

2.

Context & Identity

This section presents a more in-depth review of the local context and influences from the surrounding area. It considers:

The unique *landscape character* qualities of the site and its setting to ensure a sensitive and structured design response.

The *historic growth* pattern of Blandford is explored to identify opportunities to reinforce a natural expansion of the town with improved connections and community integration.

A *built character* appraisal highlights townscape elements and features of Blandford and the surrounding villages to inform an understanding of local identity and sense of place.

Key outcomes from the review are drawn out and summarised to inform the masterplan and design process.

Landscape context & character

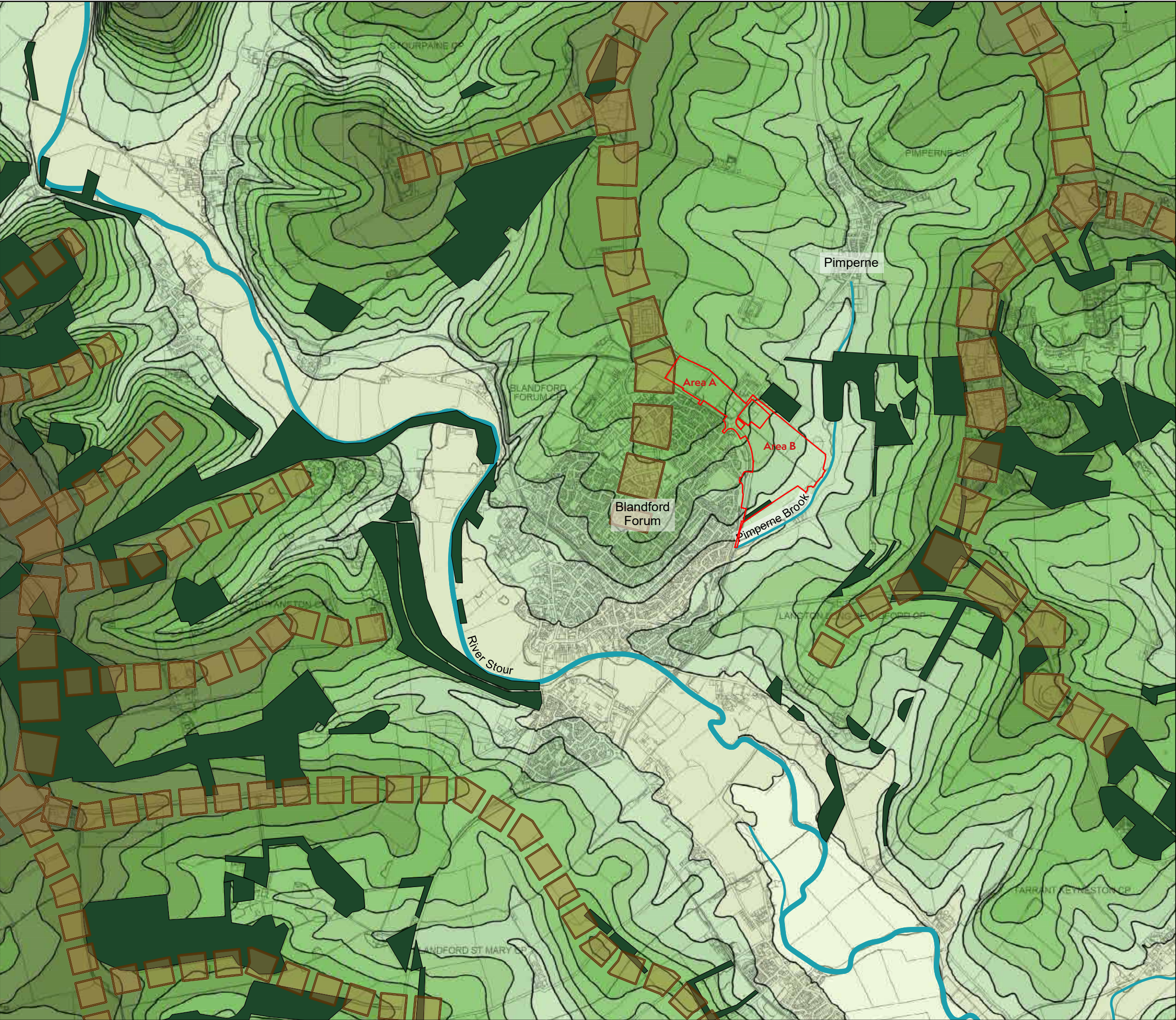
Landform & setting

The site lies to the north-east of Blandford. Land to the north of Salisbury Road (including area A) is situated on a broad, flat topped spur of chalk downland. The town sits on the southern extent of this spur, with settlement extending over the lower lying ground onto the River Stour flood plain and into the valley of the Pimperne Brook. Land to the south of Salisbury Road, (including area B) slopes south and south-east and forms part of the valley slopes to the Pimperne Brook. To the east of the Pimperne Brook land rises steeply to a north – south spur of chalk downland which defines the eastern flank of the Pimperne valley.

The main ridgelines to the east and west of the Pimperne valley form the main physical containment to the site and also form significant visually containing features in the landscape. The Pimperne valley forms the immediate landscape setting of the site to the east and south-east, and Blandford, the setting to the west and south-west. Alongside the upper reaches of the Pimperne Brook the village of Pimperne is located on the valley floor and its lower slopes.

The landscape surrounding the site is predominantly arable land with pasture on steeper slopes. Woodland is a notable feature within the Pimperne Valley, with large copses around Langborne House, located on the valley floor and eastern valley sides and woodland around properties at Letton Park, between the site and Pimperne village. The Blandford bypass, which runs between the site and the main town, is bounded by hedgerows and areas of woodland and has a noticeably treed character.

The treed character of the Pimperne valley and the Blandford bypass are notable features within the setting to the southern parcel (area B) of the site. The treed character of Salisbury Road largely contains area B to the north, and forms an important feature in the approach to the town from Pimperne.



Topography Plan
KEY

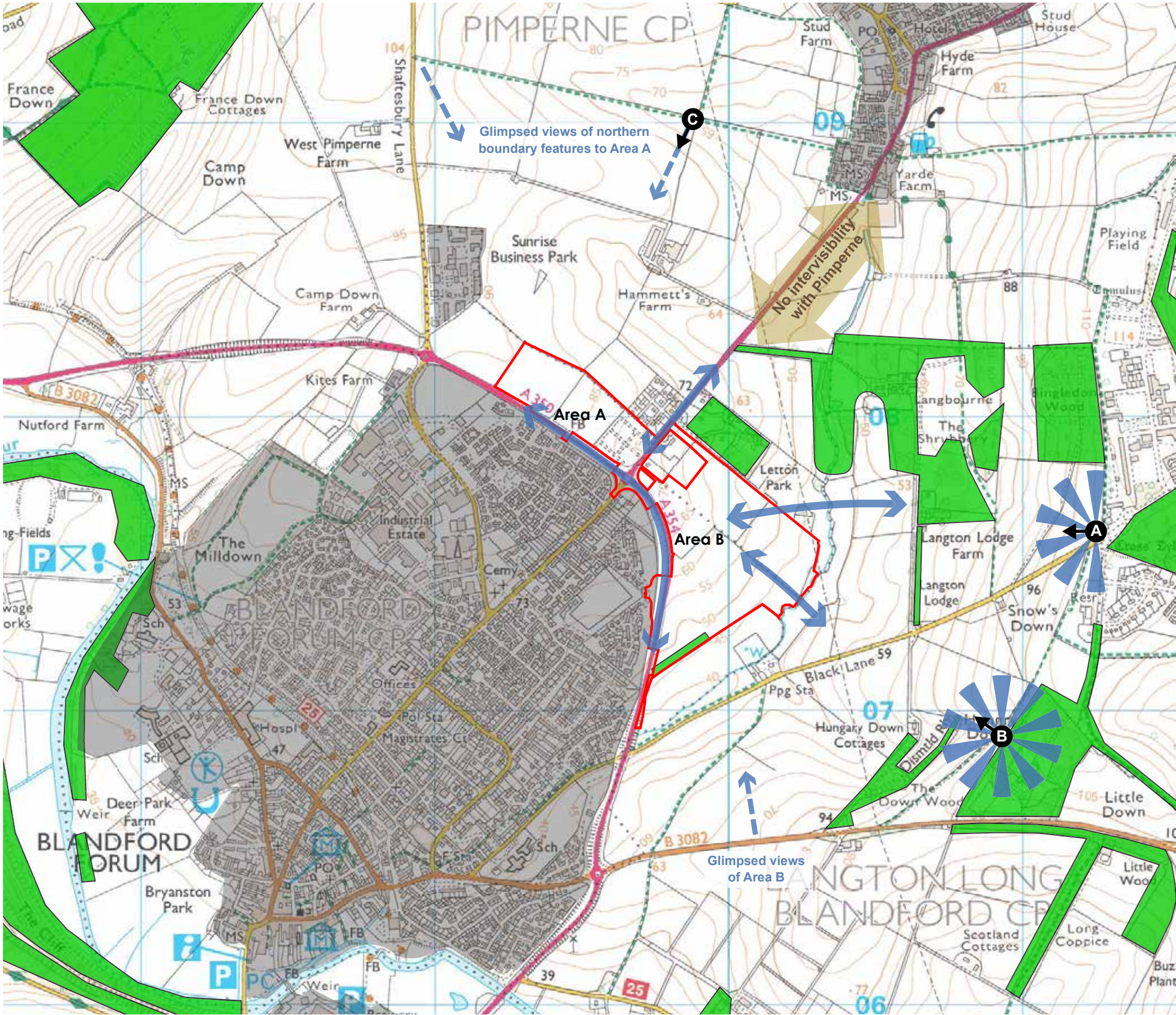
Site boundary

Ridge lines

Landform plan (prepared by HDA)

Visual Context

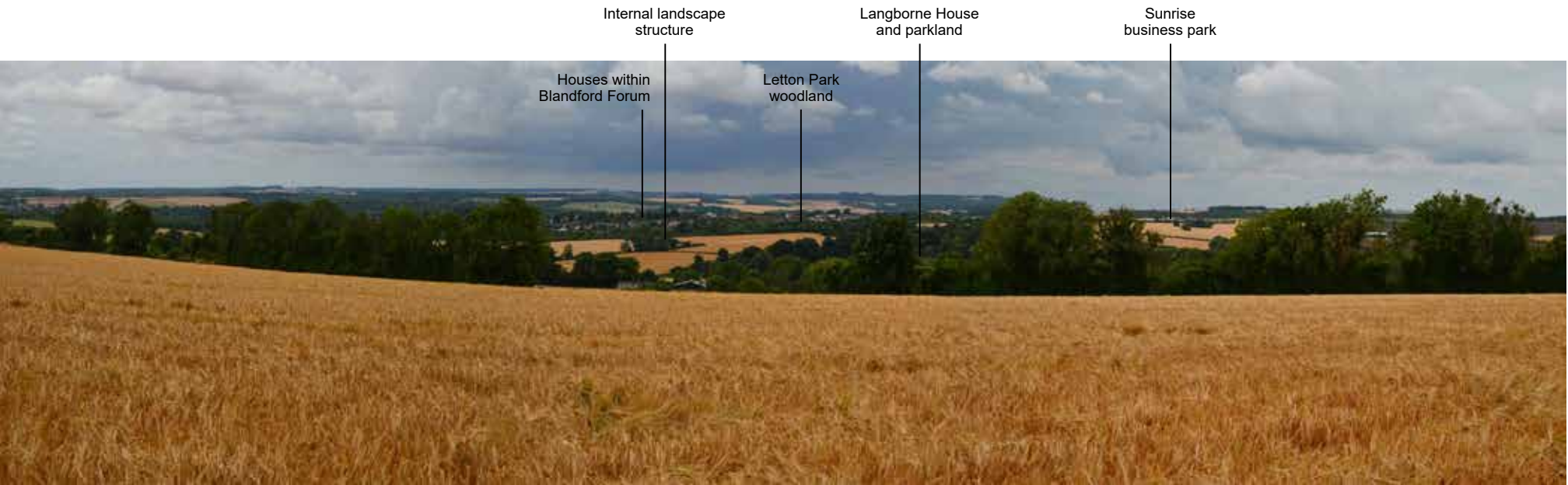
As identified through the landscape analysis the surrounding landscape limits the extent of the visual envelope to the site. Site area A is substantially enclosed by existing hedgerows and shelter belts. Views of the boundary vegetation are glimpsed from the AONB to the north and from the adjacent roads. Public views of site area B are generally restricted to adjacent stretches of road and footpaths within the Pimperne Valley, noticeably from the opposite valley sides to the east. In these views the site and the existing suburbs of Blandford are visible, together with the wooded parkland of Letton Park and Langborne House. Wider views of site area B are contained and screened by intervening landform, trees and vegetation.



