

Little Marlow Gravel Pits

Supplementary Planning Guidance



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Brief

- 1.1.1 This Brief sets out the District and County Councils' planning requirements and expectations for the future development of the Little Marlow Gravel Pits site. To assist landowners and developers it offers advice, sets guidelines and provides details of the constraints that exist for development, and highlights opportunities to be exploited.
- 1.1.2 The following provides robust, yet flexible guidance which should be used to inform all proposals for the site. The Brief includes a masterplan that allocates broad zones for various facilities and activities. Developers are encouraged to work closely with the Councils to incorporate the principles contained in this guidance into their detailed proposals.

1.2 The need for a Brief

- 1.2.1 Land ownership of the Gravel Pits is predominantly private and fragmented. Recently a number of these landowners have expressed an interest in the introduction of major new development including: a new football stadium, residential, employment, park & ride sites, a relief road and parking provision. In addition, there are ongoing issues relating to the minerals extraction and waste disposal activities including enforcement. Finally, the existing Little Marlow Sewage Treatment Works may be redeveloped to accommodate

additional flows from High Wycombe if the Wycombe Marsh site is redeveloped in line with the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011.

- 1.2.2 The above pressures for change, together with the objectives of the District Council's Local Plan to enhance the provision of leisure and recreation facilities at the Gravel Pits, has raised a need for more detailed advice and a proactive approach to the planning of this site. This Brief and masterplan will help all those involved consider the issues in a co-ordinated way and provide a framework that will significantly enhance the prospect of delivering a comprehensive facility. In this respect, the Brief will also pick up on the work that is currently progressing on the Joint Marlow Parking and Transport Study which has identified a number of issues in the area that required further resolution.
- 1.2.3 Overall, a broad ranging study has been undertaken to deliver an agreed framework for the area. This has involved extensive public consultation (as set out below) and the formal adoption of this Brief, as Supplementary Planning Guidance by both Wycombe District and Buckinghamshire County Councils.

1.3 Public Consultation

- 1.3.1 As part of the process of developing the Supplementary Planning Guidance, an extensive public consultation exercise was undertaken. This involved a number of consultation stages:

- 1.3.2 **Preliminary Consultation Stage:** A preliminary consultation stage with the local community and key statutory and local interest groups (including amenity societies, local residents associations and parish councils, as well as landowners) was held. This included a planning workshop on 12 December 2000 with the presentation of background information followed by group discussions on the strengths and weaknesses of the site, the types of land uses appropriate and the locations of land uses. The event was held for the purpose of determining the views, opinions and visions of stakeholders on how they thought the area should change in the future.

- 1.3.3 **Second Stage Consultation:** The results of the first workshop were used as a basis for developing three scenarios, including the development of facilities and activities that represented a low, a medium and a high intensity use of the area. These scenarios were then presented at the second workshop in March 2001. At this workshop landowners were also given the opportunity to present their proposals. A questionnaire survey sought people's views on the three scenarios: 67% of those attending agreed that, whilst the Gravel Pits should accommodate comprehensively planned outdoor recreation and tourism facilities, physical development should be kept to a minimum. 28% of respondents supported a low intensity use of the site, 31% supporting a medium intensity use of the site and 17% supporting a significantly higher intensity use of the site.

- 1.3.4 **Public Consultation on Draft Masterplan:** Full public consultation on a draft masterplan for

the area (based on the findings of the above second workshop) took place in the autumn of 2001. A questionnaire survey sought people's views on the draft master plan, which allocated broad zones for various activities and facilities on the basis of a low to medium intensity use of the site. A further workshop for stakeholders was also held.

- 1.3.5 Some 450 questionnaire responses were received in response to the consultation. In the main, there was considerable positive support for the proposals with 79% agreeing that the Gravel Pits should provide comprehensively planned outdoor recreation and tourism facilities; 87% agreeing that the area should remain in the Green Belt; and 73% agreeing the general approach proposed by the draft masterplan. Most uses outlined in the masterplan were supported with the exception of the public house, restaurant, holiday accommodation and camping and caravanning uses. A significant number of respondents disagreed with the level of enabling development shown on the masterplan and significant representation was also received supporting a proposal to relocate the Marlow Football Club to the Gravel Pits area.
- 1.3.6 In response to the consultation, a number of small changes were made to the draft Masterplan, however, it was concluded that it should be adopted without significant change from the draft.
- 1.3.7 Detailed information on all the representations received and the Council's responses to these are available separately, on request.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Site location

2.1.1 The study area is bounded by the A4155 Marlow Road to the north, the River Thames to the south, the A404 Marlow Bypass to the west and Coldmoorholm Lane to the east and is some 329 ha in extent. Figure 1 shows the boundaries of the site.

