

Pascal Drive, Medbourne Development Brief



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and Ownership

1.1.1 This development brief concerns 2 allocated development sites (known as Site A and Site B) within the Medbourne Grid Square adjacent to the H5 Portway (see fig 1).

1.1.2 Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP*) have high aspirations that development of these 2 sites can help deliver the Council’s corporate aims concerning the delivery of housing across Milton Keynes that meet individual needs.

1.1.1 Fig 1a highlights land ownership and site area. All sites are entirely owned by MKDP as identified by the red line. However, the area covered by the brief has, for practical reasons, been extended to the back of existing carriageways as identified by the orange line. This land, within the orange boundary, is owned by Milton Keynes Council as adoptable highway. The combined area of the both sites A and B including orange boundary extends to approximately 1.22 ha (3.01 acres).



Figure 1: Site Location

1.2 Purpose of the Development Brief

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to provide planning and design guidance for the development of Site A and B in Medbourne. This will aid the development process, by allowing developers to submit informed proposals that respond to Council (MKC), landowner and other local stakeholder expectations and aspirations for the site, and respect the requirements of MKC planning policy.
- 1.2.2 The Brief has been prepared to help deliver the Council's Corporate Plan Themes and Outcomes as well as the Core Strategy.

Vision Statement:

“To create a high quality development that helps meet the need for and diversify the offer of housing in Milton Keynes while helping contribute to its reputation for innovation.”

- 1.2.3 The consultation process associated with the preparation of this development brief has given all interested parties full opportunities to set out their aspirations for the site and to identify constraints that need to be accommodated.

