge, within a few years. New station platforms are to be constructed on the eastern side of the station. Bletchley will therefore be at the centre of an axis between two of Britain’s most successful and famous universities and fastest growing economies. This provides a renewed impetus to respond to the improved accessibility to both improve the existing station and station forecourt / square, and bring sites alongside the station forward for new development that responds to the superb enhanced accessibility of our area.” (Pg 30).

2.2.19 Policy BS1 (Station Regeneration) states “Regeneration of existing buildings and land alongside Bletchley Station, as identified in Figure 5, will be supported where it improves the travelling public’s experience including new station-related retail and café uses.”

2.2.20 Policy BS2 (Station Accessibility) states “Improvements to pedestrian, cycle and public transport access between the station and surrounding areas, including the town centre and Bletchley Park, will be supported.”

2.2.21 Policy BS3 (Station Quarter Development) states “Redevelopment of land and uses within the Station Quarter Opportunity Area , as identified in Figure 5, will be supported where the development is comprehensive and provides a sensitive and balanced mix of uses that can include residential, high quality workspaces, hotel, conference centre/ facilities, café/restaurant/local retail uses, visitor interpretation/facilities and public spaces, and is consistent with the approved development and design brief.”

2.2.22 Policy BS4 (Station Quarter Development and Design Brief) states “Major development proposals will only be supported where they are consistent with an overarching Development and Design Brief for the Opportunity Area, as defined on Figure 5.”



- Retaining and Creating New Employment  
Policies E1-E3
- ✱ Station Quarter  
Policies BS1-BS4
- Renewing Our Local Shopping Centres  
Policies LSC1-LSC4  
1. Melrose Avenue Shopping Centre  
2. Whaddon Way Shopping Centre
- Protecting and Developing Community Facilities  
Policies C1-C2 (See list opposite)
- Ensuring our Streets are Safe and Accessible  
Policies SSA1-SSA3
- - - Conservation Area Boundary

Figure 5: Proposals Map from West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan (extract only)

## 2.3 National Planning Guidance

### National Planning Policy Framework

2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (updated in July 2021) promotes sustainable development that meets 3 overarching objectives:

1. Economic - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places
2. Social - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well designed beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural wellbeing
3. Environmental - including making effective use of land and moving to a low carbon economy (para 8)

#### Section 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Recognise that residential development often plays an important role in the vitality of town centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites (para 86f).

#### Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities

Development should promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with - for example, through mixed use developments and active street frontages (para 92a)

To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, development should include shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (para 93)

#### Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport

Development should be focused on locations which are sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. (para 105).

#### Section 11: Making effective use of land

Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs (para 120c)

Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings (para 120d)

Para 124. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

#### Section 12: Achieving well-designed places

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 sets out six criteria that development proposals should meet. These included their function, appearance, layout, landscaping, character, sense of place, mix, uses, health, and well-being.

#### Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Supporting the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. (Paragraphs 152 to 173).

#### Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Paragraph 174 requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This includes sites with biodiversity value. Proposal should minimise impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Part e) states ‘preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

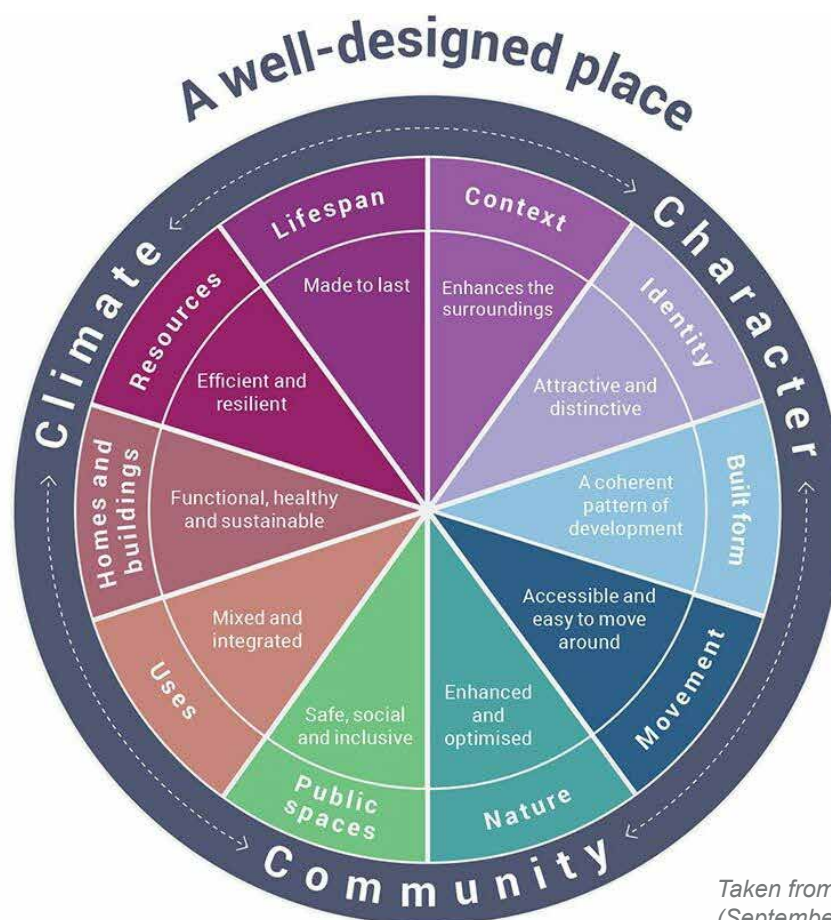
Paragraphs 179-182 set out the requirements regarding habitats and biodiversity.

## National Design Guide

2.3.2 The National Design Guide (updated in January 2021) was created to ensure beautiful, enduring and successful places are delivered. It outlines 10 characteristics of well designed places.

1. Context - enhances the surroundings
2. Identity - attractive and distinctive
3. Built Form - a coherent pattern of development
4. Movement - accessible and easy to move around
5. Nature - enhanced and optimised
6. Public Spaces - safe, social and inclusive
7. Uses - mixed and integrated
8. Homes and Buildings - functional, healthy and sustainable
9. Resources - efficient and resilient
10. Lifespan - made to last

2.3.3 Especially important in the context of this site is it advocates compact development, that lines/ addresses the adjacent streets providing active frontages, and landmarks/key buildings in appropriate place to help with legibility as well a mix of uses.



*Taken from the National Design Guide (September 2019)*

## 2.4 Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD

- 2.4.1 The Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD was adopted in March 2022. The SPD will capitalise on the significant opportunities flowing from the enhanced connectivity and accessibility, enabled by EWR, through the provision of guidance which promotes holistic and inclusive renewal within Central Bletchley.
- 2.4.2 It will inform landowners and potential investors about the placemaking and development opportunities within Central Bletchley which will deliver on the agreed aspirations for the area. East-West Rail will bring Oxford and Cambridge within a 40 minute train journey from Central Bletchley while London Euston is only 40 minutes away via the West Coast Mainline.
- 2.4.3 The SPD build's on the approved Central Bletchley Prospectus through the provision of further detailed land use and design guidance for opportunity areas which will provide greater clarity, certainty and speed for applicants when preparing planning applications.
- 2.4.4 The site lies within the Sherwood Drive Quarter Opportunity Area (see figure 6 below - SPD parameters plan). The Police and Fire Station is identified as an opportunity site to be redeveloped for mixed use development including an Innovation Hub

and housing. A small element of retail space could be provided in a prominent position to help generate activity and capture footfall around the existing western train entrance.

- 2.4.5 As part of the redevelopment of the Police and Fire Station Site, a pedestrian route was shown running across the site. This was included as the Innovation Hub was likely to be seen as a separate development and therefore a piece of public realm including a pedestrian route was seen as a good response for the site context.

## 2.5 Central Bletchley Prospectus

- 2.5.1 This Prospectus was approved by Milton Keynes Council in 2020.
- 2.5.2 It was produced to both highlight, and capitalise on, the significant renewal opportunities flowing from the delivery of EWR as a consequence of Central Bletchley's enhanced connectivity and accessibility.



Figure 6: Urban Design Framework Parameters Plan (Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road Quarter)



## 2.6 Other Planning Guidance

### Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)/ Documents (SPDs)

- 2.6.1 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/SPDs) should be considered as material considerations when preparing any planning application for the site:
- Sustainable Construction SPD (2021)
  - Parking Standards SPD (2016)
  - New Residential Development Design Guide SPD (2012)
  - Affordable Housing SPD (2020)
  - Milton Keynes Drainage Strategy – Development and Flood Risk SPG (2004)
  - Planning Obligations SPD (2021)
  - Designing Dementia-friendly Neighbourhoods SPD (2022)
  - Health Impact Assessment SPD (2021)
  - Biodiversity SPD (2021)
  - Transport and Sustainable Transport SPD (2009).
- 2.6.2 MKC is currently undertaking a partial review of its parking standards, including a reduction for Private Rental (PRS) or Built to Rent (BRS) schemes in more sustainable locations such as Central Bletchley. A draft is due out for consultation on 10 August 2022.

## 2.7 Planning Assessment

- 2.7.1 This planning assessment has been prepared in the context of this Brief proposing mixed use development with housing likely being the predominant use.
- 2.7.2 The key policies to be addressed are Policies CC3 (Protection of Community Facilities) and ER2 (Protection of Employment Land).
- 2.7.3 It is the view that the requirements of relevant sections of Policy CC3 have been met because the activities provided at the Fire Station (now demolished) and the Police station had been relocated elsewhere, in the case of the fire station to the Blue Light Hub in West Ashland where there is also a police presence.
- 2.7.4 Regarding Policy ER2 it is acknowledged that the Fire and Police Station sites are shown on the Plan:MK policies map as employment land within a wider designation as a site within the Central Bletchley Prospectus Area (CBPA) where Policy SD16 applies. Policy ER2 seeks the protection of existing employment land and premises, and the proposed mixed use (with residential being the likely predominant use) as outlined within this Brief would change the primary use of the site to a non-employment use. Plan:MK would require that a proposal is in accordance with Policy ER2 to justify the loss of employment land. However, Policy BS3 of the WBNP (post adoption Plan:MK) has allocated

the Station Quarter to be redeveloped for mixed uses and similarly, the Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework (CBUDF) SPD states the first key principle for the Sherwood Drive Quarter is for the redevelopment of the police and fire station for mixed used development including an Innovation hub.