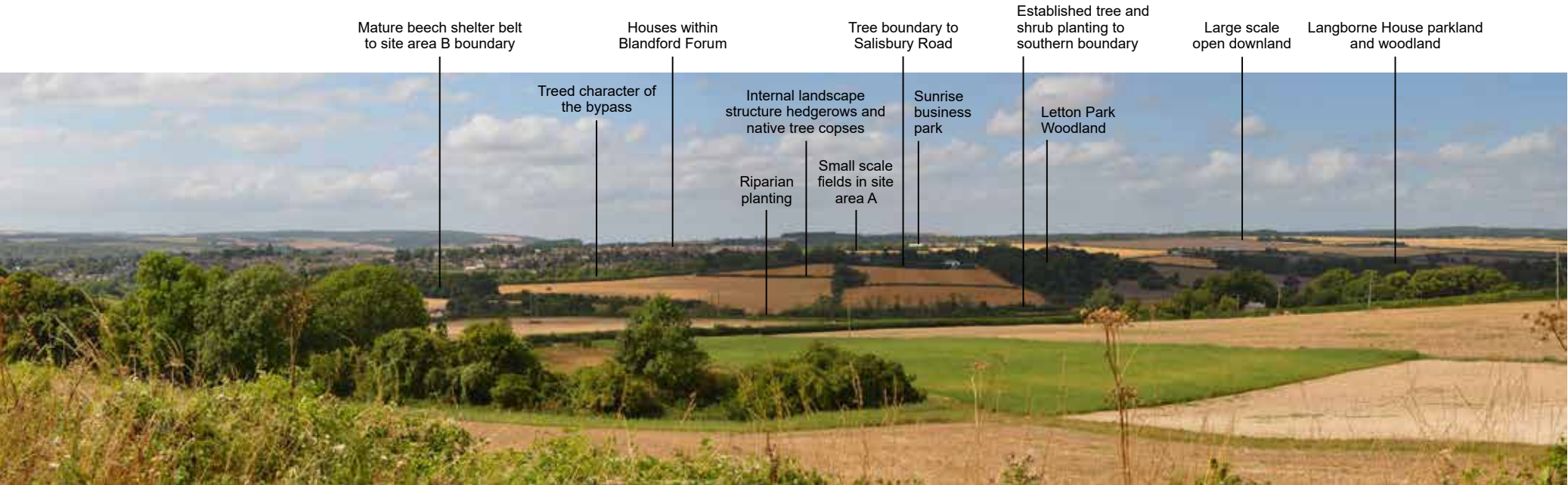
Visual Analysis KEY

- Site boundary
- Woodland / tree cover
- Notable viewpoints
- Indicative view corridors
- Glimpsed views
- Representative photographs

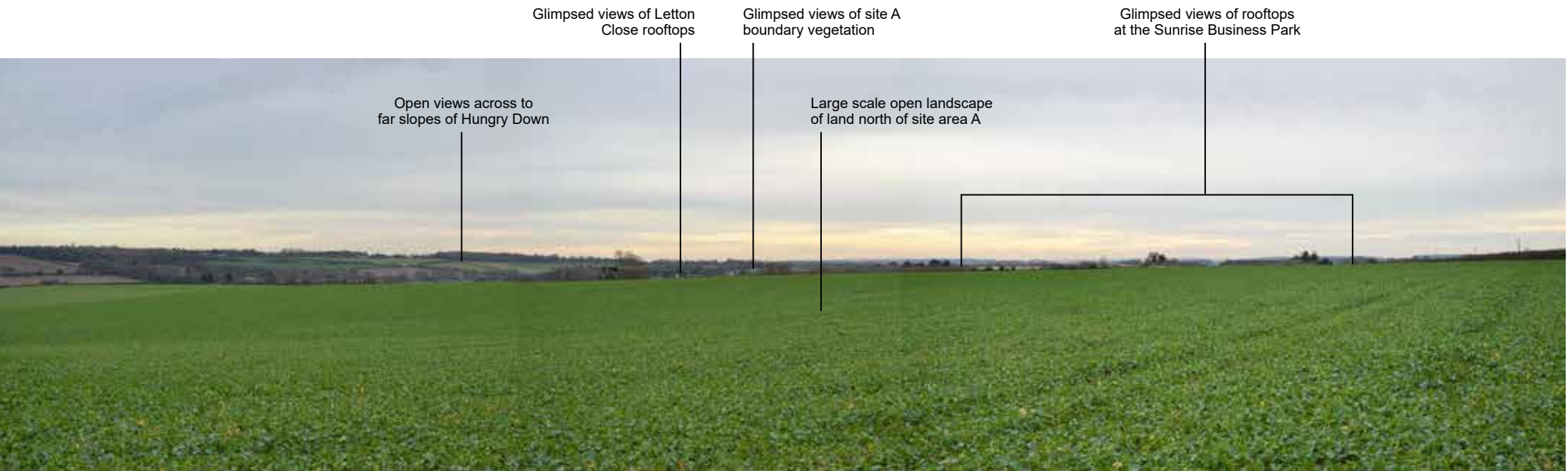
Visual analysis plan (prepared by HDA)



Photograph A Looking west from public footpath E24/8 on the edge of Blandford military camp.



Photograph B Looking north-west from public footpath E13/4 on Hungry Down.



Photograph C Looking north-east from footpath E16/10.

Landscape designations

Blandford Forum is surrounded by land designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's), nationally important landscapes. To the south and west of Blandford Forum lies the Dorset AONB; to the north and east lies the Cranborne Chase AONB. Area B, lies adjacent to the Cranborne Chase AONB, within one of a small number of parcels of land not designated along with Letton Park and some adjacent land west of the Pimperne Brook.

Area A straddles the AONB boundary with the two small arable fields, lying within the Cranborne Chase AONB. The allotments and the Letton Close residential area lie outside the AONB. Both areas A and B are within or adjacent to the AONB and are subject to the prescriptions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which requires proposed development to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on designated areas, and to protect the landscape and conserve/enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.

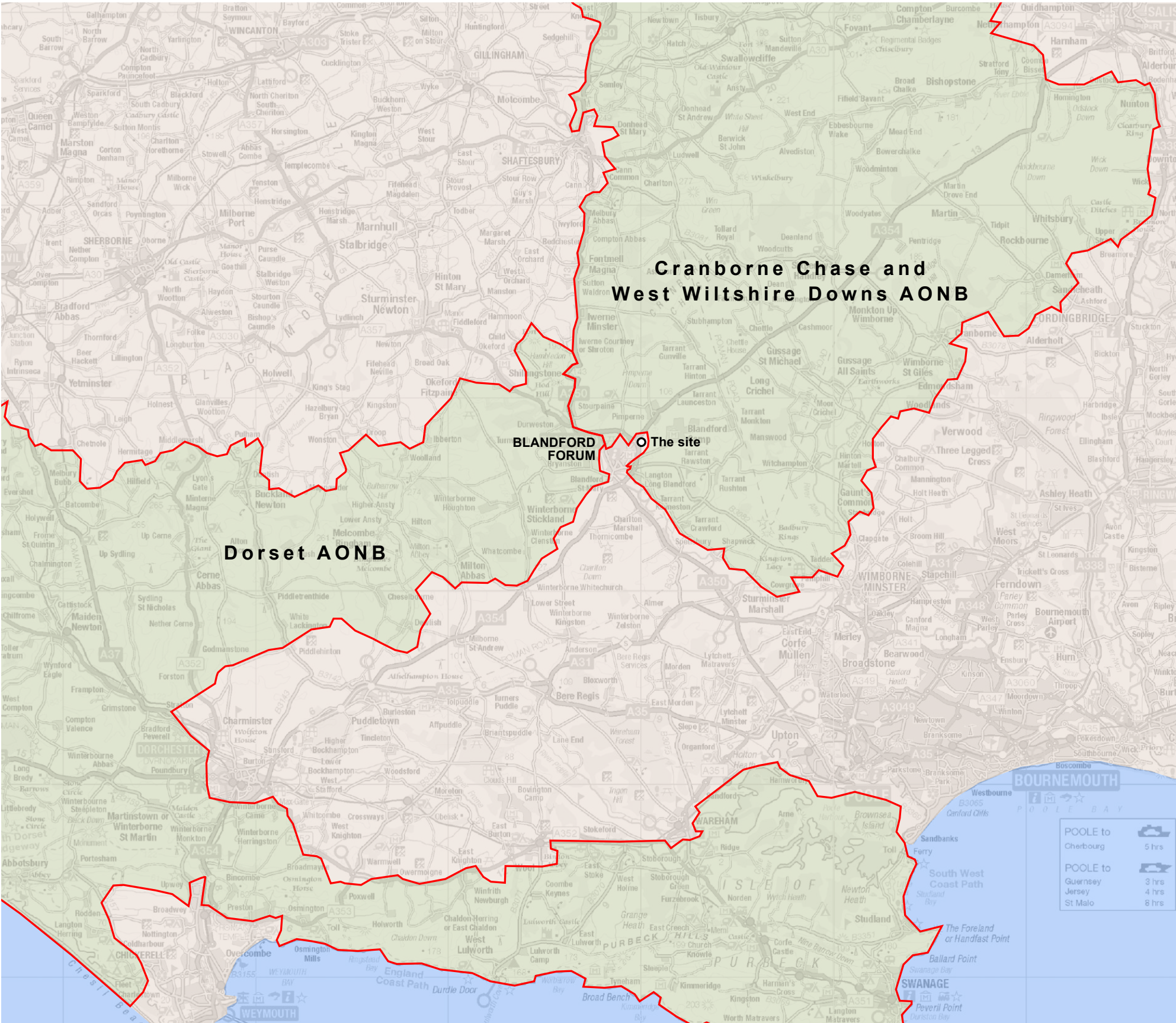
Local Planning designations

Area B lies within the LC Landscape Character policy of the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan. The policy requires the following approach to any new development;

Policy LC: Landscape Character

- a) *“All new development within the plan area must demonstrate that account has been taken of the relevant AONB Management Plan policies and must not detract from the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase and Dorset AONBs unless, in the case of major development, this is justified by exceptional circumstances and it is clearly in the public interest to permit the development.”*

Area B lies outside the AONB boundary, the development must therefore have regard to the setting of the AONB but would not have to demonstrate exceptional circumstances as the test relates to land within the AONB. The scheme has been developed in consultation with Dorset Council to minimise the effects of development on the adjacent AONB and follow the provisions of subsequent parts of the LC Landscape Character policy. A full assessment of the scheme against the policy is set out in a Technical Note submitted with the revisions to the application and the LVIA addendum.



AONB boundaries plan (prepared by HDA)

Landscape character

An appreciation of the landscape and visual attributes of the site and its local environs must inform the landscape design of the scheme. The site lies within National Character Area (NCA) No 134: The Dorset Downs and Cranbourne Chase.

The key characteristics of the area around the site are:

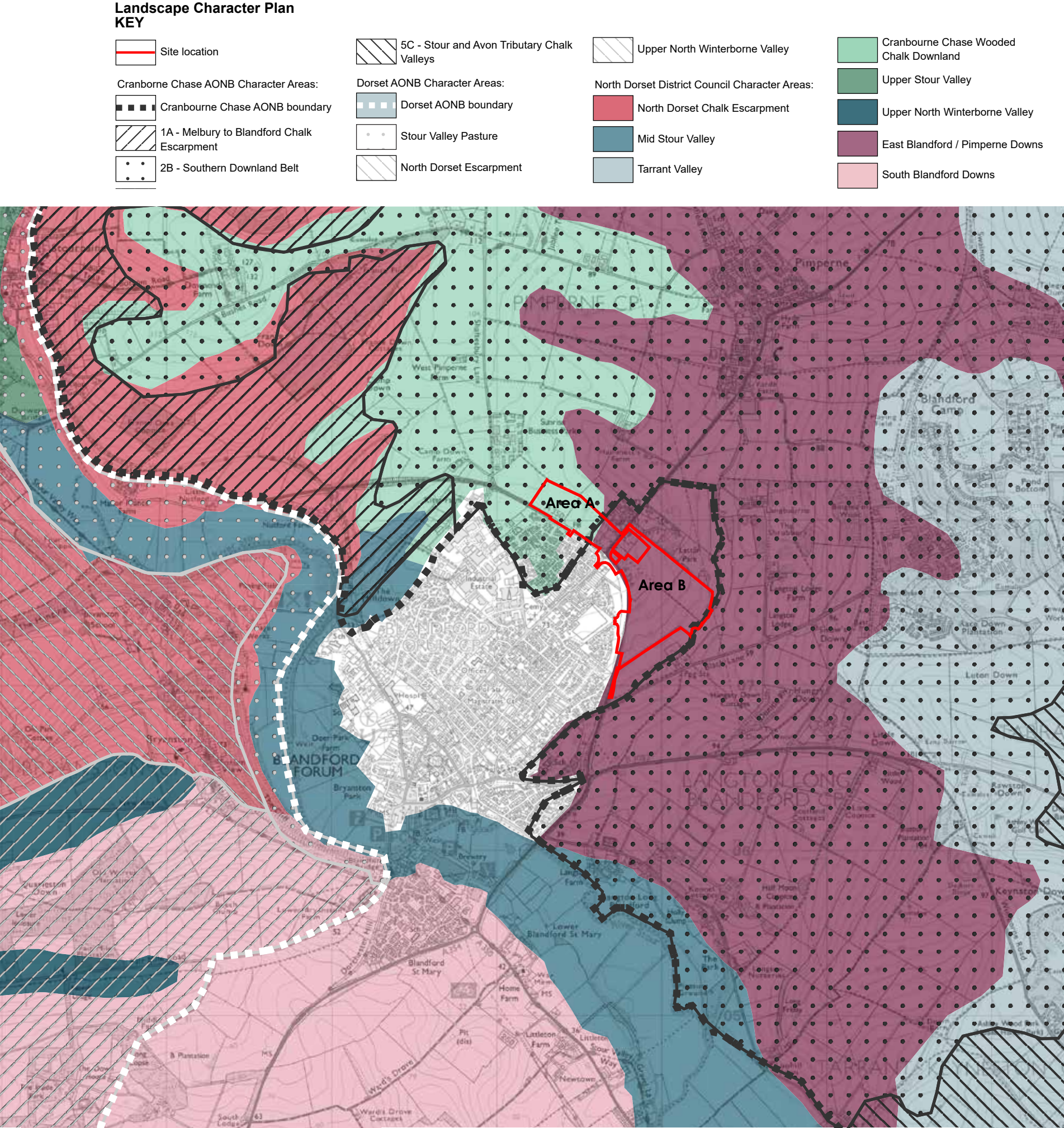
- North-west to south-east transition through dramatic scarps, plateaux, rolling chalk upland, and a gentle but expansive dip slope – all dissected by often steep-sided valleys
- Very large fields, resulting from the enclosure of downland for sheep and corn that took place between the 16th and 19th centuries. Changes during the 20th century have resulted in an intensively arable agricultural landscape.
- The wide flood plain of the River Stour brings a lowland interlude to this downland NCA, and provides the location for the NCA's second-largest town, Blandford Forum.
- Isolated farmsteads punctuate the highest downland areas, contrasting with closely spaced, linear villages and hamlets close to water along the valley bottoms or at the foot of the combes and scarp, along the springline.
- A suite of large houses and estates have played a key role in the formation of the character of the NCA.

The North Dorset District Character Assessment describes the Site and surrounding area within the Cranbourne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland (arable fields within Site area A and East Blandford/ Pimperne Downs (including Site area B and Lamperd's Field Allotments).

The AONB Landscape is characterised in the Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Integrated Character Assessment. The parts of Area A which lie within the AONB and the landscape which surrounds the Site are described by Character Area 2B: Southern Downland Belt.

Key characteristics of the Southern Downland Belt include:

- A large-scale landscape of broad rolling hills and gentle slopes cut to the south by a series of distinct river valleys.
- Dominated by an Upper Chalk geology with drift clay with flints capping on higher ground.
- A predominantly arable landscape divided into large, regular field units with straight-sided fields.
- Mixed woodland, particularly to the west where the land is more undulating.
- The A354 is a prominent feature and corridor of movement.
- A large skyscape and panoramic, distant views to the west.



Landscape character areas plan (prepared by HDA)

Local landscape character

To inform the design of the scheme HDA carried out a local landscape character assessment to identify the local character context to the site.

Local Character Area 1 – North Blandford: This area comprises site area A and adjacent land use which abuts the bypass and Salisbury Road. Area A and its immediate environs share few characteristics of the North Dorset ‘Cranbourne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland’ characterisation other than its arable land-use. It is influenced by urban land uses, including the bypass, it’s associated planting and the footbridge, the Sunrise Business Park, the allotments and adjacent residential area (Letton Close). Key characteristics include:

- Small-scale rectilinear arable fields.
- Level or gently sloping ground.
- Boundary shelter belts of semi-mature trees and shrubs.
- Adjacent urban land uses.
- Noise associated with the bypass.
- The AONB Management Plan indicates the area of lower tranquillity.

Local Character Area 2 – North Blandford Downs: This area comprises land-uses north of Blandford and south of Hammets Farm. The character area is more typical of the ‘Cranbourne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland’. Key characteristics include:

- Large scale, open arable fields with isolated trees.
- A dry valley feature creating an undulating landform.
- Adjacent modern agricultural sheds at Hammets Farm.
- Adjacent housing at Letton Park.
- More limited noise associated with Salisbury Road and Higher Shaftesbury Road.

Local Character Area 3 – East Blandford: This area comprises area B and adjacent land uses to the north, the character area exhibits a number of the landscape features of the East Blandford/Pimperne Downs to the east. Key characteristics include:

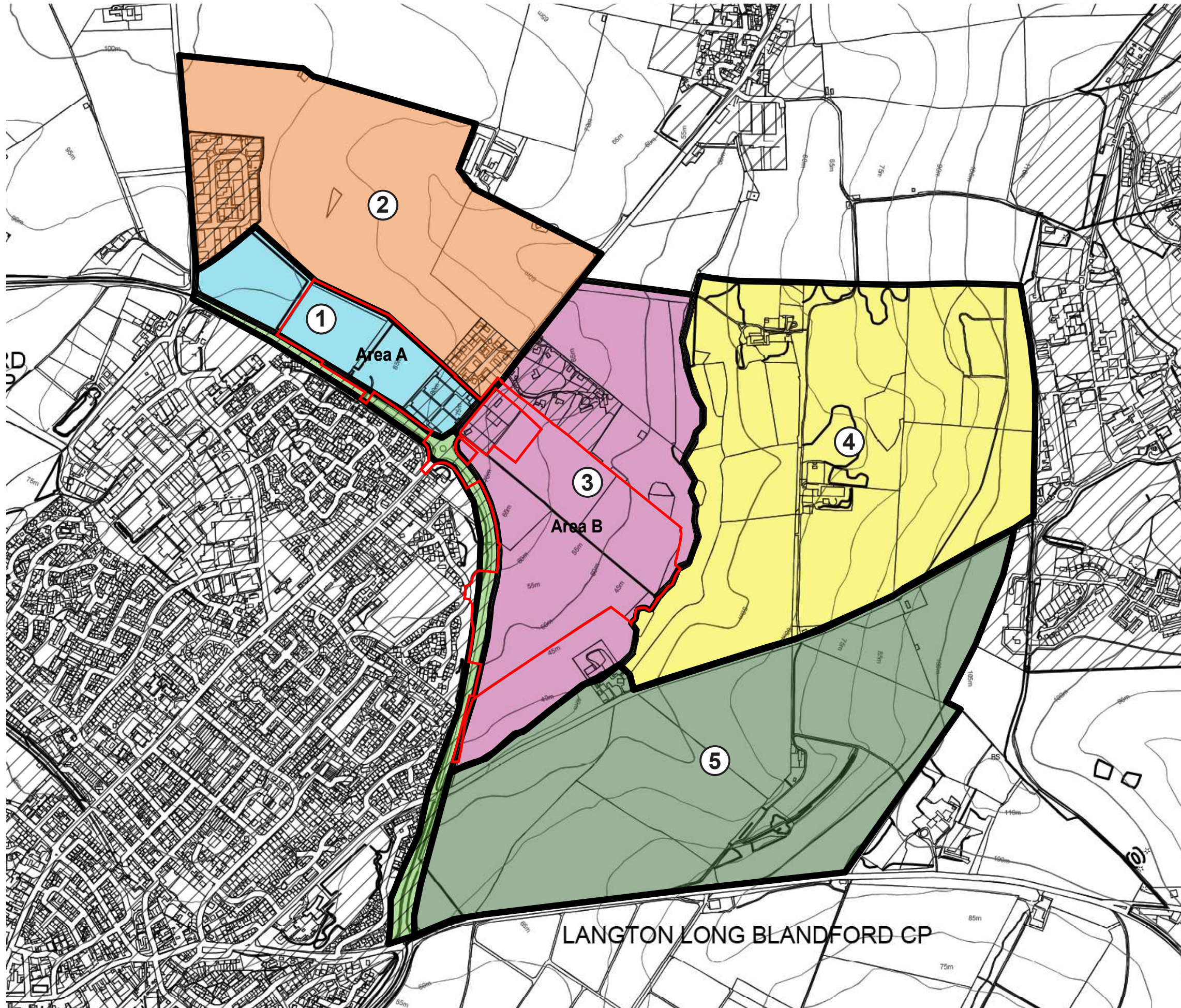
- Large arable fields.
- A largely intact hedgerow network with hedgerow trees, enclosing the fieldscape and bypass.
- Belts of mature trees.
- Occasional groups of trees and shrubs on field boundaries and isolated trees within fields.
- The Pimperne Brook and associated riparian vegetation.
- Adjacent low-density housing, trees and vegetation at Letton Park and Salisbury Road.
- Noise associated with the bypass and Salisbury Road.

Local Character Area 4 – Wooded Downland: This area comprises wooded parkland associated with Langbourne House and Langton Farm to the east of Area B. Characteristics include:








- A patchwork of woodland trees, understory shrubs and fields.
- Mature avenue of trees leading to Langbourne House.
- A dry valley feature creating an undulating landform.
- Langbourne House and Langbourne Lodge Farm within a wooded parkland setting.
- Views curtailed by intervening hedgerow, woodland and local landform.

Local Character Area 5 – Hungry Down: This area comprises land uses to the south of the Site and Black Lane and north of Wimborne Road. Characteristics include:

- Large open arable fields.
- Boundary hedgerow and woodland features;
- Isolated dwellings.
- Noise associated with Blandford Bypass and Wimborne Road.
- Views north and west which include the eastern suburbs of Blandford.



**Local Landscape Character
KEY**

-  Site boundary
-  Settlement
-  ① North Blandford
-  ② North Blandford Downs
-  ③ East Blandford
-  ④ Wooded Downland
-  ⑤ Hungry Down

The AONB Management Plan

Ambition

- 8.2. “The unique character, tranquillity and special qualities of the landscapes in the AONB are conserved and enhanced for future generations. There will be a widespread understanding of the area’s special qualities, and informed decision-making will strengthen these qualities. When change happens, it is to be consistent with the character of the landscape and the setting of the AONB. Everyone will take opportunities to restore landscape features that require it.”

Key Issues

1. “Understanding and sustaining landscape character – It is crucial that all landscape managers and planners understand, appreciate, and use the Landscape Character Assessments.
2. Monitoring landscape change over time – Long-term, objective monitoring of landscape change takes time and resources.
3. Enhancing tranquillity and Dark Night Skies – National data shows the general loss of dark night skies and the risk of light pollution encroaching on the dark skies of the AONB. However, 90% of the AONB falls in the top 2 categories of darkness, as evidenced by CPRE research in 2016. This makes this AONB the last dark area in southern, central England”.

Landscape character and the consideration of dark skies and overall tranquillity of the AONB are key parameters for the landscape strategy for the development north east of Blandford.



AONB Management Plan Vision

AONB Management Plan Vision

The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership is working towards a future in which the management of the landscape and designation is the best example of how protected landscapes can stimulate truly sustainable development and land management.

For the environment of the AONB:

- the AONB is stunningly beautiful, tranquil and healthy
- there are large tracts of well linked, high quality habitats within a landscape capable of supporting resilient populations of a wide range of species
- the AONB is regarded as a store of natural capital which is conserved and managed to maximise the benefits available from it (clean water, clean air, productive soils, geological resources, etc)

For the community of the AONB:

- sustainable rural communities are thriving and housed affordably, enjoying a range of health and wellbeing benefits afforded by a wonderful environment
- there is a range of active travel options and wide access to the countryside
- the landscape’s natural and cultural heritage is the basis for a wide range of education, learning and volunteering opportunities for all ages; it inspires ongoing research and artistic endeavour

The economy of that community offers great employment for all ages in:

- well-rewarded sensitive farming, forestry and fishing businesses and the conservation sector alongside which they work
- the production of superb local products and a tourism industry that rewards host communities and contributes to landscape management
- the local building industry which is a leader in low energy construction, employing local timber
- a world-class creative industry and the wider green economy inspired by the landscape

Key landscape parameters

To inform the scheme design and landscape strategy for the development, the following attributes of the site and its local environs should inform the form, scale and layout of the scheme.

Key outcomes: Area A

- The need to maintain and enhance the existing landscape structure of the site, particularly the boundary hedgerows and shelter belts to the arable fields and bypass.
- Within the AONB, maintain the open and undeveloped character of the surrounding landscape by minimising the landscape impact of built development with low profile buildings using landform, siting and orientation.
- Address the main view corridor along the Salisbury Road, both in terms of the rural approach from Pimperne and the urban edge and entrance to Blandford Forum.
- Maintain the treed character of the Blandford bypass.
- Minimise the use of lighting and have regard to the technical guidance provided by the Cranborne Chase AONB.

