

# Bath & North East Somerset Council: Englishcombe Lane Supported Living

JULY 2023

Landscape Strategy

(Site Familiarisation Constraints/Opportunities)





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# 1.0 Introduction

## △ 1.1 Brief

- › 1.1.1 Purpose
- › 1.1.2 The Site
- › 1.1.3 The Development
- › 1.1.4 Structure of the Report



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Brief

### 1.1.1 Purpose

Atkins Ltd. (member of SNC-Lavalin Group) has been commissioned by Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) to prepare a Landscape Strategy for a residential development (the 'Development') to the land at the rear of 89-123 Englishcombe Lane, BA2 2EH (the 'Site') to assist in Pre - Application discussions.

The primary purpose of this landscape strategy is to inform and guide the proposed development. It details the process undertaken up to pre-planning including what was observed during a site visit carried out in March 2023 and desktop research into certain aspects relating to the Site. It identifies key environmental conditions both existing and historical, intending to provide a greater level of understanding of what landscape interventions may be instigated, to better integrate the proposed development and landscape design into the context of the site.

It achieves this by demonstrating how proposals can be designed to reflect local character. Landscape strategies can be used to promote positive change in the landscape. They can help to address public concerns and promote local support for development.

After considering the existing site conditions, this Landscape Strategy identifies the constraints and opportunities, which inform decisions relating to:

- △ The shape of development within the site boundary.
- △ The position of access routes both vehicular and pedestrian.
- △ The positioning of the accommodation units.
- △ The potential landscape mitigation and/or enhancement measures to be implemented.

### 1.1.2 The Site

The Site is in the southwest of the city of Bath.

Situated within the boundary of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Site comprises 1.4 hectares of unmanaged pasture. Irregular in shape it is bounded by existing residential developments (to the north and west) and the woodland of Stirlingale Farm (to the south). Figure 1.1.1 (see next page) illustrates the existing layout, including the adjoining property's orientation, as well as the only accessible route into the Site, at the northeast corner.

Its current state appears as a mosaic of habitats, including grassland, broadleaved woodland, scrub, boundary hedgerows, and evidence of informal recreational use in the form of a picnic bench and abandoned dog toys. Small barn structures on the eastern edge under the mature tree canopy may be remnants of previous use as a horse paddock.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this document explore the Site's context and the potential receptors, who might be impacted by the development in further detail, covering the following topics:

- △ Planning
- △ Cultural
- △ Social
- △ Physical
- △ Visual Amenity

### 1.1.3 The Development

The proposed development has aspirations to:

- △ Contain within the Site:
  - › Up to 16 Bungalows (a mix of 1 bed and 2 bed dwellings, including accessible units). *This report has assumed units will be of a typical built form with a pitched roof ridgeline height of 6m;*
  - › 30m<sup>2</sup> 'hub' unit for health, well-being, and educating needs of the supported living residents;
  - › On-site active travel facilities (i.e. cycle and e-scooter parking) in addition to car parking.
- △ To fulfil the council's objective of providing purpose-built specialist accommodation for those with non-standard needs.
- △ Achieve a 20% biodiversity net gain target that exceeds the local authority planning policies.
- △ Achieve full 'Building with Nature' green infrastructure benchmark accreditation.
- △ To achieve revenue savings from the Council's Specialist Commissioning revenue budget through having specialist provision on site suited to the requirement of autistic residents.

BANES Adult Social Care has confirmed that the proposed properties will be homes for life, as long as they remain appropriate. They will be homes for autistic people and those with learning difficulties who may require supported living assistance.

It has been highlighted by them that the design should be sufficient to offer a range of accessibility. Emphasis will be on the design's flexibility and opportunity to grow, to meet individual needs being mindful that those needs may progress or regress during the residents use of the property.

It is critical to consider the points made above are reflected in the landscape design approach.



### 1.1.4 Structure of the Report

The following Chapters are included in this report:

- △ 2.0 Site Context
  - › 'Landscape' results from the interplay of the social, cultural, physical, and visual components of the surroundings. This chapter will identify and provide insight into the existing components of the Site that will be considered as constraints and opportunities for the development's proposals.
- △ 3.0 Townscape & Visual Impact Study
  - › Part of the consideration given to the design of the development will be its impact on receptors for landscape character and visual amenity. This chapter will identify the recommended approach and further published guidance for carrying out a Townscape & Visual Appraisal of the development.
- △ 4.0 Landscape Design Approach
  - › This chapter will identify the intended approach and further published guidance for the landscape design of the development. Including 'Building with Nature' themes and inclusive design, which will be essential to meet the outline requirements (noted in section 1.1.3) set by the service providers for the end users. It will introduce the emerging technical guidance PAS 6463: 2022 designing for mind, which provides particular insight on neurodivergent conditions that are strongly associated with autism spectrum condition.



Figure 1.1.1 Illustrative Existing Site Plan





# 2.0 Site Context

## △ 2.1 Planning, Social and Cultural Setting

- › 2.1.1 Planning Policy
- › 2.1.2 Designations
- › 2.1.3 Historic Mapping
- › 2.1.4 Trees in Planning
- › 2.1.5 Open Spaces Mapping

## △ 2.2 Physical and Visual Setting

- › 2.2.1 Topography
- › 2.2.2 Built form
- › 2.2.3 Water
- › 2.2.4 Arboriculture
- › 2.2.5 Ecology
- › 2.2.6 Visual Amenity
- › 2.2.7 Site Photographs



# 2.0 Site Context

## 2.1 Planning, Cultural and Social Setting

### 2.1.1 Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated 2021 sets out the Government's planning policies for England that must be considered when submitting a planning application. The following NPPF Chapters are relevant to the housing development of the site:

- › Chapter 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- › Chapter 5: Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- › Chapter 8: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- › Chapter 11: Making Effective Use of Land
- › Chapter 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places
- › Chapter 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
- › Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- › Chapter 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

A Local Plan (LP) is an overarching policy document that will be considered by the local authority in the determination of planning applications unless other material considerations outweigh the local plan. The adopted LP associated with this development comprises; the BANES Core Strategy (2014) and Place-making Plan (2017). The site is identified under the following Policies: Landscapes and the green setting of Settlement (NE2A), Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (NE3) Nature Recovery Network Woodland Strategic Network (NE5), Safeguarding Heritage Assets (HE1), Affordable Housing (CP9) and Place-making Plan Allocated Sites (SB17).

The purpose of these policies is to ensure the protection of key values/assets recognised by the local authority including landscapes and landform, landmarks, and views / viewpoints which particularly contribute to the landscape setting of settlements. The development should adhere to the vision provided in these policies.

### 2.1.2 Designations

Figure 2.1.2 highlights the designations within a 2km radius of the Site. This includes Bath World Heritage Site, a city-wide Conservation Area, several heritage assets, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and nearby Public Rights of Way.

The site is located within a non-statutory designated Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).

These statutory and non-statutory designations indicate the valued importance of the Site's cultural, historical, and environmental attributes. Which will be reflected in the proposals, including material selection.

### 2.1.3 Historic Mapping

A review of Ordnance Survey maps through the 20th century shows the progress of housing development along Englishcombe Lane from undeveloped farmland. The maps confirm the presence of field boundary hedgerows with hedgerow trees to the Site's southern, western, and eastern boundary. In addition midway along the eastern boundary there were former milking operations structures.

