

Enquiry by Design – Briefing Note – Site PR6a

Introduction

PR6a is a site that has been allocated for development in the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review (the Local Plan). This briefing note has been prepared to inform discussion through the Enquiry by Design (EbyD) process being undertaken by Christ Church, the landowners of site PR6a, to progress the 'vision' and design of this allocated development site.

We hope that you will be able to attend the EbyD events being held and contribute to this process.

The Local Plan is subject to judicial review. If the judicial review is successful, it is possible the site might not be developed, or its allocation and development could be delayed until Cherwell District Council has undertaken work to address the outcome of the Court's decision. However, we want to ensure that community representatives are given the opportunity to contribute to our plans at an early stage. This means it is important that our workshops take place on the basis that the site is allocated. See Appendix 1 for an overview of the Local Plan Policy.

These EbyD events are being held to help inform the development of our proposals for the site. The events are not intended to discuss whether the site should have been allocated for development. That is the function of the Local Plan. Instead, through the EbyD process it is intended that together with participants we will:

- Discuss, amend and refine the proposed Vision and development principles for the site; and,
- Consider key design strategies to establish a measure of agreement in respect of the strategy adopted for different disciplines, for example ecology, highways and education.

To achieve these goals, Christ Church's consultant team will provide presentations on key topics which will then be subject to discussion with participants.

Cherwell District Council is separately preparing a Development Brief for the site. This will provide additional information on the spatial requirements and design of the site. Depending on the progress of the Development Brief, we will use the outputs from the EbyD process to inform Christ Church's response to this Development Brief, in addition to informing our proposals for the site.

During the EbyD process, we will report on the conclusions from discussions to assess the measure of agreement between participants and, ultimately, we will produce drawings and responses to the key issues discussed and the conclusions drawn from them. These outcomes will be used to inform the development of our first draft masterplan for the site, which will then be subject to wider public consultation.

We hope that you will be able to attend all of the sessions we are holding – this will be particularly helpful in enabling specialist consultants or groups to better understand the considerations of wider attendees and contribute to participants gaining a more balanced view across key issues.

This briefing note is intended to provide background information to assist in maximising the benefit of the EbyD process. We hope that you will be able to find the time to read through this note in advance and give some thought to the issues raised.

If all participants are able to bring early specific thoughts on, and responses to, the issues we would like to discuss (in addition to their enthusiasm and specialist knowledge), it will enable good progress to be made to move towards the delivery of this site.

Key topics for discussion are as follows: -

Day 1 (16th July, 4pm-6pm) and REPEATED Day 2 (17th July 10am to 12pm)

Introduction – Vision and principles, Community and Character

- Vision for the site and development principles
- Stewardship
- Character and identity

Day 3 (20th July 6pm-8pm)

Uses and Connectivity

- Mix and location of uses
- Connectivity and movement

Day 4 (22nd July 6pm - 8pm)

Minimising Carbon Impacts, Living Healthily with Nature

- Energy generation and climate impact mitigation
- Natural environment and heritage
- Health and wellbeing

Day 5 (24th July 10am to 11.30am)

Summary and Next Steps

The following sections in this briefing pack set out some early research, background and questions relating to the key topics we will cover in each event above. We hope that you will have time to consider these before the EbyD sessions.

A summary of the planning policy requirements for the site allocation, alongside our Draft Vision and Development Principles are included in the appendices. Further information will be provided and discussed at the events.

The EbyD practice in our experience speeds up the planning application process and pre-application discussions by bringing key decision-makers together, to discuss and understand how key issues relate to each other. This process is therefore an opportunity to engage officers and local community stakeholders and ensure the proposals for the site are developed in the most efficient and beneficial way for the community and all those engaged in delivering this Local Plan allocation.

Day 1 and 2 (repeat of Day 1): Introduction

Background

At the event we will explain the work carried out to date, including our mapping of constraints (including archaeology, ecology and trees), initial discussions and other early investigative and design work.

Vision and Principles

A clear 'Vision' will draw together the aspirations for the site in one or two sentences. The Vision will be informed by planning policy, which will be used to guide the decision-making process for design work, in addition to the proposed Development Principles.

Christ Church has recently produced a draft Vision and accompanying draft Development Principles, (see Appendix 2) and we would welcome your feedback and thoughts on what has been set out in both including: -

- Is there anything we should be focusing on that has not been included?
- Are there any other issues / principles / factors that we should consider?
- What more detailed issues should be considered or included as part of each of the Development Principles?
- How can we measure success against these principles?

Stewardship

Christ Church wants to ensure that the management and governance of the proposals is considered from the start of the design and delivery process for PR6A to create a lasting legacy. By Stewardship we mean (for example): -

- Engagement at planning submission stages on character and design of the place
- Co-ordination of residents moving in, transport, facilities and clubs available locally and schools
- Creating 'social capital' by introducing residents to each other, creating community events or through social media
- Managing community buildings or spaces for and on behalf of the community
- Integration with utilities and services, street trees and highways, drainage
- Providing the community with control of changes to its environment over time
- Management of open spaces and community streets

We would like your views on what you believe has worked well elsewhere, any best practice / specific examples of stewardship models, as well as poor examples. We would also like to capture your thoughts on the potential functions of a stewardship body and how it might integrate with other public and third-party bodies (such as charities, sports clubs, and statutory authorities).