2.2 Existing land use and site description

2.2.1 The area contains a wide variety of existing activities including gravel extraction, waste disposal, concrete crushing and batching, minerals storage, a sewage treatment works, an office headquarters, a small number of residential properties, a mobile home park, outdoor recreation and sensitive environmental and ecological habitats. The railway line to the south physically divides the site and adjacent to this, in the south western corner, a new 168 bed hotel is currently in the process of construction. The A404 marks the edge of the urban area of Marlow and the Globe Business Park.

2.2.2 Agricultural use is still a major component and is varied with a mix of arable fields and pasture in the north, and pasture in the south adjacent to the River Thames. Woodland is also a significant land use.

2.2.3 The central part of the site is dominated by gravel extraction and the Little Marlow Sewage



Figure 1 - Site Location (Aerial photography by ukperspectives.com)

Works. Gravel extraction is still active and includes the presence of the concrete batching plant adjacent to Westhorpe Farm and a concrete crushing plant at the eastern pit. The eastern pit is also currently the site for active gravel storage. The gravel pit lakes are currently used extensively for both formal and informal recreation.

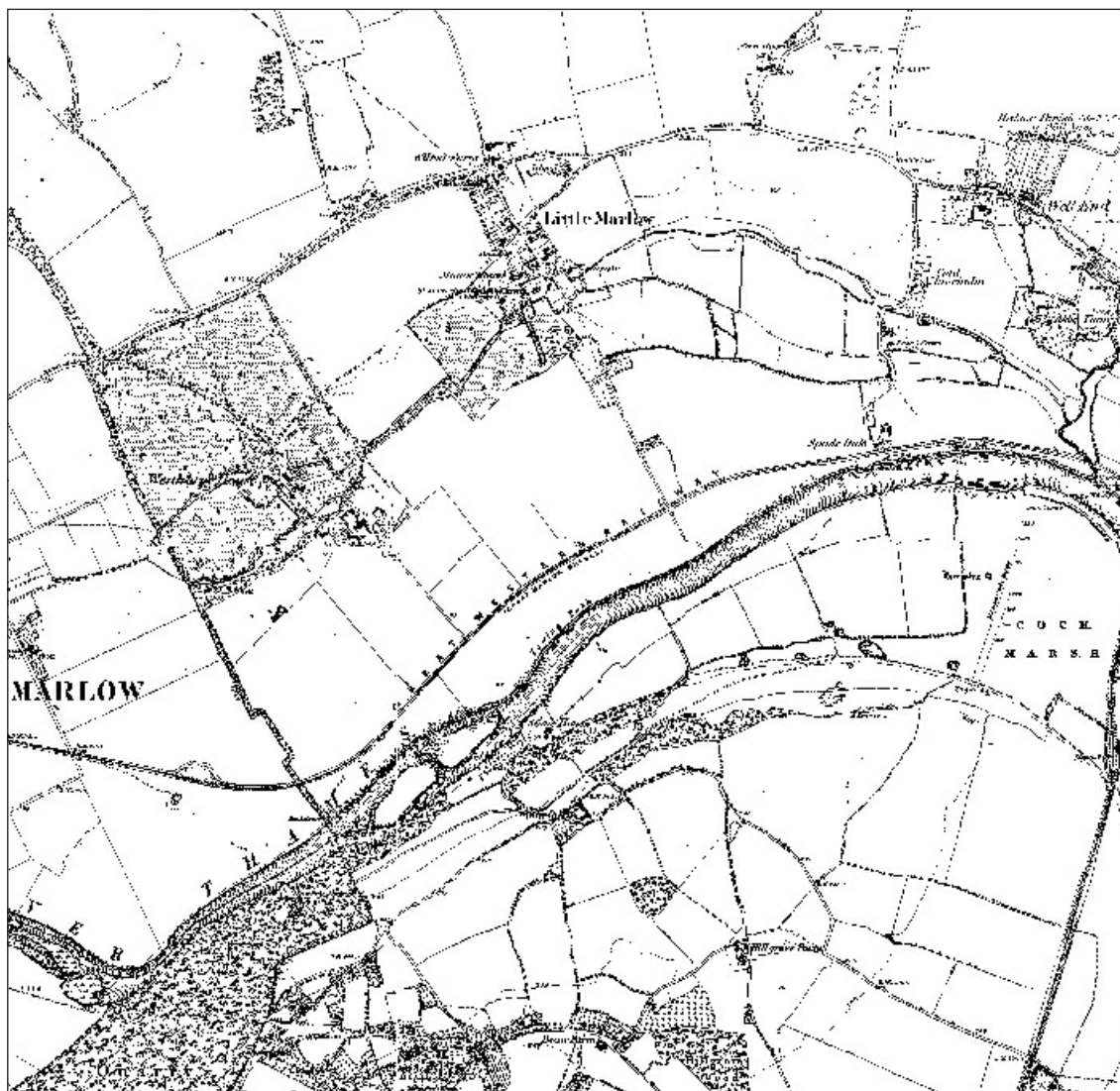
2.3 Land ownership

2.3.1 The Gravel Pits site has a complex distribution of land ownership. The pattern of land ownership has a significant influence on the current and future use of the land. In particular, it raises complex issues in terms of land assembly and/or co-operation as landowners have to participate fully in the development process in order for a comprehensive, co-ordinated facility to be developed.

2.4 Site history

2.4.1 Figure 2 shows the area between 1882-83 highlighting the strong historic associations. The key landscape features of this time include the parkland settings of the Manor House and Westhorpe House. Westhorpe House, in particular, had a strong parkland setting with the watercourse being an important feature of this landscape. Only remnant areas of this landscape remain with the northern part of the grounds lost and being subject to gravel extraction and landfill.

2.4.2 A strong network of hedgerow and tree belts existed at this time. Many of these landscape



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Figure 2 - Site History

elements remain today showing an historic association with past land uses. The general structure of this landscape has remained intact with much of the gravel workings respecting the historic field pattern.

2.5 Planning background

Introduction