Key outcomes: Area B

- Maintain and enhance the existing hedgerows and tree belts within / surrounding the site.
- Reflect the treed character of the Pimperne valley.
- Build on the parkland character evident at Letton Park and Langborne House and estate. The layout and form of the scheme should seek to create significant blocks or belts of woodland, to extend the wider parkland character into the settlement of Blandford.
- Maintain and enhance riparian woodland and scrub along the Pimperne Brook.
- Maintain and enhance the treed character of the bypass.
- Create a soft edge to the development and incorporate structure planting into the scheme to minimise harm to the setting of the AONB to the south-east.
- Minimise the use of lighting and have regard to the technical guidance provided by the Cranborne Chase AONB as to lighting levels.

Growth & integration

Historic growth pattern

From the town origins adjacent to the important river crossing, Blandford Forum has now expanded to the north and east from its historic core (located on its south-western edge), to rise up the surrounding valley sides onto the higher ground of the Downs.

Growth of the town continued along the main routes into the town centre to the north and east, in-filling between the major routes. Growth to the west has been restricted by the River Stour and its floodplain.

Expansion along the main corridors would have been the clear focus of growth until the implementation of the A350/A354 bypass. Acting as boundary to the town, containing the extents of development within it, in the process, the sense of arrival into the town has become somewhat diminished.

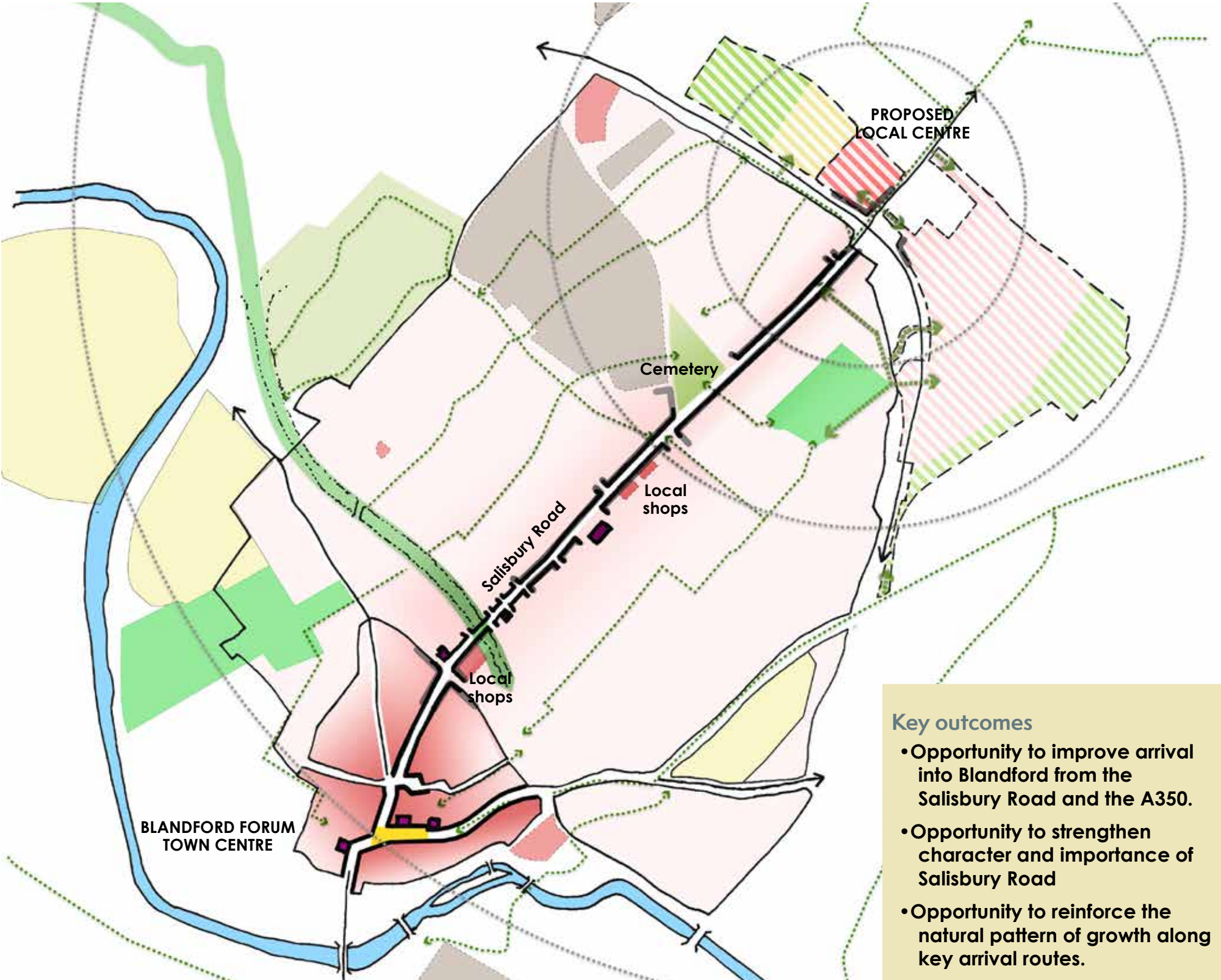
More recently, development has now proceeded to occur on the south side of the river, with the growth of the village of Blandford St Mary.

Salisbury Road

As noted above, historically the town expanded along key routes such as Salisbury Road until the bypass construction altered the natural growth pattern.

Salisbury Road is a key historic route to and from the town centre. It is a mixed-use street with retail, community and residential uses and provides a direct connection from the centre to the application site.

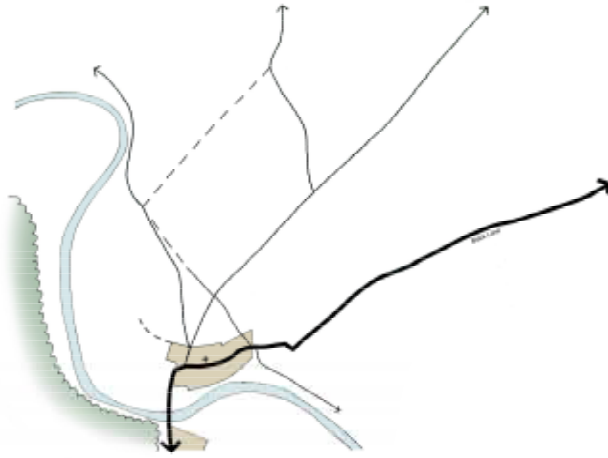
The application site frontage to the Salisbury Road and the Hill Top roundabout presents the opportunity to create a new gateway feature, with a mixed-use focus, to reconnect with the town centre and reinforce the importance and historic growth pattern of the Salisbury Road spine.



- Key outcomes**
- Opportunity to improve arrival into Blandford from the Salisbury Road and the A350.
 - Opportunity to strengthen character and importance of Salisbury Road
 - Opportunity to reinforce the natural pattern of growth along key arrival routes.

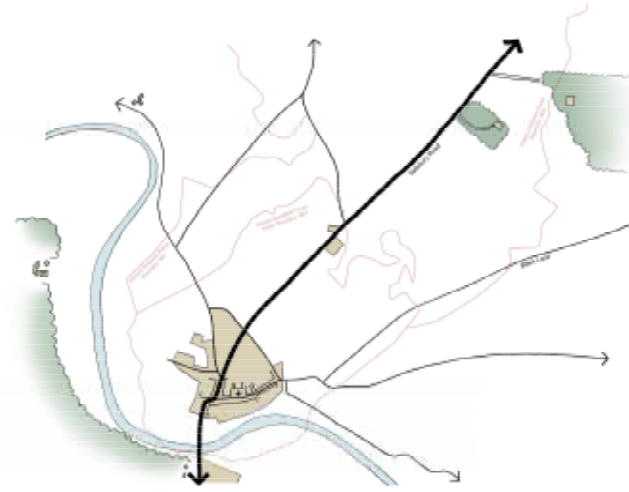
Salisbury Road - Mixed use arrival route

The proposed extension north east of Blandford can continue an historic growth pattern for the town.



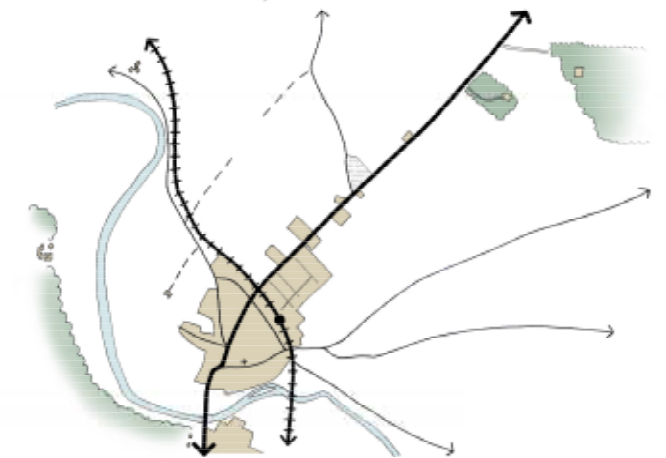
Medieval period to c1530's

- Town formed within a loop of the River Stour
- River Stour forms a natural boundary on south and west sides
- Evidence of historic north-east route (Salisbury Road)



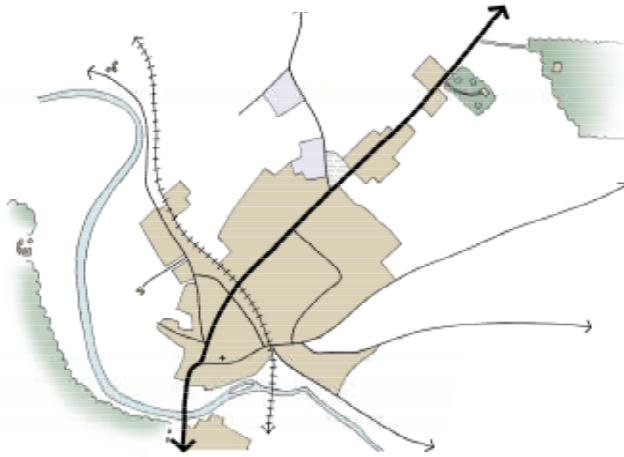
Post Medieval period c1530's - 1850's

- Transformation period into a 'Georgian' town
- Great Western Turnpike (Salisbury Road), marking a change to become the principal route to London



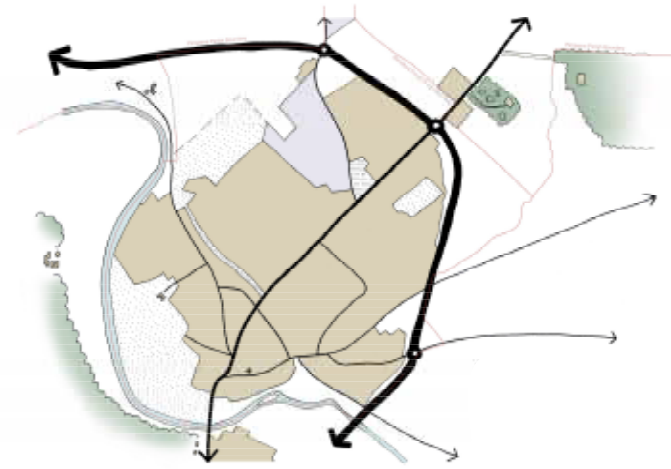
Victorian & Edwardian period c1850's - 1913

- Arrival of the railway with housing and industry growth
- Ribbon development along major radial routes, including Salisbury Road



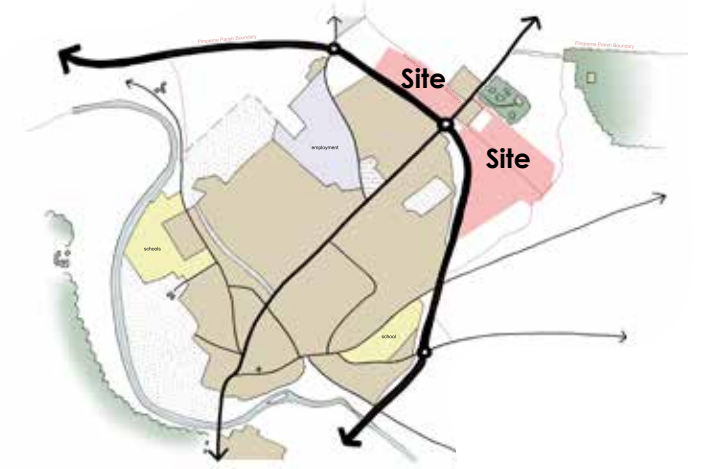
Inter-war period c1914 -1945 & post war 1946-1980

- Closure of railway
- Gradual town expansion
- Growth continues along Salisbury Road



Modern period c1980-today

- Population doubles to 8,000 between 1981 and 1991
- Bypass opened in 1992
- Bypass encloses the town and changes the growth pattern



Potential town expansion: Breaking the bypass barrier

- Continue the historic growth pattern along key routes
- Breakdown the barrier of the bypass with new crossings and route connections
- Reinforce Salisbury Road as a community focus

Blandford Forum: Historic growth pattern

Integration

Blandford is a successful market town, with a distinctive Georgian town centre and a range of shops, services, community facilities and businesses, as well as the Hall & Woodhouse Brewery.

