



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

WOOTTON DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

This development brief has been prepared in the context of the Adopted Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011 and the Pre-Inquiry Changes to the Bedford Borough Local Plan Deposit Draft 1998. Following the inclusion of land at Berry Farm in the Adopted Local Plan a development brief was produced in 1992. Since then the Borough Council has identified further development opportunities and the development brief has now been revised and extended to include land to the north and south of Fields Road. The details are consistent with the emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan and the brief was adopted by the Borough Council on 14th July 1999.

The Wootton Development Brief was prepared by the Policy Group of the Planning Division with the assistance of colleagues in other sections of the Borough Council.

Further copies of the brief may be obtained at a price of £2.00 or £2.50 by post from:



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



David K Bailey, BSc(Hons), DipTP, MRTPI, Borough Planner & Deputy Director,
Town Hall, St Paul's Square, Bedford MK40 1SJ
Telephone: (01234) 267422 - Facsimile: (01234) 221606

woottonadopted.pm6 (09/99)

©

Copyright reserved Bedford Borough Council 1999

Maps based on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 & 1:50,000 Maps with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. Crown Copyright Reserved. Licence No. LA 077127.

CONTENTS

Introduction page 1

Purpose and Objectives of the Development Brief.....	1
Location and Setting.....	1
Size and Ownership.....	1
Planning Status.....	1
Planning History.....	2

Site Features page 3

Landscape Setting and Topography.....	3
Ecology.....	3
Existing Land Uses.....	3

Development Constraints page 4

Flood Plain.....	4
Foul Water Disposal.....	4
Surface Water Disposal.....	4
Water Supply.....	5
Gas.....	5
Electricity Power Lines.....	5
Minerals and Waste.....	5
Archaeology.....	5
Footpaths.....	5

Development Guidelines page 6

The Concept.....	6
Housing.....	6
New Employment.....	7
Leisure and Community Facilities.....	7
Highways.....	7
Schools.....	7
Open Space Requirements.....	7
Footpaths and Cycleways.....	8
Public Transport.....	8
Car Parking.....	8
Marston Vale Community Forest.....	8

Design Philosophy page 9

Character of Wootton.....	9
Design Priorities.....	9
Design Requirements.....	10
Residential Landscaping.....	11
Employment Area.....	11
Highways.....	12

Implementation..... page 13

Maps

1.....	Location
2.....	Constraints
3.....	Master Plan

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Objectives of the Development Brief

1.1 Development of land at Wootton offers a challenging opportunity to comprehensively expand the village in a landscaped setting whilst at the same time promote new sustainable mixed use development opportunities and community infrastructure, in accordance with the County Structure Plan, which complement and enhance the current range of land uses. As part of the concept a new road will be built linking the development with Fields Road and Cranfield Road as well as an improved access to the village from a dualled A421.

1.2 The purpose of the development brief is to provide firm and clear guidance to prospective developers about the type and form of development which the Borough Council would like to see on this site. Following the inclusion of land at Berry Farm in the Adopted Local Plan, a Development Brief was produced in 1992. Since then the Borough Council have identified further development opportunities so that a more comprehensive approach be taken in relation to Wootton. Consequently, this document replaces the previous guidance.

Location and Setting

1.3 The development brief area is located 3 miles south west of Bedford. The area of land to which the brief relates to is shown on Map 1. It includes land to the east and south of Wootton village abutting the A421. The site is subdivided by Fields Road which provides a link between Wootton and the A421.

Size and Ownership

1.4 The total site area extends to approximately 202 acres (82 hectares) of which 84 acres is Borough Council owned and the rest is in several private ownerships. It is therefore important that the site is planned in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner.

Planning Status

1.5 The structure plan currently in force is the Bedfordshire Structure Plan 2011 which was adopted in March 1997 and gives strategic guidance to 2011. Policy 1(iii) of the structure plan aims to concentrate development in urban areas and strategic corridors of which Wootton falls into the corridor to the south west of Bedford.

1.6 The current local plan is the Adopted Bedford Borough Local Plan 1993, which was prepared for the period to 1996. Policy H1 identifies Land at Berry Farm, Wootton for housing purposes and Policy T5 puts forward the principle of a developer funded new road linking Cranfield Road with Fields Road.

1.7 This plan is in the process of being replaced and a Deposit Draft Local Plan was produced in 1997. Policies H11 and H12 of the pre-inquiry changes to the Deposit Draft Local Plan (September 1998) allocate a greater scale of development than was envisaged in 1993 and 1997. Policies H11 and H12 propose a development of some 904 houses, including land at Berry Farm, together with an associated employment/business area and community facilities.

1.8 Paragraphs 5.31 and 5.32 of the Local Plan pre-inquiry changes state:

"The Structure Plan 2011 requires a significantly greater scale of housing development south west of Bedford than was envisaged when the consultation draft of this local plan was prepared. The strategic corridor is defined by the Structure Plan and within this area the Borough is proposing to enlarge the villages of Wootton and Stewartby and to create a new settlement focused on Elstow Storage Depot. However, there are major implications in designating development sites in the strategic corridor, since such development will need to be matched by private sector investment to achieve improvements in the physical and social infrastructure. Notable amongst these are the Highway Agency's requirements in relation to the prior achievement of significant improvements to the A421 and A6 Trunk Roads and the construction of a new railway station to serve the proposed development at Elstow Storage Depot. Development proposals at Wootton reflect both the Structure Plan 2011 and the fact that development must underwrite the capital investment required by the Highways Agency in the Strategic Corridor. Thus proposals at Wootton have grown in scale following the adoption of the Bedford Borough Local Plan in 1993 and the Structure Plan 2011 and the adopted development brief needs to be revised. In order to secure a balance of development, proposals are also made to create an associated employment/business area..."

The main reason for extending the Wootton allocation is therefore to ensure sufficient weight of development to secure improvements to the A421.