The site was surrounded by farmland with a handful of rural properties up until 1932 whereby the area with the housing along the length of Englishcombe Lane has started to develop gradually. The fields within the Stirtingale Farm area adjoining the site to the south have remained relatively unchanged, until the establishment of semi-natural woodland sometime between 1952 and 1972.

The historic development of the Site is important to consider as it provides insight into how the development of the land use, settlement, enclosure, and other human interventions has been perceived to date and will help this development establish an appropriate landscape approach to ensure it blends into its surroundings. This research is a valuable tool to ensure the design protects valued features, per planning policy (HE1).

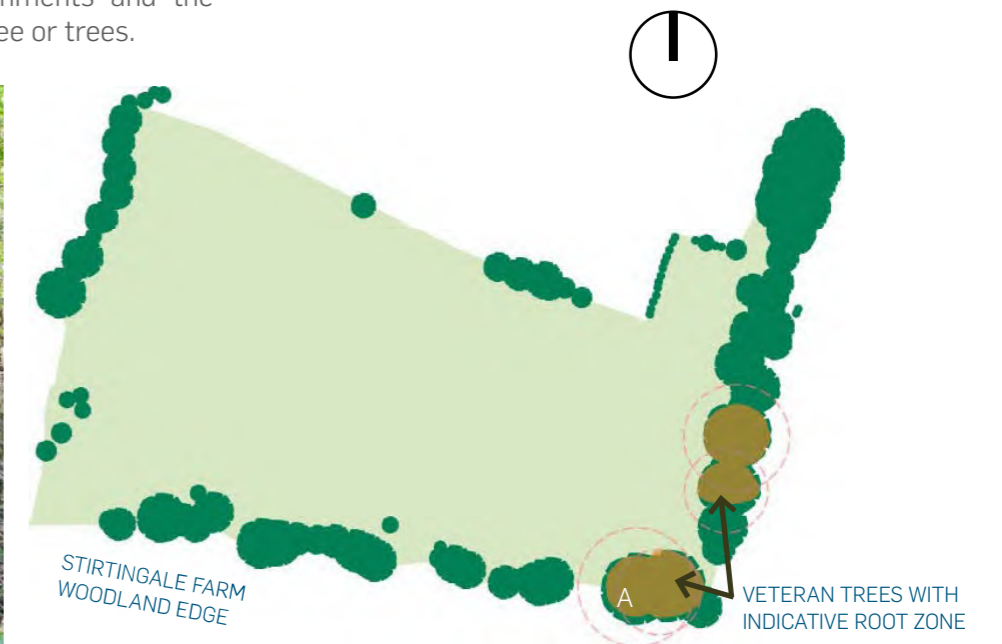
### 2.1.4 Trees in Planning

The Site contains four veteran trees (see illustration below), located within the historic field boundary hedgerow. Veteran trees are survivors that have developed some of the features found on ancient trees. However, veteran trees are usually only in their second or mature stage of life. These features contribute to its exceptional biodiversity, cultural and heritage value. NPPF (2021) states in paragraph 180:

**"...development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists".**

The proposals shall refrain from disturbing the root structure and canopies of those identified featured assets, depicted in the sketch below (based on the tree constraints plan provided by an arboriculturalist on March 2023 (Drawing ref. 5208627-ATK-ARB-TCP)).

At the time of writing this report there are no recorded trees with Tree Protection Orders (TPO) on the Site. However since this site falls within a Conservation Area the developer must give notice of work on a tree where the trunk has a girth of 7.5cm or more at a height of 1.5m, giving time for public comments and the opportunity to confer a TPO on the tree or trees.



### 2.1.5 Open Space Mapping

In large cities like Bath, open spaces can help strengthen the sense of community. They provide a reprieve from traffic jams, crowds, and pollution while improving social relationships and increasing environmental awareness.

The Site provides a valued area of greenspace for the local residents. However, a range of other public green and open spaces facilities lie in proximity to the Site include;

- › The Oval Park, a community park, (300 metres to the north of the Site).
- › Stirtingale Road, Play Space (300 metres to the west),
- › Moorlands Park (350 metres to the northeast),
- › Hillcrest Park (450 metres to the northwest),
- › The Tumps (700 metres to the southeast), and
- › Odd Down Sports Ground (700 metres to the southeast).

The development will need to consider the site's social context and avoid introducing additional pressures on the wider network. It should look to provide self-contained amenity spaces for the new residents.

- Site boundary
  - Bath World Heritage Site (WHS)
  - Bath Conservation Area
  - Scheduled Monuments
  - Register of Parks and Gardens
  - Cotswold Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
  - Stirringale Farm Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  - Local Natural Reserve
  - Ancient Woodland
- Listed Buildings**
- Grade I
  - Grade II
  - Grade II\*
- Access**
- National Cycle Network (NCN)
  - National Trails
- Public Rights of Way**
- Restricted Bridleway
  - Bridleway
  - Footpath
  - Byway

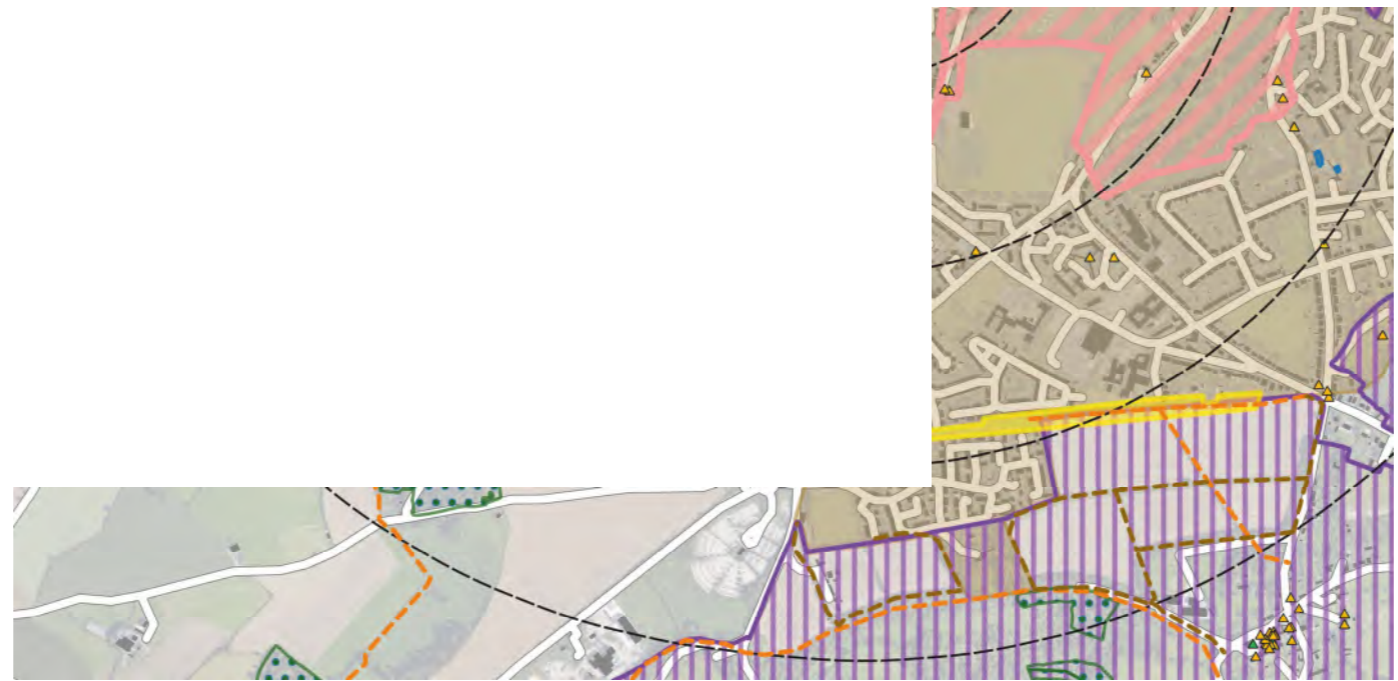
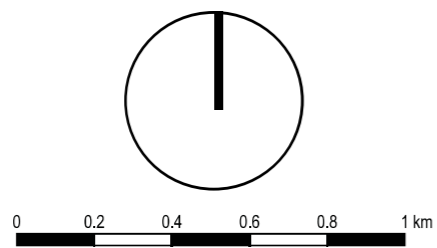


Figure 2.1.2 Designations and Access Plan

# 2.0 Site Context

## 2.2 Physical and Visual Setting



Figure 2.2.3 Panorama of Englishcombe Lane looking west opposite the Site Entrance.