- 2.5.1 This section highlights the key planning policies that will need to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of any proposal for the Gravel Pits. National and strategic policy is considered first before explaining current and emerging local policy objectives for the area.

National and Strategic Policy Guidance

- 2.5.2 Of major importance is the fact that the entire site area lies within the Green Belt and has done so since the 1950's. The Department of the Environment provides guidance on this policy in their Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2). The Guidance states that the purpose of the designation is to "prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness." (para. 1.4). There is, therefore, a general presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts except in very special circumstances".

- 2.5.3 The policy guidance goes on to explain that:

"3.4 The construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the following purposes;

- *agriculture and forestry.....*
- *essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserves the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it (see paragraph 3.5 below);*
- *limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings.....;*
- *limited infilling in existing villages,..... and limited affordable housing for local community needs under development plan policies according with PPG3;or*
- *limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans.....*

3.5 Essential facilities (see second indent of paragraph 3.4) should be genuinely required for uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it. Possible examples of such facilities include small changing rooms or unobtrusive spectator accommodation for outdoor sport, or small stables for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation." (paras. 3.4 and 3.5)

- 2.5.4 There has been a recent revision to PPG2, made in March 2000, with regard to park and ride in the Green Belt (para 3.16). This issue is dealt with in Section 5 of this Brief.

Wycombe District Strategic Plan and Community Plan

- 2.5.5 The Council has its own Strategic Plan responding to the concept of sustainable development and placing the needs of the community central to this concept. The District Council identifies a vision incorporating four main themes:

- A caring community
- A healthy community
- A thriving economy
- Value for money

- 2.5.6 The Local Plan is the land-use arm of the Strategic Plan. The promotion of the establishment of a Country Park at the Gravel Pits supports the objectives of the District Council's Strategic Plan. In particular, it furthers the Environmental Strategic Aim to create a harmonious relationship between the environment, conservation and use of the District's resources, character and environmental quality.