Character and Identity

The character and identity of a development is important in building a sense of belonging, bringing a community together and enhancing mental health.

We would like your thoughts and ideas on: -

- How identity might be formed in relation to this development: is it simply through a name, or naming of streets, or design / materials, or something else?
- Are there any key environmental, historic, or other features you believe we should draw on culturally or physically to inform the development's identity.
- Precedents that we should consider from Oxford City or Cherwell District, and how we might draw on those to inform the development.

Day 3: Uses and Connectivity

Mix and Location of Uses

Site PR6a is required to deliver various uses explained in the Local Plan Policy referred to at the start of this briefing note and included in Appendix 1. The policy map shows proposed locations for the primary school and local centre, however Cherwell District Council has confirmed that these should be considered further as part of design work. New homes are the key use to be provided on the site. Policies define much of the housing requirements (such as the amounts and types of homes provided).

We are interested to hear your thoughts on:

- The types of homes, densities and potential heights across the site (in conjunction with visual appraisal work we have carried out)
- How homes relate to the other uses (school, local centre and green spaces)
- Where the local centre and school should be located
- How the uses on the site relate to wider land uses including retail and employment

In accordance with early discussions with Cherwell District Council, our initial thinking is that the local centre and school should be located near to the centre of the site for the following reasons: -

- Locating the school and local centre together will maximise social and community benefits
- Centrally locating the school on the site will maximise its catchment within the development(s) that it serves
- The school should be located adjacent to walking / cycling routes to provide safe off-road access for children, while also being near public transport
- The local centre should be at the heart of the community
- If the local centre is able to draw on potential passing trade from Oxford Road this will maximise its chances of long-term existence.

We would like to test this idea. These discussions need to link with discussions relating to the access strategy and movement network.

Connectivity and Sustainable Movement

We believe the movement strategy should prioritise walking and cycling, then public transport, with lowest priority being given to journeys made by car. Movement networks need to link those living in the development firstly to local services and facilities (by foot and by bicycle), and then to the wider area - in particular, key destinations such as the City Centre, schools, green spaces and wider countryside, retail and employment areas, Park and Ride, and train station.

We would like to explore the following issues in the EbyD: -

- Access and movement within the site and the surrounding area
- Connections to wider destinations
- Movement strategy and priorities
- Car parking provision and location (including the provision of electric charging units)
- Deliveries
- Flexibility to accommodate future mobility