### 2.2.1 Topography

The Site has a significant level change, rising from (87m AOD) the lowest point in the northeast corner, at the access from Englishcombe Lane, to 103m AOD in the southwest corner.

Designing to the existing landform will be a foreseeable challenging constraint to overcome, when the design will be considering the Disability Discrimination Act Building Regulations.

### 2.2.2 Built Form

The Site is nestled between the residential two-storey properties of The Oval, Rush Hill and Bloomfield. The streets of the surrounding area, including Englishcombe Lane (Figure 2.2.3) and Stirtingale Road are a mix of early 20th Century semi and detached properties with large gardens which adjoin the Site along the north and west boundary.

### 2.2.3 Water

The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, which means that the land has a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding.

Small over-land watercourses run through the Site (section 2.2.7, Photo 5). The location and route of the overland watercourses appear to have changed since they were mapped in the 2019 planning application. Historic mapping of the site shows that a watercourse from Stirtingale Farm to the south used to be directed under the site via a land drain (at least up until the mid 1980s).

The apparently changing routes of the water indicate that the overland flow is present because the land drain no longer functions, and new routes may be formed as old ones dry up or are blocked by debris. Even so it is a unique feature that can be enhanced and utilised in the development to form the basis of sustainable urban drainage.

### 2.2.4 Arboriculture

The existing tree cover of the Site is restricted to the perimeter, a few scattered along the northern edge within private gardens and historic field boundary hedgerows with hedgerow trees to south, west and east.

The tree constraints plan (Drawing ref. 5208627-ATK-ARB-TCP) highlights that the majority of the trees are mature and of good value.

### 2.2.5 Ecology

The Site is potentially sensitive in ecological terms by virtue of the presence of a number of important habitats and species. It is part of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), called Stirtingale Farm (including Rush Hill Open Space and Corston View). A number of other SNCIs lie in proximity to the Site. The Site is also in proximity to several other ecological sensitive sites,

including:

- > Bath & Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC), 4km
- > Combe Down and Bathampton Down Mines Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 4.5 km
- > Midford Valley Woods (SSSI), 3.8km
- > Twerton Roundhill Local Nature Reserve (LNR), 1km
- > Carrs Woodland LNR, 2.4km

The presence of legislative protected species have been recorded within the site including badgers and migrating horseshoe bats. As well as some reptile and invertebrates species that are linked with ephemeral watercourse habitat.

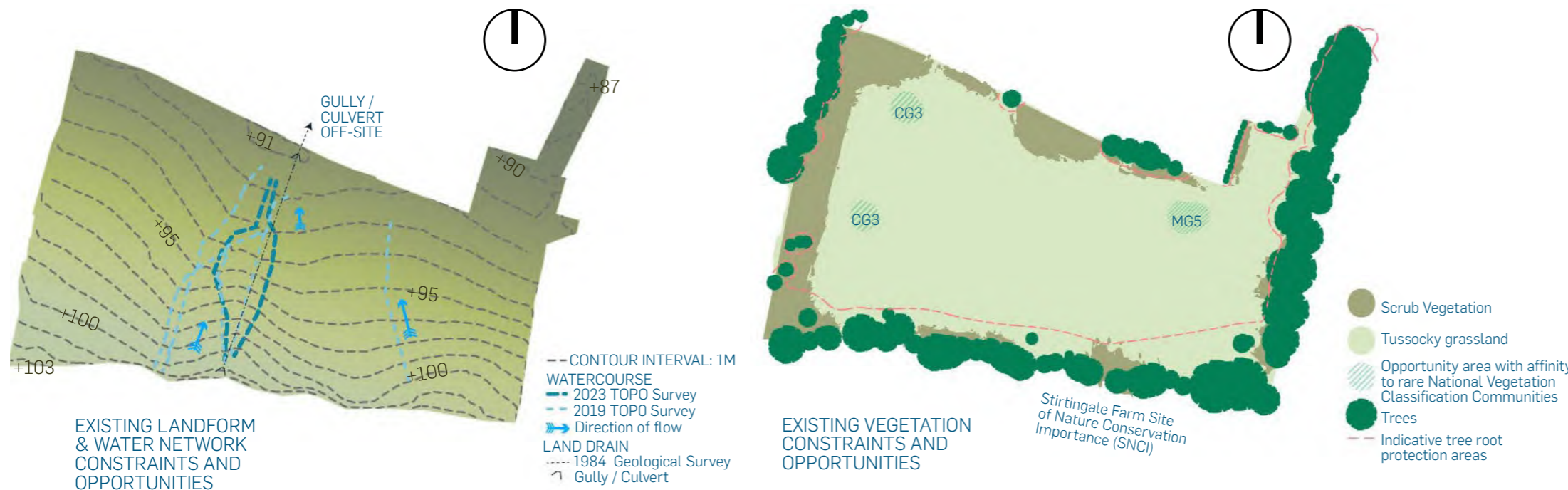
It has been highlighted within the ecology note that there are positive indicator species for calcareous grassland in the site, although none of the vegetation types are a good match for high value calcareous grassland and therefore do not constitute a high value Priority Habitat. However, the presence of calcicoles species indicates that there may be potential to create or restore species-rich grassland with appropriate management.

### 2.2.6 Visual Amenity

Landscape is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of the landscape that make places distinctive.

When visiting the Site, there were no views out towards the south because of the steep terrain and the dense established woodland of Stirtingale Farm (section 2.2.7, Photo 4).

The views from the Site northward look towards the centre of Bath. From the immediate forefront, out into the backdrop of the view, the location is dominated by residential buildings, with scattered patches of green spaces visible further afield (section 2.2.7, Photo 7).



## 2.2.7 Site Photographs



1. Existing site entrance / access viewed from Englishcombe Lane.



2. Historic field boundary hedgerow, potential bat corridor, located along the eastern boundary.



3. Existing dilapidated shed located on the eastern boundary of the Site, identified as a potential bat roost opportunity location.



4. Existing woods on the southern boundary of the Site with calcareous grassland habitat in the foreground.



5. Flexible overland watercourses habitat present on the Site.



6. View from the eastern side of the Site, looking west towards the rear of residential properties along Stirlingale Road. Illustrating slope/ topography.



7. View from the western side of the Site, looking north towards the rear of residential properties along Englishcombe Lane.



8. View from the south-west corner of the Site, looking west, showcasing a example of the typical third party boundary treatment and scrub vegetation surrounding the site perimeters.