- 2.7.5 As the WBNP was made/adopted after Plan:MK, it [the WBNP] was considered to be the most up to date plan and one that carried considerable weight.
- 2.7.6 Therefore, the designations for mixed use redevelopment for the Police and Fire Station sites outlined within the WBNP and CBUDF justifies the loss of employment land and principle of change of use.

## 2.8 Planning Summary

- 2.8.1 The preceding summary of key relevant policy and other guidance outlines a favourable policy context that supports the Council's aspirations for the site.
- 2.8.2 In summary, it is a brownfield site located within a highly sustainable location likely within Plan:MK Policy SD16 which furthermore calls for the early redevelopment of the Police and Fire Station Sites.
- 2.8.3 The West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan outlines a range of permissible uses, including residential and supporting local retail uses while the Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD envisages the site to be developed for residential led mixed use development at densities up to 250dph.

# **SECTION 3:** **CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

### 3.1 Introduction

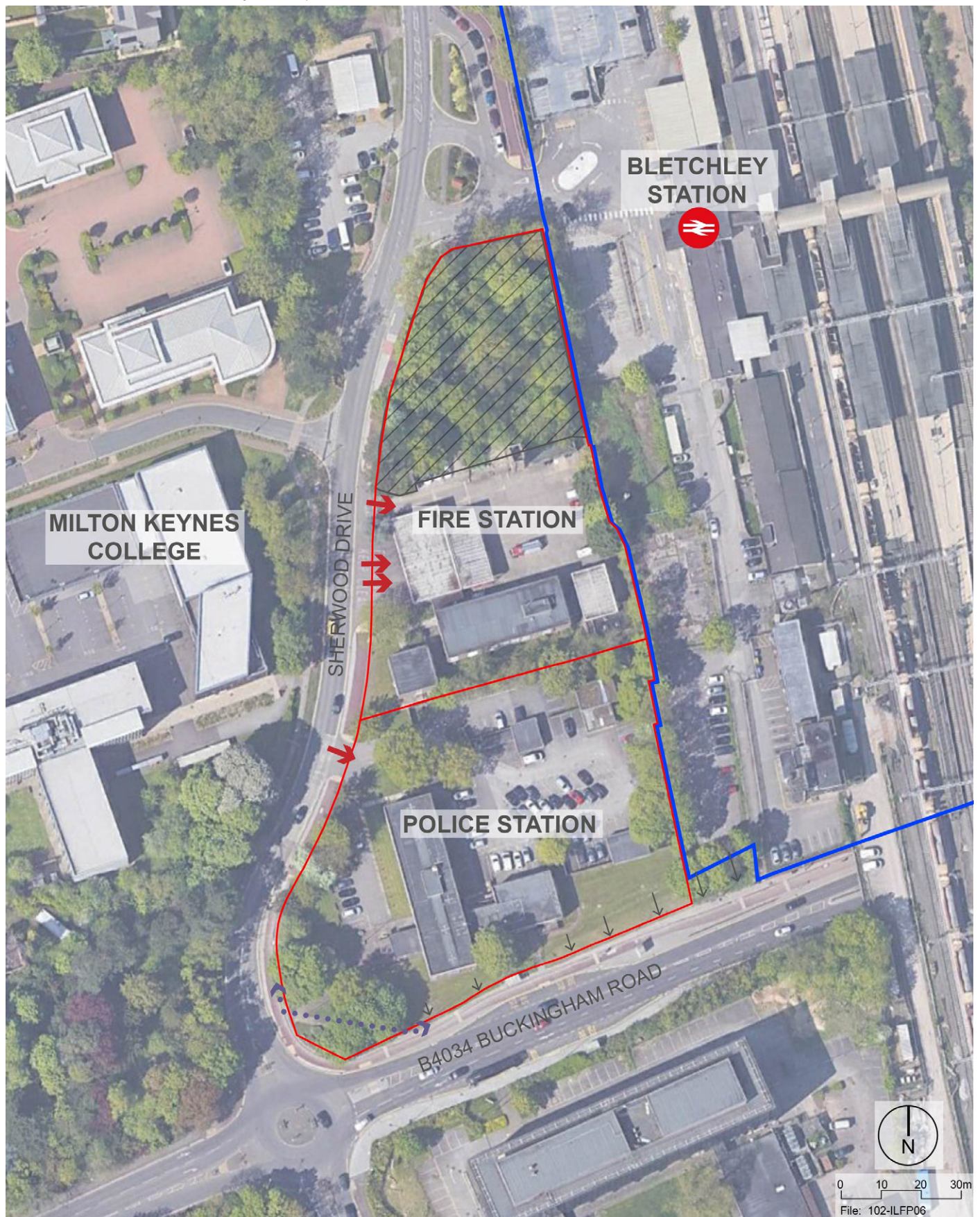
3.1.1 This section describes the key characteristics of the two sites and their context. It includes location, site description, land uses, key environmental/technical aspects such as noise, topography and utilities. There is also a short summary of transport aspects and local character. The section includes the site's opportunities and constraints which have informed the key design principles in the next section.

### 3.2 Location

3.2.1 The sites are located on the western edge of Bletchley town centre, adjacent to Bletchley Station. They are in a mixed use area with Milton Keynes College to the west, the famous Bletchley Park to the northwest, mainly employment uses to the south, whilst to the east is the West Coast Mainline. The sites are located within a commercial/institutional arc between the town centre and residential suburb of West Bletchley to the west.



Figure 7: Site Location



- Site Boundary
- Network Rail/Operator land
- TPO Area
- Informal Pedestrian Route
- ➔ Vehicular Access
- ↓ Slope Down

Figure 8: Site Plan

### 3.3 Site Description

- 3.3.1 The Police Station site occupies approximately 0.68 Ha (1.68 Ac) whilst the Fire Station is 0.57 Ha (1.41 Ac), giving a combined area of 1.25 Ha (3.09 Ac). Note that the site area given for the fire station is lower than the area on the Land Registry title (0.63 ha) as it is assumed that the site boundary would only extend to the edge of the pavement.
- 3.3.2 The Police Station comprises a two-storey L-Shaped building in a modernist style (see Figure 8 and photos). There is a car park to the rear, which includes a few ancillary buildings, and a small car park by the front entrance. There are several trees within and around the edges of the site, including mature specimens.
- 3.3.3 The Fire Station site, which was cleared in 2021, originally comprised a group of modernist style buildings set within a landscape framework. They included a garage for the fire tenders, accommodation block/offices, tower, training area, and car park. The original basement under the accommodation block remains in situ as demolition was completed to ground slab level only.
- 3.3.4 The northern half of the fire station site contain trees and shrubs and is designated as a woodland tree preservation order (TPO). Trees are also present along the site's boundaries. There is a ditch running north-south within the wooded area.
- 3.3.5 Each site takes access off Sherwood Drive. For the Fire Station, the access area is quite large in order to provide access to each fire tender whilst there is a separate access to the yard at the back. There are pedestrian connections to both sites from Sherwood Drive. Both facilities have secure rear compounds.



(Copyright Bing Maps)

*Bird's Eye View of Sites from south*



*View inside former Fire Station site looking towards Buckingham Road (top) and front of former Thames Valley Police Station*



- Site Boundary
- Area covered by the Urban Design SPD
- 🚂 Stations (EWR Buildings Under Construction)
- ..... Pedestrian Route from Station to Centre
- - - - Cycle Route (Redway) near site
- 🚌 Bletchley Bus Station
- 🚗 Car Parks
- 1 Police Station: Now Vacant
- 2 Fire Station: Buildings Demolished
- 3 WMT Staff Building
- 4 WMT Parking Area for Drivers
- 5 Signal Box
- 6 Vacant Area
- 7 Station Parking and Drop-off
- 8 Pedestrian Bridge for Platforms (extension to EWR Transfer Building under construction)
- 9 CEMEX Plant
- 10 Brunel Centre
- 11 Former Sainsbury's supermarket
- 12 Wilko
- 13 Brunel Roundabout
- 14 Stephenson House
- 15 Area with Permission Mixed Use Scheme
- 16 Office Building Recently Converted in Housing
- 17 Santander Training Centre
- 18 Extent of Proposed IoT Building
- 19 Former Cricket Pavilion Building

File: 102-ILFP04

Figure 9: Site Context Plan

### 3.4 Description of Surrounding Area

- 3.4.1 In terms of the immediate surroundings, the area to the east comprises car parking (rail related and public), metal fencing, an overgrown area which previously housed a building, a telecom mast, staff accommodation, a signal box and Bletchley Station. There is an unattractive and poorly surveilled pedestrian link running in between the parking areas and Network Rail buildings, which links the station with Buckingham Road and then on to the town centre.
- 3.4.2 To the south, the land drops down to Buckingham Road beyond which lies a five-storey former office building which is currently being converted into apartments. Sherwood Drive runs along the western edge, with Milton Keynes Colleges Bletchley Campus on the western side of Sherwood Drive. The College's new Institute of Technology faces the former Fire Station.
- 3.4.3 Adjacent to the Police Station on the corner of Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road is the former, now overgrown cricket pavilion site. It is heavily landscaped and fenced off from public access. The Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD however identifies it as an opportunity site to be restored as a small publicly accessible pocket park together with a small amount of housing.
- 3.4.4 The area to the north of the fire station contains rail-related uses such as the station entrance, pick up/drop-off (PUDO) and two-storey car park. There is also a hire car firm opposite the station entrance.
- 3.4.5 MKDP and MKC have held meetings with Network Rail, East West Rail and the station operator (London Northwestern Railway) about the land immediately to the east of the site (see Appendix A for ownership/lease arrangements). There is an opportunity to improve the environmental quality and functionality of this area although the Signal Box building needs to remain. Network Rail are currently exploring the options for this area and will continue to meet with MKDP and MKC.