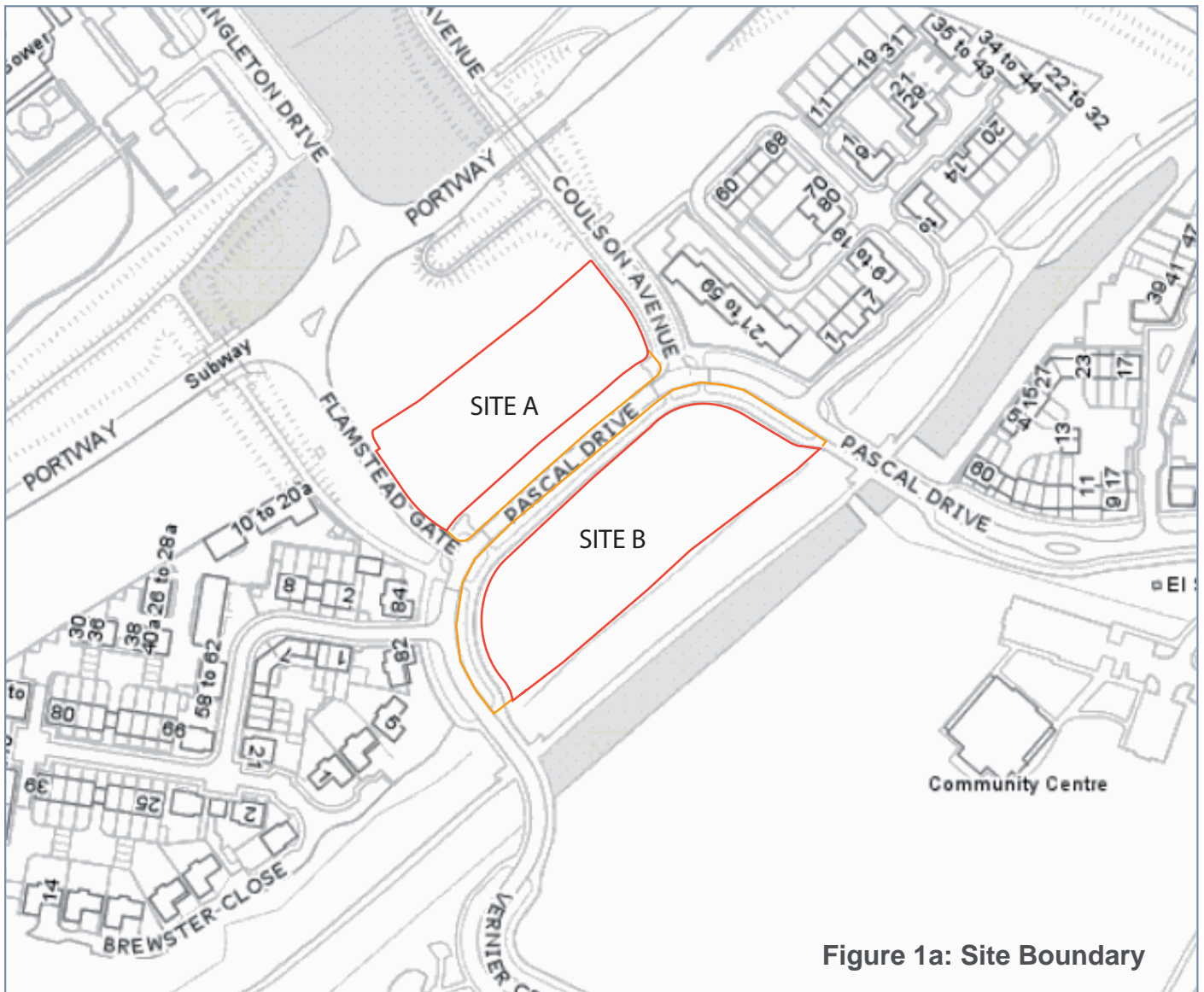


Figure 1a: Site Boundary



Figure 2: Aerial photo of site

- 1.2.4 Development Briefs cannot be used as a means to change existing land use policy allocation. They normally therefore accord with the existing land use policy with a key aim/role being to contextualise planning and design policy for the site covered by the Brief. In certain cases there may be material considerations that suggest variations of current policy may be appropriate. Where this is the case, the Brief will state what they are and what the preferred use and / or variation in policy is. The brief can therefore act as material evidence for a change in land use and will be weighed against the current policy when determining a planning application for the site. This brief is such a case where opportunities for alternative land uses to the allocated land use is being promoted.

- 1.2.5 Once approved by Milton Keynes Council Cabinet, the guidance contained within the Brief will be a material consideration in helping determine planning applications for the site.

**MKDP is a limited liability partnership set up by Milton Keynes Council to facilitate Milton Keynes's continued growth and economic success by promoting the development of land assets transferred to the council from the Homes and Communities Agency, in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and Economic Development Strategy. MKDP take a commercial and entrepreneurial approach to sell and develop these assets with third party developers and investors, whilst ensuring full community and stakeholder engagement in the preparation of development briefs for the sites.*

It is a requirement on the MKDP that an adopted Development Brief must be in place before they commence marketing or developing any of their larger sites. This is intended to enable the Council, following consultation with all interested parties, to set clear expectations for the nature of any future development on the site; but also to assist the MKDP in marketing the site and to give potential bidders/development partners a degree of confidence about the parameters within which they should develop their proposals.

1.3 Structure of Brief

The Brief is divided into five sections:

Section 1 outlines the purpose of the brief, its location and ownership and other administrative information for developers.

Section 2 describes the planning policy context for the site.

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 what the Brief is seeking to deliver in terms of land uses

Section 5 represents the Key Design and Development Principles, that should inform any development proposals. The accompanying Parameters Plan spatially illustrates the design principles. An indicative housing layout has also been included for a potential use of the site.

1.4 Other Information

- 1.4.1 Once adopted, the development brief will be followed and supported by a marketing brief prepared by MKDP which will outline pertinent information where appropriate, regarding title, any existing leasehold arrangements, rights of access, restrictive covenants and clawback arrangements.

- 1.4.2 The marketing brief is also intended to set out additional MKDP aspirations for sustainability / energy standards, design and mix of uses and tenures, phasing of development, together with more detail on MKDP's preferred route to the market and selection criteria.

SECTION 2: POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Policy Context

Any proposals for the site should be informed by and will be expected to support the delivery of the Milton Keynes Council Corporate Plan and comply with the below national and local planning policy.

2.2 MKC Corporate Plan

- 2.2.1 This Brief will, in particular, support the Themes of “Living in MK” and “Cleaner, Greener, Safer, Healthier MK”.

2.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- 2.3.2 The following sections of the NPPF are of particular relevance to the development of this site:
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
 - Promoting healthy communities
 - Requiring good design

2.4 Milton Keynes Core Strategy (2013)

- 2.4.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in July 2013 and forms part of the development plan for Milton Keynes.
- 2.4.2 Relevant Core Strategy policies include:
- Policy CSA National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - Policy CS4 Retail and Leisure Development
 - Policy CS10 Housing
 - Policy CS11 A Well Connected Milton Keynes
 - Policy CS12 Developing Successful Neighbourhoods
 - Policy CS13 Ensuring High Quality, New Designed Places
 - Policy CS18 Healthier and Safer Communities
 - Policy CS19 The Historic and Natural Environment