9 View from the south-west corner of the Site, looking east, along the edge of Stirlingale Farm woodland.



# 3.0 Townscape & Visual Impact Study

## Δ 3.1 Overview on Appraisal Work

- › 3.1.1 The Study's Objective
- › 3.1.2 Reporting Guidance
- › 3.1.3 Townscape Appraisal Advice
- › 3.1.4 Photography Guidance

## Δ 3.2 Character Setting

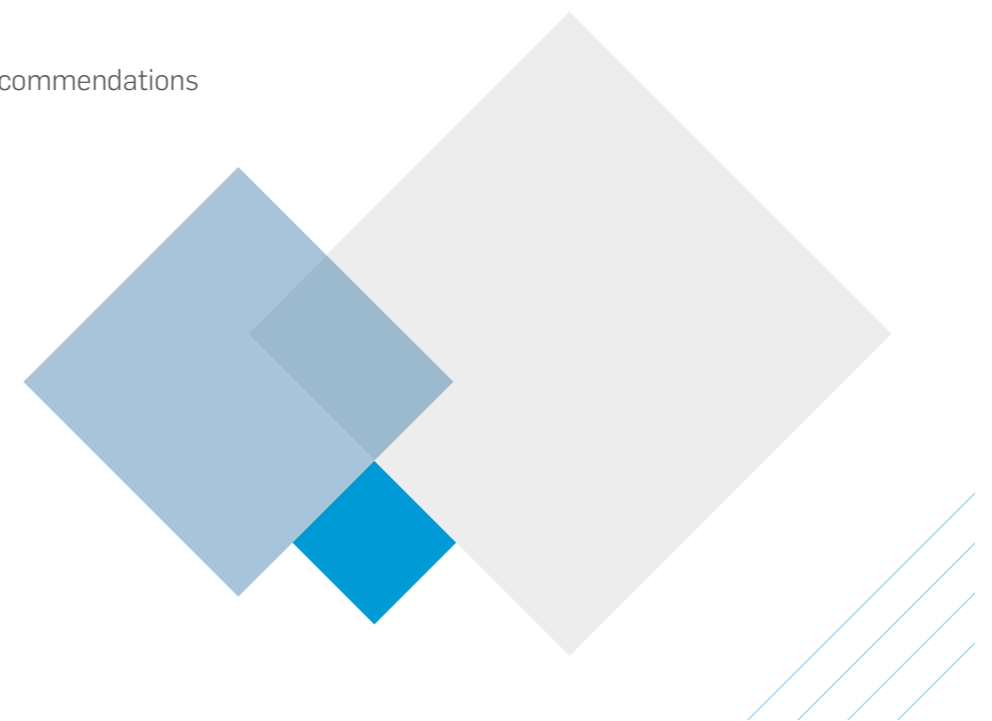
- › 3.2.1 Landscape Receptors
- › 3.2.2 Character Study

## Δ 3.3 Visual Setting

- › 3.3.1 Visual Receptors
- › 3.3.2 Captured Viewpoints

## Δ 3.4 Conclusion

- › 3.4.1 Assessment Recommendations



# 3.0 Townscape & Visual Impact Study

## 3.1 Overview on the Study and Further Appraisal Work

### 3.1.1 The Study's Objective

This chapter provides an overview on studying the Development's potential impact in landscape terms (Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)). Observations made on the potential landscape and visual receptors identified at this early stage will inform the development's proposals to ensure they are considered sensitively throughout the stages of design.

Landscape and Townscape reflects the relationship between people and place and the part it plays in forming place-making. It results from the way that the different components of the environment – cultural, physical and visual - interact and are understood and experienced by people (Natural England, 2014). Chapter 2 of this landscape strategy has highlighted the Site's existing cultural and physical context.

Please note this chapter will not be providing analysis of effects. Further work outlined in the following subsections 3.1.2 to 3.1.3 can be undertaken to define the impacts on landscape and visual receptors. However the content within Sections 3.2 and 3.3 can be used for direction when carrying out an full appraisal of the design.

### 3.1.2 Reporting Guidance

The Landscape Institute (the chartered body for the landscape profession) published various guidance for undertaking appraisals. One of the most successful pieces of guidance written by the Landscape Institute (in conjunction with IEMA) is 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3). Chapter 7 of 'City of Bath World Heritage Site Setting Supplementary Planning Document' (BANES, August 2013) also outlines a similar process for assessing impacts of proposed development and other changes on the World Heritage Site relating to the setting.

The flow diagram opposite outlines the key stages in formal assessment.

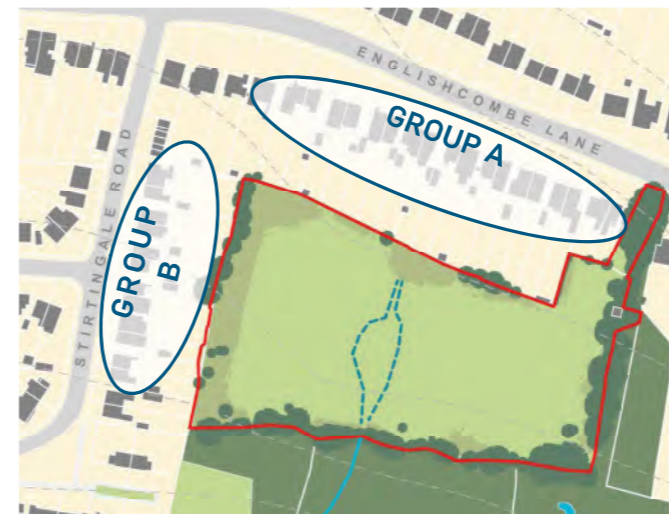
### 3.1.3 Townscape Appraisal Advice

Townscape and Visual Appraisals (TVAs) are undertaken to identify and assess the likely effects of a proposed development on the surrounding townscape and visual amenity. GLVIA3, paragraph 2.7 defines townscape as:

"[Townscape is] the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces."

Technical Guidance Note 2/19 on Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA), published by the Landscape Institute, is concerned specifically with the effects of change to the views and visual amenity available to people at their place of residence. The key difference between RVAA and LVA is that RVAA focuses on private visual amenity at individual properties whilst LVIA focusses on public amenity and views.

The recommended approach to undertaking a RVAA is grounded in principles and process set out in GLVIA3. Properties are normally assessed individually, but since this development is visible from the rear gardens only of a small row of houses these could be assessed as two groups; Stirlingale Road and Englishcombe Lane.



### 3.1.4 Photography Guidance

Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals (Landscape Institute guidance 2019) will be followed in the production of 8nr representative views (of the baseline) to supplement the TVA (These should be based on the receptor categories listed above).

Additional photo-montages, verified views or accurate visual representations (AVRs), are a central part of TVA work. AVRs can include wire-frames or rendered photo-montages. AVRs from key viewpoints can be a useful tool when considering the scale, massing and height of new development to understanding the scale of impact from the development's architectural design against the surrounding context, including landform, vegetation; and the skyline.

Sections 3.3.2 of this report displays a selection of panoramic 'baseline reference images', and have not been prepared as appropriate visualisation types, in accordance with the above guidance.





## 3.2 Character Setting

### 3.2.1 Landscape Receptors

The landscape character receptors have been based on details set out within the published character studies and observations on site.