1.9 Within the Adopted Local Plan, other specific policies relate to the area covered by this brief. These include:

POLICY H2 - The provision of social housing

POLICIES PE1 & PE2 - Sites of Natural/Wildlife interest

POLICIES HA1, HA1A & HA2 - Sites of archaeological interest.

1.10 In relation to the Deposit Draft Local Plan other relevant policies include:

POLICY E17 - Employment in the rural area.

POLICY BE38 - Landscaping/open space

POLICY H25 - Important open space.

POLICY S5 - Marston Vale Strategy Area

POLICY SH7 - New residential development and retail provision.

POLICY NE21 - Marston Vale Community Forest.

Planning History

1.11 A summary of the site's recent planning history is set out below:

98/00021/OUT – Outline application for residential development and community facilities including construction of new roundabouts at the junction of Fields Road and A421.

98/01002/FUL - Construction of a new vehicular access, Fields Road.

SITE FEATURES

Landscape Setting and Topography

2.1 The landscape to the south and east of Wootton is open in character with generally long views across arable fields and set aside, interspersed with existing vegetation in the form of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. As a result of this, features in the landscape are prominent. The Borough Council has undertaken some landscaping on the site which will be incorporated into the scheme. Existing hedgerows, trees and ponds will normally be expected to be retained and incorporated into an extensive whole site landscaping scheme given the open nature of the area.

2.2 In terms of topography the site rises very gently in a westerly direction. Both approaches to Wootton, along Cranfield Road and Fields Road, have a country lane feel with hedgerows and long grass at the side of the roads. Wootton is situated within the Marston Vale which is one of twelve locations in the country selected for community forest status. The forest area extends to 61 square miles stretching between Bedford and the M1 Motorway and is a joint initiative by the Countryside Commission, Forestry Commission, Bedford Borough Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council and Bedfordshire County Council. The Community Forest Plan has now been adopted by the Department of the Environment. It is a non-statutory document and therefore its policies and proposals cannot override those approved and adopted in the development plan for the area.

2.3 The Community Forest Plan identifies Wootton as one of a small number of villages within the project boundary to be targeted for environmental improvement. The main aims are considered to be:

- i) maintaining a physical distinction between town and countryside;
- ii) improving both the setting and internal environment of Wootton;
- iii) limiting the coalescence of settlements.

Ecology

2.4 In ecological terms, the most important features on the site are the hedgerows which can support various forms of wildlife, for example, birds of prey. Where possible these should be retained and

supplemented by extensive landscaping as part of the development proposals. The hedgerows should be considered in terms of the hedgerow regulations which could make them eligible for protection. The site also contains numerous ponds that should be retained wherever possible and habitats adjoining should remain undisturbed. In particular records exist of Great Crested Newts in the vicinity of the development brief area and, in this respect, developers will be expected to undertake a Great Crested Newt Survey and consult an experienced ecologist. If confirmed on site the Council wish to see measures implemented to safeguard summer breeding ponds and winter hibernation areas. Any proposal to upgrade Elstow Brook to provide for surface water drainage should consider the ecological implications of the proposed works.

Existing Land Uses

2.5 The site is given over to agricultural use, both arable and pastoral, with some set aside and planting. The site adjoins residential development to the west and the A421 to the east.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

3.1 In addition to the policy requirements the development will need to take into account a number of constraints which are considered under the following headings:

Flood Plain

3.2 The Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is the drainage authority for the development brief area and certain of the watercourses that cross the site or run along the settlement boundary are maintained by the IDB under its permissive powers. The drainage authority responsible for those parts of the site lying outside the IDB district is the Environment Agency or local authority. The watercourses are 15, 16, 16A and 42 and are identified on Map 2.

3.3 No works are permitted within 7 metres of the banks of the IDB's watercourses without the IDB's consent. The IDB will require provision for access for maintenance along the banks of the watercourses.

3.4 The IDB has carried out an analysis of flooding on the Elstow Brook and certain of its tributaries including watercourse 15 and watercourse 16 as far as Fields Road. The analysis was limited to an estimation of the 1 in 100 year flood. The results indicate that flooding occurs within the site adjacent to watercourse 16 during the 1 in 100 year flood condition. A copy of the IDB's report on the model analysis, which includes plans of the estimated flood plain for the 1 in 100 year flood and describes the limitations of the analysis, may be viewed at the IDB's offices. It should be noted that watercourses 15 and 16 are at the upstream limits of the model. Watercourse 16 upstream of Fields Road, watercourse 16A and watercourse 42 west of the A421 have not been modelled and no information relating to flood risk is available for these reaches.

3.5 Generally, the IDB object to development in the floodplain. No works that obstruct the passage of flood water, or that reduce available storage for flood water within the flood plain, will be permitted unless compensation works that are acceptable to the IDB are carried out. The IDB will require developers to demonstrate that flood risk has been considered and that a reasonable freeboard to proposed floor levels will be provided to protect proposed buildings from flooding.

Foul Water Disposal

3.6 New development will drain directly to the pumping station situated to the land north of Fields Road which will need to be improved. As the development is to be phased, Bedford sewage treatment works will have sufficient capacity for the domestic flows generated.

Surface Water Disposal

3.7 Surface water drainage may be discharged to existing watercourses subject to attenuation measures to limit discharges to estimated natural rates of run-off to avoid increasing flood risk down stream. All discharges and associated outfall structures require the consent of the Internal Drainage board. Developers will be expected to consider the most sustainable solutions for surface water disposal.

3.8 Surface water drainage from parking areas for less than fifty spaces and hardstandings should be passed through trapped gullies with an overall capacity compatible with the site being drained before being discharged to any watercourse, surface water sewer or soakaway system. All surface water from roofs should be piped direct to an approved surface water system using sealed downpipes. These measures will assist in the prevention of water pollution.

3.9 Any culverting or works affecting the flow of a watercourse requires the prior written consent of the Environment Agency or Drainage Board under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991. The Environment Agency seeks to avoid culverting and its consent for such works will not normally be granted except as a means of access.