2.5 Milton Keynes Local Plan (2005)

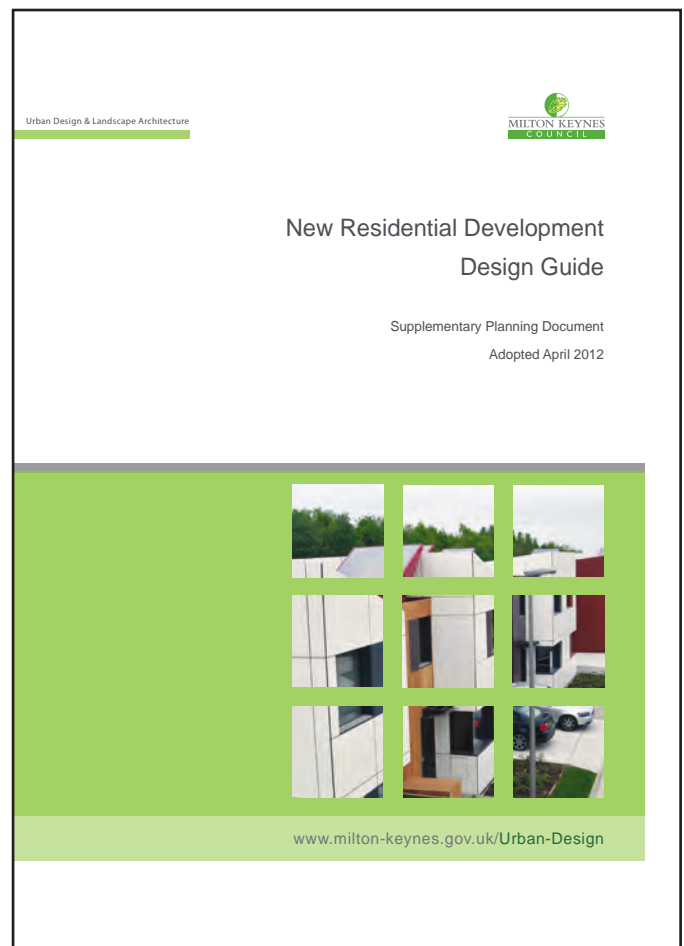
- 2.5.1 Site A is allocated in the adopted Local Plan for commercial facilities while Site B is allocated for housing development. Given the close proximity of the site to the existing Grange Farm Local Centre and given the character of the immediate locality, there may be a case to make an exception to this policy regarding Site A. Please see the statement at paragraph 2.7.2.
- 2.5.2 Policy H7 (housing on unidentified sites) sets out criteria against which housing proposals on non-allocated sites will be assessed. Policies H4-H5 and L3 set out the Council's requirements with regard to affordable housing, and open space, respectively.
- 2.5.3 Policy D4 of the Local Plan sets out the Council's requirements with regard to sustainable construction.
- 2.5.4 Policies D1 and D2 are general design policies that apply borough-wide. They look at the impact of development proposals on locality and the design of buildings. Policies T10 and T15 take account of traffic and parking provision respectively, while Policy T11 sets out the Council thresholds regarding whether or not a Transport Assessment/Travel Plan is required.

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

- 2.6.1 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents (SPG/SPDs) will be considered as material considerations when preparing any planning application for the site:
- Sustainable Construction SPD (2007)
 - Parking Standards 2016
 - New Residential Development Design Guide (2012)
 - Affordable Housing (2013)
 - A suite of Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance relating to Developer Contributions

2.7 Planning Summary

- 2.7.1 The two sites are allocated in the Local Plan for the provision of new commercial/retail uses and residential uses respectively.
- 2.7.2 The promotion of other uses on Site A, particularly residential uses, would need to be accompanied by evidence that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for the allocated commercial use.



The Residential Design Guide (2012)

SECTION 3: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 It is important to understand the existing sites and surrounding area and their features, as this informs the layout and design principles for any redevelopment of the site. Figures 3 to 6 provide an analysis of the site and its context.

3.2 Surrounding Area (see figure 3 and 5)

Land Uses

- 3.2.1 Figure 3 illustrates the wide variety of uses within 400m and 800m of the sites.
- 3.2.2 To the north east and south west of the two sites is housing. The site is bordered on the north west by mature trees and planting which is part of the H5 Portway grid road corridor.
- 3.2.3 The south east of Site B is bordered by a hedgerow the length of the site following the Swan's Way footpath and bridleway. This separates the site from Medbourne Pavilion which includes a community centre and playing fields. Directly adjacent to this area is Shenley Wood with its leisure routes.
- 3.2.4 Further north beyond the H5 is Grange Farm and Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School. Coulson Avenue runs from Grange Farm via an underpass of the H5 to the north east border of the site. The local centre within Grange Farm, includes a dental practice, children's nursery, a supermarket and a number of unit shops. This located within 400m of the site directly accessible by redway.



View of Site A looking north east along Pascal Drive



View of Site A from Pascal Drive looking North West along Flamsteed Gate towards Portway.



View looking east across Site B and along the hedgerow bordering Swan's Way.