### 3.2.2 Character Study

#### National Character

Natural England's National Character Areas profiles indicate that the Site is within the 107 Cotswold:

"Defined by its underlying geology: a dramatic limestone scarp rising above adjacent lowlands with steep combes, and outliers illustrating the slow erosion of escarpments. The limestone geology has formed the scarp and dip slope of the landscape, which in turn has influenced drainage, soils, vegetation, land use and settlement".

#### Local Character

Within the local context, the site lies on the west-northern edge of Area 18-Entry Hill, Perrymead and Prior Park Character Area. Noted within the Bath city-wide character appraisal:

"This area is within Bath Conservation Area that covers the slopes south of Bathwick Hill, Widcombe and Prior Park. It includes open agricultural land, woodlands, parks and gardens that provide natural beauty and views. The area has a varied topography and a mix of architectural styles ranging from Georgian to modern. And it is mainly residential with recreational facilities such as playing fields"

#### Site Character

When visiting the Site and neighbourhood, in March 2023, it was found that the points noted above are a true and accurate description of the current conditions. (Refer to Site Panoramas A, B, C, and D)

#### Δ A. The Development Site Access

An existing track and mature hedgerow is squeezed between early 20th century two storey houses, principally built of reconstituted Bath stone.



#### Δ B. Northern Area of the Development

The edge of Stirtingale Farm woodland at the crest of the cityscape provides a dramatic backdrop to the site.



#### Δ C. Western Area of the Development

The sloping topography is a defining feature of the site, which informs natural drainage and vegetation typologies.



#### Δ D. Eastern Area of the Development

The main land use of this site is amenity. The tranquillity of the area is disrupted due to its proximity to the city centre.



# 3.0 Townscape & Visual Impact Study

## 3.3 Visual Setting

### 3.3.1 Visual Receptors

There are multiple ways to determine where there may be visual receptors impacted by the development. One of the most advanced forms is through a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Figure 2.3.1 displays the initial ZTV, generated using digital software for this development. The pink colour overlay indicates where software has determined the site with no development can be seen, whilst the blue colour overlay shows the potential extension of the visibility area due to the development.

Analysing the ZTV and undertaking further fieldwork, four representative viewpoints (North, East South and West) have been identified from publicly accessible locations throughout the surrounding area within a 2km radius.

Additional views locations from the Royal Crescent and High Common have also been considered based on their importance referenced within the 'City of Bath World Heritage Site Setting Supplementary Planning Document', BANES, August 2013.

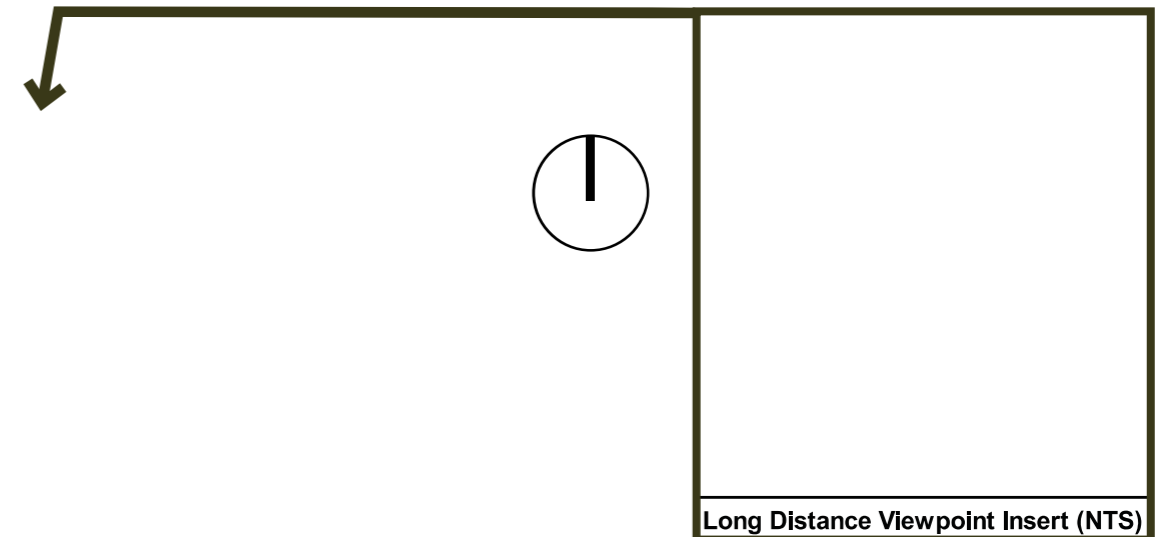
During a Site visit in 2023 photographs of these views towards site were captured and digitally stitched together into panoramas (displayed in the subsequent sections 3.3.2 to 3.3.4).

The visual study has brought to attention the following considerations for the identified visual receptors to be addressed:

- › Neighbouring Properties (overlooking the Site), are likely to be the most affected by the development on site and as such visual mitigation measures such as screening may be of benefit.
- › Key leisure areas (Within 2km of the Site); will likely have limited views of the development due to the existing vegetation and citywide landform. Therefore, retention of the existing mature hedgerows bordering the site will be essential.
- › Key viewing points overlooking the city (up to 5km from the Site); will unlikely notice the development, due to the proposed scale and quantity of intended new buildings.



Figure 2.3.1 Viewpoint and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Plan



- Site boundary
- Contours (1m intervals)
- Likely Visible of Proposed Level (Option 5A - Revised with Extra Units)
- Likely Visible of both Existing Level and Proposed Level

1. Royal Crescent
2. High Common
3. Twerton Roundhill
4. Brickfield Park
5. Alexandra Park
6. Corston View Park

This Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), has been generated by QGIS Viewshed plugin, set to binary and combining multiple outputs utilising data from 2020 LiDAR Digital Surface Model (DSM); at 1m resolution.

DSM data takes into consideration the screening effect of existing landforms, potential intervening vegetation and structures.

This ZTV has been modelled based on 16nr 6m high to roof ridgeline single-storey bungalows with pitched roofs scattered across the site.

### 3.3.2 Viewpoints

#### 1. Royal Crescent

A long-range view towards roofs of buildings in front of the site with partial view of the field on Site, lower and eastern parts of the site obscured by intervening vegetation of the park in the middle ground with roofscapes in the distance.



#### 2. High Common

A distant panoramic view of the city with the High Common park and an informal golf course in the foreground scene. Bath's westerly urban districts dominates the skyline as the ground slopes up towards the background. The upper parts of the site are just visible against the distinctive woodland blocks of Stirringale farm.



# 3.0 Townscape & Visual Impact Study

## 3.3.3 Viewpoints

### 3. Twerton Roundhill

The site is well concealed by the properties on Stirlingale Road. Tree belts run down from the largely wooded skyline, separating neighbourhoods. The long ridge lines of properties on Kingsfield, Edgeworth and Stirlingale Road differ from the majority of roofscapes in the view.



### 4. Alexandra Park

A mid-range view from an elevated position within Alexandra Park across from the road entrance of the park at the end of Shakespeare Avenue, BA2 4RG. The corner of the Site is glimpsed between the rooftops of Englishcombe Lane and rear of Stirlingale Road. The properties on Shakespeare Avenue dominate the foreground, the Stirlingale Farm woodland is clearly seen from the higher position the background with the Pine woodland block near Barrow Castle read on the skyline. Multiple residential areas of Bath break the skyline views



### 3.3.4 Viewpoints

#### Δ 5. Brickfield Park

An elevated mid-range view out towards the Site shows a large, open green area in the foreground which dramatically descend into the densely populated residential district of South Twerton. Its hilltop position offers a panoramic view of the city of Bath, up to the woodland crest in the distance.



