

SECTION 3: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 It is important to understand the existing site and surrounding area and their features, as this informs the layout and design principles for any redevelopment of the site that are identified within Section 5 of this Brief. Figures 4 and 5 provide an analysis of the site and its surrounding context.

3.2 Surrounding Area

Land Uses

3.2.1 The site has a wide range of uses within a 400m walking distance. To the east of the site is a Local Centre which includes a Community Centre, A Post Office, Pub, Convenience Store, Hair Dressers and two food establishments.

3.2.2 Hungerford House, a sheltered housing provision of 34 one bed flats and nine 2 bed bungalows, is situated on the opposite side of White Horse Drive to the north of the site.

3.2.3 Within the 200m catchment to the south is a local park, while a health centre is situated to the east of the site on the opposite side of Standing Way in Bletchley. The Emerson Valley linear park which follows Loughton Brook is within 400m to the north.

3.2.4 Directly abutting the site to the north, and west are residential uses, dwelling types include apartments and houses. The landscaping associated with the H8 / Standing Way grid road corridor is directly to the south of the site.



View of site looking west from White Horse Drive



Entrance to local centre from White Horse Drive



View along White Horse Drive from junction with Taunton Dean

Public Realm

- 3.2.5 There is a footway along the north boundary of the site providing pedestrian access from White Horse Drive to Bottesford Close.

Existing Infrastructure

- 3.2.6 The site fronts White Horse Drive on the North East edge, which provides access to Emerson Valley directly from H8 Standing Way and consequently is served by the infrastructure provided by the wider MK grid road network. The site is furthermore served by the existing redway network which passes the north corner of the site. The national cycle network (route 51) is also accessible within 400 meters via the redway.

Building Heights, Setbacks and Edge Conditions

- 3.2.7 To the north and west of the site, the surrounding residential development is predominantly 2 storey as well as some single storey sheltered residential housing.
- 3.2.8 The existing dwellings along White Horse Drive enjoy deep set backs from the street. This allow for a wide tree lined verge and access to residential parking to the side and front of dwellings. Bottesford Close is a level surface street with shallow set backs and parking to the side of dwellings.