It has a secondary school, leisure centre, football, rugby and cricket grounds as well as informal recreation areas and trails. There is a wide range of jobs at the Blandford Heights Industrial area and Sunrise Business Park on the northern edge of Blandford.

The application site is well located to connect into these existing services and facilities. A network of new connections will prioritise pedestrians and cyclists with controlled crossing points over the bypass and Salisbury Road ensuring safe and direct routes. A potential bus route will also encourage more public transport connections and reduce reliance on the private car.

The application site also presents the opportunity to enhance the provision of facilities for north Blandford, to establish a better balance across the town and reduce the need for wider car trips.

The review process has re-confirmed the proposed school site as Dorset Council's (education) preferred location, with the site benefiting from flatter ground, proximity to the proposed local centre to enable shared trips, and the direct connection over the existing bypass footbridge to adjoining residential community at Badbury Heights. This will also help create a more balanced provision across the town, with all of the town's existing schools located to the south and west.

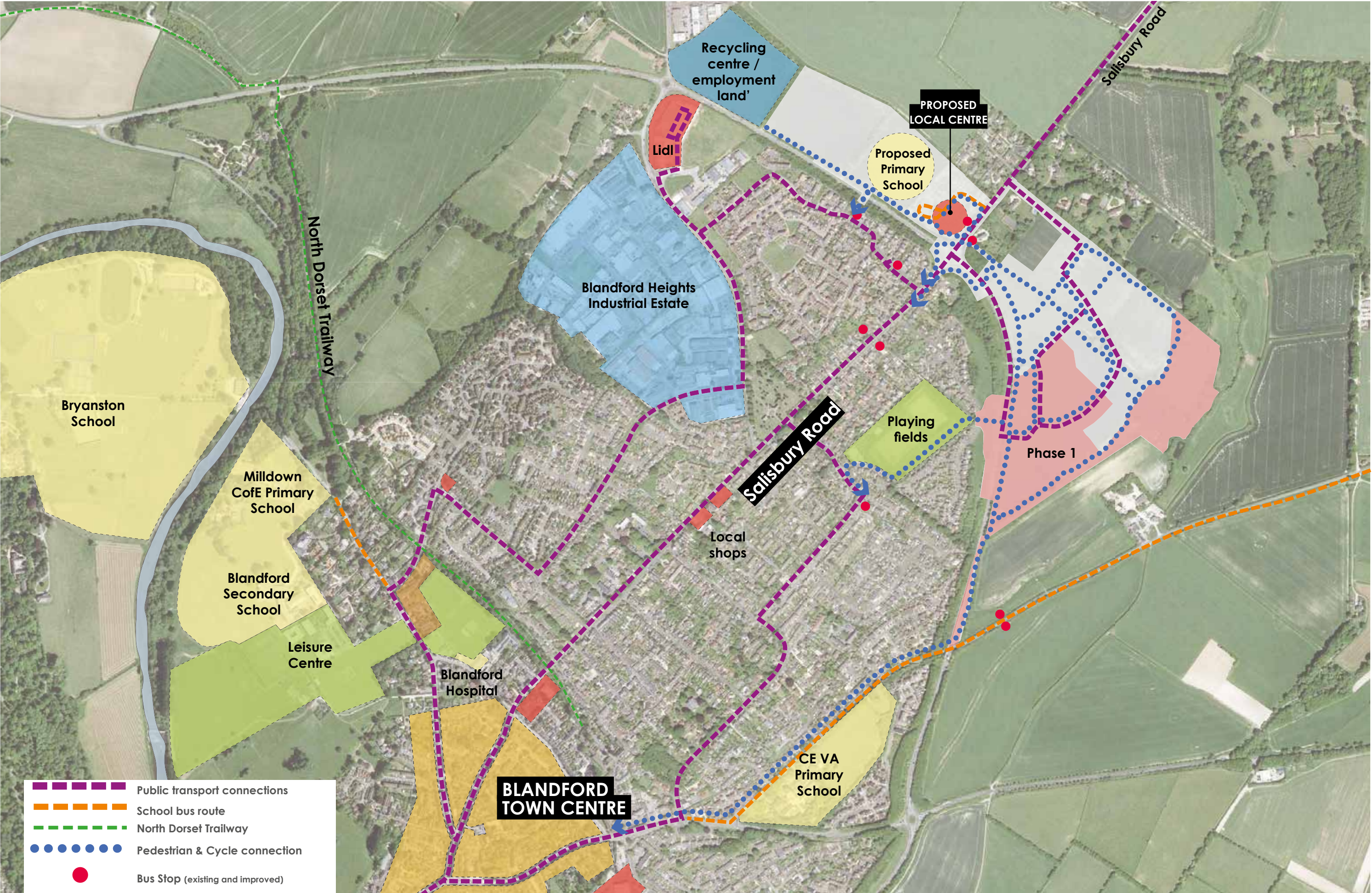
Key outcomes

- Facilitate the delivery of new community facilities, including a primary school, to provide a better balance of services across the town
- Create improved pedestrian and cycle linkages to encourage active travel, with safe road crossings
- Create the opportunity for a bus route through the site.

Wider catchment: The application site lies within 2km of wider catchment populations at Pimperne and Blandford Camp, and is aligned on Salisbury Road; an historic key connecting corridor through to Blandford town centre.



Wider catchment plan

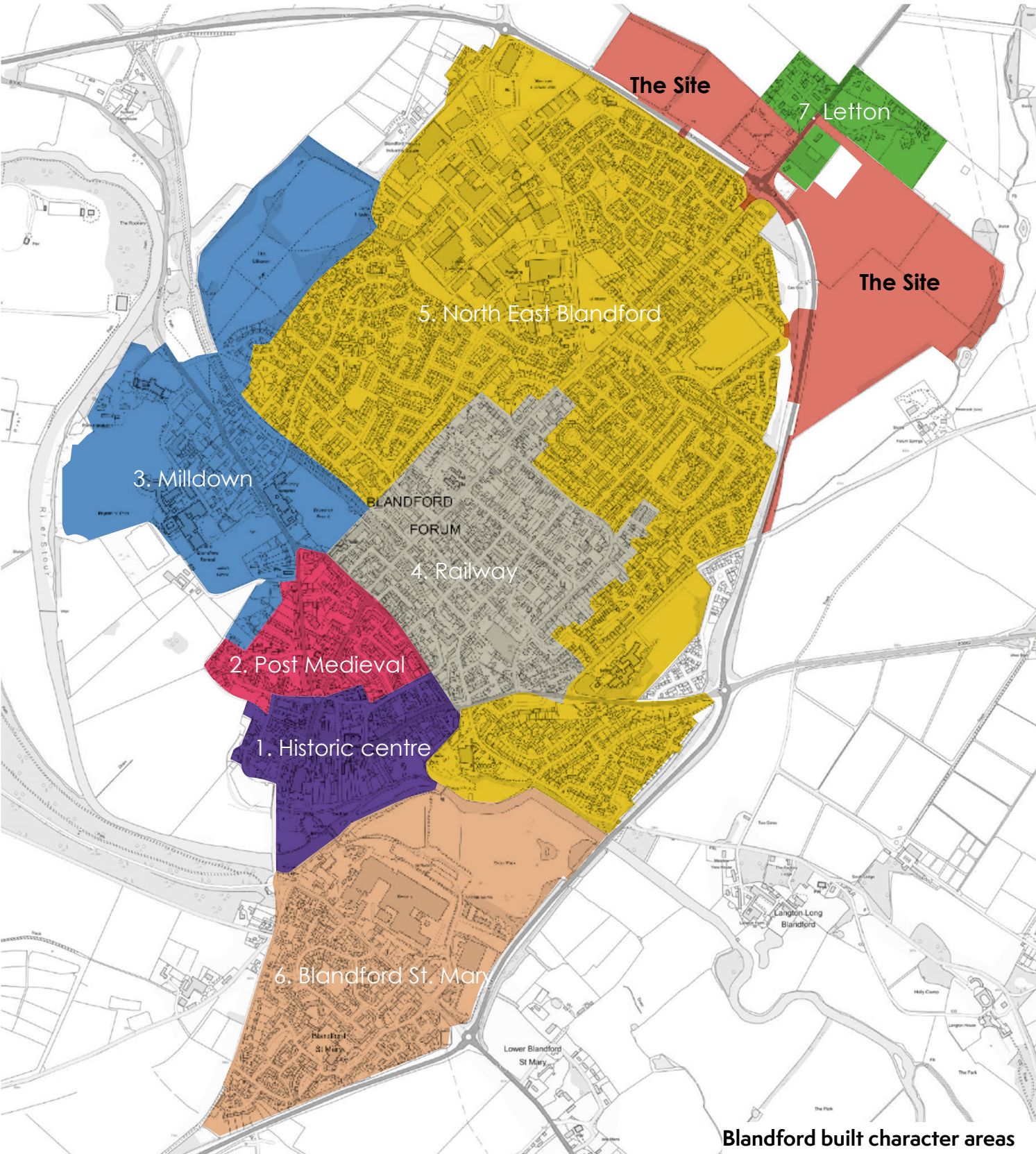
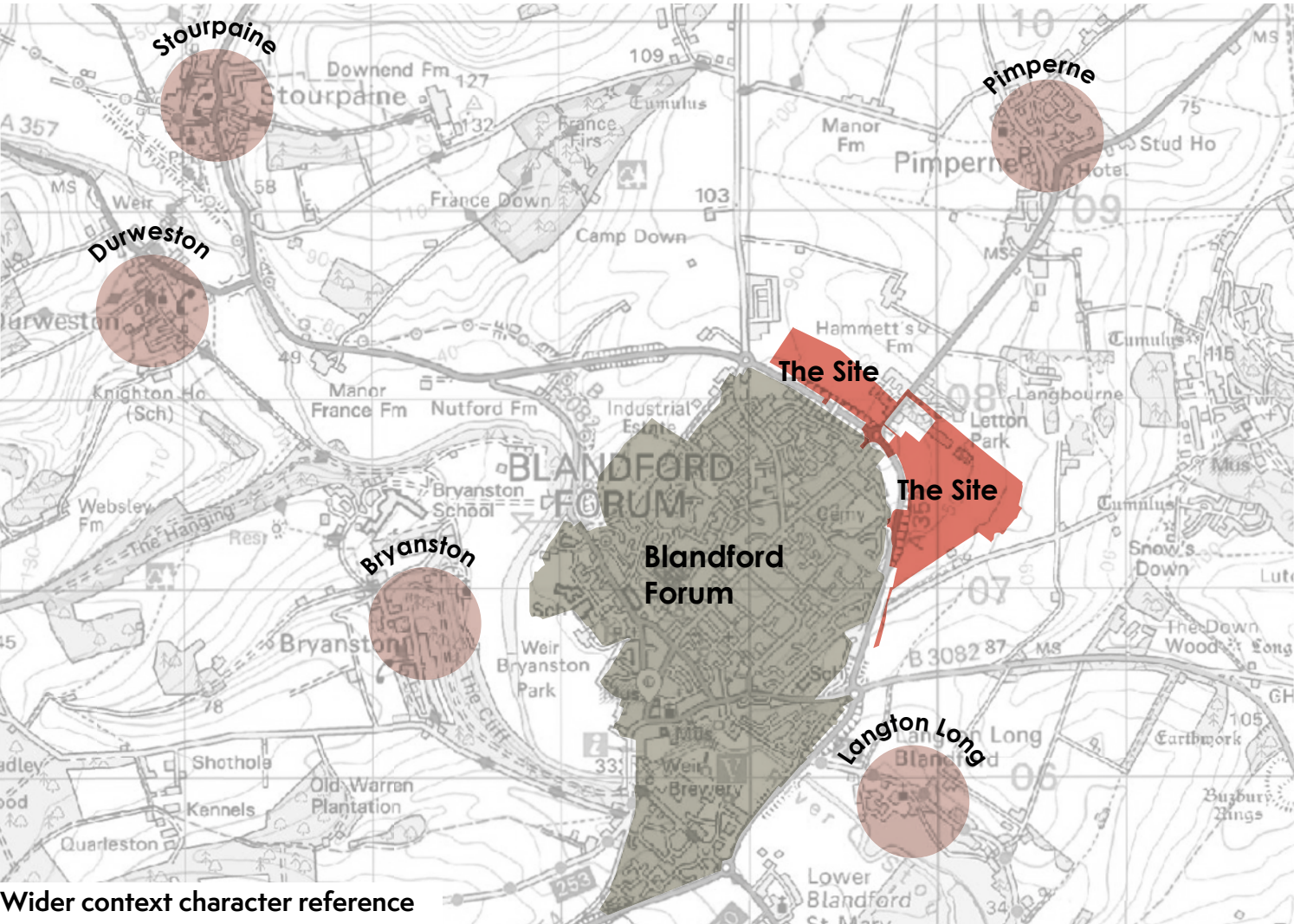


Integration opportunities

Built character context

The review of Blandford's built character follows the Historic Urban Character Areas defined by the Dorset Historic Towns Survey: Blandford Forum, 2011, and set out on the plan opposite. They comprise the area of the medieval and post-medieval town (Character Areas 1 and 2); Victorian and early 20th century suburbs on the north and north east sides of the town (Areas 3 and 4) a modern suburb (Area 5) and the historic suburb, together with its modern housing estates, of Blandford St Mary (Area 6). In addition to these areas, we include Letton (Area 7), covering the Salisbury Road over the bypass and the Letton Park / Close estates which adjoin the application site.