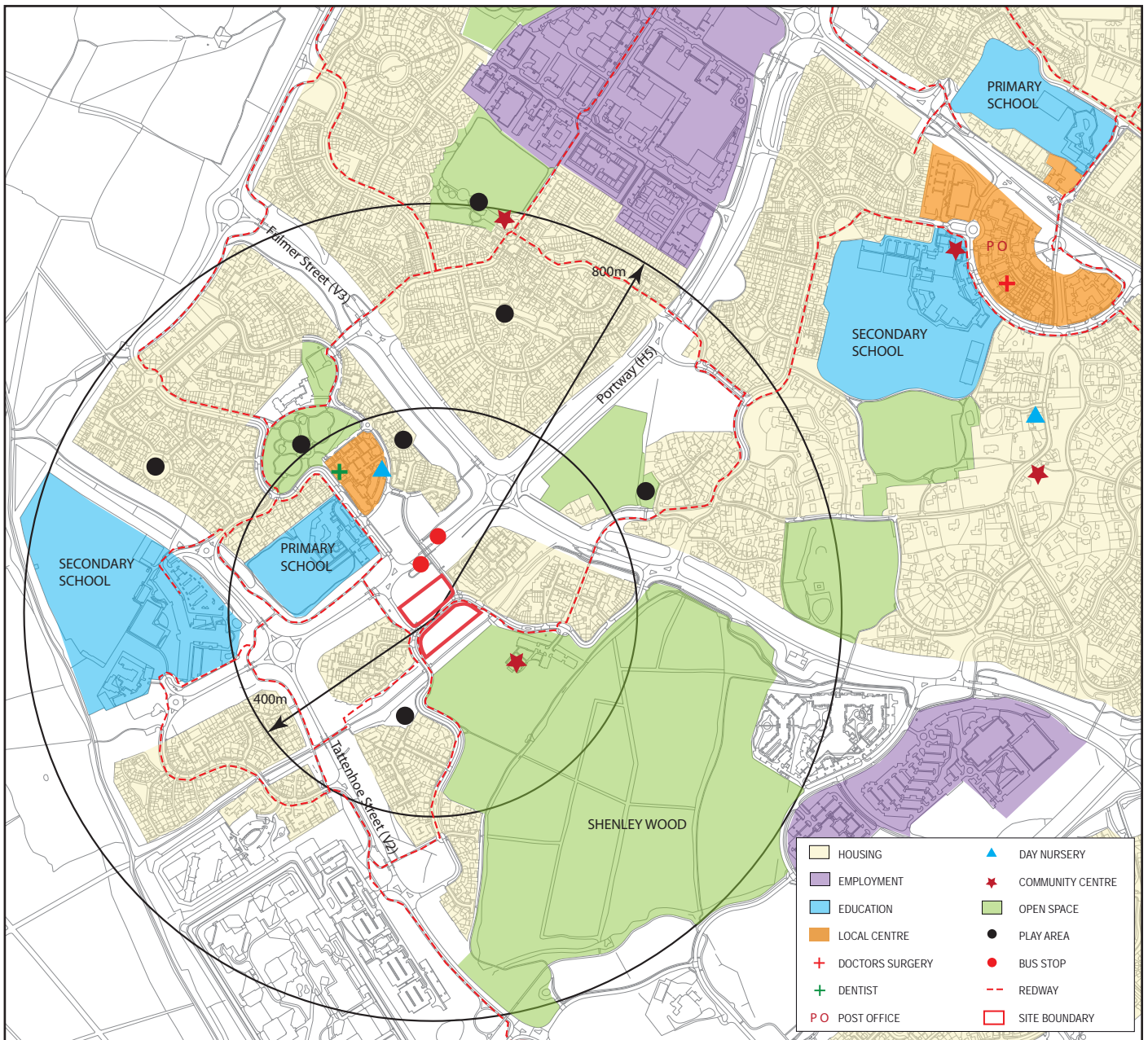


Figure 3: Surrounding Area

Building Heights and Setbacks

3.2.5 Development in the immediate vicinity of the sites is predominantly 2-2½ storeys. There are also 3 and 4 storey apartments addressing the corner of Coulson Avenue and Oldham Rise which overlooks the sites. The adjacent Grange Farm local centre which is 4 storeys is located on a high point relative to the site and acts as a landmark.

3.2.6 Setbacks along Pascal Drive in the vicinity of the sites are generous with wide verges laid to grass and tree lined with a redway between the road and property boundaries. Properties generally have a further set back from the redway and are typically 1-2 metres deep.

Public Transport Access

3.2.7 To the north of the sites there are existing bus stops on Portway (H5) (currently non operational) and to the south on Tattenhoe Street (V2).



3 and 4 storey apartments addressing the corner of Coulson Avenue and Oldham Rise which overlooks the sites.



Redway running between the sites adjacent to Pascal Drive



Swan's Way leisure route footpath and bridleway bordering the southern edge of site

Redway network

- 3.2.8 There is a redway running directly between the 2 sites along the southern side of Pascal Drive. This links into the wider redway network which provides cycle and pedestrian access to adjoining grid squares, and beyond. A redway also runs along Flamsteed Gate passing under the H5 into Grange Farm and the local centre there.
- 3.2.9 There is also a leisure route footpath and bridle way which runs along the southern edge of Site B. This route links into the network of footpaths within Shenley Wood and joins the North Buckinghamshire Way.

Vehicular Access (See Figure 5)

- 3.3.4 The site has easy access to the grid road network via Flamsteed Gate connecting to Portway (H5). Vehicular access is also provided under the grid road to Grange Farm via Coulson Avenue.
- 3.3.5 Vehicular access to the site can be taken directly from the existing surrounding street network. Pascal Drive runs through the centre of the site, Coulson Avenue and Flamsteed Gate enclose the site on two sides. These streets have a pedestrian footway which adjoins the boundary of the site.