#### Δ 6. Corston View Park

A close range view from south of the site demonstrates the site is not visible due to the topography and intervening woodland block. The roof tops of the properties on Englishcombe Lane and Stirringale road are virtually indiscernible.



## 3.4 Conclusion

### 3.4.1 Assessment Recommendations

An assessment to determine the potential impacts on the landscape character and the visual amenity (including views from sensitive receptors) of the proposed development will be necessary. However, given the site's location, existing condition and the scale of the development (16 dwellings) it is proposed that a 'Townscape and Visual Appraisal (TVA)', with a focused Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) of Englishcombe Lane and Stirringale Road, will be appropriate for an full planning application.

The TVA will review the existing baseline conditions of 2km , potential adverse landscape character and visual effects, whilst sufficiently addressing potential impacts on the UNESCO World Heritage Site. The proportionately scaled RVAA will consider how adverse effects might be offset through realistic and securable mitigation measures.

Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals (Landscape Institute guidance 2019) will be followed in the production of 8nr representative views (of the baseline) and 2nr AVRs to supplement the TVA. Subject to agreement with the local authority team.



# 4.0 Landscape Design Approach

## Δ 4.1 Defining The Development's Landscape Design

- › 4.1.1 Achieving a Quality Landscape Design
- › 4.1.2 Design Guidance
- › 4.1.3 Mitigation hierarchy

## Δ 4.2 The Development's Key Landscape Themes

- › 4.2.1 Layout and Access
- › 4.2.2 Biodiversity
- › 4.2.3 Material
- › 4.2.4 Drainage

## Δ 4.3 Designing for Neurodiverse / Autistic People

- › 4.3.1 Design principles
- › 4.3.2 Best Practice Guidance
- › 4.3.3 Biophilic Design Approach

## Δ 4.4 Building With Nature (BwN) Framework

- › 4.4.1 Introduction to BwN
- › 4.4.2 BwN Case Studies

## Δ 4.5 Top 4 Directives (Summary)



# 4.0 Landscape Design Approach

## 4.1 Defining The Development's Landscape Design

### 4.1.1 Achieving a Quality Landscape Design

The following Chapter outlines design and strategic guidance for the 'landscape' approach given the future intended use of the site. The long-standing, fundamental principles for good design are that it is: purposeful; durable; and brings delight.

Figure 4.1.1 notes the initial ideas and desires the design will achieve, which are befitting of a World Heritage Site. The Development will aim to:

- △ Adhere to current design guides: documents providing guidance on how a development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.
- △ Establish design principles informed by the Building with Nature framework: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development to be guided by. The graphic and written components of the planning application will build upon a holistic design vision.
- △ Adopt appropriate mitigation measures of habitat retention, enhancement, and new creation to achieve 20% biodiversity net gain targets (including off-site green infrastructure improvement).
- △ Become an inclusive design exemplar: Make sure that individuals have equal access, opportunity, and dignity in the use of the built environment. That will build community cohesion, and a sense of belonging for communities. Diversity is valued and people of different backgrounds will have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with one another.

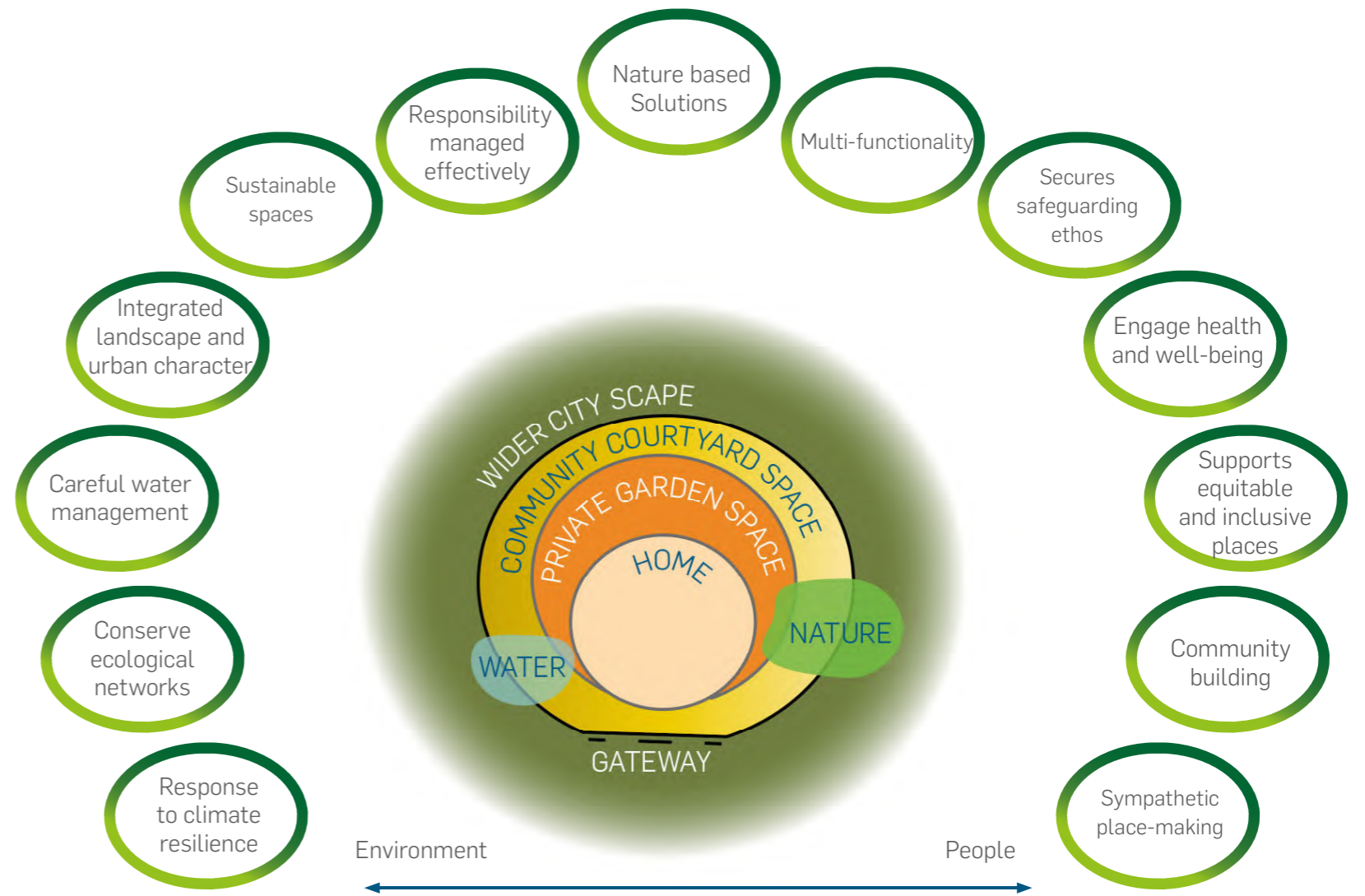


Figure 4.1.1 Placemaking Aspirations

### 4.1.2 Design Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework is supported by a suite of planning practice guidance that is relevant to both design quality and quality in delivery. The National Design Guide addresses the question of how to recognise well designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in form of ten characteristics.