For the wider rural context, the surrounding villages of Bryanston, Langton Long, Pimperne, Durweston and Stourpaine are considered.



'Medieval Town' – Historic centre

Overview

- Medieval town and modern commercial centre of Blandford.
- Carefully designed Georgian streetscape.
- High density housing in a regular narrow plot layout along the major streets.

Building types

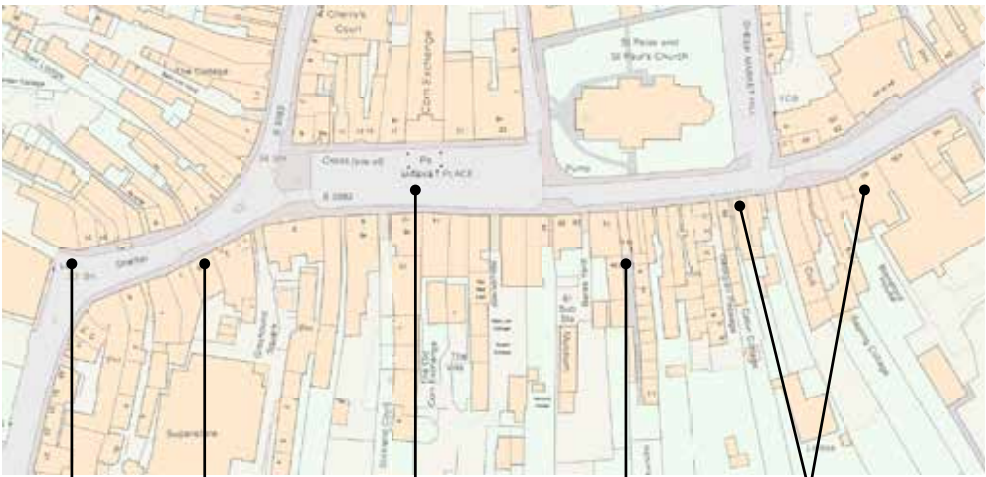
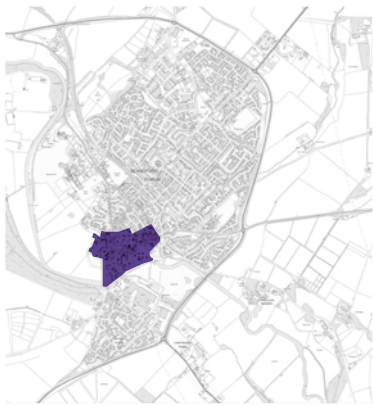
- Prominent group of attached Georgian buildings arranged around the market square.
- Detached Georgian town houses.
- Modern infill lies hidden behind the Georgian façade.

Scale

- 2-4 storey.
- Predominantly 3 storey around market square with higher commercial ground floor.

Materials & details

- Majority in brick with some Portland stone dressings
- Decorative detail achieved through walls of vitrified bricks laid as headers and dressings of rich crimson brick
- Dark tone clay tile or slate roof
- Chimneys
- Buildings commonly back edge of footpath – no boundary feature.



Sinuous streets

Continuous frontages

Rectangular market place

Back lanes and mews streets

Regular and narrow plots



Building on slopes is a strong feature across the town, with stepping roof lines and a feature building at the high point



Dormer windows, slate roof and brick walls



Purple bricks and stone dressings



Dark tile roof, brick dressings and chimneys

Roof-lines build up to the central focus of the Town Hall and Church

Chimneys add interest to the skyline and break up long roof sections

Variety of pitched and parapet roof lines

The stone Town Hall at the centre of the market place accentuates the street-scene

Subtle dormer windows in roof

Views to secondary spaces behind the market facade

St Peter and St Paul's Church creates a strong landmark view from the Crown Hotel



The Georgian façades around the market place creates an important townscape that is considered 'Nationally Important'

Salisbury Street -Post Medieval Suburb

Overview

- North of the medieval historic core - late 17th to early 19th century expansion.
- 3 radial routes converging at the junction of Bryanston, White Cliff Mill and Salisbury Streets.
- Historic housing with significant areas of modern infill / estates.

Building types

- Larger terraced and detached housing and small terraced housing.
- Suburban villas and modern housing estates.

Scale

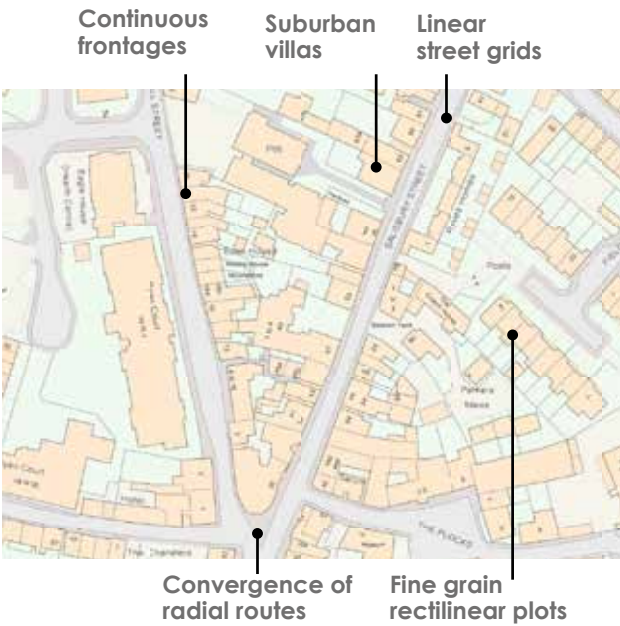
- 2-3 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Majority in brick with tiled or slate roofs.
- Some prominent buildings have stone dressings. Blue vitrified brick dressings are a feature of properties on Salisbury Street
- Decorative tile hanging.
- Chimneys

Boundaries

- Some buildings back edge of footpath – no boundary feature.
- Low wall, railings
- Occasional hedge



Sash windows, slate roof



Dark orange brick colour



Hedgerow and low wall



Decorative tile hanging



Grand brick villa with slate roof and hedge frontage



Prominent 3 storey building terminates view

Milldown Road

Overview

- Suburban expansion to the north of the historic centre, between the river Stour and the former railway line.
- Structured around an axial through route, Milldown Road.
- Inter-war housing and later 20th century development low / medium density housing.

Building types

- Detached and semi-detached houses.
- Large institutional buildings set in extensive grounds.

Scale

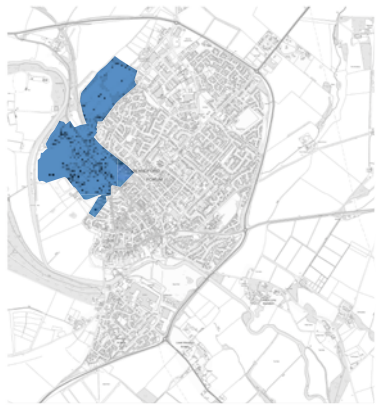
- 2-2.5 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Mainly brick , some render.
- Later 20th century housing tends to use non-local materials.
- Inter-war housing has a mixture of slate and tiled roofs.
- Chimneys.

Boundaries

- Low wall, railings
- Hedge



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Large plots and set back position

Axial through route

Suburban layout



Suburban brick and render houses with plain tile roofs, brick walls and chimneys



Low wall and formal railings



Dark brick with stone dressings

Railway suburb

Overview

- North of the historic core which developed after the opening of the railway in 1863.
- Medium and high-density housing.
- Regular rectilinear grid street pattern and some suburban / avenues.

Building types

- Victorian and Edwardian terraces and detached / semi-detached villas.
- Narrow and enclosed streets to south and wider streets to north.
- Large public buildings.

Scale

- 2-2.5 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Primarily red brick is used with some lighter brick used decoratively and some decorative tiling.
- Small number of houses are stuccoed or rendered, some flint banding and tile hanging.
- Mainly slate roofs.
- Chimneys.

Boundaries

- Some buildings back edge of footpath
- Low wall, railings
- Some front gardens
- Occasional hedge



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Suburban villas in larger plots
Rectilinear grid streets
Mix of regular and long narrow plots
Groupings in consistent frontage positions



Render and pyramid roof



Decorative tile hanging



Parapet roof and chimneys



Brick with stone dressings



Detached brick villa with slate roof, balcony and tile and timber detailing.



Terrace rows with small or no front garden

North East Blandford

Overview

- Modern housing and industrial estates, bounded by the Blandford by-pass.
- Medium and low-density suburban housing.

Building types

- Post-war housing short terraces.
- Later 20th century and early 21st century smaller terraces, semi-detached and detached houses set in small plots.

Scale

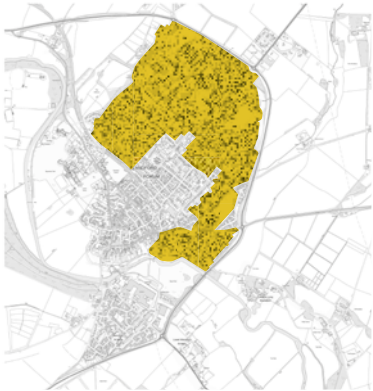
- 2-3 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Generally, 19th century domestic buildings have brick walls.
- Earlier 20th century houses have brick walls and gabled ended roofs with a mixture of slate and tile.
- The mid-20th century bungalows on Salisbury Road and the post war houses at Elizabeth Road are built in brick with tile roofs.
- Modern housing tends to be built from non-local brick and tile.
- Chimneys.

Boundaries

- Front gardens.
- Landscape strips.
- Low wall, railings, fences.
- Hedge.



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Modern suburban estate
Looped street network
Smaller, fine grain plots
Cul-de-sacs



Brick with hipped slate roof



Hedges and grass verges



Low scale brick terrace cottages with porches



Modern cottage interpretation with small landscape strip



Canopy porches and timber fence to green space

Blandford St. Mary

Overview

- Origins in a small medieval or post-medieval settlement.
- Historic cottages and brewery.
- Large blocks of modern housing estate and retail park.

Building types

- Mixture of detached, semi-detached and short terraced houses.
- Brewery complex and conversions.

Scale

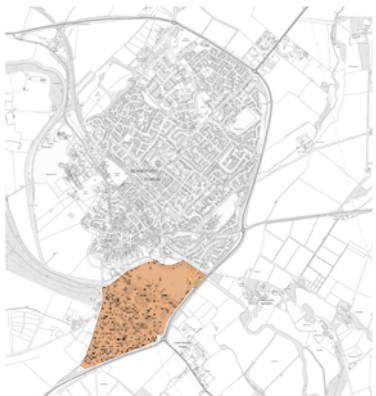
- 2-3 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Majority of the historic buildings in this area are built in brick with tile roofs.
- Some houses have slate roofs, occasional thatch.
- Often the brickwork is rendered, and colour washed.
- Brewery has pale brick walls with red brick dressings and a part gabled, part half hipped slate roof.
- Some flint banding.

Boundaries

- Front gardens.
- Landscape strips.
- Low wall, railings, fences.



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Historic tight knit groupings

More regular plot sizes

Suburban housing estate layouts



Brick and render cottages with small front gardens or landscaped strips

Overview

- Mid to late 20th Century infill housing accessed from Salisbury Road.
- Low-density suburban development set in landscape.
- Secluded parkland character.

Building types

- Larger detached houses set within spacious plots.
- Lodges.
- Some bungalows at Letton Close

Scale

- 1 - 2.5 storey. Typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

- Brick, brick and flint, painted render.
- Slate and dark clay plain tiles.
- Brick chimneys.

Boundaries

- Front gardens.
- Hedgerows
- Low wall, railings, fences.



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Large spacious plots

Irregular plot arrangement

Set back position



White render with dark tile roof



Flint with brick banding



Red brick flintish bond and slate roof



Flint with brick banding, porch



Cream render, dark tile roof



Grass verge lanes



Large detached dwellings set within spacious mature parkland landscape

3 storey brick brewery warehouse and formal railings at the town centre approach

Villages (Bryanston, Long Langton, Pimperne, Durweston, and Stourpaine)

Overview

- Collection of small villages and rural settlements on fringe of Blandford Forum.
- Agricultural buildings, conversions, and modern infill buildings and estates.
- Rural character adjoining the countryside.