View south along footpath with overgrown area to right and Signal Box on left



View south along Sherwood Drive with former Fire Station behind temporary fencing



View towards former Fire Station site (buildings now demolished) from entrance to MK College

### 3.5 Landscape and Environmental

#### Topography

- 3.5.1 A topographic survey has been completed on the two sites and shows that there is a gradual fall from north to south, with a more significant drop along the southern edge, down to Buckingham Road (see photo below).

#### Trees and Vegetation

- 3.5.2 There are a number of trees within the site and along the adjacent streets, which contribute towards the character of the area. A tree survey has been completed on the sites by Andrew Belson (see extract in Appendix B) and this includes details about the condition of the trees. The northern part of the Fire Station site is covered by a Woodland Tree Preservation Order made in 2010.

#### Ecology

- 3.5.3 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was completed by Ecology by Design in October 2021. The Baseline Habits Map is shown in Appendix C. The Executive Summary provides a list of key findings and recommendations for additional surveys regarding bats. There is a recommendation for improving the biodiversity value of the site, which may require offsetting.

#### Flood Risk

- 3.5.4 The sites do not lie in any flood zone and are hence classified as Flood Zone 1. According to the Government website, parts of the site have a low-medium risk of flooding from surface water.

#### Noise

- 3.5.5 The site lies close to the West Coast Mainline and proposed route of the new route for East-West Rail. Therefore, consideration will need to be given to the impact of noise on the future residents and users of the development, including amenity spaces. There will also be noise from Buckingham Road.

### 3.6 Utilities

- 3.6.1 A utilities report on the site has been prepared by Atkins (see extract in Appendix D) and is available upon request. These have not been added to constraints plan and the developer will need to carry out their own assessments of the existing services to ascertain their implications for development and whether they act as constraints, particularly the sewers crossing the site.



*The more steeply sloping part of the site along its southern boundary*



*Trees within northern part of former Fire Station with station entrance on left*



### 3.7 Land Uses

3.7.1 The sites are located in a mixed use area which is typical of an edge-of-centre location (see Figure 10). To the east lies Bletchley town centre which contains a range of high street businesses. Its western end is defined by Brunel Shopping Centre, with a range of local and national businesses, and the retailer Wilko.

3.7.2 The western side of the railway lines comprises mainly educational, government and commercial uses, typically offices. Situated in between these two areas are predominantly transport related uses such as the station, ancillary buildings, car parks, car hire firm, and a CEMEX plant which is served by the adjoining railways. Extending outwards, the uses comprise mostly housing, with predominantly Victorian terraces to the east and inter-war suburbs to the west. Other notable uses include the bus station, higher-density apartments in Stephenson House and the educational/tourism at Bletchley Park to the northwest.

3.7.3 Some of the older commercial areas are now in residential use. For example, Caspian View, the office block to the south is now in residential use as is the land north of the bus station currently being redevelopment into 184 dwellings and community uses (Bletchley View).



Former office building to south of site being converted into apartments (Caspian View)

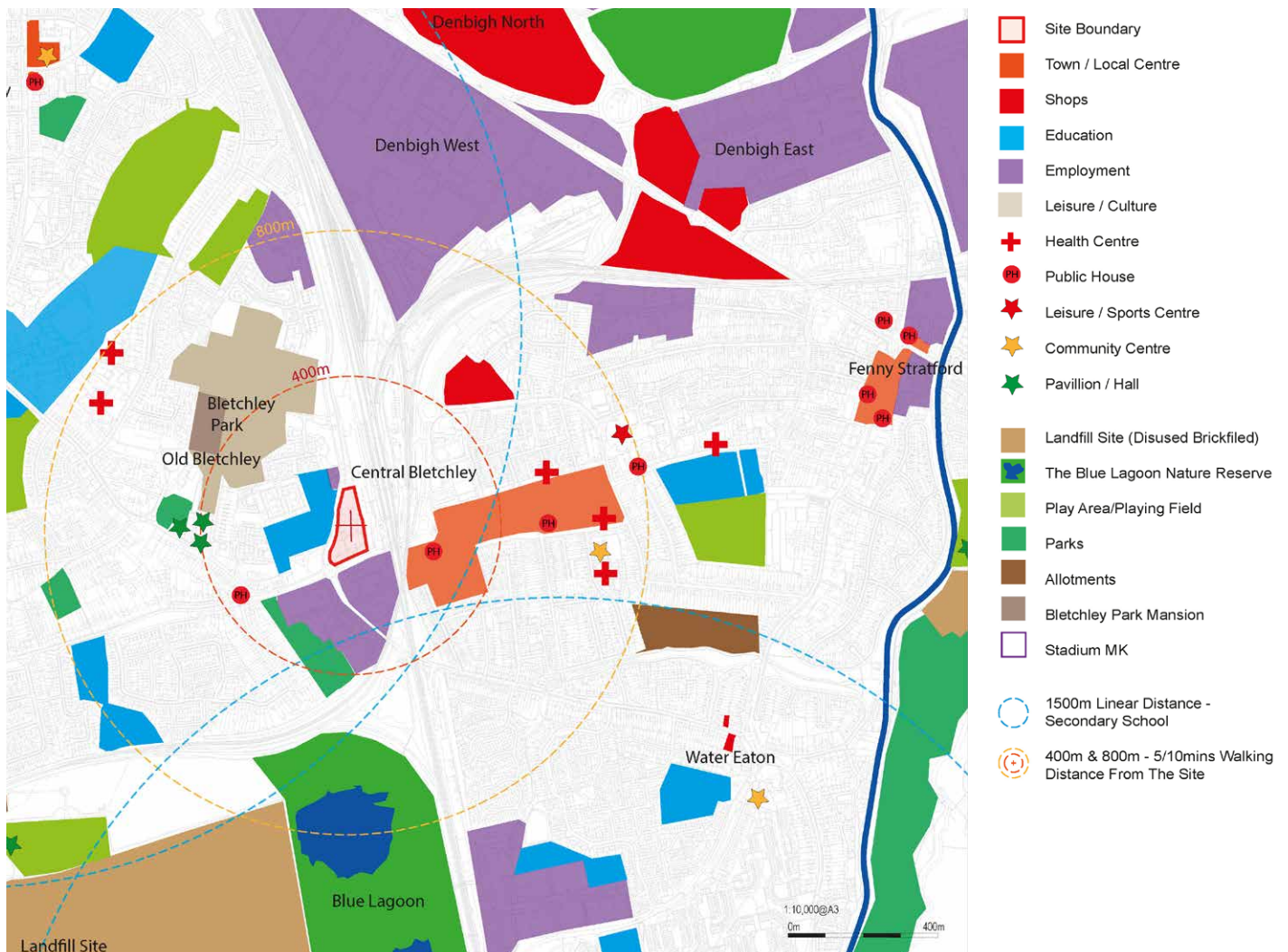
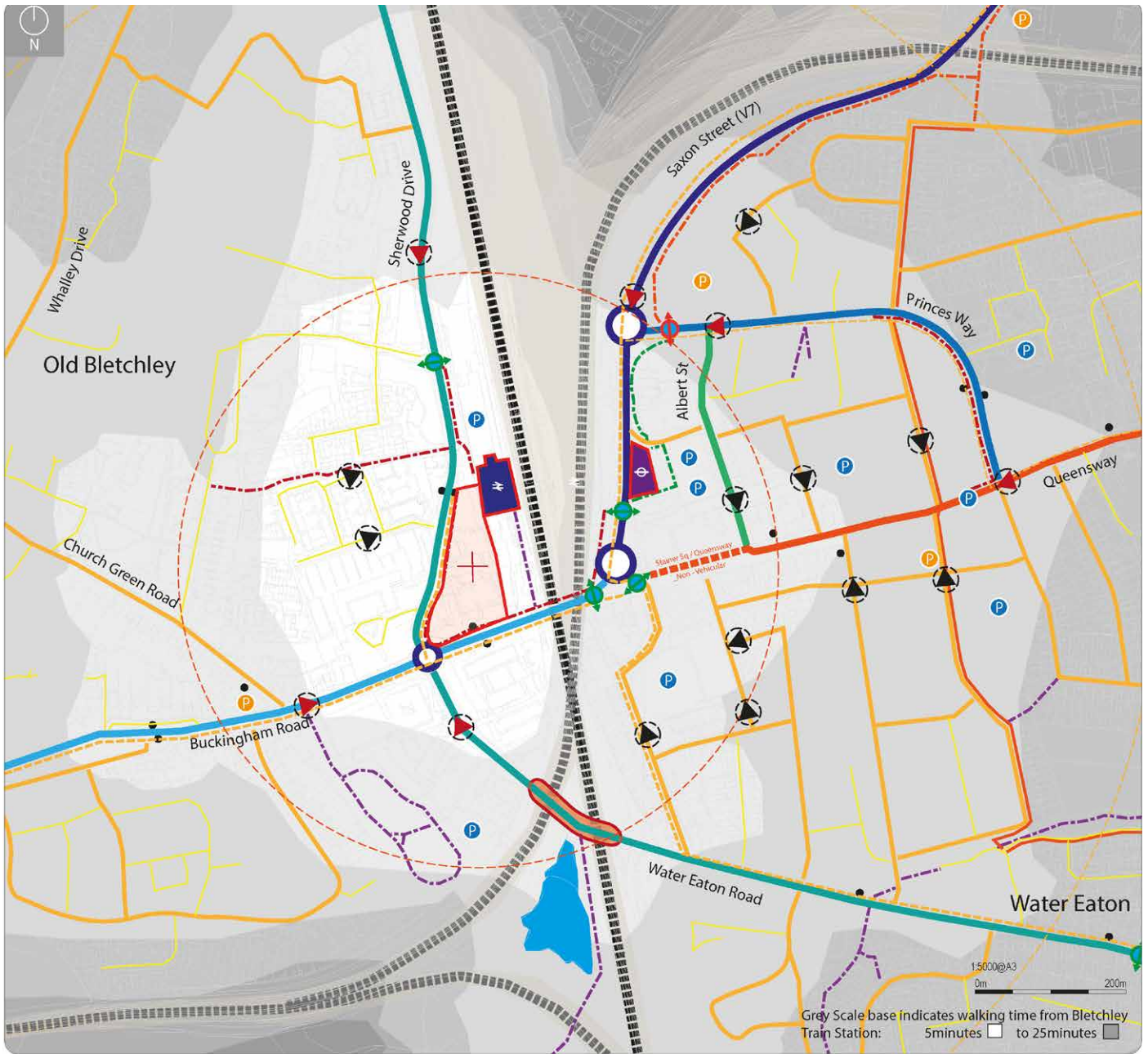