**Context | Identity | Built form | Movement | Nature | Public spaces | Uses | Homes and buildings | Resources | Lifespan**

BANE's Streetscape Manual (2005) contains guidance to the selection, design, installation and care of the Local District's streetscape and its historic preservation. The Manual has been set out for all work in relation to the highway or new development. It contains useful information to inform selection of hard materials and street furniture which will be considered.

Furthermore Building with Nature Framework will be a key factor in the development of the landscape proposals. Refer to Section 4.4.

### 4.1.3 Mitigation Hierarchy

The development will adhere to a mitigation hierarchy. A 4 step process which will be followed in the to efforts to counter loss. It is often considered against themes such as biodiversity and sustainability:



#### STEP 1: AVOIDING

There are plenty of gains that can be achieved with avoidance. Consideration for the development to be as car-free as possible, without compromise to health and welfare infrastructure, would alleviate many environmental factors such as day-to-day noise, air pollution and overall improvement towards achieving a sustainable build.

#### STEP 2: MINIMISING

Minimisation can be more visible. The development will aim to reduce the loss of existing trees and sensitive hard material selection befitting of the local area.

#### STEP 3: RESTORATION

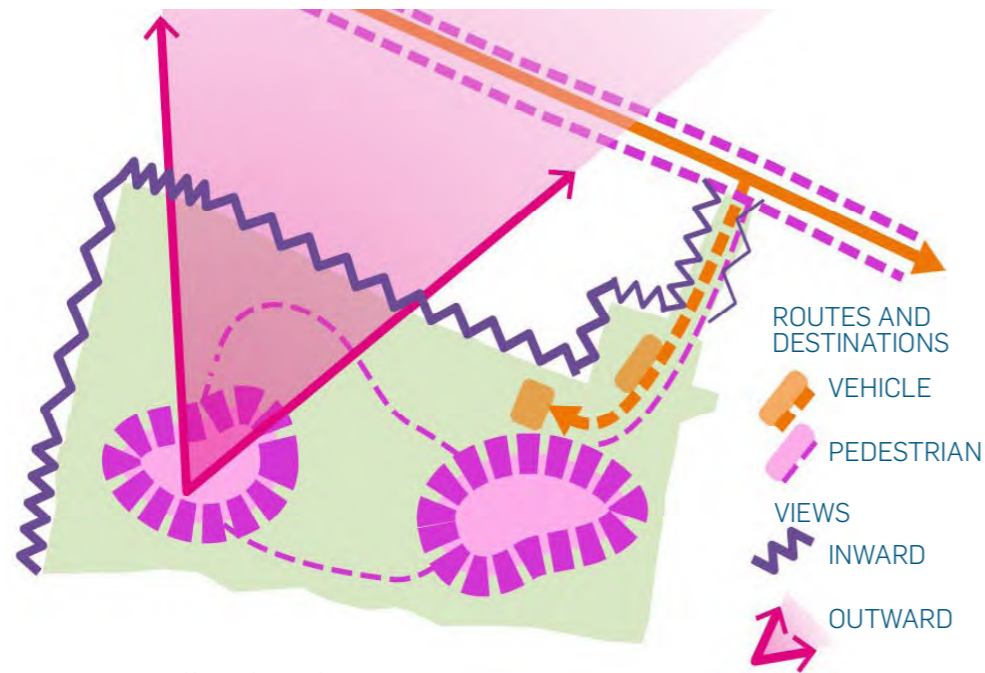
Restoration refers to the measures taken to repair degradation or damage to any features of a project. Part of this development will likely result in improved management of water run-off from the existing uncontrolled ephemeral watercourses.

#### STEP 4: OFFSETTING

Often, biodiversity gains cannot be achieved on-site. The development this will likely face this, due to lack of space. In such instances, it isn't uncommon to plant trees and create woodland or other habitats on other sites that are geographically located elsewhere.



## 4.2 Key Landscape Themes



The design process will explore the provision of the following key landscape themes which shape the placemaking and nature based solutions design parameters.

### 4.2.1 Layout and Access

- > Main development to be car free / limited day-to-day access.
- > Circular pedestrian path routes to avoid termination points.
- > Domestic sized gardens and courtyards to offer quiet, defensible and refuge spaces.
- > Shared communal spaces for safe interactions.
- > Accessible spaces ensures inclusion.

### 4.2.2 Biodiversity

- > Landscape enhancement opportunities in various parts of the site.
- > Strengthening of existing ecological networks.
- > Safeguarding and enhancement measures to existing green / dark corridors and identified habitats such as the watercourses and grassland with calcareous affinities.

### 4.2.3 Material

- > Sensory-friendly landscape design.
- > Flexibility within a domestic setting, adapting domestic garden environments to suit different preferences.
- > Blurred transitions between build and green spaces.
- > Stimuli within the landscape to encourage exercise and engagement with the external spaces.
- > Different functional planting types.

### 4.2.4 Drainage

- > Rainwater harvesting or other methods of capturing rainwater for use by residents.
- > Sensory friendly sustainable drainage systems, i.e. Nature based Solutions, detention basin and swales.
- > Permeable paving combined with specific drainage outlets to reduce excessive water run-off and standing water.



# 4.0 Landscape Design Approach

## 4.3 Designing for Inclusion

### 4.3.1 Neurodivergent Design Principles

The development seeks to provide residential properties incorporating living spaces and a site layout which offers a safe and secure living environment. Neurodiversity is a trending term to describe the variation in neurocognitive profiles that are strongly associated with autism spectrum condition.

The development will consider aspects of the newly built units and the external spaces and how they will impact user accessibility. The proposals will concentrate on designing spaces that fulfil the following qualities:

**Multi-sensory (catering for both hyper and hypo sensitive)**  
**Quiet/Calm | Safe | Choice: Controllable/Flexible | Adaptability**  
**Transitions | Enabling social interaction (and physical activity)**

### 4.3.2 Inclusive Design Best Practice

To be inclusive there are firm sets of guidelines in the construction industry to adhere to. This development will focus on **BS 8300: Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment** and **PAS 6463: Design for the Mind** compliance.

BS 8300 applies to the buildings and the immediate surroundings and is the definitive source of authoritative recommendations for the accessible design of:

- > Access routes to and around all buildings
- > Entrances
- > Steps/stairs and ramps
- > Guard rails
- > Surface finishes
- > Signage
- > Lighting
- > Parking areas
- > Provision of seating

Chapter 7 of the recently published PAS 6463 focuses on external spaces and access, recognising the importance of freedom in accessing nature. The commentary informs the designer on:

- a) naturalistic design with organic forms and shapes, and connection with nature through the use of forms and textures (referring to biophilic design approach, see section 4.3.3 for further information)
- b) natural finishes selection (particularly locally sourced); and,
- c) spatial arrangements of outdoor / street furniture and planting.