Building types

- Historic buildings, including churches, halls and cottages.
- Current and former agricultural use buildings including barns and stable blocks.
- Victorian and Edwardian farmhouses, terraces and detached / semi-detached villas and cottages.
- Modern infill 2 storey houses, occasionally reflecting rural context with barn typology interpretations.

Scale

- 1 - 2.5 storey, typically 2 storey.

Materials & details

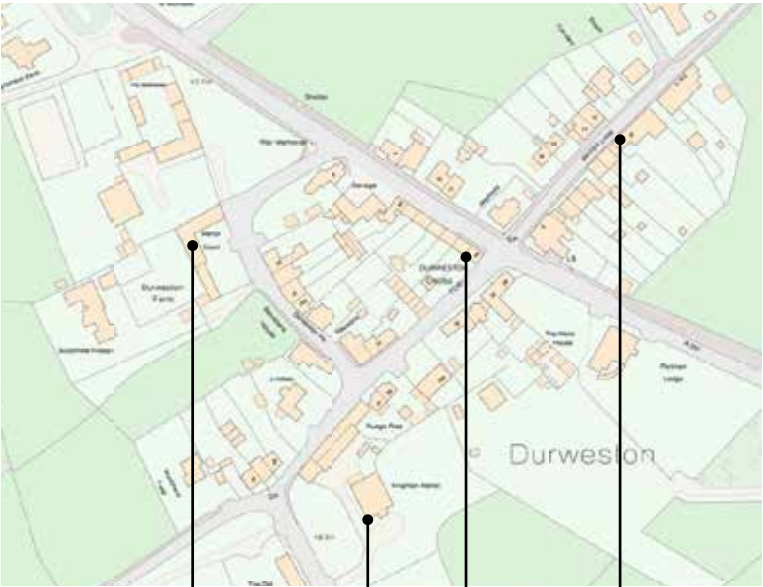
- Mix of building materials including rendered cob, painted render, red brick and brick and flint.
- Mainly slate roofs.
- Chimneys.

Boundaries

- Some buildings back edge of footpath
- Some front gardens
- Low walls, estate railings
- Hedges



Structure extract (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Barn buildings and courtyards

Farm houses and large plot dwellings

Clusters of cottages forming groupings

Steps and irregular building lines



Cottages in brick and flint ,with bay windows, chimneys and window detailing



Larger detached 'farm house' style dwellings in brick, flint, render. Dark tone roof tiles, chimneys and tile hanging.



'Barn' style dwellings and conversions, with courtyard spaces. Brick and flint finishes with slate roofs, occasionally hipped gables and buttress details.



Flint, slate, brick and render



Flint walls and estate rail



Brick buttress



Timber boards and render



Flint and brick



Grass verges and hedges

Key townscape elements

A variety of townscape character elements can be found in the local area. The characteristics are often reflective of the different periods of growth, and to differing settings, ranging between both more urban and rural contexts. The built quality and appearance may also vary, but structural lessons and improvement opportunities can still be drawn to inform a locally distinctive design response.

This overview section highlights the following townscape elements:

Streets

- Avenue street
- Residential street (town)
- Residential street (village)
- Rural edge lane
- Mews street

Spaces and groupings

- Arrival greens
- Squares/courtyards
- Junctions
- Park edges
- Green routes
- Barn courtyards

Where applicable, design opportunities and lessons learnt from each townscape element are summarised to inform the masterplan response for the application site.

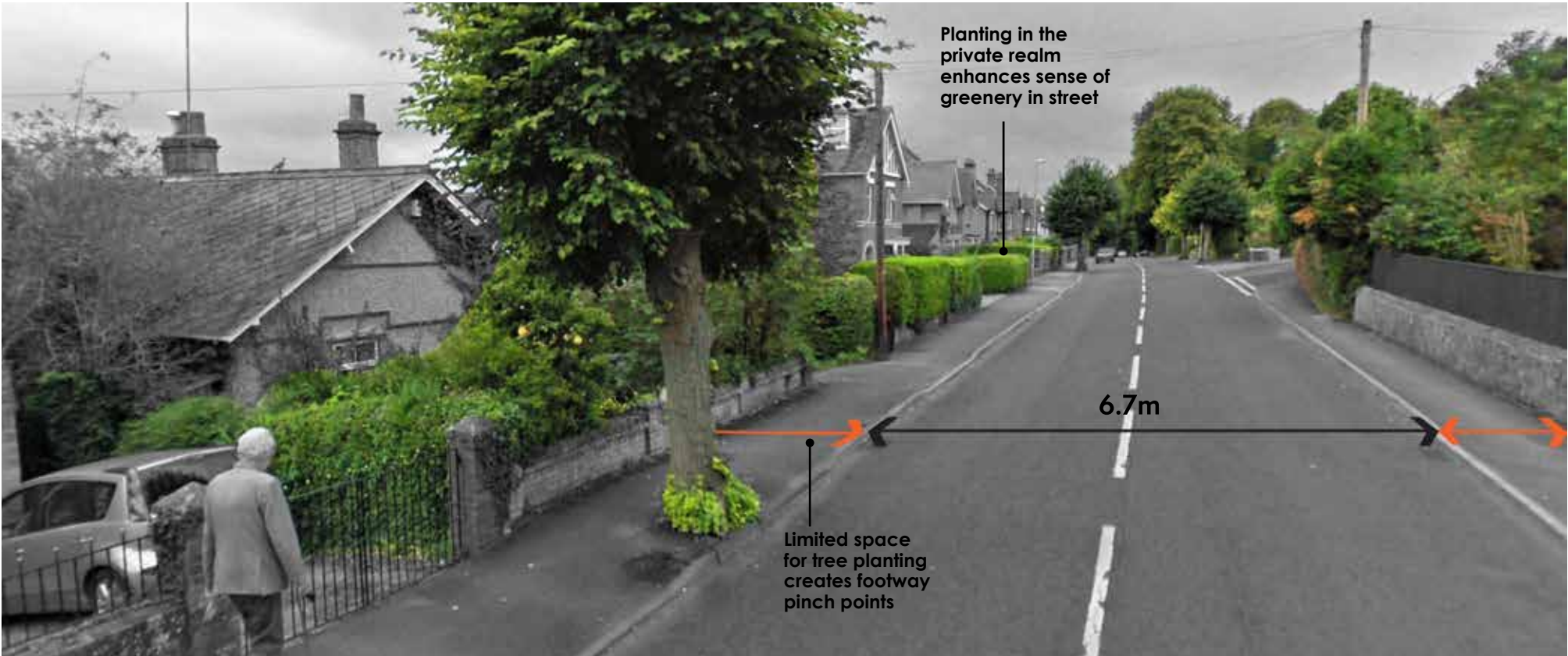
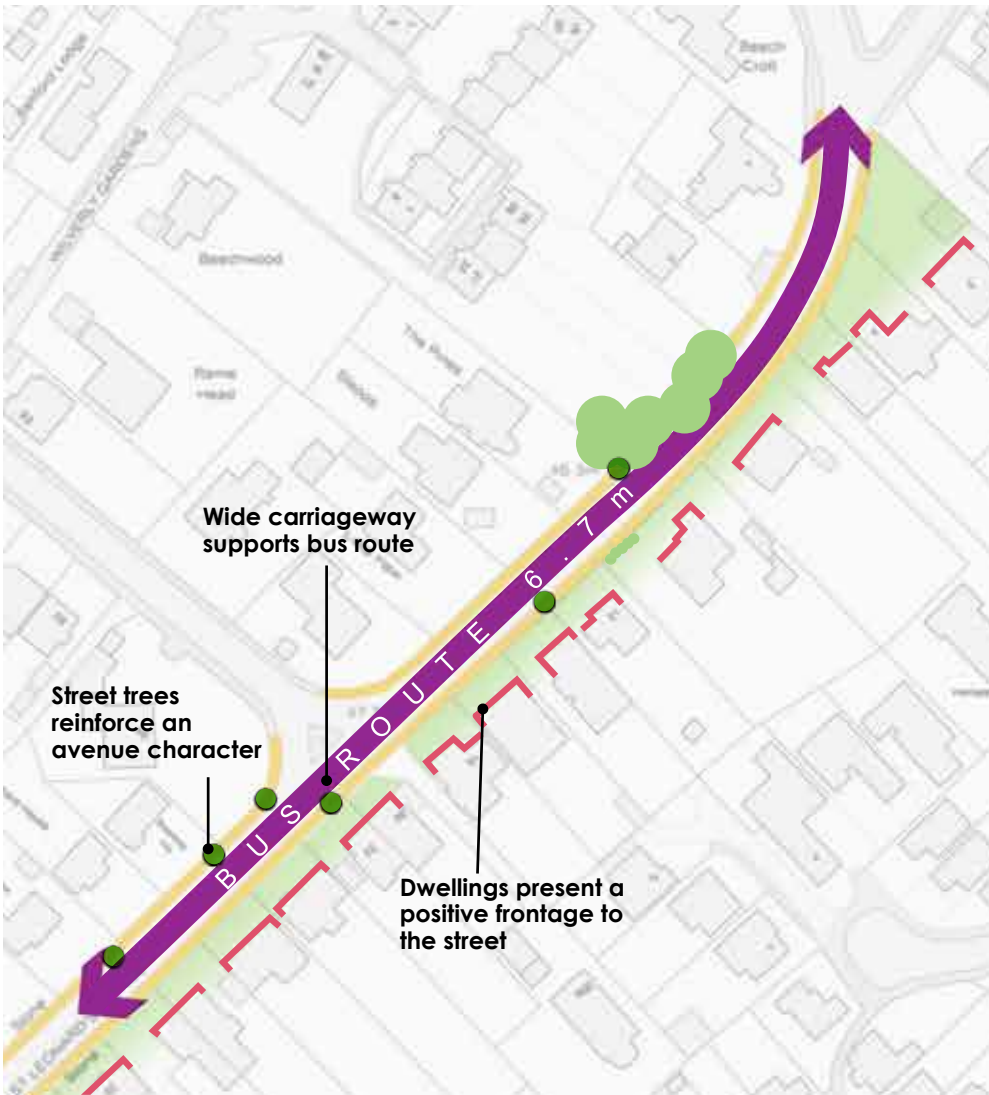
Streets

Avenue street: St. Leonards Avenue, Blandford Forum

Wide sweeping avenue street with detached and semi-detached brick and render houses built on the south side of St Leonards Avenue between 1901 and 1946.

Design observations

- Wide carriageway (6.7m) supporting a bus route.
- Footways to either side, but no segregated cycle lane.
- No verges and limited space for street planting, causing pinch points to footways.
- Front gardens and driveway set backs.
- Hedgerows, low walls and railings to front boundaries.



Residential street (town): Queens Road, Blandford Forum

Straight grid street arranged in arranged in rectilinear blocks, with suburban detached and semi-detached brick villas (Edwardian and Victorian period)



Design observations

- 5.5m - 6m carriageways with narrow footways to each side.
- Houses front and overlook the street.
- Set back with front gardens or driveways.
- Hedgerows, low walls and railings to front boundaries.
- Street greenery from plots and boundaries only.
- On-street (part on footway) parking can dominate scene.
- Use of projecting gables and taller pitched roofs increase a sense of street enclosure

Residential street (village): Church Street, Pimperne

Historic spine street through the village along the valley side, with a variety of period cottages, larger farmstead properties and some modern infill. Brick and flint common materials, with some painted brick / white render.