- 2.5.7 There is ongoing work to prepare a Community Plan for the District with a supporting annual process involving partners and communities. The objective is to ensure the Local Plan and other policies are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.5.8 Policy at the local level is provided by the Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan (July 1995) and the Deposit Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 (December 1998). An abstract from the Deposit Local Plan to 2011 Proposals Map is provided in Figure 3.

Adopted Local Plan (1995)

2.5.9 There are a number of policies which cover large parts of the Gravel Pits area. These include the following in the 1995 Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan:

- RT9 – Little Marlow Gravel Pits
- C1 – Development in the Green Belt
- C4 – Built-up areas within the Green Belt
- L1 – The Chilterns AONB
- L2 – Areas of Attractive Landscape
- L6 – Development within the Flood Plain
- HE7 – Development in Conservation Areas

2.5.10 Policy RT9 covers the Little Marlow Gravel Pits area. The Policy states:

“The Little Marlow Gravel Pits area is defined on the proposals map. It is recognised that some parts of this area are in need of environmental improvement. In order to secure environmental improvements the area is allocated for outdoor recreation consistent with its Green Belt designation as defined in Policy C1 and its location adjacent to the AONB [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty] and an AAL [Area of Attractive Landscape].

In order to harmonise landscape, access, recreation and nature conservation interests, the area should be considered comprehensively or in a manner which does not prejudice its comprehensive treatment.

Planning permission will not be given when development will have an adverse affect upon the amenities or setting of the Little