3.10 The Internal Drainage Board, in a partnership with the Marston Vale Community Forest, Environment Agency and local authorities, known as the Marston Vale Working Group, is seeking to promote strategic solutions to surface water attenuation and flood defence in the interests of long term sustainability. Such facilities can also provide opportunities for enhancement of the environment and recreation and can contribute to the Community Forest. Developers will be encouraged to adopt a strategic solution to surface water attenuation for the development site taken as a whole, rather than piecemeal solutions on a site by site basis. Opportunities that could be explored appear to

include provision of a balancing facility in the area designated for the Community Forest on the east side of the site, or a comprehensive scheme for surface water attenuation and flood defence involving the Bedford Western Bypass and other proposed developments west of Kempston.

Water Supply

3.11 Substantial reinforcements will be required, either from the supply reservoir to the north of Ampthill or from Manton Lane on the northern edge of Bedford. Infrastructure provision within the Marston Vale Strategy Area will need to be provided in accordance with a strategy to be agreed, and financed in accordance with the statutory framework.

Gas

3.12 Transco have informed the Borough Council that there are gas apparatus within the vicinity of the Wootton development brief area and that the site can be served from the Medium Pressure main in the Bedford Road 1.5km from the site area. Any existing service on site may need to be disconnected.

Electricity Power lines

3.13 A 11KV/33KV overhead line cable crosses the site and pole mounted sub-stations are situated within the site. These apparatus will require alteration/diversion as a consequence of the development. The 11KV overhead line cable can be diverted at no cost to the developer, and can be used to feed the development based upon a route through the development being agreed and an open trench for the cable route being provided. In order to supply the proposed development, Eastern Electricity will need to establish four ground mounted sub-stations and install high voltage and low voltage mains and service cables. In accordance with Policy BE47 of the Deposit Draft Local Plan the Borough Council will seek to reduce the visual intrusion of overhead power cables and encourage their location underground away from residential, educational, leisure or workplace uses.

Minerals and Waste

3.14 The extraction of any minerals within the area of the brief is a matter for the Mineral Planning Authority and other agencies. However, workings should only extend to that required to satisfy the

needs of the development and associated infrastructure works. Any minerals planning permission granted will take due account, inter alia, of the presence of archaeological remains. The phasing of development should also have regard to the adjacent landfill with no housing being permitted within 500m of the landfill site before capping is complete. Currently it is anticipated that the site will be full by 2004/5.

Archaeology

3.15 In line with PPG16: Archaeology and Planning and Policies BE24 and BE25, an archaeological field evaluation will be required in order to define the character and extent of archaeological remains prior to a planning application being submitted. The Council expects this to be undertaken on behalf of the developer by professionally qualified field archaeologists. Where the Borough Council decides that the physical preservation of archaeological remains is not justified and that development should proceed, proposals should minimise the effect of a proposal on archaeological remains and ensure satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the remains. In the absence of an adequate evaluation planning permission will be refused. Further details regarding archaeology can be obtained from Martin Oake, County Archaeological Officer, County Hall, Bedford.

Footpaths

3.16 One public footpath crosses the site and is shown on Map 2 and will need to be incorporated into the development or alternatively arrangements made for its statutory diversion. It is important that existing footpaths within Wootton village are linked to the development and efforts made to provide footpath linkages between Wootton and Stewartby Country Park. Careful consideration should be given to developing linking corridors between the open spaces within the development and routes into the community forest, as shown on Map 3, and the existing development. The character of these pedestrian corridors should retain a rural feel with the corridors being sparsely wooded with long and short grassed areas to create a fairway type feel and a transition between urban and rural landscapes. Tree planting will also be important along these corridors, again aimed at securing a transition between the more densely planted rural fringe and the residential areas.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The Concept

4.1 The development of approximately 900 dwellings at Wootton represents a major expansion of the village. It is therefore important that it is planned in a comprehensive and sustainable manner with a range of employment, community, shopping, environmental and leisure opportunities to cater for people living on the site. (See Map 3)

4.2 The involvement of the Parish Council and local community in this process is essential.

4.3 It is important that new development assimilates into the existing development pattern at Wootton and does not create a community with a separate identity. The use of land should therefore be maximised in a manner which creates a mixed use sustainable environment but which respects the existing rural setting.

4.4 A new road will be built linking the development south of Fields Road with Fields Road and Cranfield Road. Similarly a new road will be required linking that part of the development north of Fields Road with Fields Road itself. An important aspect of the development will be the requirement to have an improved access to the village from the A421 and a contribution to the dualling of the A421 as required by the Highways Agency. Developers will be required to contribute to off-site improvement works as part of a planning agreement.

Housing

4.5 It is intended that provision is made for approximately 450 dwellings, on 17.50 hectares of land north of Fields Road and 454 dwellings, on 17.70 hectares of land south of Fields Road. This should include a variety of different house types, sizes and tenures to be agreed with the local planning authority for each neighbourhood or phase of development.

4.6 In accordance with Policy H31 of the Deposit Draft Local Plan (as amended by PIC 217) the Council will negotiate with developers to include an element of affordable housing within each residential area. Policy H31 requires that 30% of the dwellings on this site should be affordable so as to make its contribution to the identified housing need in the Borough, and the Council will seek to negotiate provision on that basis. The Borough Council

recognises that housing needs vary across the Borough and that the ability of sites to carry affordable housing will also vary. The Borough Council's Housing Survey recognises that full provision in accordance with Policy H31 may not be sustainable on this development. In accordance with the advice in Circular 6/98, and justified by housing need elsewhere, part of this provision may be targeted off site where needs may be greater, in lieu of on-site provision. Developers contributions to alternative sites for affordable housing provision will be negotiated in the context of the 30% affordable housing requirement. Developers will be required to liaise closely with the Borough Housing Officer to define the form of the housing need in terms of tenure and type of housing to be provided, with the overall objective of creating an acceptable balance of housing throughout the development. The Council will normally seek a zero or substantially reduced land price for the social housing to allow for affordable rents under the current grant scheme. The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the low cost benefit for subsequent occupants where legally possible. In addition the Borough Council will expect the mix and range of house types to reflect the needs of the community in accordance with Policy H32 of the Deposit Draft Local plan.