Example of properties along White Horse Drive backing onto the site



View of site looking east along the path to Bottesford Close



View of H8 Standing Way from the site

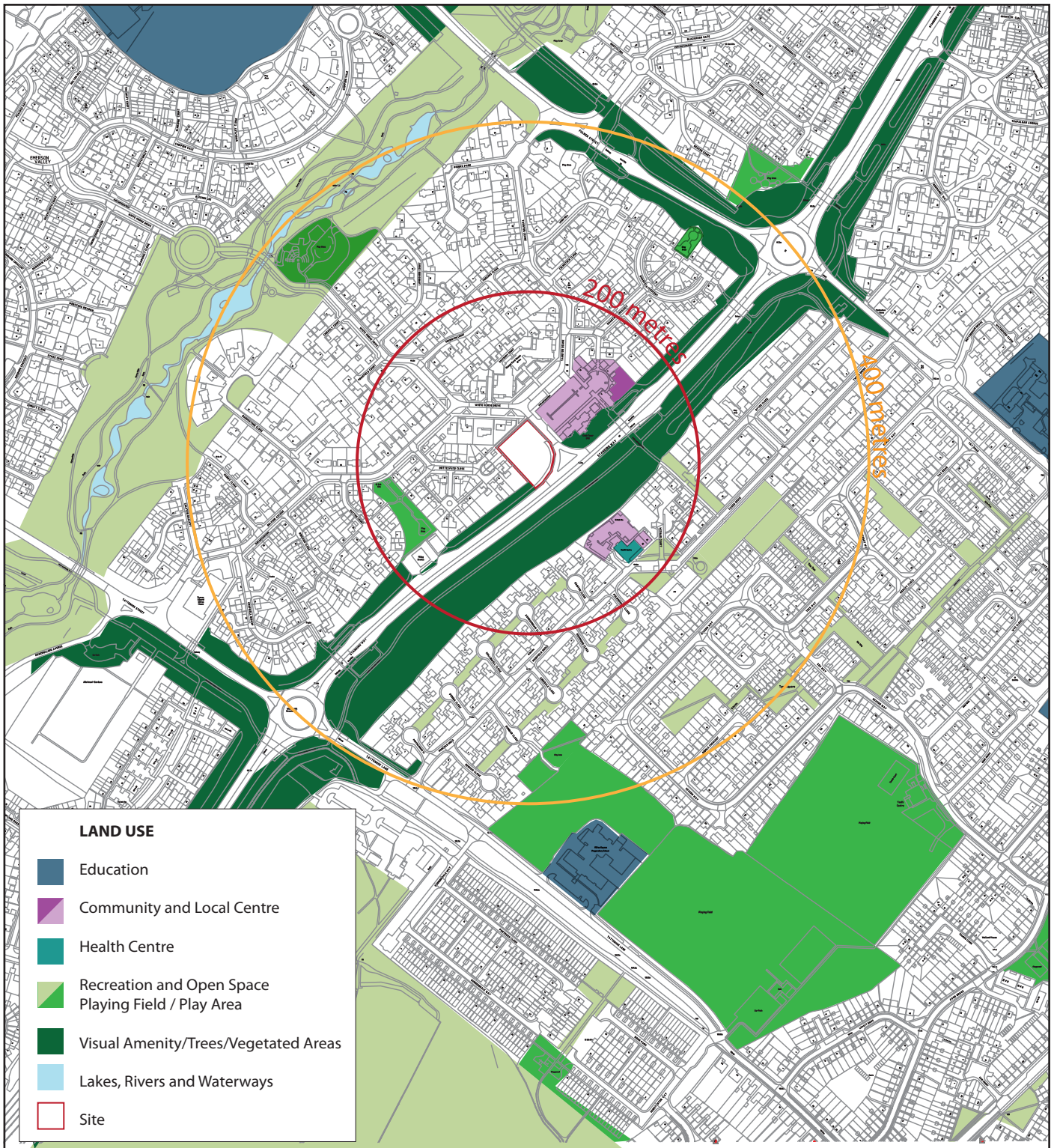


Figure 4: Surrounding Area

Surrounding Building Appearance

3.2.9 The Emerson Valley estate displays the characteristics of a typical spine road with cul-de-sacs layout. The area contains significant street planting and incorporates strategic landscape features such as linear parks. The streets contain deep hedgerows and wide tree lined verges. Surrounding buildings are typical of the style adopted by development of the late 1980's and early 90's. Housing varies in ridge height and generally have pitched roofs. The use of a limited material pallet such as buff brick, render and painted timber cladding with areas of darker buff / pink and deep red brick provides the built form character to Emerson Valley.

Public Transport Access

3.2.10 There are bus stops located on Standing Way White Horse Drive, and Taunton Dean within 100m of the site. Bletchley train station is 2 km from the site.

3.3 The Site

3.3.1 The site is largely rectangular in shape with the east corner following the curvature of the slip road from Standing Way. Comprising mostly of grass, it is bordered with a low hedge on two north facing edges. The north east edge faces White Horse Drive and provides existing access (shown in fig 5). The north west edge is bordered by the footway to Bottesford Close. A mature hedgerow and trees exist as a green buffer along the H8 grid road corridor to the south east and, extending partway along Whitehorse Drive. Close boarded fencing of the rear of the adjoining Bottesford Close properties occur along the south western edge. Land slopes gently from a mounded high point on the southern corner.



Surrounding housing illustrating buff brick and pitched roofs with painted timber cladding



View of site looking south east towards the grid road corridor landscaping that borders the site.



View looking west across the site towards neighbouring 2 storey dwellings.