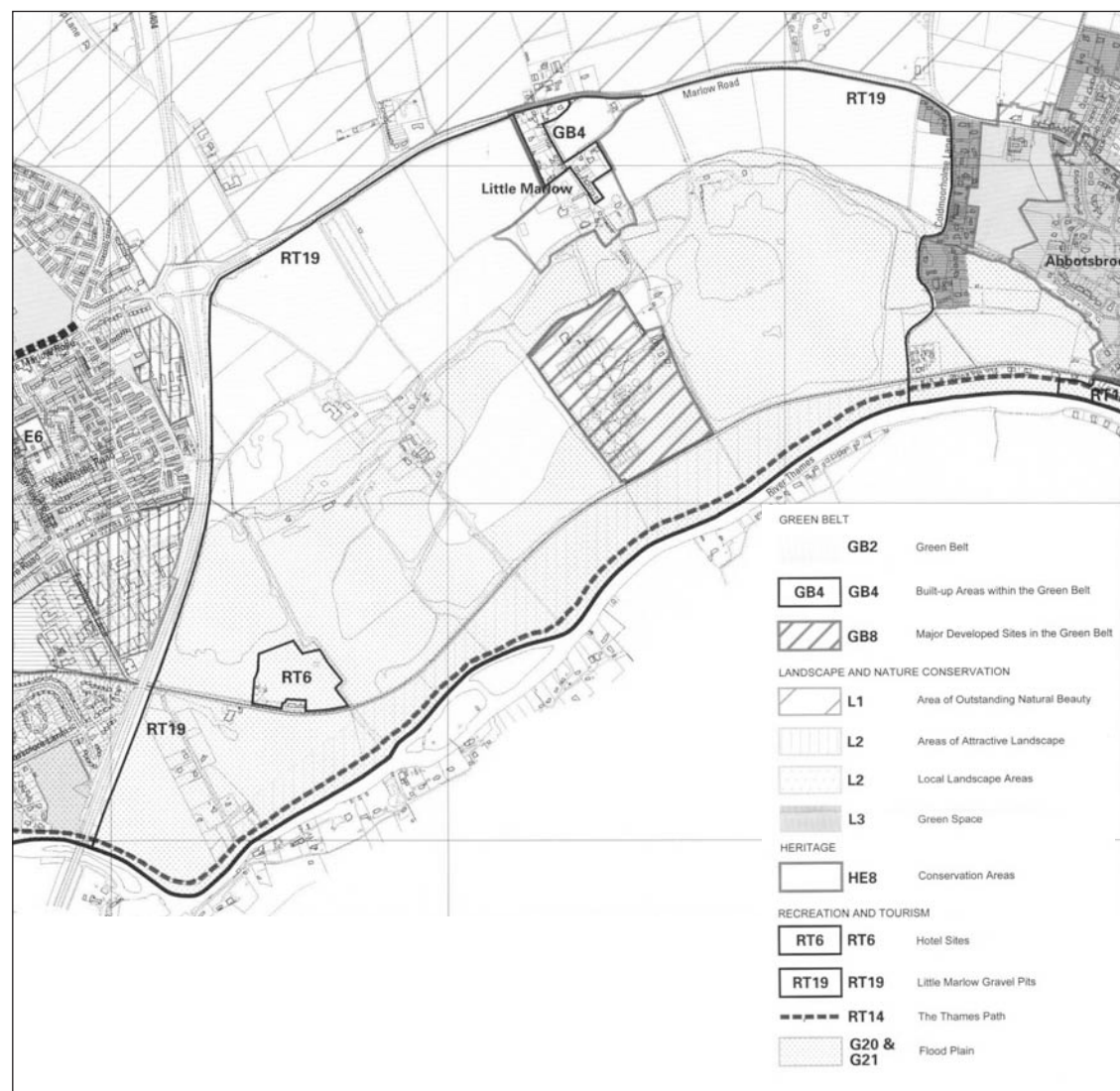


Figure 3 - Deposit Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011

Marlow Conservation Area, Abbotsbrook Conservation Area, the River Thames, or long and short range views of the site. The amenities of residents within site RT9 or nearby should not be adversely affected.

Maintenance of the existing, and opportunities for enhancing the considerable wildlife interest and informal recreation activities should form an integral part of any development of the site"

2.5.11 The entire Gravel Pits site lies within the Green Belt and only development which conforms with Policy C1 will be allowed:

"Within the Green Belt development will not be permitted, unless there are very special circumstances, for any purpose other than:

Development essential for agriculture or forestry;

(i) Development for outdoor sport and countryside recreation and for buildings which are essential to support those uses;

(ii) Institutions standing in extensive grounds;

(iii) Cemeteries; and

(iv) Development consistent with Policies C4 and C8 to C15 of this Plan.

In all cases development is subject to other appropriate policies in this Plan and must retain the open character and rural

amenities of the Green Belt and respect its visual amenities."

2.5.12 Little Marlow village is designated a Conservation Area and new development is currently only allowed which is in agreement with Policy HE7. The District Council has produced a character survey of Little Marlow Conservation Area. In addition, the site is also in the vicinity of the Abbotsbrook, Cookham Dean and Bisham Conservation Areas. There are 22 listed buildings in the study area, most of which are located in Little Marlow. There is also the site of a scheduled ancient monument on the adjacent hillside in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

2.5.13 The site is strategically important and is part of a sensitive landscape due to its close proximity to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Policy L1), a landscape designation of national importance. In addition, a strip of land adjacent to the River Thames, between the bankside and the railway line is designated an Area of Attractive Landscape (policy L2). The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead protect the landscape adjacent to the River Thames by a setting of the Thames policy, which protects the southern side of the river valley. Any change to the character of this landscape will need to be evaluated in the context of these national and local designations which aim to conserve the quality and character of this landscape. Policy L2 states:

"Planning permission will not normally be given for any development likely to have an adverse effect upon the special character

and appearance of the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AAL) or Local Landscape Areas (LLA) identified on the proposals map. Development which, although not itself within an AAL or LLA, would have a detrimental effect on their special character and appearance will not normally be permitted."

2.5.14 A large part of the Gravel Pits lies within the 100 year flood plain for the River Thames. Policy L6 states:

"In areas liable to flood, planning permission will not normally be given for development which is likely to materially:-

(i) impede the flow of flood water;

(ii) restrict the capacity of the flood plain; or

(iii) increase the risks to life or property arising from flooding.