Mature trees and hedgerow borders the site and screens from H5



Predominantly flat site, gently sloping down to Pascal Drive

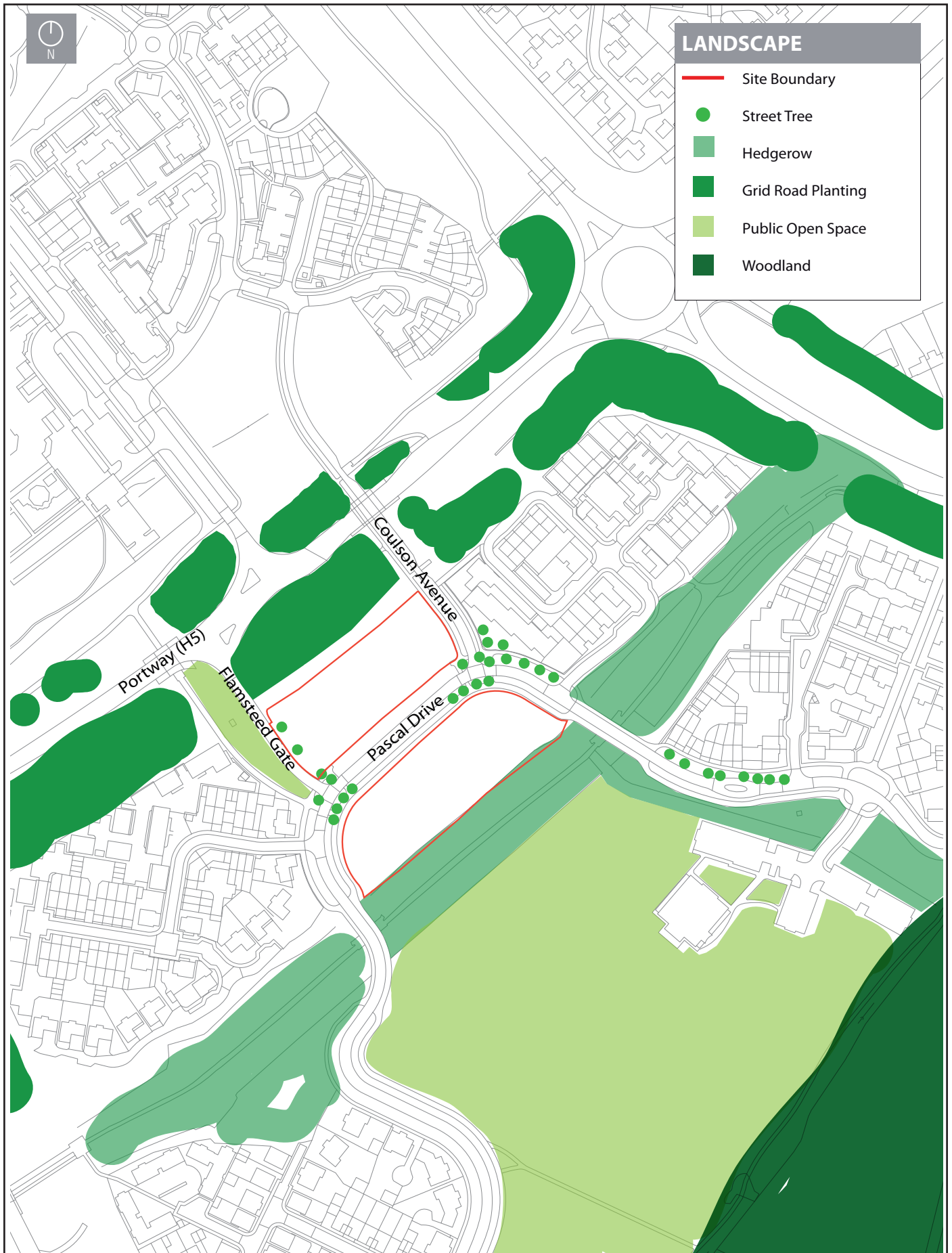


Figure 4: Surrounding landscape

3.3 The Site

Topography and Landscape

- 3.3.1 While Site B is fairly flat, Site A does have quite a significant slope down to Pascal Drive.
- 3.3.2 Both sites are featureless and laid to grass although a few trees are located within the highway land in Site B opposite the junction of Coulson Avenue and Pascal Drive and the junction of Flamsteed Gate and Pascal Drive.
- 3.3.3 The south east part of Site B is bordered by a hedgerow the length of the site following the Swan's Way footpath and bridleway. This separates the site from Medbourne Pavilion and Playing Fields.
- 3.3.4 Site A is screened from the H5 grid road by mature trees and planting.
- 3.3.5 No other known site constraints exist.



Coulson Avenue borders the site along the north east edge and runs under the H5 to Grange Farm