Figure 1. Modal travel – how people travel from this area to work

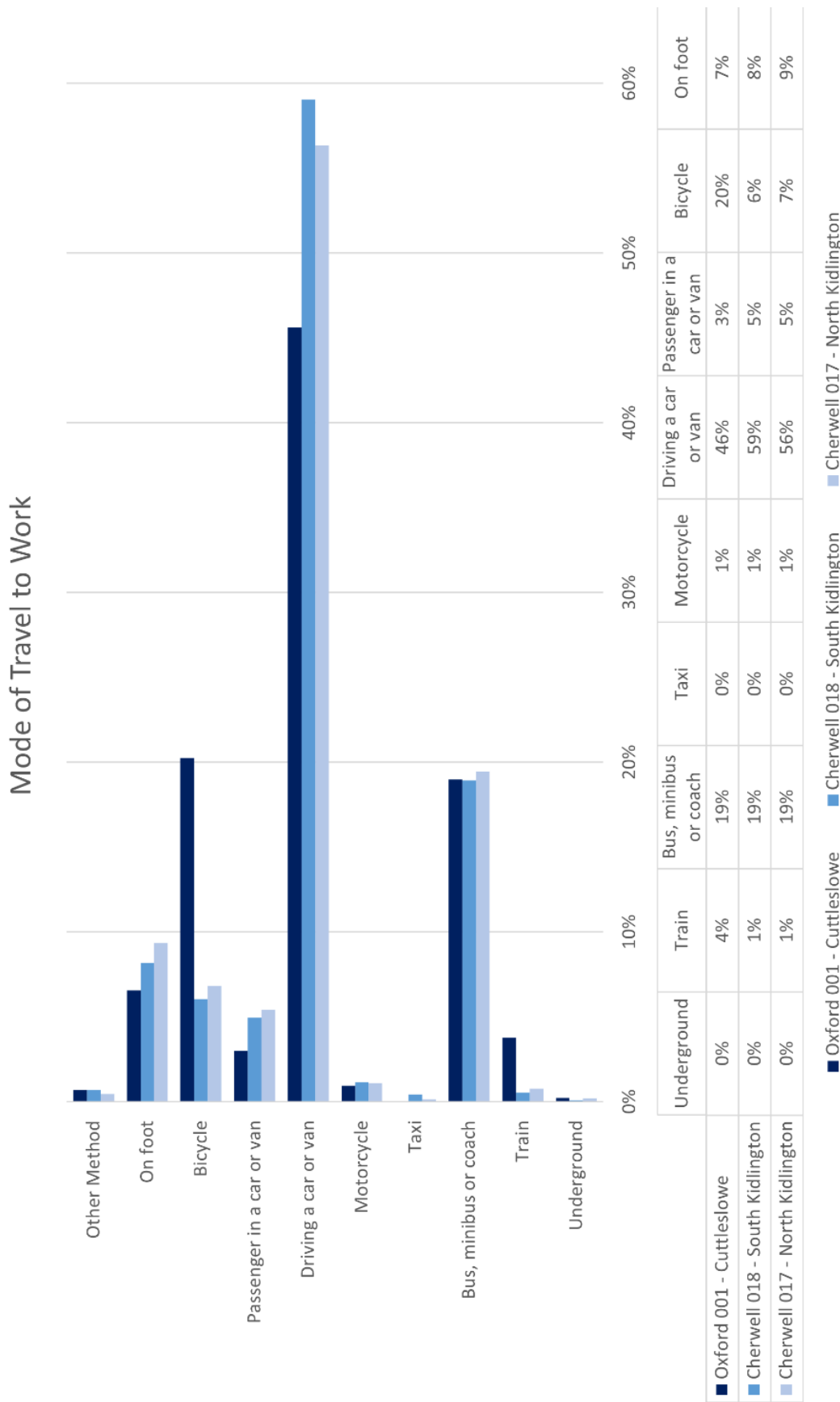
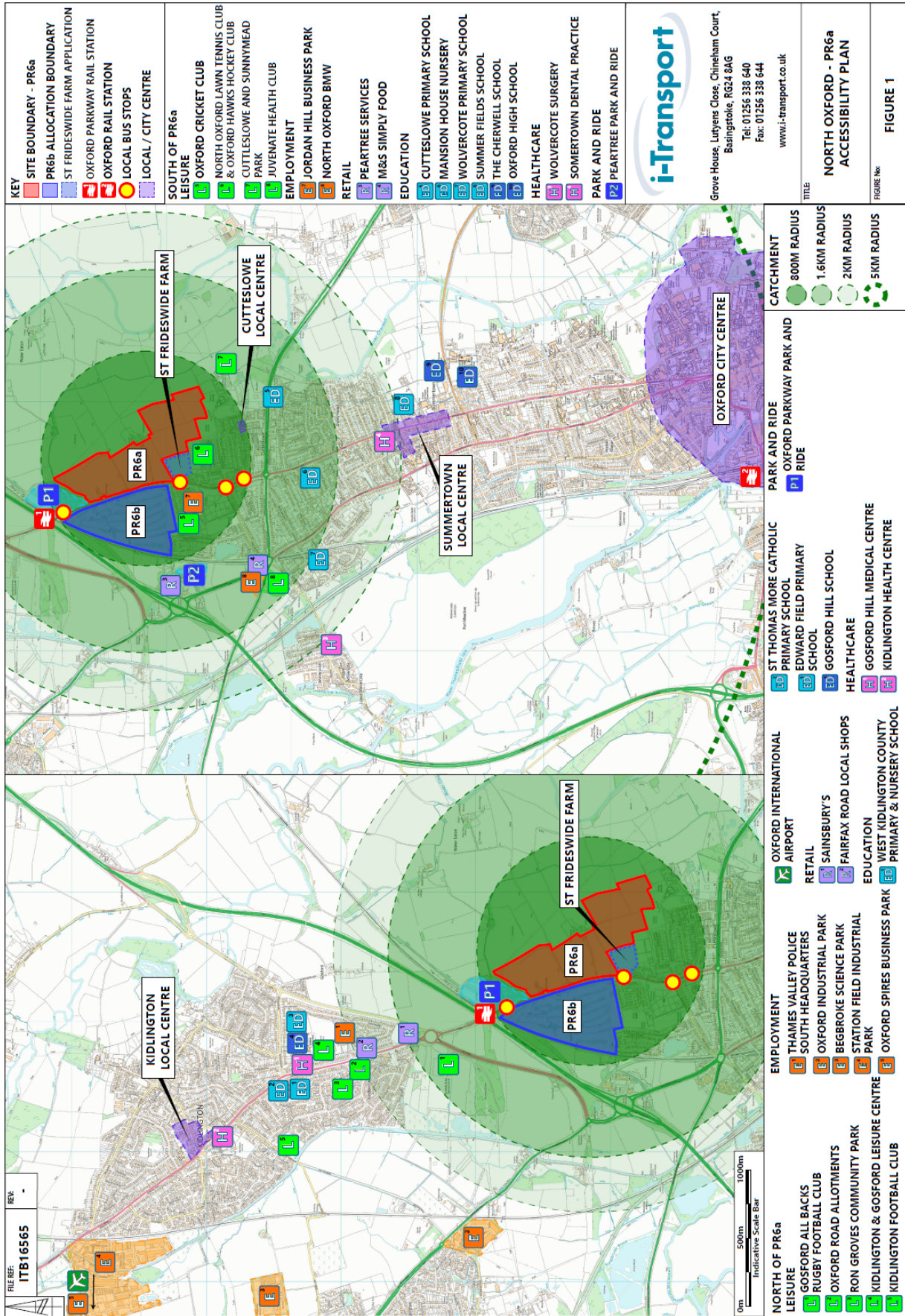


Figure 2: Wider destinations – where people travel to



Day 4: Minimising Carbon Impacts and Living Healthily with Nature

Climate Mitigation and Energy

Christ Church is committed to minimising the impact of this development on climate change, on minimising energy use and carbon emissions from the development during construction and when occupied, and maximising local energy generation.

We would like to know whether you agree with these aims, and also capture and explore any ideas you have on how we can achieve the aims set out.