This policy will be applied to any further areas which the National Rivers Authority identify as being liable to flooding following the publication of the Plan"

Deposit Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 (December 1998)

2.5.15 The emerging Deposit Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 has now completed its Inquiry stage and reaffirms many of the policies existing in the Adopted Plan (1995). Policies of particular relevance are:

RT19 – Little Marlow Gravel Pits

GB2 – Green Belt
 GB4 – Built up areas within the Green Belt
 GB8 – Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt
 HE8 – Little Marlow Conservation Area
 L2 – Areas of Attractive Landscape
 G20 & G21 – Flood Plain

2.5.16 Whilst the majority of the policies are repeated, there are a small number of changes which are of relevance to the Little Marlow Gravel Pits. The main difference in the Little Marlow Gravel Pits Policy (RT19) is the particular reference to the long term objective to establish a Country Park. It also states the need to provide for safe, convenient and direct access to Marlow for pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with Policies T5 and T7 – T8 of the Plan.

2.5.17 A further slight difference is evident in Policy G20, Development within the Flood Plain. This Policy now includes an additional section which states that new development, redevelopment or intensification of existing development will not be permitted in these areas, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not of itself, or cumulatively in conjunction with other development:

“(v) Cause significant adverse effects on the environment, with particular emphasis on areas of nature conservation, landscape and heritage importance.”

2.5.18 The operational Little Marlow Sewage Works and Little Marlow are identified as special areas within the Green Belt and policies GB8, ‘Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt’ and GB4, ‘Built-up Areas within the Green Belt’

apply respectively.

2.5.19 In addition to the policies which cover large parts of the area of the Gravel Pits, there are policies for specific features, including:

- RT6 - Hotel Sites
- RT14 - Thames Path
- Residential

2.5.20 Finally, there are Site’s of Special Scientific Interest at Cock Marsh and Quarry Wood plus a number of wildlife heritage sites adjacent to the site in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

2.5.21 There are a number of individual and area Tree Preservation Orders on the site. These have arisen in response to development and have not been designated strategically. There is, therefore, a need to assess the amenity value of these trees when considering the development potential of the site.

3. SITE APPRAISAL

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 As part of the process of preparing this Brief, the Councils have examined various relevant technical issues. These will have a significant bearing on what uses, facilities and buildings could be possible within the area and the constraints within which proposals will need to be developed. This section briefly examines the main considerations: landscape character, ecology, contamination and hydrology.

3.2 Landscape character

- 3.2.1 The site is defined by the Character of England Map as Character Area 110 Chilterns and is part of the Chilterns Natural Area defined by English Nature. The character of this area is dominated by the Chiltern Hills which rise above Aylesbury Vale to the north and slope into the Thames Valley in the south-east. The hills are formed by an outcrop of chalk, overlain by clay with flints. The chalk strata have been tilted to create a dip slope that rises so gently to the north-west that it generally has the character of a plateau. This extensive dip slope is cut by numerous dry valleys. In the west the chalk ends abruptly in a steep scarp slope. The south-western boundary is formed by the River Thames. Although part of the Chilterns, this belt of countryside is dominated by the river and its floodplain rather than the Chiltern Hills.
- 3.2.2 The site is defined by the Buckinghamshire Landscape Plan (see Figure 4) as falling within the Valley Floodplain (Zone 17) rather than the