4.7 Residential development will be sub-divided into a number of landscaped clusters with separate identities which will contain groups of houses providing a wide ranging housing mix. New houses should be designed to meet the requirements of modern living and the sustainable use of resources. For example, house types specifically designed for working from home without adversely affecting residential amenity, will form an essential part of the housing mix. Developers should explore the opportunities afforded by the site and the surrounding area, in particular the existing landfill sites, in terms of maximising the use of renewable energy sources, including wind, solar and alternative fuel sources (biomass and biogas).

4.8 It is intended that higher density housing be located relatively close to the proposed community facilities. This will enable easy access to these facilities and should encourage short journeys to be undertaken either on foot or by cycle. It will also maximise the convenience of the community facilities for the greatest number of people. Lower density housing will generally be located close to the boundaries of residential development to ease the urban to rural transition.

New employment

4.9 Approximately 9.00 hectares of land is available for employment use south of Fields Road. It will be developed primarily for a mix of B1 and B2 uses with the possibility of B8 warehousing in less prominent locations within the site. Development of land adjacent to and visible from the A421 will be of the B1/B2 type, and in design terms will reflect its position fronting the A421.

Leisure and Community Facilities

4.10 It is important that the shopping, community, leisure and social needs arising from the development are accommodated within the scheme. Within the new development areas have been identified for a community centre and a separate surgery. Adjacent to the area identified for community use it is intended to locate a small food based supermarket of approximately 300 sq m to satisfy the needs arising from the new development. In addition, the community centre should provide for needs such as a dentist, chiropodist and other services of a local nature. This facility should be well related to the proposed school to allow for dual use of facilities, including car parking, and room for future expansion.

Highways

4.11 Development of the site will take place in conjunction with the construction of a new road linking Cranfield Road with Fields Road and the dualling of the A421. New junctions are required where the new road joins the existing carriageway. On the advice of the highways authority the brief will seek to close Cranfield Road to vehicles travelling north, although access will be permitted for cyclists, pedestrians and horses. Before this issue is finalised there will be a further round of consultation with the local community to inform the final decision.

4.12 Traffic travelling north from Cranfield will be channelled away from Wootton onto the A421 thus reducing traffic flow in Wootton, and Kempston to the north.

Schools

4.13 A new lower school will be required as a result of the housing proposed, and the Education Authority advise that a school site of 3 acres (1.2ha)

is needed together with a school providing in the region of 240 places, to be provided at nil cost to the Local Education authority.

4.14 The existing Holywell middle school in Cranfield, and upper school in Wootton, will have insufficient capacity to meet the needs arising from the development and will require additional infrastructure. Precise requirements will be established through negotiation with the Education Authority and the schools as appropriate, and will be funded by residential development through pro-rata contributions. The provision of safe pedestrian routes will be essential to and from the school with the creation of grade separated crossings from the school over Fields Road and the new link road.

Open Space requirements

4.15 In accordance with the Borough Council's adopted standards, and based on the total development of 904 new dwellings, a minimum of 6.78 hectares of open space will be required for the development on a pro-rata basis. This will be divided into a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play), LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) and LAP (Local Area for Play). The following table shows how this is devised.

Type of provision & standard	Requirement for 904 dwellings
outdoor playing field (NEAP) 0.4 ha per 100 dwellings	3.62 ha
children's play outdoor equipped (LEAP) 0.05 - 0.075 per 100 dwellings	0.452 ha
informal play (LAP) 0.1 - 0.125 per 100 dwellings	0.904 ha
amenity open space 0.10 ha per 50 dwellings	1.808 ha
TOTAL	6.78 ha

The development brief provides an opportunity to provide for the whole community ensuring that neither new nor existing residents are disadvantaged through a lack of community facilities.

4.16 Opportunity exists to provide playing field facilities and toilets to the east of the village. An area has been set aside for community use adjacent to the new lower school, and in close proximity to the playing field, which will include male and female changing facilities and a bar.

4.17 It is intended that children's equipped and informal play areas will be distributed throughout the housing areas with a view to maximising their use. Amenity open space will be evenly distributed in new housing layouts.

Footpaths and Cycleways

4.18 A network of footpaths and cycleways will cross the site providing a link to the National Cycle Network, which was launched by Sustrans in 1995, providing opportunities for public access and leisure pursuits and linking Bedford with Milton Keynes. Developer contributions will be sought to provide links to the Sustrans route where appropriate. The footpaths and cycleways will link the proposed housing and employment sites, the school, community facilities and community forest, with the existing built up area of Wootton. It is important that facilities can be reached by footpath and cycleway from all parts of the site. The provision of grade separated crossings will be required across the A421, Fields Road and the new link road. The Council will expect developers to address Policies T13 and T14 of the Deposit Draft Local Plan and where necessary and relevant will seek the provision of new cycle/footpath routes and/or contributions to improved provision to ensure that this major development is accessible by pedestrians and cyclists.

Public transport

4.19 Developers are encouraged to consult with service providers regarding the levels of public transport services to be provided and the infrastructure improvements expected. In accordance with the pre-inquiry changes of the Deposit Draft Local Plan, the Borough Council will seek developer contributions for both the capital implementation costs of public transport measures and the revenue costs of funding for public transport, including the revenue support of services in order to assist the achievement of sustainable development.

Car parking

4.20 The Borough Council will be seeking to achieve imaginative approaches to the provision of car parking for both residents and visitors in relation to the proposed housing and employment areas. In addition, car parking will also be required for the shop, community facilities and school where the dual use of car parking will be encouraged. Provision will be expected to meet the Borough Council's adopted parking standards.