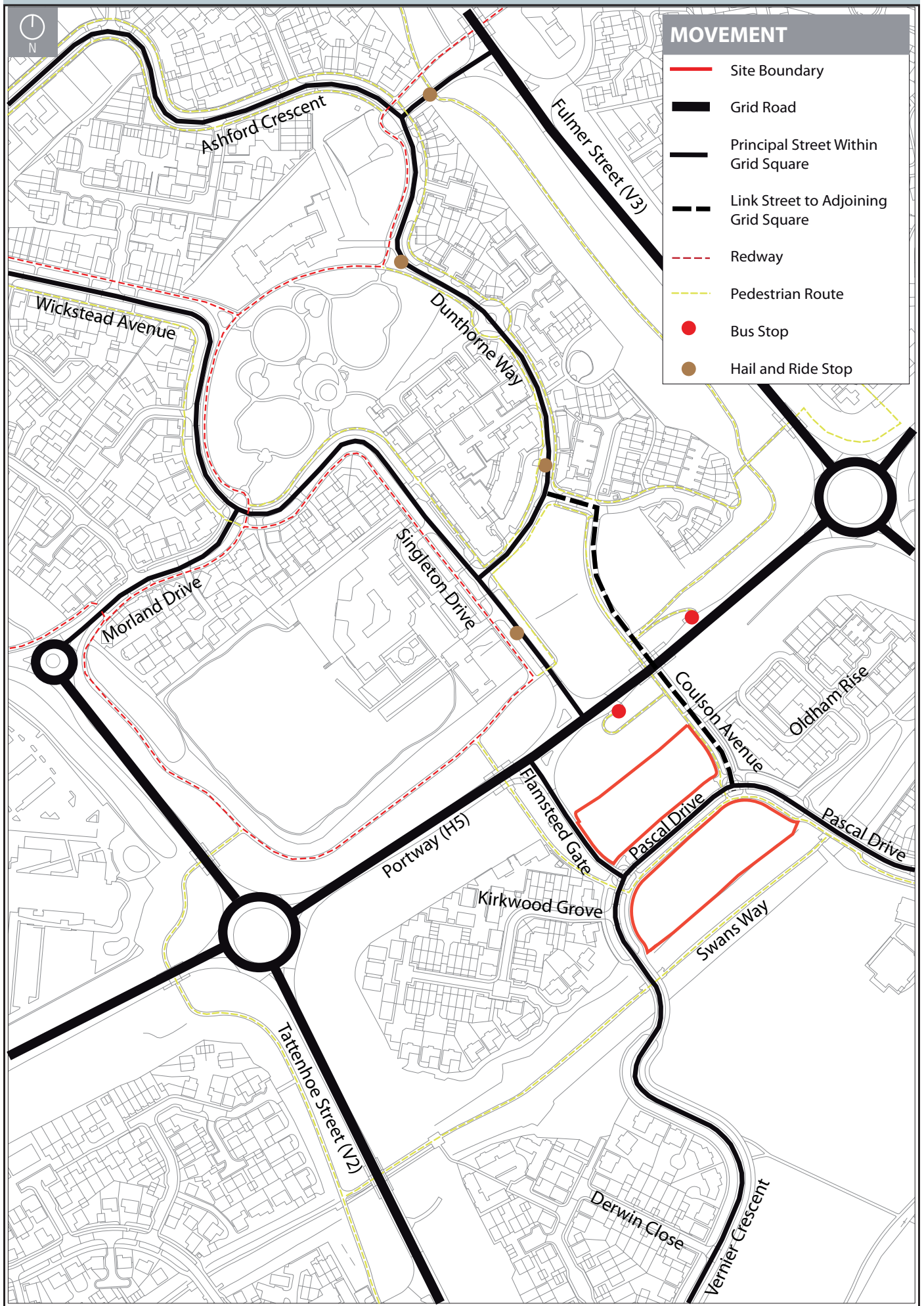


Figure 5: Existing movement

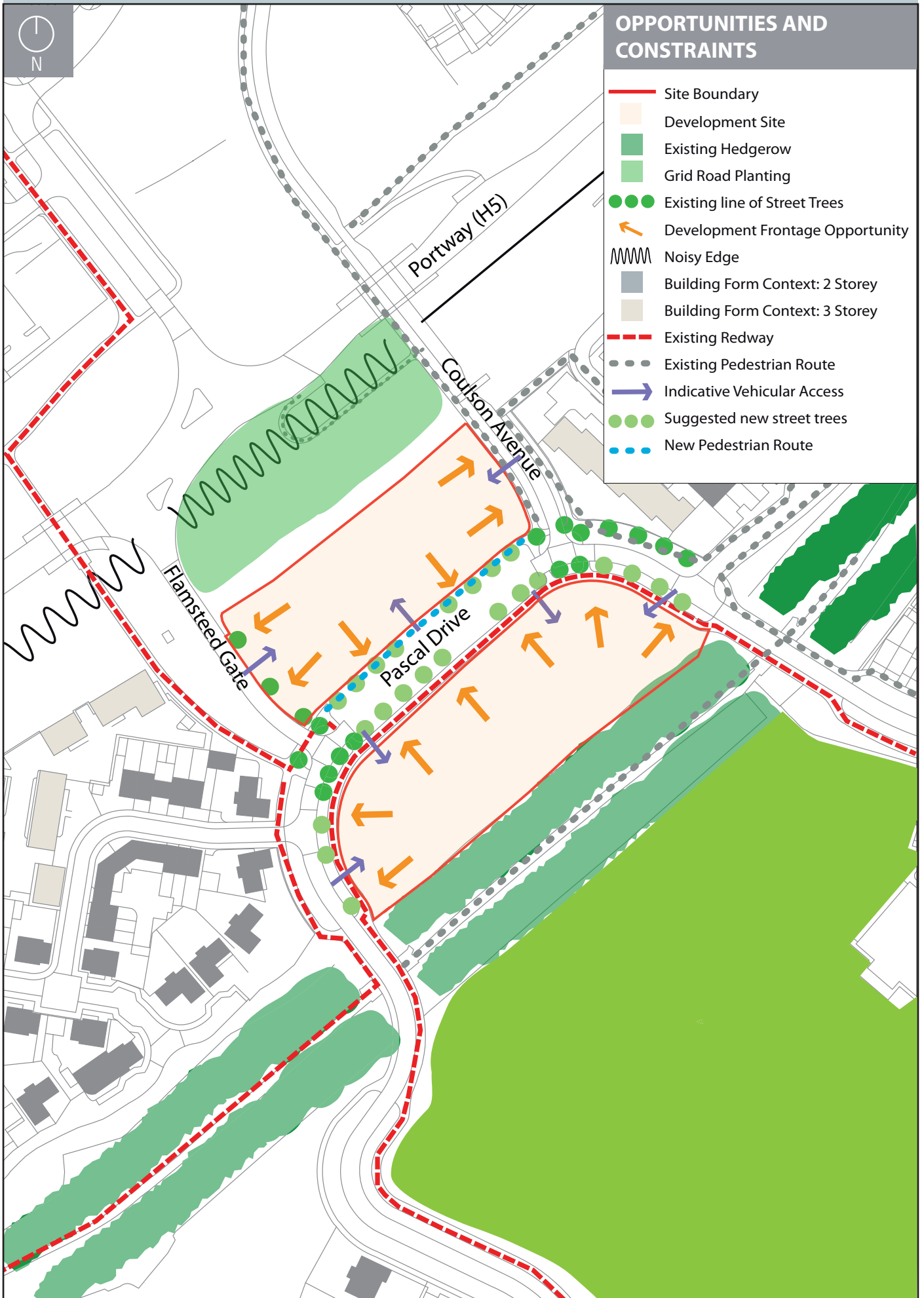


Figure 6: Opportunities and Constraints

3.4 Opportunities and Constraints (See figure 6)

3.4.1 The preceding sections of the development brief provide an appraisal of the site's existing character and context.

Opportunities

- The sites are allocated in the adopted Local Plan as development sites and there is an expectation that they will be developed.
- Milton Keynes requires new housing and these sites, in close proximity to a range of accessible facilities, and open space can help to deliver this.
- Shenley Wood provides an attractive backdrop to the site.
- Good existing pedestrian and cycle links.
- Sites are accessible by public transport and car.
- Sites are unconstrained.
- Site has street frontage to Pascal Drive, Flamsteed Gate and Coulson Avenue.
- Potential to provide surveillance of public realm.

Constraints

- Vehicular noise from the adjacent H5
- Mature hedgerow borders the sites - sensitive approach required

3.4.2 The opportunities and constraints have served to underpin the rationale behind the planning and design principles and associated Parameters Plan, outlined in section 5.

SECTION 4:
DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 Development Opportunities

4.1.1 The planning policy context as outlined in Section 3 states that the sites are allocated for both housing and commercial development.

4.1.2 There is an existing local centre within close proximity and very accessible to the site at Singleton Drive in Grange Farm. It is considered therefore that there is insufficient need or demand for additional commercial / retail facilities on Site A.

4.1.3 It is therefore proposed to bring the site forward for residential use. This is considered to be an appropriate use, as the site lies within an established residential area and can capitalise on its strengths of being within walking distance to a range of facilities. Any housing proposals would need to be accompanied by evidence that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for commercial / retail use.

4.1.4 Residential development is an appropriate use of Site B. Both sites could therefore come forward as either general housing development or a range of self build plots where a demand has been identified.

4.1.5 There are opportunities with the sites to showcase Milton Keynes approach to innovative, bespoke and exemplar housing design. In this regard and to demonstrate inclusiveness, homes should where possible be built to Lifetime Homes standards.

4.1.6 Opportunities for an element of specialist / supported housing could also be explored on the flatter of the two sites (Site B).