Figure 10: Land Use Plan

(Plan based upon p21 of Urban Design SPD)



- |                                                                     |                                                                                   |                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Site Boundary                                                       | Existing Vehicular Access Point                                                   | Bus Route                                |
| Saxon Street, V7 Grid Road<br>Dual Carrageway (Primary Distributor) | Strategic Access Point                                                            | Footpath                                 |
| Queensway                                                           | Railway Line - West Coast Main Line                                               | Leisure Route (Pedestrian / Cycle Route) |
| Princess Way                                                        | Railway Line - East West Rail                                                     | Redway (Pedestrian / Cycle Route)        |
| Buckingham Road                                                     | Railway Station                                                                   | Redway Super Route                       |
| Sherwood Drive / Water Eaton Rd                                     | Bus Terminus                                                                      | National Cycle Route (Route 6)           |
| Albert Street                                                       | Traffic Signals -Constrained Road Width<br>(Water Eaton Drive, under the railway) | Pedestrian Road Crossing Points          |
| Local Distributor                                                   | Bus Stop                                                                          | Poor Pedestrian Crossing Points          |
| Local Access Road                                                   | 400m from site (5 mins walking)                                                   | Parking (public)                         |
|                                                                     | 800m from site (10 mins walking)                                                  | Parking (customer only)                  |

(Plan based upon p24 of Urban Design SPD)

Figure 11: Movement Network

## 3.8 Access & Transport

### Vehicular

- 3.8.1 The sites are located at the junction of Buckingham Road and Sherwood Drive (see figure 11). The B4034 Buckingham Road is a busy main road running into and around Bletchley town centre. Each site is accessed from Sherwood Drive which connects onto the roundabout along the B4034 Buckingham Road.

### Public Transport

- 3.8.2 The sites are very well served by public transport. They are next to Bletchley Station with regular services to London Euston and Milton Keynes Central. The new East West Rail service will add further destinations, including Oxford and Bedford. There are also bus stops along Buckingham Road and Sherwood Drive whilst the town's bus station lies immediately on the eastern side of the railway line and is within easy walking distance.

### Walking and Cycling

- 3.8.3 The sites are well connected to existing footpath and cycle networks with a redway running along their southern and western boundaries. There are no footpaths crossing the site although there is an informal desire line crossing the southwest corner. There are pavements along both sides of Buckingham Road and Sherwood Drive which then links into the station and College.
- 3.8.4 There is a poor quality pedestrian link providing the shortest walking distance between the town centre and train station. It includes steep steps providing access onto Buckingham Road.



Access into Police Station (Footpath/Cycle link in front) with secure rear compound and turning for car parking to right.



View of Brunel Roundabout with transfer building for East West Rail under construction

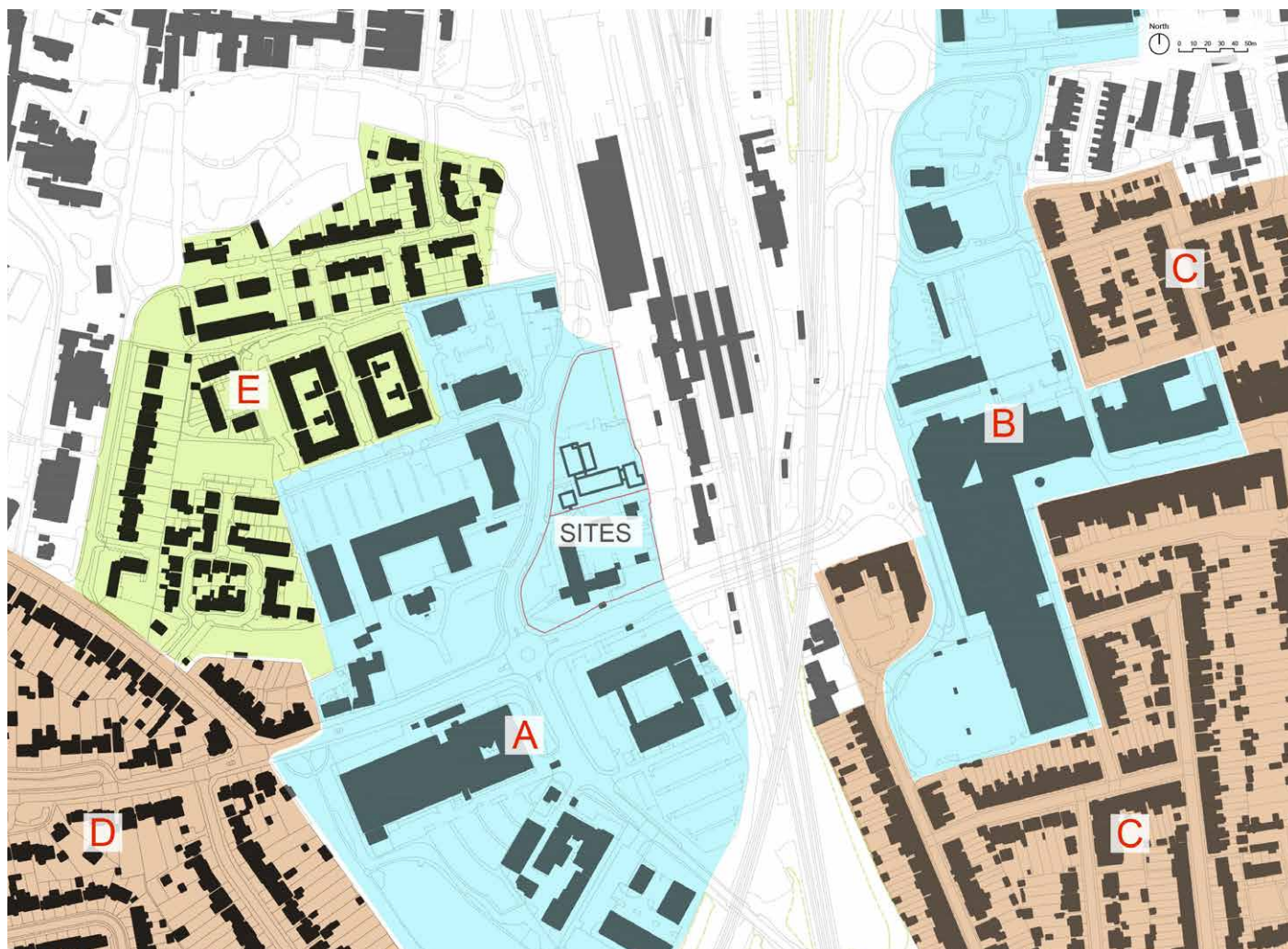


Bletchley Station entrance and car park with edge of former Fire Station site on right

### 3.9 Local Character

- 3.9.1 The site and surrounding area comprises mostly modern, stand-alone type buildings set back from the adjoining streets, which have a sylvan character. The buildings have a similar orientation, running perpendicular to Buckingham Road.
- 3.9.2 Figure 12 below is a figure/ground plan of the area and shows the variety across this edge-of-centre location. The area around the site has a coarser grain, which reflects the modernist principles, whilst the Victorian centre and inter-war suburbs have a finer grain.

- 3.9.3 In terms of heritage assets, there are no listed buildings on or next to site although there is a conservation area to the southwest of the police station.
- 3.9.4 In terms of activity, Buckingham Road is a busy main route into and out of Bletchley and beyond, whilst the station and College create activity along Sherwood Drive and the footpath to the east.



- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #c8a28d; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Fine Grain</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #c8e6c9; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Medium Grain</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #bbdefb; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Coarse Grain</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A</b> Mostly Commercial or Educational Buildings</li> <li><b>B</b> Large Footprint buildings, including Brunel Shopping Centre, with mostly commercial uses</li> <li><b>C</b> Mainly Victorian terraced housing and town centre</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>D</b> Mostly Inter-War Housing</li> <li><b>E</b> More modern housing created through infill or regeneration of other uses</li> </ul> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Figure 12: Figure/Ground Plan



The area fronting onto Brunel Roundabout comprising Victorian buildings and back of The Brunel Shopping Centre



Mercury House - a 1980s office building, designed by Milton Keynes Development Corporation and currently being converted into apartments



View across Brunel Roundabout looking towards Queensway/town centre. Modernist Brunel Shopping Centre is on right with more recent Wilko store in the middle and the 10 storey residential block of Stephenson House on left

(Copyright Google Streetview)



Typical Victorian terrace alongside town centre



MK College buildings at the entrance with more recent four-storey apartment buildings in the distance