Marston Vale Community Forest

4.21 Developers will be required to contribute to the setting out and planting of an area of Community Forest, as illustrated on the indicative masterplan, and contribute to its future maintenance and management.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

5.1 In respect of design and housing layout the Borough Council is seeking to achieve high standards and this is supported by the Bedfordshire Local Authorities Design Forum. The thrust of current Government advice is that urban extensions or residential development at low densities and the use of standard layouts does not lead to attractive, successful or sustainable development. Particular note should be taken of the Borough Council's own supplementary design guidance 'Achieving Quality in Residential Layouts' which advocates a high standard of design in residential layouts. This design guidance is supported by the good practice guide 'Places, Streets and Movement', September 1998, which advocates that the creation of attractive residential areas with a genuine sense of place is a prerequisite to achieving sustainability. There are also sound design principles in the document 'Housing Layouts - Lifting the Quality', August 1998, a joint publication by the House Builders Federation, The Planning Officers Society and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR).

Character of Wootton

5.2 From the outset of the design process it is important to establish those elements which give Wootton its local distinctiveness. The existing village of Wootton originally comprised of several small separate hamlets called 'ends' but the original rural pattern has been heavily diluted by post war ribbon development. However many well established and important elements remain within these 'ends' and make a significant and positive contribution to the essential distinctiveness of the village. The most original and local character is to be found within the 'ends' and it is from these areas that design cues should be taken for new development areas.

5.3 Dense tree and hedge planting define the interface between the open countryside and the village and this helps to integrate the village into the wider landscape. The quality of external spaces makes an important contribution towards local distinctiveness in Wootton.

5.4 The original rural character of the Conservation Area has been retained. This is very much a landscape dominated area with mature trees, large scale external spaces and buildings which sit well in their setting, because of their scale and massing.

5.5 Other areas have a semi-rural or open quality created in part by the scale and spacing of buildings and, in older areas, mainly by deep front gardens and/or large external spaces. A few terraced properties sit on the back of the highway edge and this sharp contrast adds to the townscape quality. Variety in the scale of built form creates focal points and feature buildings in places, and retains townscape interest. There are also some visual pinch points where the close juxtaposition of buildings closes down views along the street and provides added legibility to movement routes.

5.6 The shape of the built form is varied and there appears to be a dominance of semi-detached and terraced residential properties over detached. There are also several traditional single storey dwellings and occasionally three storey. Wootton also has several long, low gabled barns that are a positive townscape feature reflecting the original rural character. The better examples of existing local houses are simple and symmetrical with wide frontages of shallow depth and steeply pitched roofs and chimneys. Generally houses have a low window to wall ratio with windows based on vertical proportions. Dormer windows are not prevalent but where they do occur they are small and square with considerable gaps between them. Porches are not prevalent but, where they do exist, are extremely simple.

5.7 To achieve the high quality of design required it is suggested that developers give serious consideration to the appointment of consultant architects with a pedigree in high quality housing design.

Design Priorities

5.8 The design principles illustrating the overall design and landscape concept should be incorporated in a contextual statement/drawing as required by PPG1 (revised) and 'Achieving Quality in Residential Layouts'. This should illustrate the developers proposed basic design framework for movement, landscape and built form and how it relates to the setting of each area of development. It is desirable that this is submitted for written approval at the outset, and prior to the submission of a planning application. The creation of local distinctiveness is dependent on taking design references from some of the older and more established parts of Wootton as described above. It is dependent on:

- the shape of the development which stems from the layout, built form and townscape.
- the choice of appropriate local materials and details.
- individual dwellings which reflect the built form traditional to the locality.

Design Requirements

5.9 Careful attention should be paid to the following design principles that should be incorporated into the scheme. The housing development on the south side of Fields Road is considered to be quite self contained, and should have no design influence on the development brief area.

i] SHAPE OF DEVELOPMENT

- the creation of a high quality public realm is paramount.
- the priority should be to establish a sense of place and community, with legible movement networks to enhance these qualities. The development should also have regard to community safety issues such as the provision of "youth shelters".
- there should be variety in movement routes and external spaces with a network hierarchy of routes that might include formal or informal squares, streets, lanes, courtyards, mews and pedestrian streets, together with appropriate built form to define such spaces and legibility of routes.
- each cluster of development should have its own character and identity, drawing on local distinctiveness.
- the main gateway of each cluster should define the entrance clearly and should have identifiable architectural or landscape form and character. In this respect trees should be planted at key node points and entrances.
- development adjacent to areas of structure planting, public open space or other landscaped areas should generally face these areas.

- there should be variety in how cars are accommodated.
- in places the grouping of garages into long, simple barn like structures should be considered.
- standardised layouts with inappropriate or inflexible standard house types will not be acceptable.

ii] MATERIALS

- high quality materials and detailing will be required and are fundamental to achieving a high quality built environment. The use of standard house types, constructed as an assembly of mass produced and standardised components will not be accepted.
- external joinery makes a major contribution to the appearance and visual quality of individual buildings and must be carefully designed as an integral part of the overall architectural design.
- designers should draw from established traditions within Wootton in terms of external wall finishes which should include face brickwork, render, exposed structural timbering and weatherboard.
- where face brickwork is selected careful consideration must be given to brickbond, pointing profile and the selection of mortar colour and texture.
- high quality clay bricks must be selected.
- where render finishes are selected careful consideration must be given to surface finish, the use of decorative panels or patterns and edge detailing at junctions.
- where weatherboard is selected consideration should be given to the detailing at junctions and the proportions of board sizes.
- roof coverings make a major contribution to the quality of the built environment and it is important that the materials selected weather in harmony with their surroundings so that the quality of the built environment can be sustained in the longer term. Concrete roof tiles will not be accepted.

iii] INDIVIDUAL DWELLINGS

- it is not considered acceptable practice to rely solely on the cosmetic use of local materials in efforts to either replicate local character, or to create feature buildings.
- standard house types that do not respond to the local context will not be acceptable.
- the range of house types should provide adequate flexibility to meet good urban design objectives. This should comprise basic elements that are adequate to achieve the following: define adequate space to turn corners; define or enclose spaces; link dwellings into terraces; define streets or spaces; form strong focal points within the development; create significant changes of scale in built form and variety in roofscape; create contrast and interest within the development. Side and rear elevations will require the same level of attention as front elevations.