Our initial ideas for discussion include:

- What does 'zero carbon' development mean and how should we target this?
- Implementing the Future Homes Standard and Future Building Standards (building regulations)
- How we can best embed renewable energy within the proposals
- Potential ways we can minimise energy use and carbon emissions once the buildings are in use
- How we minimise carbon used in the construction of buildings and the transport needed to deliver materials to the site
- How buildings could be repurposed at the end of their lives
- How we can best reduce water use
- How can we measure how well we have designed and / or delivered the measures proposed?

Figure 3: Net zero carbon – carbon emissions through a building's life

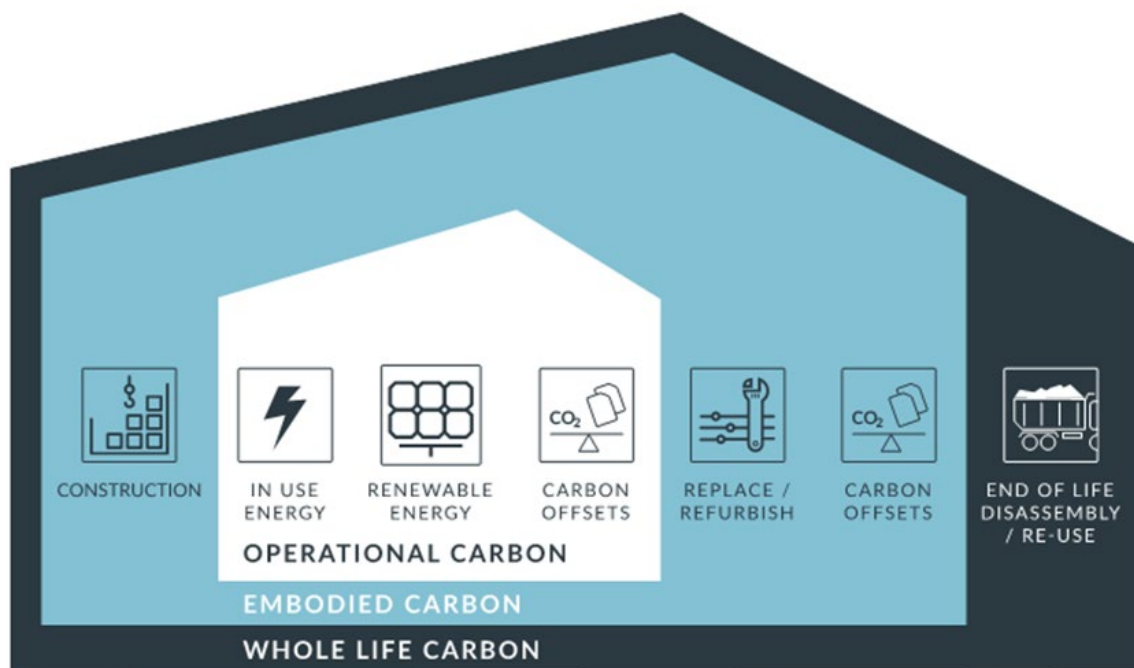
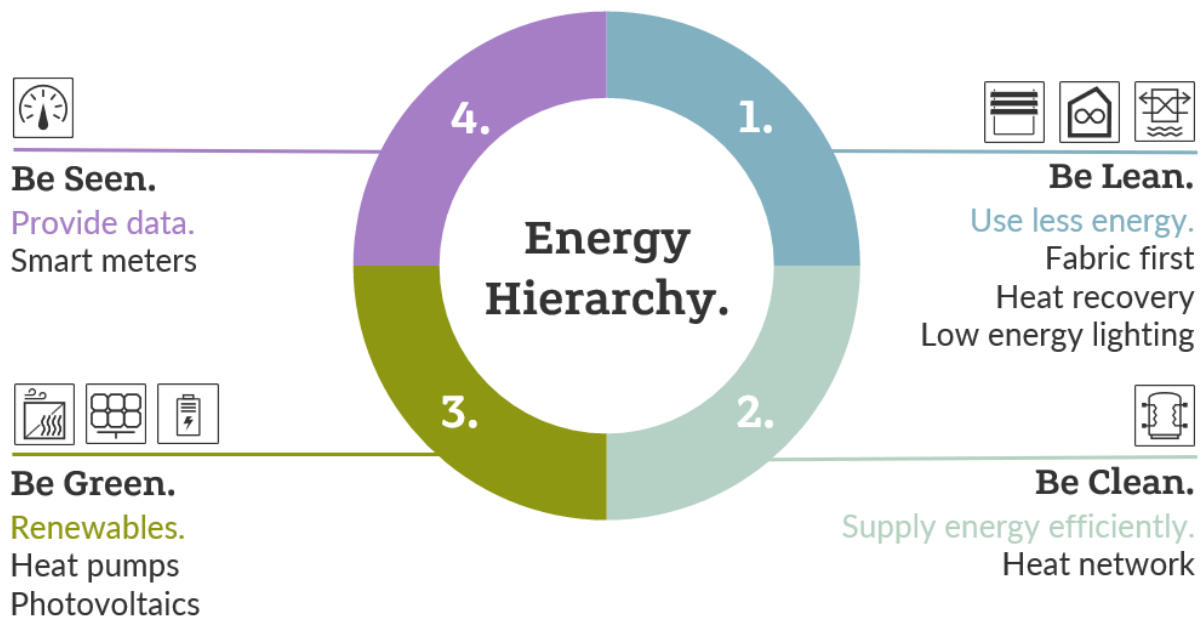


Figure 4: The Energy Hierarchy for minimising energy consumption and carbon emissions



Natural Environment and Heritage

One of the suggested development principles is to incorporate nature and wildlife into the development; to provide landscape and green spaces that are accessible to all residents and visitors; and to deliver enhanced habitats with a net biodiversity gain (of a minimum of 10 per cent). We would like to discuss this and other aspects of the natural environment, including the potential to deliver this scheme in accordance with the [‘Building with Nature’](#) accreditation.