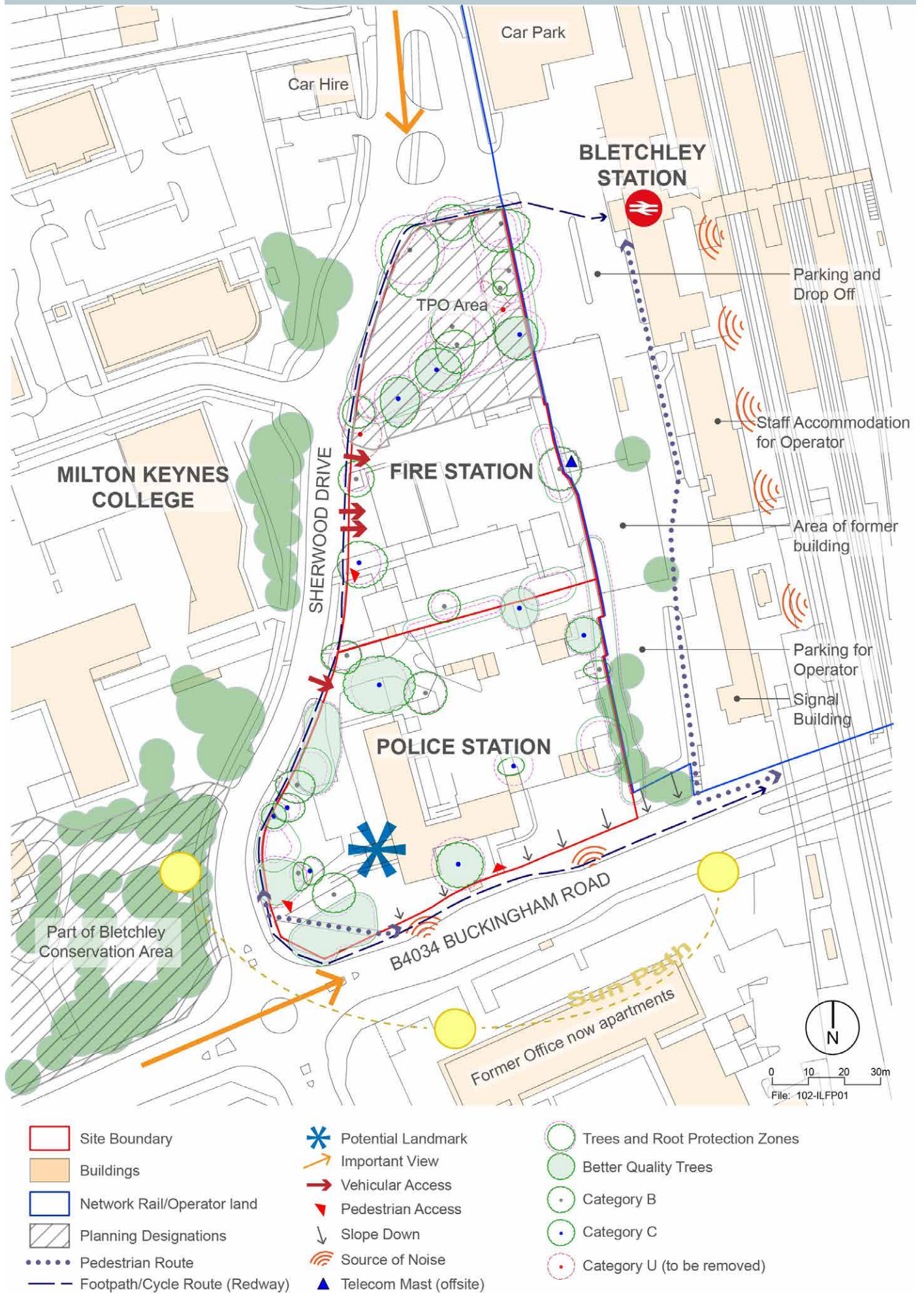


Figure 13: Opportunities and Constraints Plan

### 3.10 Opportunities and Constraints

3.10.1 The key opportunities and constraints are set out in Figure 13 and summarised below.

1. There is an opportunity to redevelop this site for mixed use development which could include high-density housing, a hotel, café, restaurant, or local retail uses.
2. There is an opportunity for a landmark building and/or new frontages along Buckingham Road.
3. The proposal should consider the impact upon the existing trees and plant new trees and vegetation. There could be an opportunity to develop within the Woodland TPO, provided it can be justified in planning policy terms, or to use the area for another function.
4. The scheme must consider noise from the railway lines, station area and main road.
5. Access can be from Sherwood Drive using one or both existing connections.
6. There is an opportunity to improve safety of the pedestrian route to the station, situated to the east, by providing natural surveillance.
7. Some of the underground utilities could affect the layout, especially the foul water sewers which could be expensive to move.

3.10.2 Developers will need to provide their own opportunities and constraints plan as part of the design process in order to demonstrate a good understanding of the site and its context.



*Opportunity for new landmark building on southwest corner of site, set back behind existing trees.*



*Southern part of site where the existing trees could be treated as a constraint. There is also the potential to add additional trees and vegetation.*

# **SECTION 4:** **DESIGN PRINCIPLES**



## 4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section sets out guidance and requirements to be taken into account by the developer and their design team. They have been informed by good urban design practice, policy guidance (including the Central Bletchley Urban Design Framework SPD), alongside a thorough understanding of the site and its context. The development proposals need to provide a clear design framework to include the key objectives and a concept. This could include assessing more than one option and the reason for proposing the final scheme.
- 4.1.2 High density developments require careful design, particularly those in complex built up areas. The Architect will need to think creatively, have experience designing these typologies and incorporate lessons from other precedents.
- 4.1.3 The design and layout will need to be imaginative in response to the noise conditions, shape of the site and adjoining station environment, whilst making the most of key views.
- 4.1.4 The key considerations are set out on the Design Principles Plan in Figure 14 and described in the following section. The Plan only identifies those key principles which are important to delivering the overall vision of the scheme and need to be adhered to, allowing significant design creativity with other design elements of the scheme. This section should be read alongside the development plan and other material considerations, including the New Residential Development Design Guide SPD, and the NPPF. The guidance here relates to this particular site and hence does not include all the standard urban design principles to be followed.

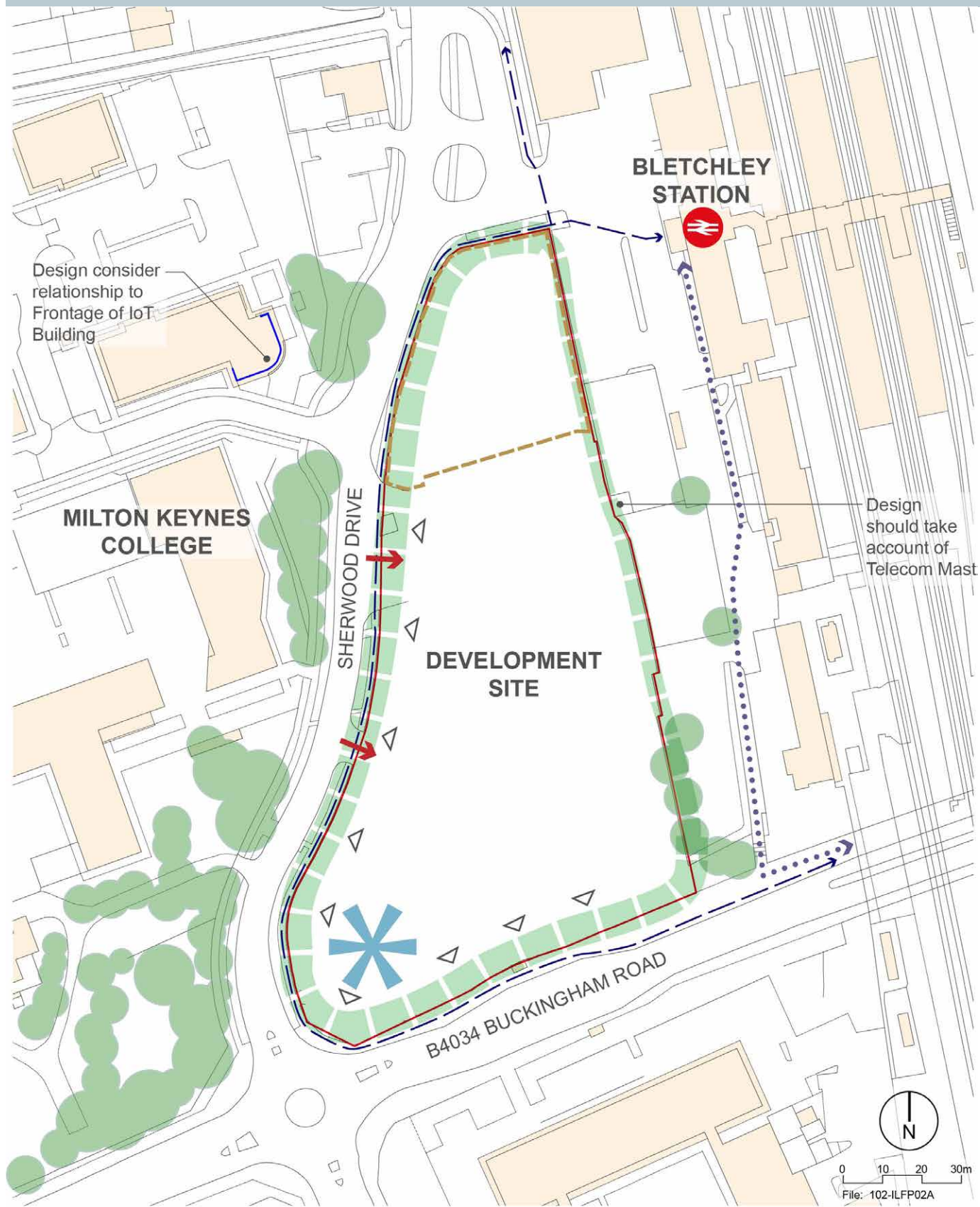
## 4.2 Land Use and Housing Mix

- 4.2.1 As set out in planning policy, the site is suitable for mixed use development which could include housing, a hotel, café, restaurant, or local retail uses.
- 4.2.2 The proposal should accord with planning policy in terms of density and housing mix.

## 4.3 Layout

- 4.3.1 Development should aim to provide an attractive and strong frontage onto Buckingham Road and Sherwood Drive, increasing surveillance onto them. Doors, entrances and primary habitable room windows should also be focussed on these two streets.
- 4.3.2 The approach should also provide some surveillance of the existing footpath to the east of the site but given the unattractive and uncertain future of the Network Rail owned land immediately to the east of the site, this edge can be designed as a secondary frontage in comparison to the Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road frontages. The layout should clearly avoid direct views towards the telecom mast.