4.1.7 It is expected that 30% of the total housing will be provided as affordable housing, as outlined in the Council's Affordable Housing SPD adopted in 2013.

SECTION 5:
PLANNING AND DESIGN
PRINCIPLES

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section outlines the relevant planning and design principles appropriate to the development of the site. These principles have been informed by the existing planning policy position, the contextual analysis as well as the opportunities and constraints/challenges facing the two sites.
- 5.1.2 A Parameters Plan serves to spatially represent the key design principles. (See figure 7)
- 5.1.3 An indicative layout has also been included to demonstrate how self build plots could be accommodated on the site (see figure 8)

5.2 Layout

- 5.2.1 Development should follow perimeter block principles, so that there is a clear distinction between public and private space.
- 5.2.2 The layout must not result in ambiguous space that is not clearly public or private (such as alleyways or other 'leftover space').
- 5.2.3 The layout of the development blocks must be legible to enable easy wayfinding and ease of movement.

5.3 Key Buildings and Frontages

Key Buildings

- 5.3.1 The entrance to Pascal Drive from Flamsteed Gate and Coulson Avenue must be marked with key buildings. They must be designed so that they are distinct from the surrounding buildings by virtue of, scale, architectural style, detailing or materials.
- 5.3.2 Buildings on the corner of streets must turn the corner with active frontages provided to both streets.

Frontages

- 5.3.3 Pascal Drive, Flamsteed Gate and Coulson Avenue must be overlooked by the frontages of development. In this regard care must be taken to avoid layouts and building footprints that result in blank elevations that front a public street.
- 5.3.4 There is a planted landscaping belt along the northern and southern boundaries of Site A and B respectively. Dwellings could back onto these boundaries, subject to strengthening of this landscaping belt.

5.4 Density and Building Heights

- 5.4.1 The density of development should reflect that of the surrounding area and therefore densities of generally between 25-35 dw/ha would be appropriate. If self build plots are developed on both sites, densities could be lower at between 15 - 20 dw/ha.
- 5.4.2 Building heights should be predominantly 2 to 2.5 storeys in height, The sites low lying location relative to the surrounding area, together with the sloping nature of site A and context of neighbouring 3 and 4 storey development means that the potential exists for the occasional use of taller development to mark key corners if the design is of an exceptional quality. However, proposals for the site should ensure that roof heights must not be taller than the existing adjacent development.