Residential Landscaping

5.10 To ensure continuity of design throughout the brief area, developers will be required to prepare a landscape masterplan. This will identify the areas of structural landscaping, as those broadly shown on the indicative masterplan, and should be submitted prior to the submission of a planning application.

5.11 Extensive landscaping will be required on the periphery of the site with existing trees and hedgerows retained. The site is prominent in a generally featureless landscape and the landscape will have to be improved by way of extensive tree planting and earth mounding. It is important that the community forest flows through the development and extends in 'fingers' into the proposed housing areas. A high standard of landscaping is required within the housing areas and also along the proposed link road and distributor roads, to reduce visual impact. It is important to create a country lane feel with grass, trees and wild flowers along the verges. Wherever possible natural species should be used in planting schemes.

5.12 A landscape masterplan should incorporate the following principles:

- i) set out a hierarchy of landscape character to define functions so that each area has an

identified function. For example, linear spaces as corridors of communication and node points as landscape features.

- ii) use plants comprising a mix of species of a domestic, and where appropriate non-domestic scale, to add visual interest creating a variety of features and adding seasonal colour to the street scene.
- iii) define the boundaries of residential areas by landscape corridors which will also run along the main road network.
- iv) increase the total tree cover substantially, including extensive planting within the housing areas, using native species wherever possible.
- v) avoid the creation of a hard edge to the development and minimise the visual impact of buildings on the surrounding areas.
- vi) select species to reflect the scale of spaces within the street scene or wider setting. Small ornamental trees will be acceptable in small urban areas but provision must be made for large forest type species, especially in public open areas.
- vii) reduce the impact of noise emanating from the A421/distributor road on adjacent residential and other development by incorporating noise attenuation measures, and provide a forest setting on the approach to Wootton from the A421.
- viii) retain and enhance hedgerows, wooded areas and associated ditches in order that the nature conservation significance is retained.

Employment Area

5.13 Structural landscaping will be required around the employment site to minimise the visual impact of development on adjacent land uses, and especially the dualled A421. The strength and depth of landscaping required will reflect the scale and design of any industrial buildings. The scale, design and orientation of industrial buildings will need to be appropriate for this gateway location.

Highways

5.14 A Travel Assessment will be required from developers to ascertain how the trips to and from the development might affect the highway network and/or public transport facilities. The Travel Assessment should be an impartial description of the impacts of the proposed development and should outline both the positive and negative aspects including measures to facilitate integrated transport provision. Prospective developers are advised to agree the scope of the Travel Assessment with the relevant highway authorities and to take full account of travel movements to and from local schools.

5.15 The highway authority have indicated that a series of roundabouts should be constructed along the length of the new road, linking Cranfield Road with Fields Road as well as those distributor roads leading to the residential areas, and on that part of Fields Road adjacent to the new school. As well as accessing the residential areas the roundabouts will also act as a form of speed reduction. Speeds on this section of the road will be kept to 30mph. Developers will also be required to fund traffic calming works necessary along Bedford Road and the remaining area of Fields Road.

IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The majority of the development proposed in the brief will be carried out by private developers. However, other bodies including statutory undertakers, housing associations, the Parish Council, Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire County Council and the Highways Agency will clearly have roles to play.

6.2 All development sites identified in this brief will be allocated in the Deposit Draft Local Plan and therefore no strict phasing of the area is necessary. However, the order in which sites and facilities come forward must be controlled to ensure that the various elements of the brief work together and do not compromise the wider goals.

6.3 Residential development in the most southern part of the site should be phased so that no housing is built within 500m of the adjacent landfill before the capping of the landfill is complete.

6.4 The commencement of building on site is dependent upon the granting of planning permission together with the completion of the necessary planning obligations as well as the availability of the required services to the sites. The planning agreement will also control the occupation of dwellings in accordance with a programme of necessary infrastructure implementation.

6.5 Owing to the extensive nature of the development it is imperative that the proposed infrastructure, facilities, landscaping and surface water attenuation facilities are provided in tandem and, where essential, in advance of new housing and/or industrial development. Key elements of the brief will be the dualling of the A421, an improved access to the village, the construction of a new road linking Fields Road with Cranfield Road, community facilities, a school, playing field, landscaping and tree planting. For these reasons no development will be permitted until contractual commitments are in place to secure the dualling of the A421, the construction of the new road and other necessary planning requirements through a S.106 agreement.