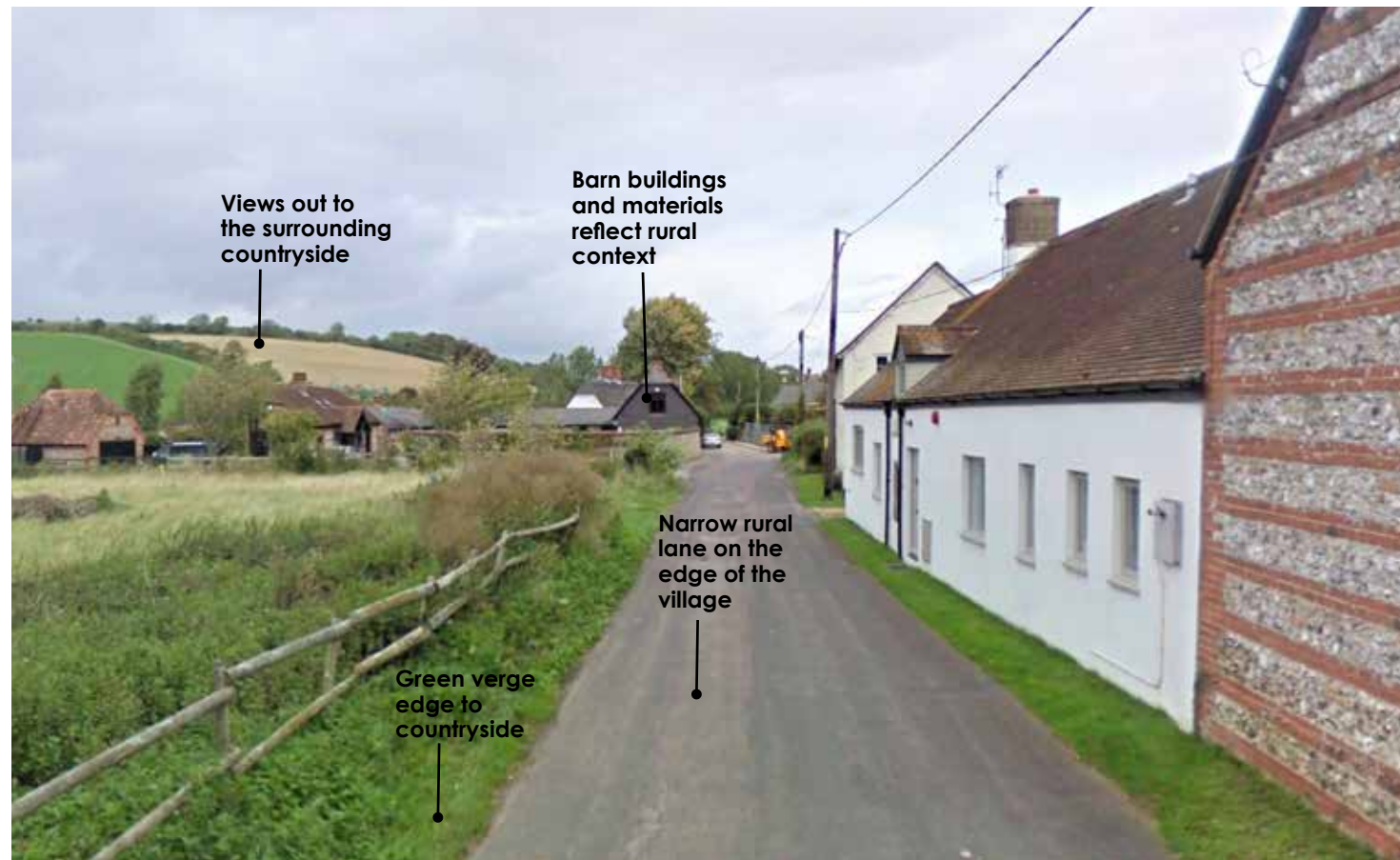
Design observations

- More informal character with alignment turns and curves.
- Sequence of internal views leading to Church / cross space.
- Positive frontages to street, with small front gardens.
- Some steps or variances to building lines.
- 5m - 6m width carriageway, with 1.5m footway one side.
- Verge to one side separates carriageway to footpath.



Rural edge lane: Manor Road, Stourpaine

Narrow rural lane on the edge of the village with period cottages, barn buildings, courtyard spaces and paddock field gaps. Brick, flint and painted brick materials.



Design observations

- Fairly straight street alignment with buildings set back behind narrow verge margins.
- Fronts and sides to street with some building line variance.
- Approximately 5m wide carriageway, but no footpath.
- No street trees, but green feel from boundaries and views.
- Low walls and hedgerows, but sometimes no boundaries.

Mews street: Harwood Place, Blandford Forum

One of a series of straight narrow internal mews lanes within a central development block. Brick buildings defining the edge of the route with slate roofs.



Design observations

- Internal route connecting through the development block.
- Narrow lane street (3.5m wide carriageway).
- Defined parking bays to one side.
- No footways and minimal boundary margins.
- Properties back, side or front the route.
- Regular and consistent building line.
- Brick wall and elevation boundaries, occasional greenery.

Spaces and groupings

Arrival green: Dorchester Hill, Blandford St. Mary

Focal green space at the intersection of key arrival routes between Blandford St. Mary and Blandford Forum.

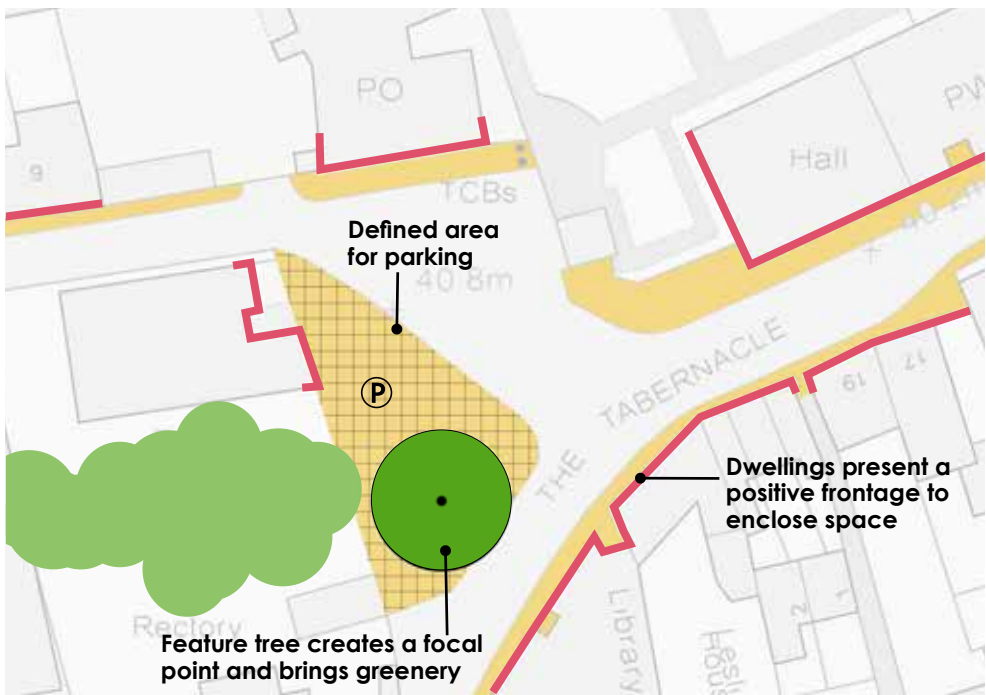


Design observations

- Arrival green space with mature tree planting
- Public access with pathway and seating
- Cottage grouping arranged to front and overlook space
- Access driveway to serve dwellings separate to main routes

Squares / courtyards: Tabernacle, Blandford Forum

Square space north of the historic centre of Blandford.



Design observations

- Shared use space with parking, landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular through routes
- Feature mature oak tree brings greenery, with canopy extending over space to provide shade
- Parking area defined by surface material change (setts)
- Space framed and overlooked by surrounding properties

Junctions: Milton Lane, Durweston

Street and lane T-junction arrangement in the village of Durweston.



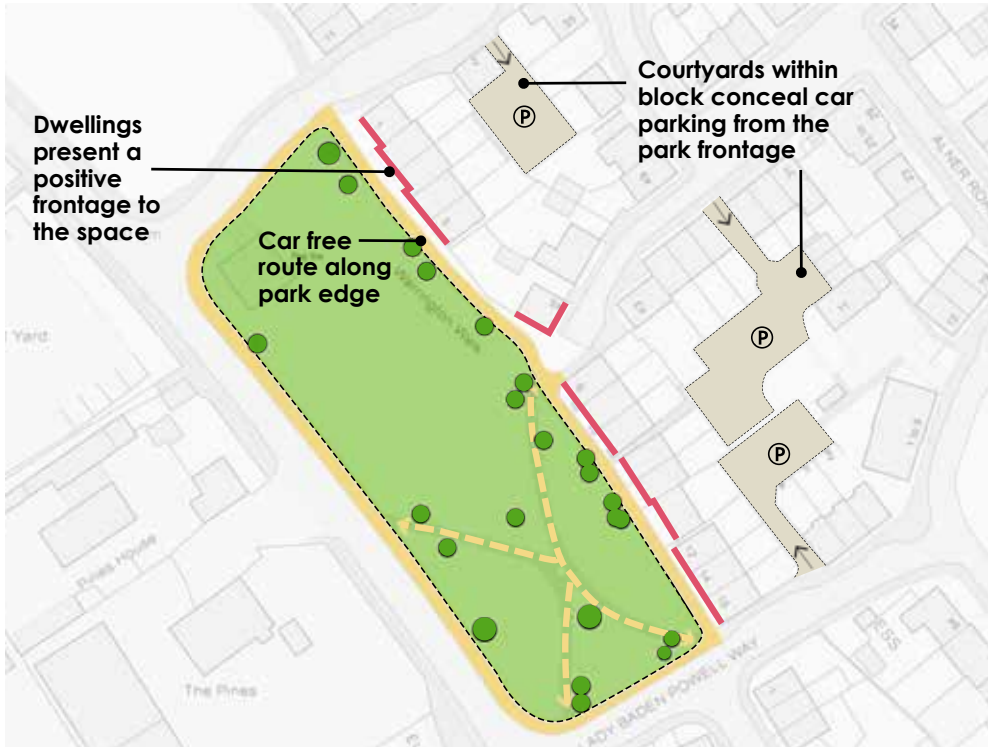
Design observations

- Dwellings arranged in a group around a key junction
- Positive dwelling frontages terminates forward view on the junction approach
- Dwellings command view down the approach lane
- Prominent gables add elevational interest

Spaces and groupings (continued....)

Park edges and green routes: Gurkha Road, Blandford

Frontage arrangement to linear parkland edge to planned residential development in north Blandford Forum.



Design observations

- Dwellings positively address the parkland space
- Car free frontage to the green space, with parking enclosed within the block (courtyard)
- Pedestrian / cycle route along the parkland edge
- Dwellings set back with front gardens and planting margins
- Exposed blank gable creates a poor edge to the street

Green route: Manor Road, Stourpaine

Greenway footpath / cycle trail connection to / from the countryside on the edge of the village.



Design observations

- Route transitions from village street directly into a landscaped pathway
- Surface material change and meandering alignment of pathway define a character change
- Cluster of dwellings within a farmstead courtyard mark the village edge
- Properties provide overlooking to route on the approach / exist from the village
- Pedestrian / cycle route along the parkland edge
- Dwellings set back with front gardens and planting margins
- Exposed blank gable creates a poor edge to the street

Spaces and groupings (continued....)

Rural barn and courtyard typologies: Surrounding villages

Farmsteads and agricultural buildings arranged around courtyards in the surrounding rural villages.



Stourpaine extract plan (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Pimperne extract plan (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Bryanston extract plan (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Langton Long extract plan (Source: Dorset Explorer)



Design observations

- Farmstead dwellings, stables and barns arranged around courtyards, reflecting the agricultural surroundings
- Horizontal buildings, often 1- to 2-storey in height
- Barnyard areas enclosed by walls along roadside
- Car parking and amenities often contained within the courtyard
- Cart shed / barn garages for parking
- Brick, flint, slate tiles, half hipped roofs, and buttress walls



Key Outcomes

The local area review has helped to inform an understanding of the surrounding built form and character, with references from both the rural Dorset vernacular and locally distinctive characteristics of Blandford Forum. It has identified a broad range of observations and influencing townscape elements which can be used to guide an appropriate design response.

This review has also highlighted opportunities to improve and strengthen local character qualities, as part of a 21st Century response, with streets needing to be designed to facilitate greater levels of tree planting and greenery, to better manage car parking demands, and to encourage more active travel patterns with safe cycle and pedestrian routes

There is the added opportunity presented by the site's setting and features to also combine these locally distinctive built elements within a unique parkland landscape as part of the new neighbourhood's vision, offering something different to the existing community areas of the town, with tree lined routes, connected parkland spaces, and locally influenced architecture.



Streets, structure and form

- Varied street patterns, including rectilinear grid suburban loop streets, mews, and rural lanes
- Dwellings often arranged to provide a conscious street frontage
- Groupings of cottages along streets and around focal spaces
- Deeper plot positioning found in suburban areas
- More informal street and lane structure common to villages, often with verge margins
- Farm / barn buildings enclosing private courtyards
- Streets must plan for more tree planting, and to better manage car parking demands.



Building types

- Georgian town houses and large villa properties often along arterial routes
- Terraced / semi detached houses in rows and groupings
- Rural cottages and farmstead clusters and barns



Spaces, parks and routes

- Parks and green spaces a focus for neighbourhoods
- Focal greens framed by dwelling groups mark an arrival
- Edge parkland areas fronted by dwellings and car free routes
- Shared use square spaces with feature trees
- Active travel routes and trailways connecting directly to the countryside



Materials

- Predominantly brick with red tones
- Some render and painted brick
- Flint and brick banding typical in rural areas
- Slate or dark tone clay tile roofs
- Occasional tile hanging and timber boarding



Boundaries

- Brick walls, railings and hedges individually or in combination
- Deeper front gardens in suburban areas
- Greenery typically from boundary planting or front gardens
- Verges, hedges, low walls, timber post fences and estate rail found in more rural locations



Scale

- Taller buildings are located around the historic market square
- 2 storeys typical scale across the area
- Occasional 3 storey buildings at key corners, arrival points and spaces
- Lower scale cottages and barn conversions in rural area