5.5 Detailed Design Appearance

- 5.5.1 The architectural approach to development must be informed by the contextual analysis. The adjoining development is characterised by a wide variety of building materials and forms. Housing directly adjacent and at the Grange Farm Local Centre has some interesting roof forms which help give a positive character to the area. This could provide a design cue for the design of the housing on the sites. A carefully considered palette of materials must be employed within the proposed development to compliment the surrounding context and help give a strong character to the development.
- 5.5.2 As a general principle, the appearance of buildings should reflect Milton Keynes's ethos as a forward thinking, and innovative city. All buildings must be well proportioned, must enhance their surroundings and be constructed from high quality, durable materials.
- 5.5.3 All social/affordable housing must be indistinguishable from market housing (i.e.. 'tenure blind').

5.6 Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

- 5.6.1 The Council's Local Plan Policy D4 and its supplementary Sustainable Construction SPD sets sustainability standards that will have to be considered as part of the overall design process.
- 5.6.2 To satisfy Policy D4, developers will either need to produce a sustainability statement showing how the requirements of the relevant checklist in the SPD will be satisfied, or carry out a BREEAM/Code for Sustainable Homes assessment demonstrating how an excellent/ Code For Sustainable Homes level 4 standard will be achieved.

5.7 Access and Movement

- 5.7.1 The principal vehicular access to the development will be taken off Pascal Drive. Secondary access could also be provided off Coulson Avenue and Flamsteed Gate.
- 5.7.2 While individual access can be taken for site A off Flamsteed Gate, Pascal Drive and Coulson Avenue, the presence of a redway wrapping around Site B along Pascal Drive means that crossovers of the redway must be limited. This will influence the layout of development on Site B.
- 5.7.3 Planning applications for proposals must include a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan, produced in consultation with local transport providers and agreed with the Council. A Transport Assessment identifies what measures will be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme and to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel.

5.8 Parking

- 5.8.1 Car and cycle parking must be in accordance with Milton Keynes Council's Parking Standards.
- 5.8.2 The location of car parking should accord with the guidance in the Council's Residential Design Guide.
- 5.8.3 The existing wide verges along Pascal Drive should include on street parking to be integrated within them thus keeping the carriageway clear of parked cars.

5.9 Public Realm and Landscaping

5.9.1 Development proposals must be accompanied by a plan illustrating indicative landscape principles for the site.

5.9.2 The few existing trees along Pascal Drive should be supplemented with an avenue of trees along both sides of Pascal Drive reinforcing the green character of the area.

5.9.3 Landscaping should be used wherever possible to reduce the impact of blank side boundary walls / fences.

5.9.4 The hedgerow along Swan's Way to the south-east boundary of the site is designated a wildlife corridor. Within the council's adopted Local Plan policy NE1, Wildlife Corridors are given the same status as Milton Keynes Wildlife Sites. They are linear pathways containing habitats that encourage the movement of plants and animals between important wildlife sites. The objective of policy NE1 is to protect from development all designated sites of importance for nature conservation. Where development proposals lie within an adjoining a wildlife corridor, the Council will consider whether the proposals would damage the viability of the corridor.

5.9.5 Any development proposals in this location will be required to respect the special nature of the hedgerow and will need to be sensitively designed to offer sufficient buffer distance for the hedge which is a landscape feature clearly shown on historic maps dating back to c1880. The location and detailing of parking, highway or property boundaries along the south-east boundary will need to be carefully considered to minimise the risk of future problems relating to potential conflict with the hedge: such as future growth of the hedge, overhanging branches, damage to property, shading, etc.

5.9.6 Maintenance access for management of the hedge will also need to be carefully considered.



Figure 7: Parameters Plan

5.10 General Planning Requirements

Nature Conservation

- 5.10.1 An Extended Phase One Survey Report, including information on the likely ecological impacts of the development and proposed mitigation, will be required. This survey will also inform the requirements for other more specific surveys and mitigation work.
- 5.10.2 Development proposals are usually subject to the DEFRA Impact Assessment Biodiversity Calculator methodology to inform avoidance, mitigation and compensation to include biodiversity offsetting actions.

Safety and Security

- 5.10.3 The developer must consult with the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at an early stage in the design process: initially, regarding design and layout and subsequently, regarding any additional physical security or community safety requirements.
- 5.10.4 Most importantly, the layout of the development must 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 must be no ambiguous space in terms of ownership.

Archaeology

- 5.10.5 Consultation with the Council's Senior Archaeological Officer did not identify any significant archaeological constraint.

5.11 Illustrative Layout : Self Build Development

Using the design principles and the Parameters Plan outlined in the previous sections, an illustrative layout option (Fig 8) has been drawn up.

The layout indicates that a maximum of 18 self build plots at approximately 500m² each could be accommodated on the site:

The illustrative layout provides an example of how the site could potentially be developed. Developers are encouraged to come up with their own design solutions, based on the design principles and the parameters plans outlined in the development brief.



Figure 8: Indicative Layout

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