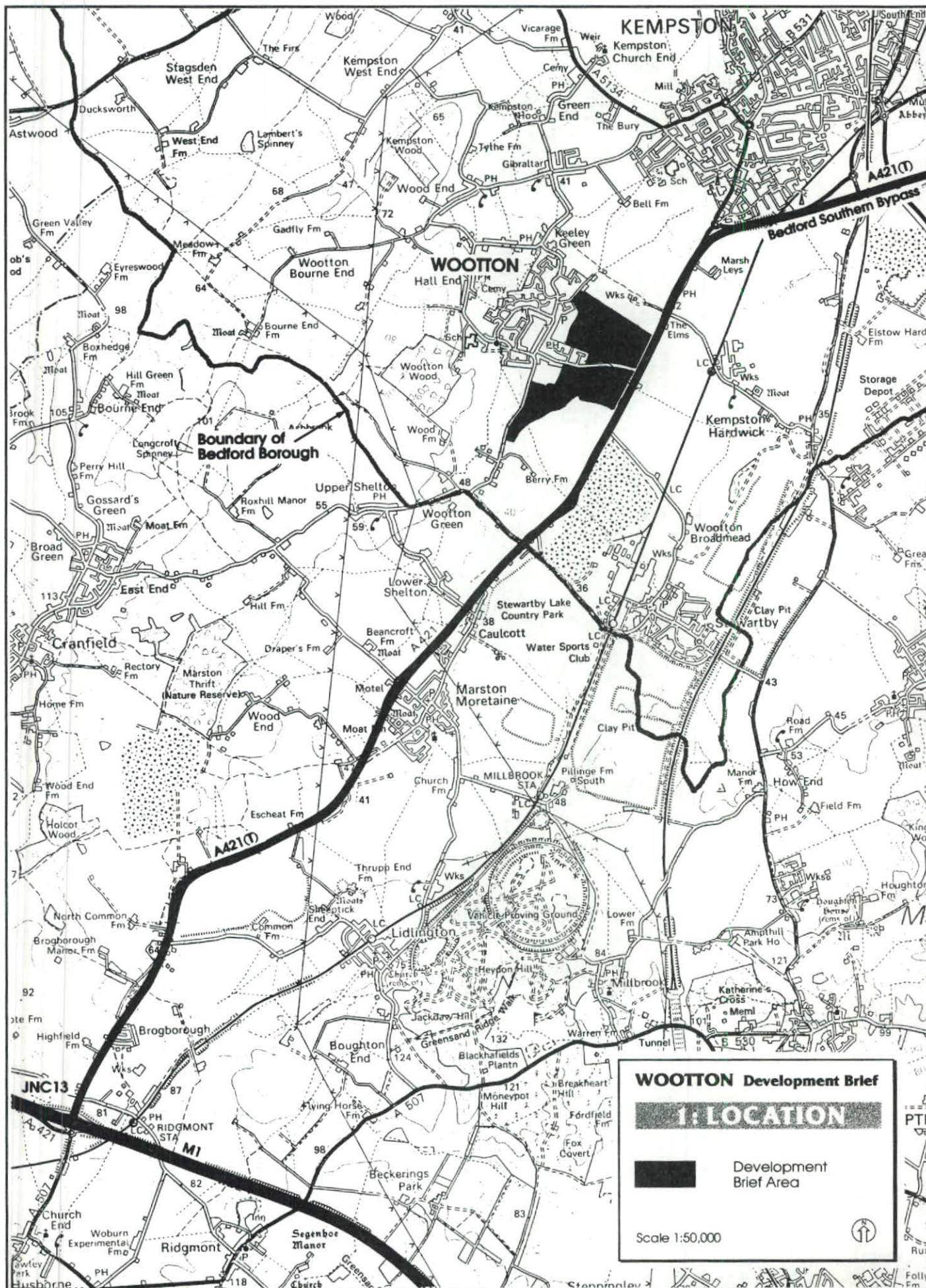
6.6 New community facilities, a new doctors' surgery and school provision, with associated parking, should be developed and operational as soon as possible through negotiations and with trigger mechanisms in a planning obligation to ensure a delivery programme in accordance with need. Provision will be made for a separate

community centre to be used as a dual facility with the school, a doctors' surgery and a supermarket. Detailed requirements for the community facilities will be established in conjunction with the local community and County Council.

6.7 Play space, amenity open space and playing field space will be provided in conjunction with residential development. Play and amenity space will be incorporated into the individual residential development sites and form an integral part of their design. The Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) is the exception to this and is to be located to the north of Fields Road. The playing fields will be made available early in the development process and will include the NEAP.

6.8 Structural landscaping details will be submitted in a landscape masterplan during the early stages of negotiation. Where appropriate, advanced planting may be required in order to create a framework for the later stages of development.

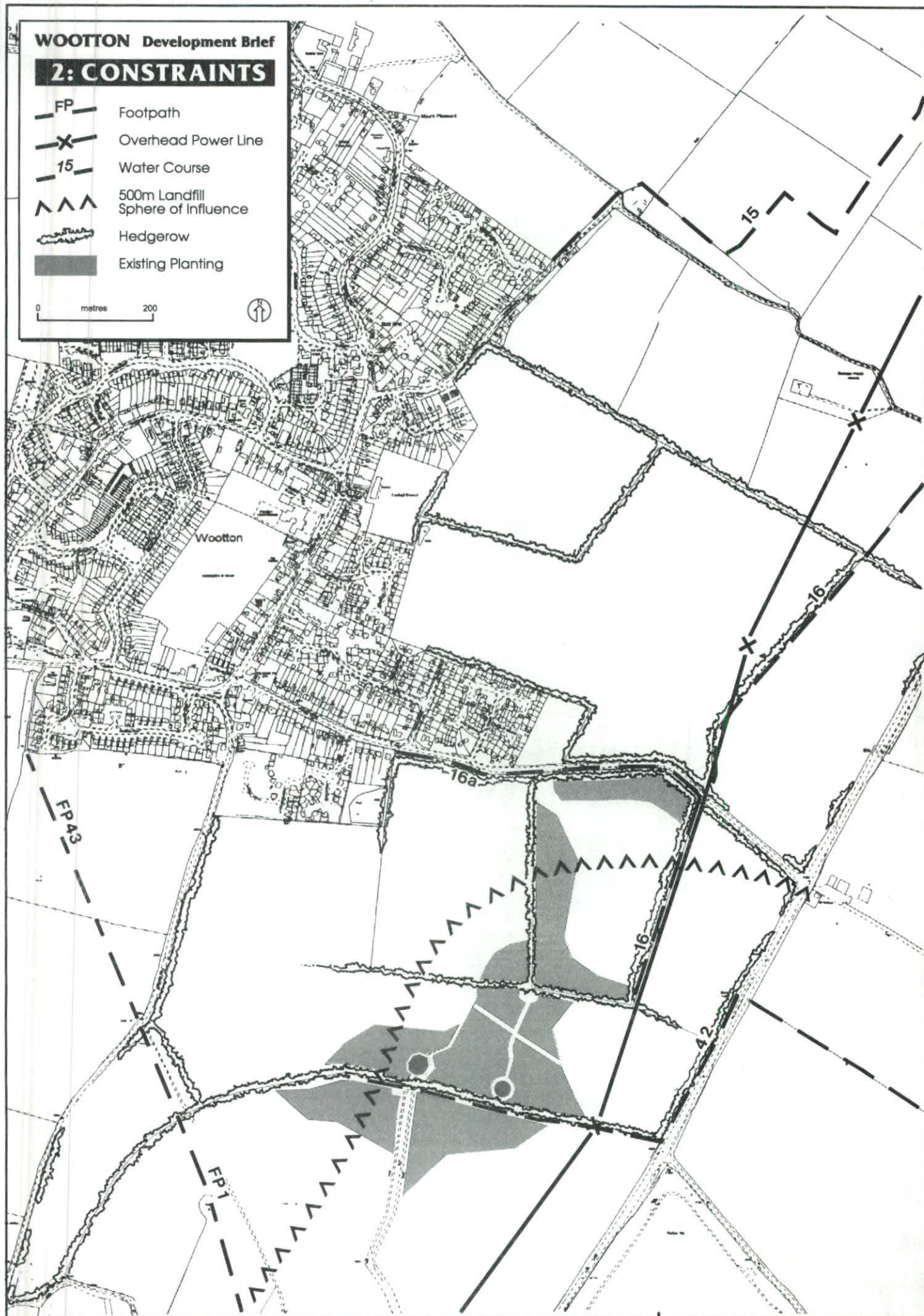
6.9 Highways, areas of open space, children's play areas and landscape corridors should be made available for adoption by the appropriate authority. The developer will be required to submit schemes for management and maintenance of such areas and pay a commuted sum based on reasonable maintenance and management costs.