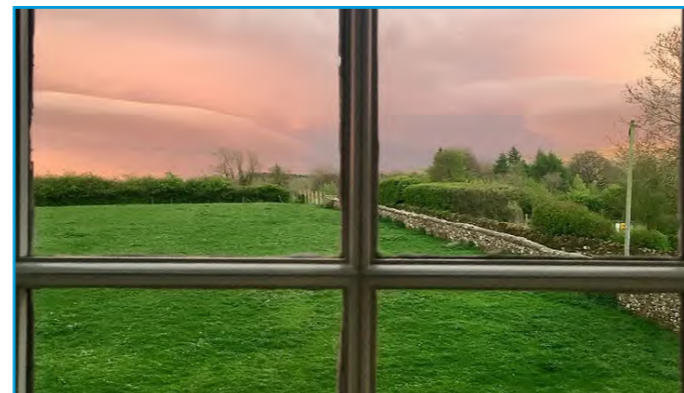
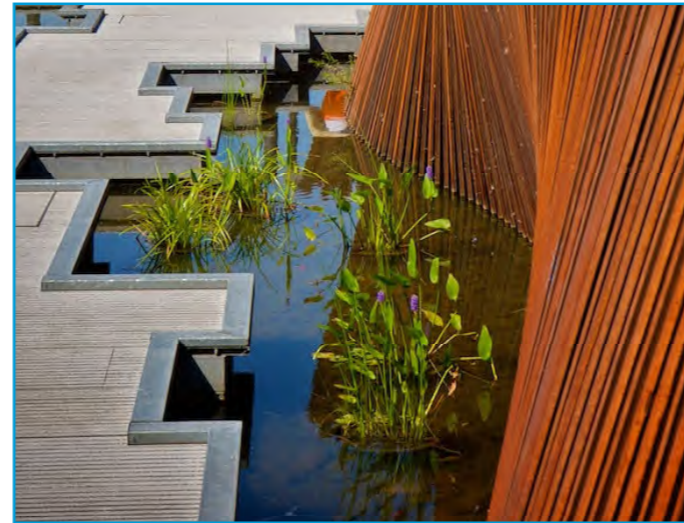


Figure 4.1.1 Images demonstrating Patterns of Biophilic Design [Top photo Tanner Springs Park. Middle photo A view to nature. Bottom Photo: New York Highline]

### 4.3.3 Biophilic Design Approach

In recent years research and published guidance has identified a Biophilic Approach to inform designs of the built environment. Joe Clancy and Terrapin's Catie Ryan published the article "The Role of Biophilic Design in Landscape Architecture for Health and Well-being" detailing how biophilic design patterns can inform landscape design to create restorative urban outdoor spaces. The same article highlights one of the biggest challenges to landscape architects:

**"an increasing densification of cities and consequently the loss of green spaces that provide much needed respite from these urban environments".**

It builds upon the foundation principles set out within the 14 Patterns of Biophilic Design publication.

"14 Patterns of Biophilic Design" articulates the relationships between nature, human biology and the design of the built environment. The Patterns lays out a series of tools for understanding design opportunities, including the roots of the science behind each pattern, then metrics, strategies and considerations for how to use each pattern.

1. Visual Connection with Nature
2. Non-Visual Connection with Nature
3. Non-Rhythmic Sensory Stimuli
4. Thermal & Airflow Variability
5. Presence of Water
6. Dynamic & Diffuse Light
7. Connection with Natural Systems
8. Biomorphic Forms & Patterns
9. Material Connection with Nature
10. Complexity & Order
11. Prospect
12. Refuge
13. Mystery
14. Risk/Peril

Reference:  
 Browning, W.D., Ryan, C.O., Clancy, J.O. (2014).  
 14 Patterns of Biophilic Design.  
 New York: Terrapin Bright Green LLC.



NATURE OF THE SPACE | NATURAL ANALOGUES | NATURE IN THE SPACE

## 4.4 Building With Nature Framework

### 4.4.1 Introduction to BwN

The development hopes to target a Building with Nature Full Award, which externally certifies that the proposals meet the Building With Nature (BwN) Standards and delivers high-quality green infrastructure, at both pre- and post-construction stages.

The BwN is the first evidence-based benchmark for high-quality green infrastructure in the UK. It has been developed to support the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure and draws together policy and practice guidance related to health and well-being, sustainable water management, and biodiversity.

The robust set of holistic design principles standards (outlined opposite) help to clearly define the parameters and expectations for all parties involved (including local authorities) to recognise the designed elements equate to quality green infrastructure.

### 4.4.2 BwN Case Studies

A number of other housing developments have been awarded BwN certificates, such as;

**Church Road** - a small, yet influential, greenfield development of 33 new homes, a public open space, and a footpath that links the site to existing natural woodland. It successfully demonstrated a social housing scheme that incorporates essential green infrastructure features and encourages the health and wellbeing of its occupants.

**Lower Mill Estate** - divided into distinct villages. Each of these villages have a sensitive design meant to respect and contribute to the local context. Mill Village incorporated a traditional Cotswold-style design with extensive tree planting and a converted Mill. The others villages exhibit a more modern character that prioritises a connection with the outdoors.

#### CORE Standards

- Standard 1** Optimises Multifunctionality and Connectivity
- Standard 2** Positively Responds to the Climate Emergency
- Standard 3** Maximises Environmental Net Gains
- Standard 4** Champions a Context Driven Approach
- Standard 5** Creates Distinctive Places
- Standard 6** Secures Effective Place-keeping

#### WELLBEING Standards

- Standard 7** Brings Nature Closer to People
- Standard 8** Supports Equitable and Inclusive Places

#### WATER Standards

- Standard 9** Delivers Climate Resilient Water Management
- Standard 10** Brings Water Closer to People

#### WILDLIFE Standards

- Standard 11** Delivers Wildlife Enhancement
- Standard 12** Underpins Nature's Recovery



Figure A: Illogen housing site plan, Church Road, Cornwall



Figure B: Aerial of Lower Mill Estate, Cotswold Water Park

# 4.0 Landscape Design Approach

## 4.5 Top 4 Directives (Summary)

### 4.5.1 Innovation in Inclusive Design

The landscape strategy for this development will create a development with a joyful considered environment that **responds to the needs of the community it will house**.

This report has highlighted the importance of neurodiversity and sets out an intention to adopt an biophilic design approach that seeks to connect building occupants more closely to nature.

This approach is key component of PAS 6463:2022 (the first building design standard produced by a national standards body to specifically address the needs of people who are neurodivergent and have sensory processing differences).

### 4.5.3 The Mitigation Hierarchy

A key process of the adopted landscape will be to follow the **Mitigation Hierarchy**:

- › Avoid
- › Minimize
- › Rectify
- › Reduce
- › Offset

### 4.5.2 Context Driven

The landscape strategy will **respond to the existing site's** constraints and opportunities to ensure the development meets the Building With Nature (BwN) benchmark for high-quality green infrastructure in the UK.

Furthermore, the development will consider the following receptors:

- › 107 Cotswold National Character Area
- › 18-Entry Hill, Perrymead and Prior Park Character Area
- › Neighbouring properties (overlooking the Site)
- › Key leisure areas (Within 2km of the Site)
- › Key viewpoint locations overlooking the city (up to 5km from the Site).

### 4.5.4 A Sustainable Development

The development's design will be defined by key **landscape themes rooted in nature based solutions to achieve a sustainable design**:

- › Layout and Access - car free ambition
- › Biodiversity - restoring valued habitats
- › Material - blurred transitions between built and green spaces
- › Drainage - adopting sustainable drainage systems

### 4.5.5 Next Steps

The the next steps will be to build on all the initial site assessment work and emerging design ideas presented within Chapter 4 to establish the landscape concept into a masterplan.

The design will be developed with the multi disciplinary team working closely to deliver a bespoke solution that enhances the site and provides a development of high quality.

The concluding images provide design precedents delivered on other residential schemes.

5.2 Possible Precedent to inspire the Next Steps



Figure: A The Avenue, Saffron Walden.



Figure: B Marmalade Lane, Cambridge.



Figure: C South Gardens, Elephant Park, London.



Figure: D The Malings, Ouseburn.



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