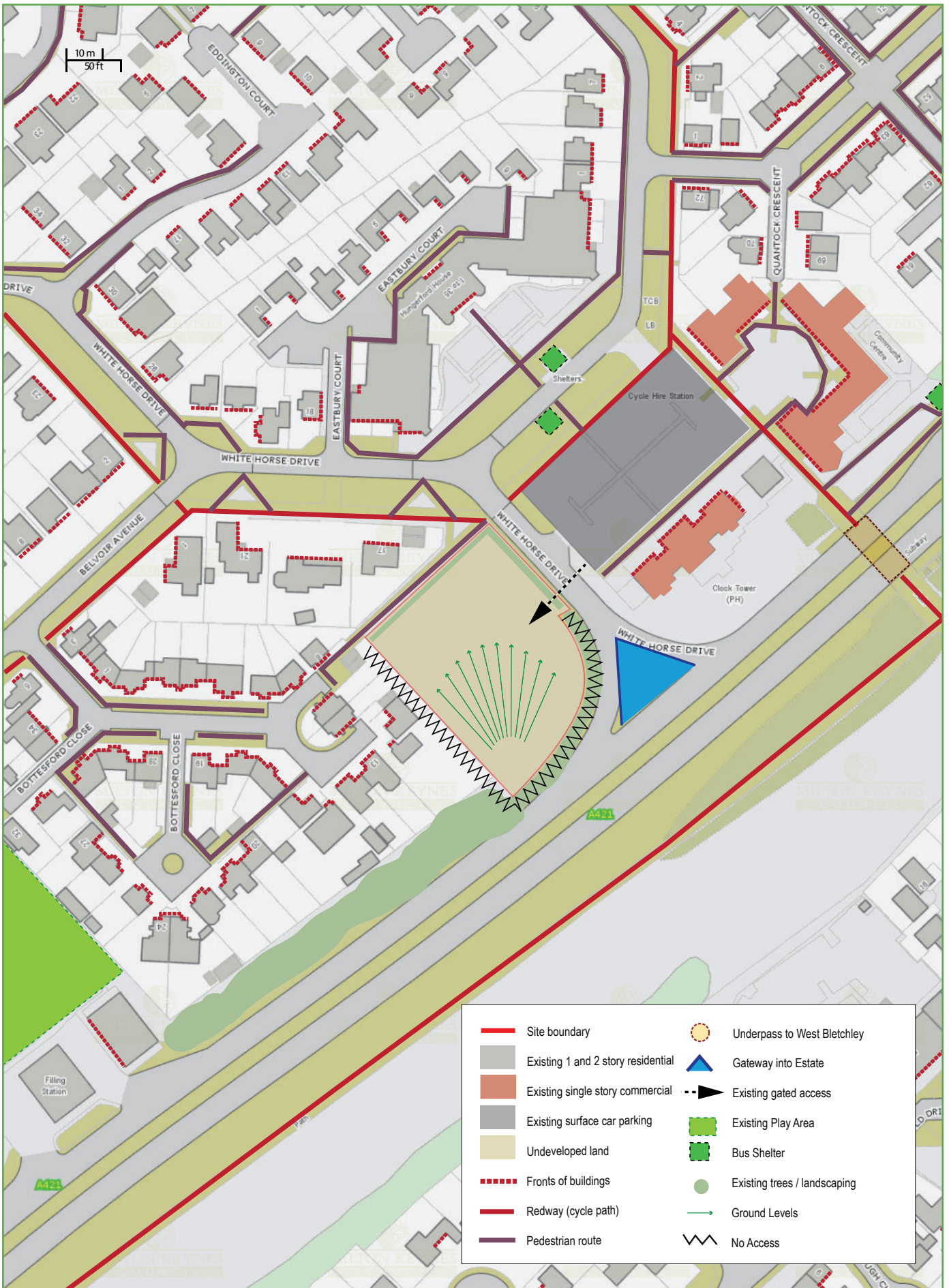


Figure 5: Site Analysis

3.4 Opportunities and Challenges

- 3.4.1 The preceding sections of the development brief provide an appraisal of the site's existing character and context.
- 3.4.2 The site is located in a visually prominent location when arriving by car from Standing Way (H8). The development can therefore help to demarcate this gateway into Emerson Valley.
- 3.4.3 The site is situated in a highly accessible location close to Bletchley and Westcroft centres, and within walking distance of a range of local centre uses.
- 3.4.4 The site is served by significant existing infrastructure. Street frontage to White Horse Drive exists to one side as well as footpaths, a redway and other utilities.
- 3.4.5 The backs of existing properties facing the south west boundary offer an opportunity for rear boundaries of new development to adjoin them, the proposed design response needs to be mindful of the risk of overlooking.
- 3.4.6 The existing footpath along the north west boundary will need to be retained and offers challenges in terms of an appropriate design response.
- 3.4.7 Adjacent development to the north-east and east is limited to 2 storey in height.
- 3.4.8 The site is free of any ecological constraints and there are no known utility constraints.

- 3.4.9 The levels on the site and the proximity to Standing Way offer some constraints with regards to vehicular access. There is only a short stretch of White Horse Drive where vehicular access can be obtained and therefore this may influence the layout of development.
- 3.4.10 The opportunities and challenges have served to underpin the rationale behind the approach and principles of this Brief and the Parameters Plan, outlined in section 5



Example of 2 storey housing adjacent to the site



Current access to the site