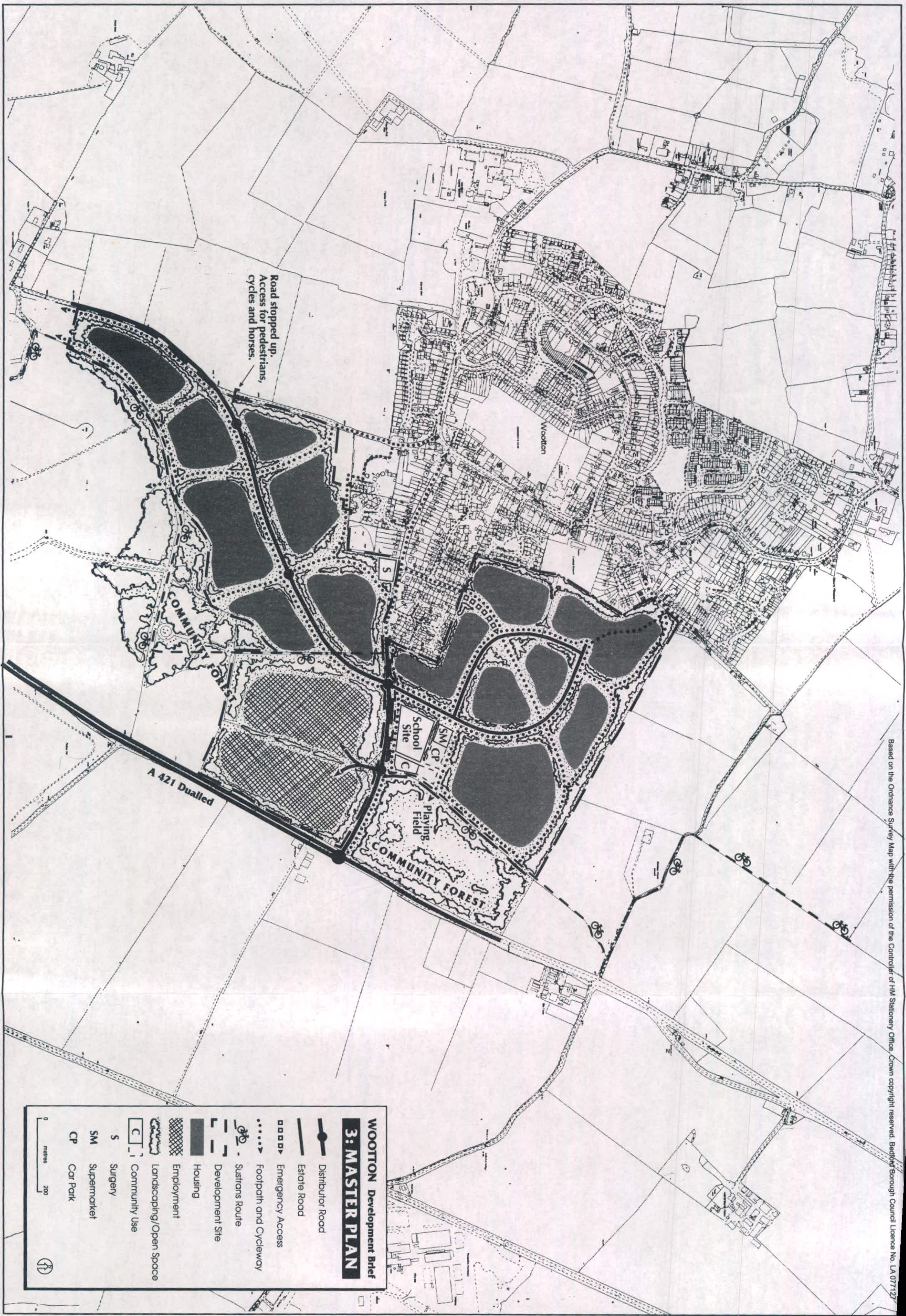


Based on the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of HM Stationery Office. Crown copyright reserved. Bedford Borough Council Licence No. LA 077127

2: CONSTRAINTS

- 0 metres 200





WOOTTON Development Brief
3: MASTER PLAN

- Distributor Road
- Estate Road
- Emergency Access
- Footpath and Cycleway
- Sustans Route
- Development Site
- Housing
- Employment
- Landscaping/Open Space
- Community Use
- Surgery
- SM Supermarket
- CP Car Park

0 200 metres