- 4.3.3 A key consideration is the approach towards the existing trees. There is a requirement to retain trees and vegetation around the edges of the site in order to protect the character of the adjoining streets and provide an attractive setting for the buildings, no to mention the environmental benefits. It is possible to propose development within the TPO area provided it can be justified in planning terms. If this area is not built upon then the developer needs to decide what to do with the area. This includes its function, future ownership, boundary treatment, and relationship to the surrounding area, particularly the station entrance and car park.
- 4.3.4 New trees and vegetation should be provided, including along the site's boundaries although the aim is not to screen the buildings. Where trees are removed the 'green edge' should be enhanced through new planting within the private defensible space along Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road in particular.
- 4.3.5 A landmark building and/or strong frontage should be provided along the Buckingham Road edge, a busy approach into the town centre, as well as being visible from the adjoining railway lines. It needs to be carefully designed to have a presence, respond to the road/junction whilst avoiding adverse impact upon the other parts of the development in terms of shade.
- 4.3.6 The layout should ensure that the adjoining public realm is overlooked and there is a clear distinction between public and private realms. Key frontages should be maximised although it may not be possible to provide them along the entire periphery because of the width of the block depth. Therefore, the focus should be on key principles which are to provide passive surveillance in the southeast corner, parts of the eastern side, improving the look and feel of the pedestrian link to the station, and Sherwood Drive. The College generates activity but the buildings provide limited natural surveillance and even then only during opening times. The layout should obviously avoid direct views towards the telecom mast.
- 4.3.7 The Council will seek to design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour following best practice guidance in 'Secured by Design'. Most importantly, the layout of the development should avoid the creation of areas of public realm that are 'leftover' and not overlooked by any development, as they can become areas of anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, there should be no ambiguous space in terms of ownership.
- 4.3.8 Where residential exists at ground floor there needs to be private defensible green space included along the Sherwood Drive and Buckingham Road frontages. The designer needs to consider the relationships between the building, its function and the boundary with the back of the redway.



- Site Boundary
- Area Covered by TPO
- ✳ Potential Landmark
- △ Key Frontages
- Green Edge
- Existing Trees Outside Site Boundary
- ⋯ Pedestrian Link to Station
- Footpath/Cycle Path (Redway)
- ➔ Potential Access Point(s) for vehicles

Figure 14: Design Principles Plan

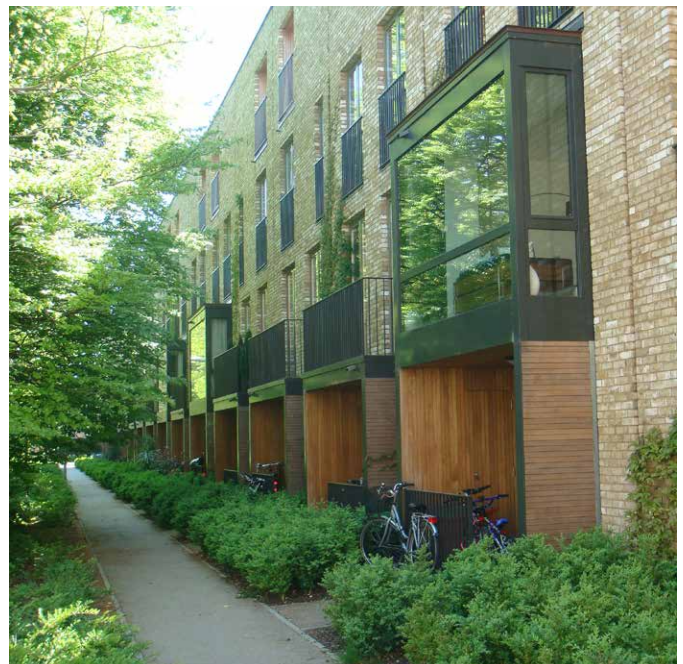
- 4.3.9 The design needs to think carefully about the type of non-residential use, its location and relationship with the housing. For example, any café/convenience store would need to take access off Sherwood Drive and provide space for parking and servicing.
- 4.3.10 The layout will need to consider noise from the railway line and roads. This could be in the form of site layout or floor plans. The design will also need to consider the impact upon the amenity space and accord with any maximum noise levels (and preferably be well below them). A noise survey will be required early on in the design process to ensure that noise levels are acceptable (this will need to include assumptions about East West rail). The approach will need to ensure that any non-residential uses do not disturb residential amenity.
- 4.3.11 Underground services will also need to be considered, particularly the sewers.

#### 4.4 Density and Building Heights

- 4.4.1 The development should aim for a density of 150-250 dwellings per hectare as set out in Policy SD16 of Plan:MK. The precise amount of development will need to consider site constraints, context, car parking standards and viability. Given the density target and market considerations, the most likely type of housing will be one and two-bedroom apartments.
- 4.4.2 There is a degree of flexibility for heights given the site's context and buildings could range from 4-10 storeys. The Architect should also consider the relationship with the new Technology building.
- 4.4.3 Any apartment complex will need to provide suitable amenity space between the buildings. If the amenity space is provided above the car parking, the designer will need to give careful consideration to the quality of the amenity space, relationship with the surrounding homes and the access points. Suitable distances between buildings are set out in the Residential Design Guide SPD.
- 4.4.4 The designer will need to explain how solar orientation has been taken into account in terms of natural light, shelter and solar gain. This relates to the external amenity space as well as the interiors.

#### 4.5 Landscape and Open Space

- 4.5.1 Landscaping and vegetation can play an important role in integrating apartment buildings into their context. They can serve to soften hard materials, help with the transition from public to private, provide visual interest, and deliver ecological / environmental benefits. The following principles and advice should be taken into consideration:
- Opportunities to include green infrastructure as part of the proposed building, either in the form of a green roof, roof garden, growing spaces, green walls, balconies and/or planters, can provide amenity landscape at various levels of a building design.
  - The edges of the development need to be carefully considered to retain and/or create a green edge around the site where it forms part of the character of the area. The aim is to keep the area facing Buckingham Road and Sherwood Drive in particular 'open' and green, but it needs to be defensible, with clear public /private boundaries.
  - All proposals must be accompanied by a plan illustrating indicative landscape principles for the site and how the design deals with the interface with the adjoining streets.



*Example of clearly defined pedestrian access with semi-private approach into each building.*

## 4.6 Architectural Approach

- 4.6.1 The buildings should be designed with a contemporary architectural style to help create a strong identity and sense of place. The approach should be selective in terms of materials, chosen for their appropriateness to the site and its context.
- 4.6.2 The building entrances need to be legible and welcoming. Stairwells within the building should be flooded with natural light whilst access into any rear amenity space needs to be well designed and located to preserve amenity.



*An attractively designed contemporary design where the building and landscape setting work together*

## 4.7 Residential Amenity

- 4.7.1 The residential uses should deliver a good standard of amenity in terms of privacy, sunlight, daylight and noise. The scheme will need to provide suitable amenity space, such as shared courtyard/garden, balconies, small patios inside the site (with low fenced off area for any ground floor flats) and roof gardens. The amenity space for a higher-density scheme needs to be carefully designed especially if lies on a parking area.
- 4.7.2 If balconies are included, if they are a crucial elevation detail and need to be carefully designed. They can often be too small and/or appear 'stuck on'. Balconies must be an integral part of the design and consider privacy, useable space, and climate. On this particular site, the design will need to consider noise from the railway, the sun path, the trees being retained, and the relationship with the effect of any taller building along the southern boundary.

## 4.8 Access and Movement

### Vehicles

- 4.8.1 Vehicular access will need to be from Sherwood Drive. The preference is for one or two at the most, in order to limit the potential conflict with pedestrians and cyclists using the redway.

### Pedestrians and Cyclists

- 4.8.2 The building entrances need to be designed with amenity and activity in mind. The number and location of entrances should help animate and activate the street whilst avoiding having too many apartments buildings served off a single entrance.
- 4.8.3 The informal pedestrian route across the southwest corner of the site could be closed off and the area returned to grass/vegetation with defensible space and better quality trees retained. This should create an attractive public realm, clear public/private distinction whilst removing future maintenance liabilities.
- 4.8.4 The development should consider the existing Redway that runs along the edge of the site and provide a safe and convenient link into the required cycle parking area.

### Car Parking

- 4.8.5 Underground or undercroft parking should have a high standard of security with automated access controls. Car parking should be designed to be unobtrusive and place close attention to the links between the car parking areas and dwellings in terms of security and access. In line with Plan: MK Policy HN1E a case could be made for provision of parking below current standards. Note that these standards are currently being consulted upon with lower requirements for Build to Rent types of development.
- 4.8.6 Any undercroft parking should not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding area, especially Buckingham Road or Sherwood Drive. Those that do face onto the street should be either screened or have enhanced architectural features or landscaping to ensure that the ground floor provides interest. The developer should aim to provide at least one space for a car club. There needs to be a electric vehicle charging point for every car.



*Example of an integrated parking solution (Vizion Development, CMK) where the car park entrance is kept to a minimum and designed as part of building facade*

### Cycle Parking

- 4.8.7 Cycle parking can be provided in apartments, provided the space is in addition to the Nationally Described Space Standards. It requires level access and an adequately sized lift. Communal bike stores may be provided externally, in basement car parks or in freestanding structures. These should be as near as possible to the entrance for convenience, and both the store and the bike stands should be lockable.
- 4.8.8 The cycle parking should be well-lit, with a sense of personal safety and be included in any CCTV set up. External parking should be overlooked by dwellings and not screened.