We would also like to examine how green ‘infrastructure’ could be embedded into the development, and how we structure green spaces in relation to the key uses on the site, views, the streets and green routes (such as public rights of way) and the ‘strategic’ open space such as the parkland adjacent to Cutteslowe Park.

We want to better understand the community and Council’s requirements in relation to the delivery of play spaces, natural amenity areas, sports pitches, parkland and other green spaces, in order to consider [nature based solutions](#) and design a strategy for green space.

We would like to consider and discuss the findings of archaeological work. We will also discuss the potential impacts of development, and possible design solutions, to reflect the importance of listed structures including St Frideswide Farmhouse and its listed wall.

We would also like to consider views and heights of buildings across the site, which will help inform views into and out of the scheme.

Health and Wellbeing

We would like to discuss the ways that healthy living can be embedded into the development, both in its management and physical structure. How can green spaces be integrated with development, and with the way people live their lives, to maximise the benefits from the natural environment, while also delivering biodiversity gains?

We have the following topics for discussion: -

- What makes a 'healthy place'?
- How can we use the natural environment for healthy living?
- We propose to encourage healthy diets by providing fruit trees in streets, community herb beds, and a new community orchard. Are there other ways we could encourage healthy diet?
- Are there any lessons learned from the Healthy New Towns trials which could be embedded in the site?
- Should we measure health and wellbeing and if so, how?
- How do we ensure that this is a beautiful place to live?
- How can we work to enhance general mental wellbeing?
- How can we provide for active lifestyles and active leisure, for example walking and running routes – and how do they relate to the wider land uses / spatial structure of development?
- Are there other tools we should use to ensure design for healthy living such as [Building for Healthy Life](#) (a design code for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces)?

Day 5: Summary, Feedback and Next Steps

Feedback

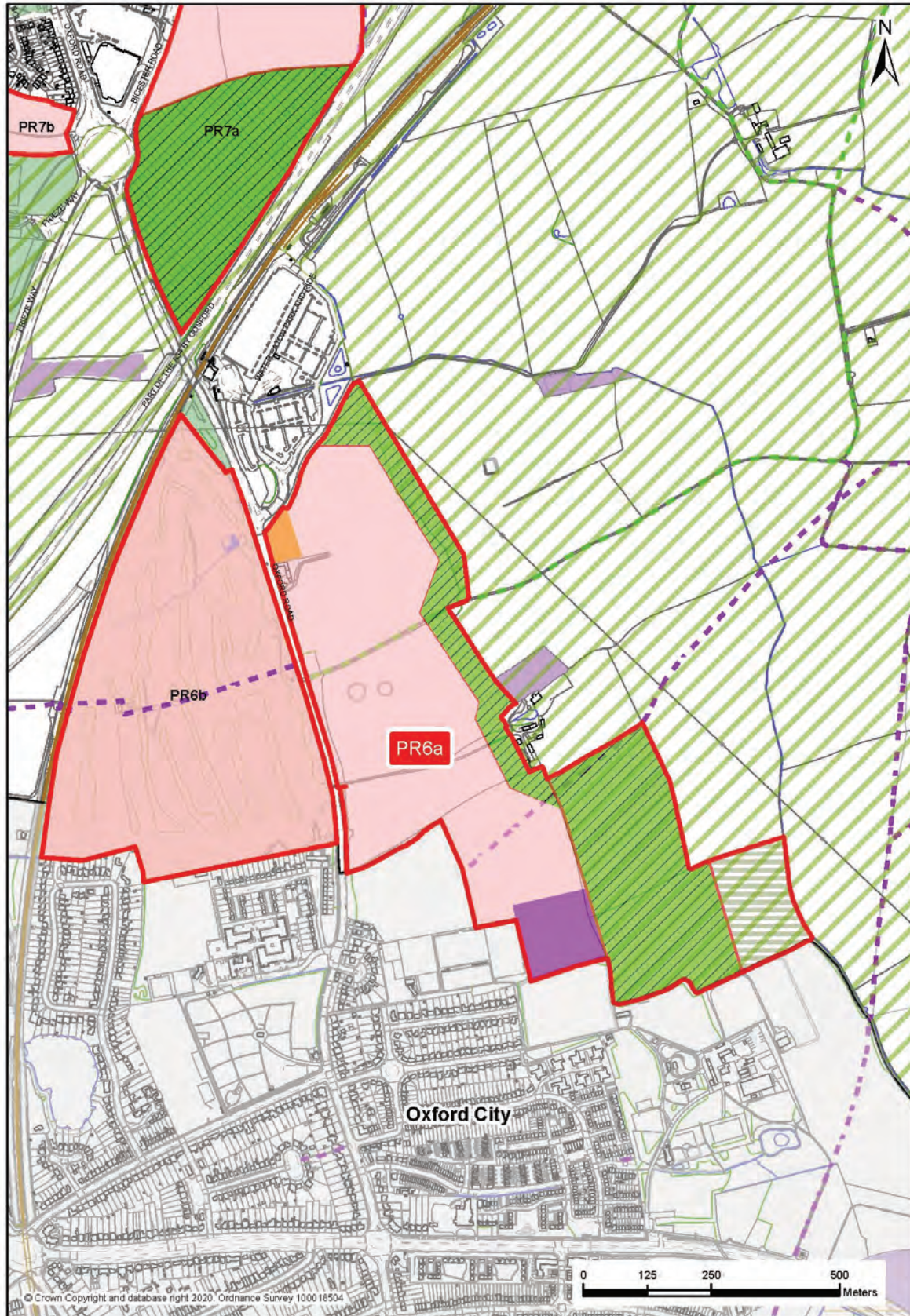
Our intention is to reflect back on, and summarise the outcome of discussions made over the course of the EbyD process, including any sketches or diagrams, as follows:

- **Vision and stewardship:** summary of discussions and any proposed / potential changes to the vision, thoughts and ideas for stewardship and how this is taken forwards
- **Identity and character:** early ideas identified for exploration
- **Mix of uses:** agreement on outcomes of discussions and how the uses best work together to create a strong community, where they should be located, potential building densities / heights. Amounts and types of green space required, sports pitches requirements, and children's play areas
- **Connectivity:** summary of the approach discussed and broad agreement on the approach to movement networks and connectivity. Any key issues raised that need to be looked at in more detail
- **Carbon mitigation / energy:** discussion of energy strategy and issues raised. Summary of how this is to be included in the application documents, any changes / targets to design principles
- **Natural environment:** a green infrastructure strategy, agreement on how this influences the design work, benefits that can be maximised, ideas emerging from discussions and agreement on details such as play space provision / amounts, orchard and/or allotments etc
- **Health and wellbeing:** agreements reached on approach to health and wellbeing. Any measurement tools, ideas, options discussed and how they will manifest in the design process and masterplan. Lessons to use from Heathy New Towns and site-specific issues.

Next Steps

Further to the EbyD workshops taking place we will hold an initial stage of community consultation on the outputs, findings and conclusions from the process, along with our vision and approach. This will give the wider public the opportunity to provide us with their feedback at an early stage so we can take their views into consideration as we continue to develop a draft masterplan. This consultation will take place in the autumn and will be publicised in advance.

Policy PR6a - Policies Map - Land East of Oxford Road



-  Site Boundary
-  Cherwell District
-  Conservation Target Areas
-  Existing Green Space
-  Local Centre
-  NERC Act. S41
-  New Green Space/Parks
-  Outdoor Sports Provision
-  Oxford City
-  Primary School Use
-  Public Bridleway
-  Public Footpath
-  Residential
-  Retained Agricultural Land
-  Revised Green Belt

Policy PR6a - Land East of Oxford Road

An urban extension to Oxford city will be developed on 48 hectares of land to the east of Oxford Road as shown on inset Policies Map PR6a. Development proposals will be permitted if they meet the following requirements:

Key Delivery Requirements

- 1. Construction of 690 dwellings (net) on approximately 25 hectares of land (the residential area as shown).**
- 2. The provision of 50% of the homes as affordable housing as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 3. The provision of a primary school with two forms of entry on 2.2 hectares of land in the location shown.**
- 4. The provision of a local centre on 0.5 hectares of land in the location shown unless the location is otherwise agreed with Cherwell District Council. The Local Centre shall include provision for local convenience retailing (use class A1 - no more than 500 square metres net floorspace and no less than 350 square metres), ancillary business development (use class B1(a) only) and/or financial and professional uses (use class A2); a café or restaurant (use class A3); the provision of a community building to required standards providing the opportunity for social and childcare facilities, the opportunity for required health facilities to be provided and provision for required emergency services infrastructure.**
- 5. The provision of facilities for formal sports, play areas and allotments to adopted standards within the developable area.**
- 6. The provision of public open green space as an extension to Cutteslowe Park on 11 hectares of land in the location shown and including land set aside for the creation of wildlife habitats and for nature trail/circular walks accessible from the new primary school.**
- 7. The creation of a green infrastructure corridor on 8 hectares of land incorporating a pedestrian, wheelchair and all-weather cycle route along the site's eastern boundary within the area of green space shown on the policies map. The route will connect Cutteslowe Park with Oxford Parkway Railway Station/Water Eaton Park and Ride and provide connection with the public rights of way network.**
- 8. The retention of 3 hectares of land in agricultural use in the location shown.**

Planning Application Requirements

- 9. The application(s) shall be supported by, and prepared in accordance with, a comprehensive Development Brief for the entire site to be jointly prepared and agreed in advance between the appointed representative(s) of the**

landowner(s) and Cherwell District Council. The Development Brief shall be prepared in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council.

10. The Development Brief shall include:

(a) A scheme and outline layout for delivery of the required land uses and associated infrastructure. Minor variations in the location of specific uses will be considered where evidence is available.

(b) Two points of vehicular access and egress from and to existing highways, primarily from Oxford Road.

(c) An outline scheme for public vehicular, cycle, pedestrian and wheelchair connectivity within the site, to the built environment of Oxford, to Cutteslowe Park, to the allocated site to the west of Oxford Road (policy PR6b) enabling connection to Oxford City Council's allocated 'Northern Gateway' site, to Oxford Parkway and Water Eaton Park and Ride, and to existing or new points of connection off-site and to existing or potential public transport services. Required access to existing property via the site should be maintained.