## 4.9 Servicing and Utilities

- 4.9.1 The layout and design of the building(s) shall accommodate requirements and access for servicing, waste storage and collection and utilities equipment. Methods of dealing with, and integrating servicing, waste storage and collection shall reflect the town centre location and form part of the building envelope, with no separate enclosures. Service yards and parking entrances should be integrated into the design and should not dominate any elevation.
- 4.9.2 Servicing arrangements should minimise any adverse impact upon the street scene or residential amenity. It may be better to locate the servicing needs together to minimise their impact possibly alongside car parking for any non-residential use which could sit alongside Sherwood Drive rather than be within any block. The design needs to take account of the size of refuse collection vehicles and waste collection systems to ensure that their turning requirements do not compromise the layout or change the design at a later stage in the process.
- 4.9.3 Where Anglian Water requires the diversion of, or any other works to, adopted sewers within the site, the developer is responsible for all works and costs incurred in meeting their requirements. The sewers shall be constructed in accordance with the current edition of 'Sewers for Adoption' irrespective of their future adoption status.
- 4.9.4 Here, the designer will need to take account of the existing utilities as per the plan in this document, especially the sewers. Some of the sewers run across a similar area in the southern part of the site and hence this could be a reason for retaining them.
- 4.9.5 The developer should speak to utilities providers and Network Rail in order to see if any new or re-directed underground services should take account of future development elsewhere. For example, if the sewers are redirected there could be benefits of installing a larger pipe to accommodate capacity for say new staff accommodation or possible student housing.
- 4.9.6 All new developments should be encouraged to provide superfast broadband. Larger developments of 30 or more homes can have the infrastructure installed for free if they start the application process

very early in the life cycle of their developments. All the necessary information for developers is on the Openreach website.

## 4.10 Sustainable Design

- 4.10.1 Milton Keynes has a history of pioneering approaches to sustainable design new technologies and aspires to be the greenest city in the world. Our local plan - Plan:MK - commits to continue the borough's dedication to high environmental standards, green urban landscapes and being 'different by design'.
- 4.10.2 Alongside this are the Council's objectives of being carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050. Therefore, proposals for the site should look to meet or surpass the sustainable standards laid out in Policy (SC1) of Plan MK and the subsequent Sustainable Construction SPD. As such development should be aiming for a BREEAM rating of Outstanding (>85%) level of certification which requires implementing innovation across all aspects of the project. Policy SC1 from Plan:MK and the Sustainable Construction SPD set sustainability standards that will have to be considered as part of the overall design process.

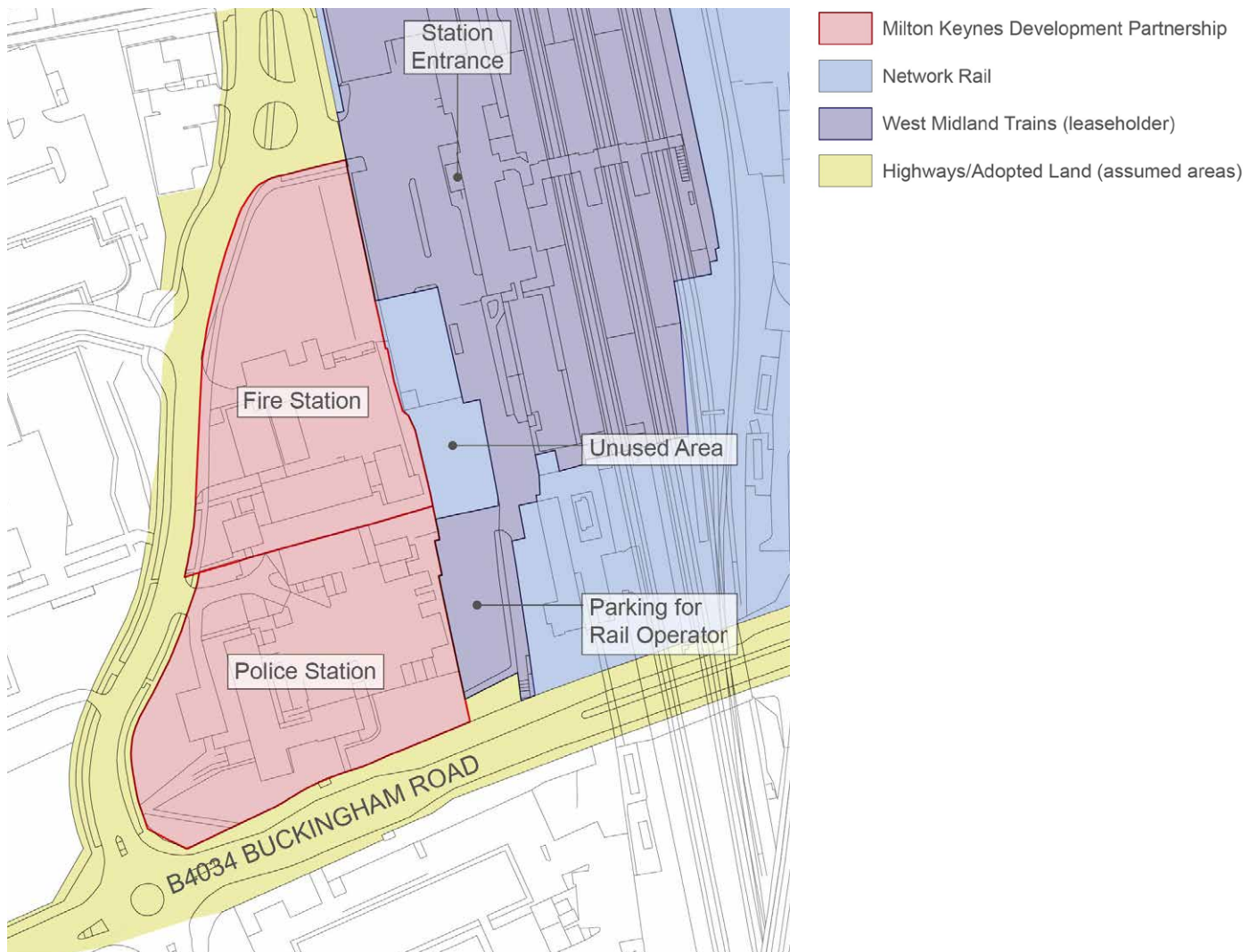
## 4.11 Ecology

- 4.11.1 Policy NE3 of Plan:MK on Biodiversity Enhancement has the objective of achieving positive gains for biodiversity in the design of new development. All new development exceeding 5 dwellings (in the case of residential development) or incorporating gross floor space in excess of 1000 sqm (in the case of other development) will be required to incorporate proposals to enhance biodiversity.
- 4.11.2 New buildings provide many opportunities for wildlife with benefits for biodiversity and the building occupiers. Specialist boxes or spaces are available (for example bird/bat bricks, swallow nest cups and sparrow terraces). Elements such as climbing plants can create habitat and enhance the visual appearance of buildings, as well as providing cooling, insulation and microclimate moderation. The developer will also need to consider the findings of the ecology report

## 4.12 Flooding and Drainage

- 4.12.1 When making planning applications it is essential that, to get the best results, the integration of water and SuDS options are considered early in the site evaluation and planning process, not just at the detailed design stage. Full consideration of SuDS at the pre-application and outline stage is important to ensuring surface water management is fully integrated into the development, leading to an effective drainage design, providing multiple benefits and with costs considered from the outset.
- 4.10.2 Further guidance and information can be found in the "Milton Keynes Council Surface Water Drainage; Local Guidance for Planning Applications", which is available on the Council's website.

# APPENDIX A: OWNERSHIP PLAN



# APPENDIX B: TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN

No.	Tree ID	Tree Name	Species	Notes	Recommendation		
2.5	T.1	7.0	31.18	-30	Reasonable	None in last third of safe working life expectancy. Hazard to vehicles if trees to be removed. Retain with 10m buffer in 10 degree.	Fell and replace
5	T.7	7.2	32.08	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen.	As work required
12	T.8	8.0	33.07	20	Poor	Low vigor. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some moderately sized pieces of deadwood in crown. Consider to remove. Retain with 10m buffer.	Could be retained in the short term. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
1	T.6	8.0A	34.53	15	Poor	Low vigor. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some moderately sized pieces of deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Could be retained in the short term. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
7	T.9	7.0	31.18	40	Reasonable	Weathered minor dead wood throughout crown. Partially obscured roots to lower levels. Some broken and dead.	Could be retained. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
8	T.5	8.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown.	Could be retained. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
9	T.6	5.0A	34.53	20	Reasonable	Low vigor. Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown.	Could be retained in the short term. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
7	T.1	1.0	3.36	40	Reasonable	Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Lower group of natural generation oak trees.	Remove
3	T.3	5.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. Tree interdependent from	Could be retained with care.
5	T.4	5.0	33.07	40	Good	No visible defects seen. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some small dead wood.	Could be retained with care. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter. Retain ground surface.
1	T.2	2.0	40.71	40	Reasonable	Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Tree located within 10m of building. Some group of natural generation oak trees. Consider direct damage to existing wall and roof.	Remove
4	T.3	2.0	40.71	40	Reasonable	Single stemmed tree. Suppressed.	Could be retained.
7	T.1	5.78	34.24	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. Tree interdependent from	Could be retained with care.
4	T.4	5.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	Multi stemmed tree. Suppressed.	Could be retained.
7	T.6	7.0A	33.09	40	Good	No visible defects seen. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some small dead wood.	Could be retained with care. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter. Retain ground surface.
5	T.1	4.3	34.42	40	Good	No visible defects seen. High level crown. Some deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Could be retained with care.
8	T.6	6	33.11	20	Reasonable	Low vigor. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some moderately sized pieces of deadwood in crown.	Could be retained in the short term. Remove dead wood greater than 2.5cm in diameter.
8	T.7	5.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen.	Could be retained.
8	T.1	2.0	41.1	40	Reasonable	Tree fern. Suppressed.	Could be retained in the short term.
5	T.5	5.78	34.24	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. High landscape. Retain.	Could be retained with care.
5	T.1	2.0	41.1	-30	Fair	Low vigor. Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. High landscape.	Could be retained with care.
5	T.1	5.0	40.71	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen.	Could be retained.
1	T.8	5.18	33.86	-30	Poor	Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Some deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Fell and replace
8	T.8	6.0	32.89	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. Tree interdependent from	Could be retained with care.
5	T.1	5.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen.	Could be retained.
10	T.1	7.0	31.18	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some moderately sized pieces of deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Could be retained with care.
10	T.1	10.0	31.18	40	Reasonable	No visible defects seen. Scattered minor dead wood throughout crown. Some moderately sized pieces of deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Could be retained with care.
1	T.1	4.0	33.07	-30	Fair	Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Some deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Fell and replace
1	T.1	4.0	33.07	-30	Fair	Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention. Some deadwood in crown. Retain with 10m buffer.	Fell and replace
8	T.8	6	33.11	20	Reasonable	No visible defects seen.	Could be retained with care.
5	T.1	5.0	33.07	40	Reasonable	Multi stemmed tree. Unlikely to be considered suitable for retention.	Fell and replace