(d) Protection and connection of existing public rights of way and an outline scheme for pedestrian and cycle access to the surrounding countryside.

(e) Design principles which seek to deliver a connected and integrated urban extension to Oxford and which respond to historic setting of the city.

(f) Outline measures for securing net biodiversity gains informed by a Biodiversity Impact Assessment in accordance with (11) below.

(g) The sites for the required school and the Local Centre.

(h) An outline scheme for vehicular access by the emergency services.

11. The application(s) shall be supported by the Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) based on the DEFRA biodiversity metric (unless the Council has adopted a local, alternative methodology) to be agreed with Cherwell District Council.

12. The application(s) shall be supported by a proposed Biodiversity Improvement and Management Plan (BIMP) informed by the findings of the BIA and habitat surveys and to be agreed before development commences. The BIMP shall include:

(a) Measures for securing net biodiversity gain within the site and within the residential area and for the protection of wildlife during construction.

(b) Measures for retaining and conserving protected/notable species (identified within baseline surveys) within the development.

(c) Demonstration that designated environmental assets will not be harmed, including that there will be no detrimental impacts down-river in the Cherwell Valley through hydrological, hydro-chemical or sedimentation impacts.

(d) Measures for the protection and enhancement of existing wildlife corridors.

(e) The creation of a green infrastructure network with connected wildlife corridors, including within the residential area, and the improvement of the existing network including through the protection/enhancement of the existing hedgerow network and the protection of mature trees.

(f) Measures to minimise light spillage and noise levels on connective features and other habitat features of biodiversity value.

(g) The protection of the orchard and waterbody adjoining the site at St. Frideswide Farm.

(h) Farmland bird compensation.

(i) Proposals for long-term wildlife management and maintenance including for the wildlife habitats accessible from the primary school.

(j) A scheme for the provision for in-built bird and bat boxes, for wildlife connectivity between gardens and for the viable provision of designated green walls and roofs.

13. The application(s) shall be supported by a phase I habitat survey including habitat suitability index (HSI) survey for great crested newts, and protected and notable species surveys as appropriate, including great crested newt presence/absence surveys (dependent on HSI survey), surveys for badgers, breeding birds and reptiles, an internal building assessment for roosting barn owl, a tree survey and an assessment of the watercourse that forms the south-eastern boundary of the site and Hedgerow Regulations Assessment.

14. The application(s) shall be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan including measures for maximising sustainable transport connectivity, minimising the impact of motor vehicles on new residents and existing communities, and actions for updating the Travel Plan during construction of the development.

15. The application shall be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment which will identify measures to avoid or minimise conflict with the identified heritage assets within the site, particularly the Grade 2* Listed St Frideswide Farmhouse. These measures shall be incorporated or reflected, as appropriate, in any proposed development scheme.

16. The application shall be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment informed by a suitable ground investigation, and having regard to guidance contained within the Council's Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. A surface water management framework shall be prepared to maintain run-off rates to

greenfield run-off rates and volumes, with use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in accordance with adopted Policy ESD7, taking into account recommendations contained in the Council's Level 1 and Level 2 SFRA's.

17. The application should demonstrate that Thames Water and the Environment Agency have been consulted regarding wastewater treatment capacity and agreement has been reached in principle that foul drainage from the site will be accepted into the drainage network.

18. The application(s) shall be supported by a desk-based archaeological investigation which may then require predetermination evaluations and appropriate mitigation measures. The outcomes of the investigation and mitigation measures shall be incorporated or reflected, as appropriate, in any proposed development scheme.

19. The application(s) shall include proposals for securing the long-term use, management and maintenance of the community building, formal sports provision and play areas.

20. The application shall include a management plan for the appropriate re-use and improvement of soils.

21. The application(s) shall include proposals for securing the use, management and maintenance of the public open green space / extension to Cuttelowe Park and agricultural land in perpetuity.

22. A single comprehensive, outline scheme shall be approved for the entire site. The scheme shall be supported by draft Heads of Terms for developer contributions that are proposed to be secured by way of legal agreement. The application(s) shall be supported by a Delivery Plan demonstrating how the implementation and phasing of the development shall be secured comprehensively and how individual development parcels, including the provision of supporting infrastructure, will be delivered. The Delivery Plan shall include a start date for development, demonstration of how the development would be completed by 2031 and a programme showing how the site will contribute towards maintaining a five year supply of housing.

23. The application shall include an Employment, Skills and Training Plan to be agreed with the Council.

Place shaping principles

24. A layout, design and appearance for a contemporary urban extension to Oxford city that responds to the 'gateway' location of the site, is fully integrated and connected with the existing built environment, maximises the opportunity for sustainable travel into Oxford, provides a high-quality, publicly accessible and well connected green infrastructure and ensures a sensitive relationship with the site's Cherwell Valley setting.

25. The provision of a landscaped green infrastructure corridor at the eastern settlement edge which links Cutteslowe Park to Oxford Parkway, minimises the visual and landscape impact of the development, creates an appropriate setting to the Listed St. Frideswide Farmhouse and Wall, and provides a clear distinction between the site and the Green Belt.

26. The provision of connecting green infrastructure corridors running east-west across the site.

27. The provision of an active frontage along Oxford Road while maintaining a well treed streetscape.

28. The public open green space/extension to Cutteslowe Park and agricultural land to be kept free of buildings to avoid landscape impact.

29. The location of archaeological features, including the tumuli to the east of the Oxford Road, should be incorporated and made evident in the landscape design of the site.

30. Layout and design that encourages the sustainable and safe management of waste by individual households and by residents collectively while minimising the visual and pollution impacts.

Appendix 2: VISION & DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

This appendix sets out a draft vision for development at site PR6a and a series of design principles for the development.

A Vision for PR6a

PR6a will be founded in history and built for the future. It will reflect its location as an entrance to Oxford city, inspired and informed by the best of Cherwell and Oxford's streets and spaces. PR6a will be a diverse and healthy mixed-use intergenerational community, providing essential housing for Oxford. It will be connected to its neighbours, to the city, and to nature and the countryside. A place that people value, where sustainability, wellbeing and quality of life are fundamental.



Stewardship

Ensure strong leadership and governance in the design process for PR6a, and create a lasting legacy.



Minimise carbon impacts

Reduce carbon in construction and operation, minimise energy consumption, and generate carbon-free energy.



Create a strong community

Put people first. Work with local people and stakeholders to co-create a genuine and inclusive community which gives all people a sense of belonging. Empower people to be in control.



Live healthily with nature

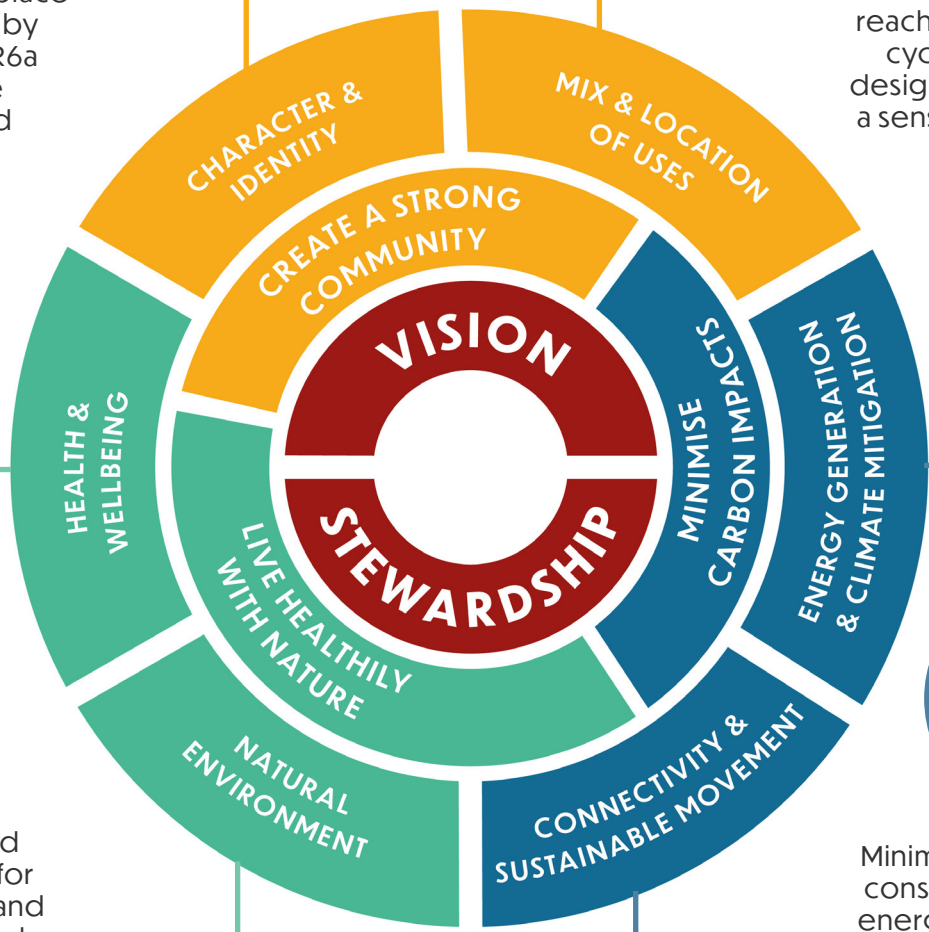
Encourage walking and cycling. Integrate with nature. Reduce impacts to the environment and create new wildlife habitats.



The identity and character of the place will be informed by the location of PR6a to create a sense of belonging and community.



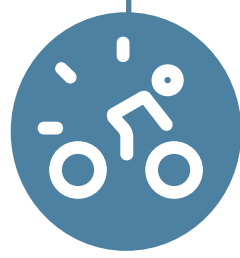
A local centre, primary school, and green spaces will all be within easy reach by walking and cycling, and will be designed to enhance a sense of belonging for everyone.



Residents at PR6a will be surrounded by green spaces for activity, exercise and meeting with friends and neighbours. Landscaping will be productive, providing fruit, herbs and more.



Nature and wildlife will be incorporated into the development, green spaces will be accessible to all, and enhanced habitats created throughout the area. Net biodiversity gain and dark skies strategies will reduce impacts.



Walking and cycling will be given priority. Streets will be places for people, not dominated by cars and parking. Parking and public spaces will be adaptable for potential changes in future use.



Minimise carbon from construction. Reduce energy use. Maximise energy generation. Provide heating without the need for natural gas.