**Appendix B: Tree Constraints Plan**

**Tree Constraints Plan**

**Information Only**

**Andrew Beeson**

Arb-Cultivar Consultant  
The Tree House, 10/11 The Old  
Milton Keynes, MK9 1JH  
01908 551111

**GSS Architecture**

**Blackley Fire Station - North**

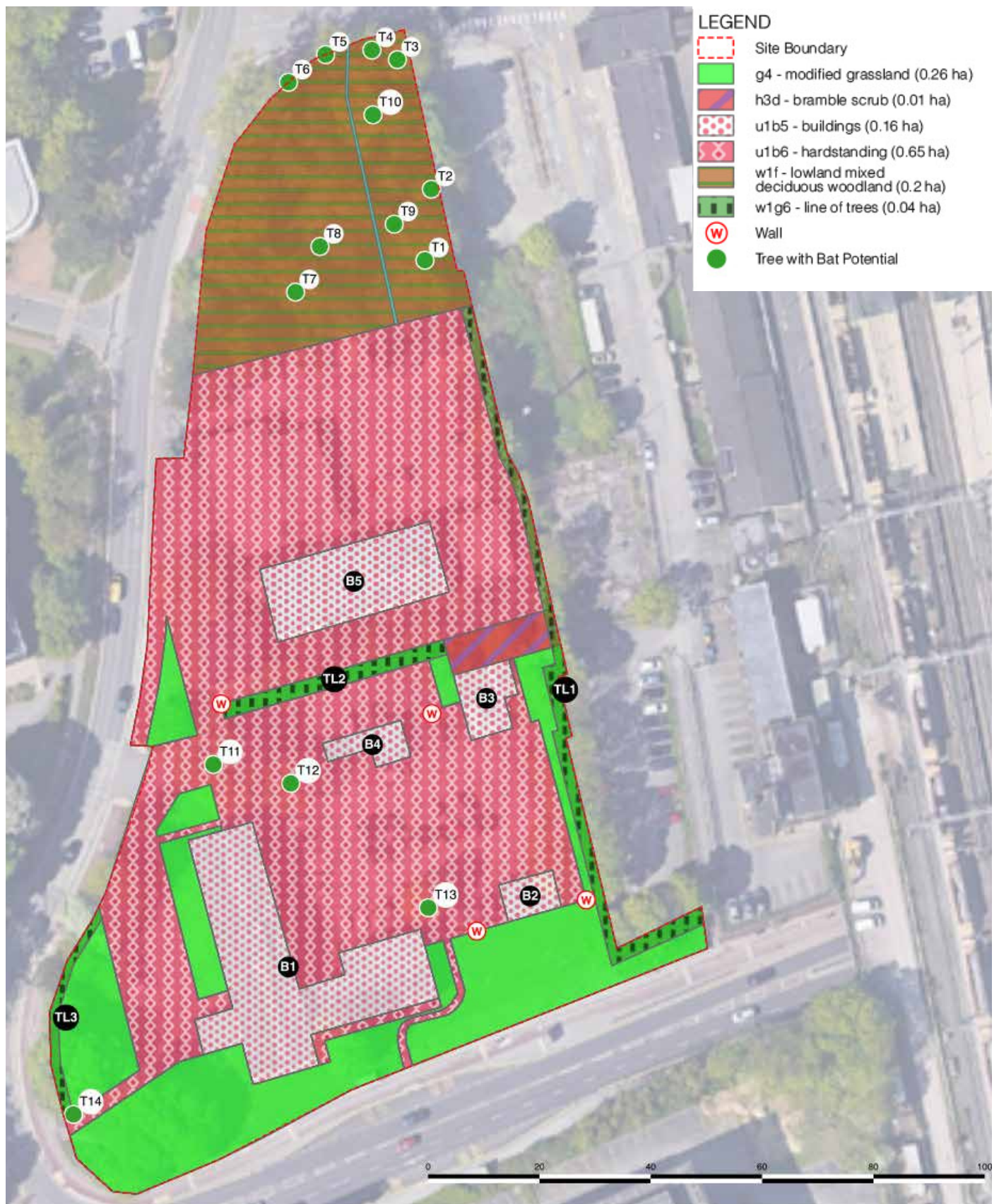
**TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN**

Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Date
ADD	ADD	ADD	2024/02/01

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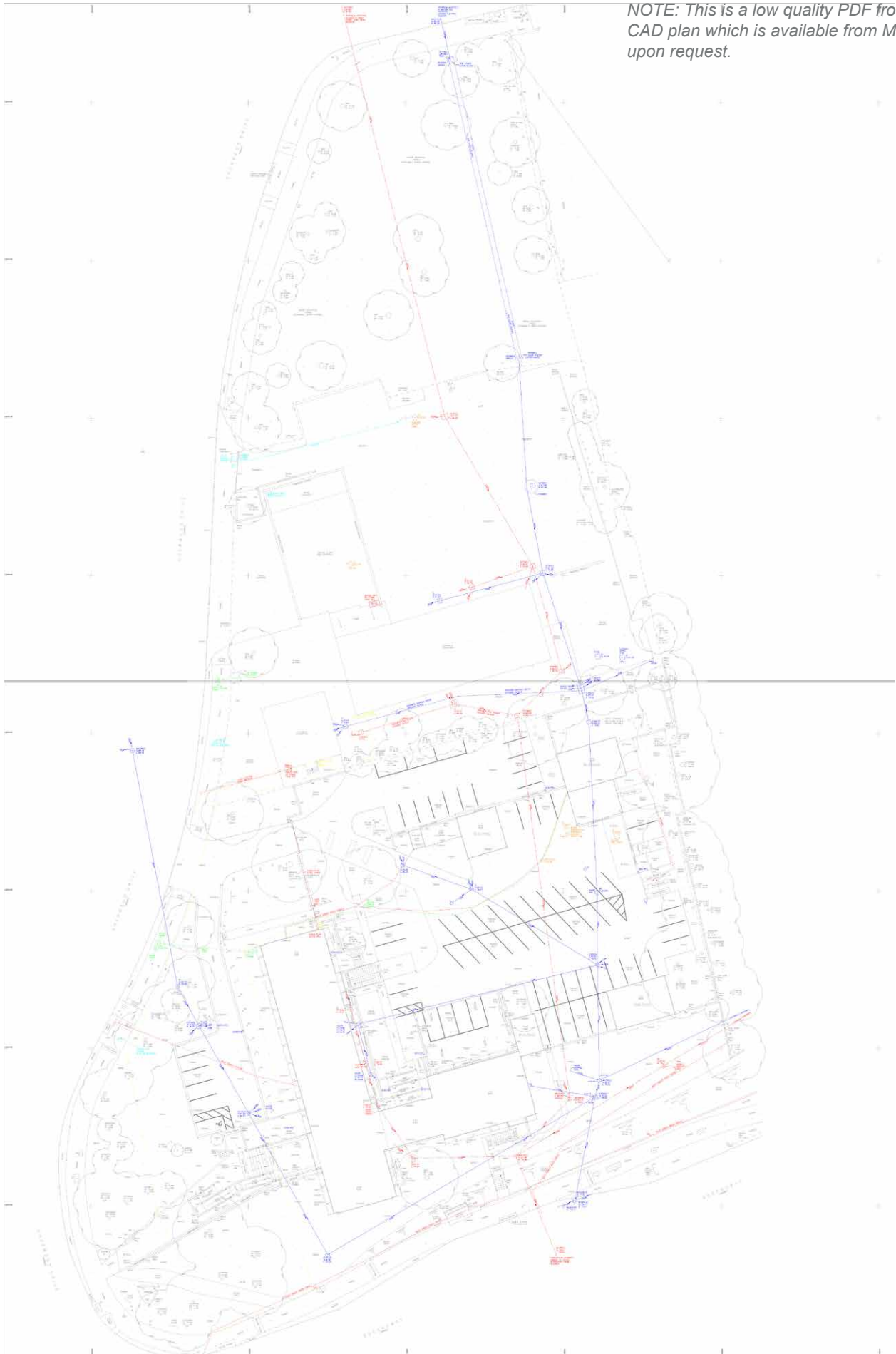
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# APPENDIX C: PHASE 1 ECOLOGY MAP





# APPENDIX D: UTILITIES PLAN



*NOTE: This is a low quality PDF from the CAD plan which is available from MKDP upon request.*

## APPENDIX E: ADDITIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

### Additional Plan:MK Policies

- Policy SD1 (Place-making principles for Development)
- Policy ER10 (Assessing Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Proposals)
- Policy ER16 (Hotel and Visitor Accommodation)
- Policy HN3 (Supported and Specialist Housing)
- Policy HN4 (Amenity, Accessibility and Adaptability of Homes)
- Policy CT2 (Movement and Access)
- Policy CT 3 (Walking and Cycling)
- Policy CT5 (Public Transport)
- Policy CT6 (Low Emission Vehicles)
- Policy CT9 (Digital Communication)
- Policy EH6 (Delivery of Health Facilities in New Development)
- Policy EH7 (Promoting Healthy Communities)
- Policy FR1 (Managing Flood Risk)
- Policy FR2 (Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management)
- Policy NE2 (Protected Species and Priority Species and Habitats)
- Policy NE3 (Biodiversity and Geological Enhancement)
- Policy L4 (Public Open Space)
- Policy D8 (Mains and Telecommunications Services)
- Policy CC3 (Protection of Community Facilities)
- Policy SC2 (Community Energy Networks and Large-Scale Renewable Energy Schemes)
- Policy SC3 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Schemes)