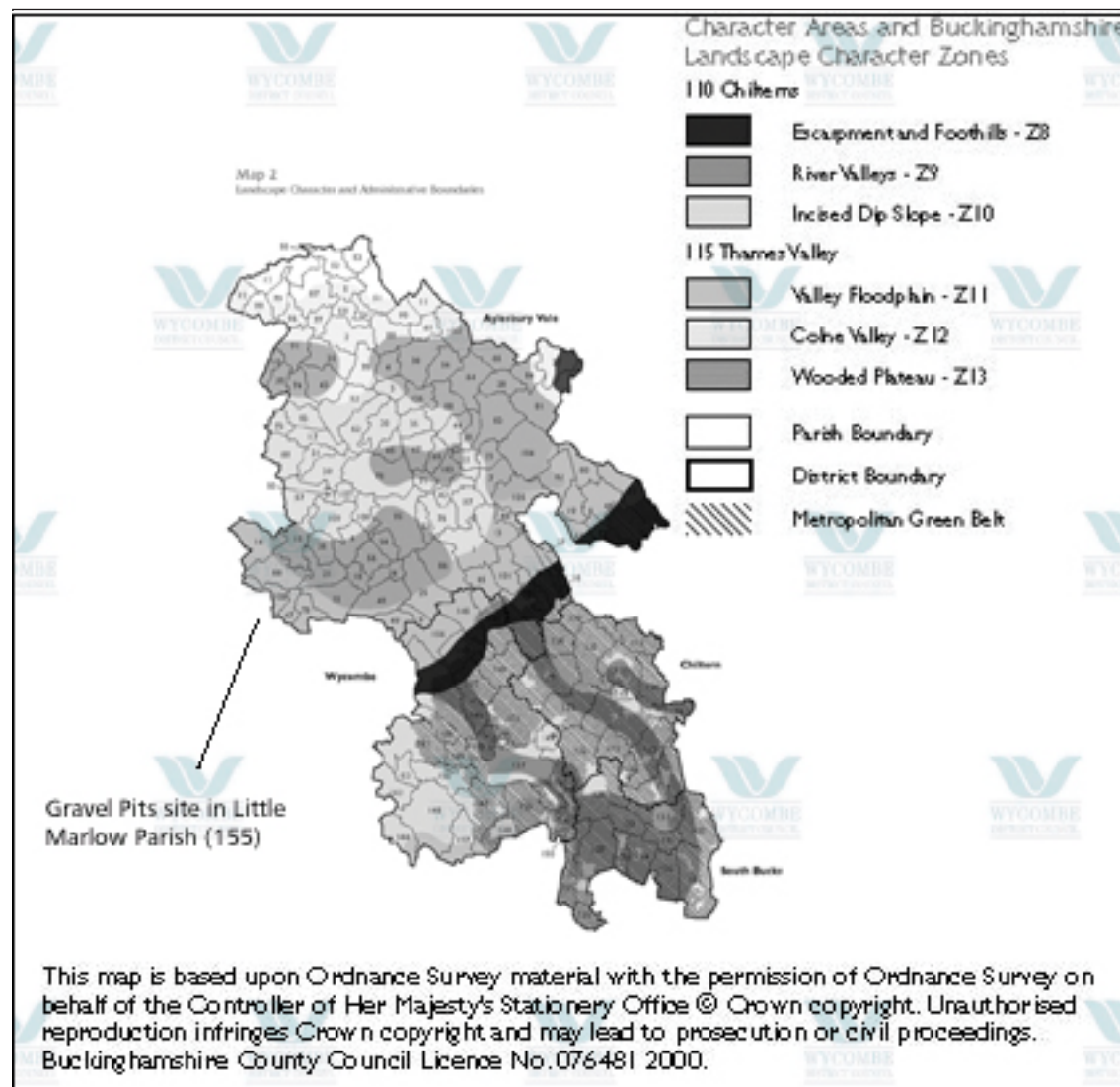


Figure 4 - Buckinghamshire Landscape Plan

Chilterns as defined by the Character of England Map. The detailed analysis carried out for the Buckinghamshire Landscape Plan has enabled a more accurate delineation of these character areas, which has resulted in a local interpretation of the Character of England map classification. The Buckinghamshire Landscape Plan states that this type of refinement is consistent with the overall philosophy of the Character of England approach which recognises that more detailed analysis will adapt and further define the character areas in relation to local needs and criteria.

3.2.3 The site therefore, forms part of an attractive landscape combining the small-scale agricultural character of the Thames Valley floodplain with the rolling Chiltern Hills landscape. The areas that have retained this agricultural character are of high scenic quality such as the north-eastern area of agricultural land and the river corridor. The gravel pit lakes are an attractive, intimate landscape which provide a very tranquil and verdant environment. The land provides continuity of countryside between the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Winter Hill and the River Thames. The landscape defines and separates the settlements of Marlow, Little Marlow, and Well End and is therefore critical in maintaining the individual character and identity of those settlements.

3.2.4 There is considerable variation in landscape quality due to the extraction of gravel and other urban influences. Past and current gravel extraction in the north of the site has resulted in the deterioration of the agricultural character of this area. The presence of the

concrete crushing and batching plants, with associated access roads, has resulted in areas of poor quality landscape in the centre of the site. Industrial land uses such as the sewage works provide a poor quality landscape with a character dominated by signs, height barriers, buildings and settlement tanks. Lack of environmental management has created areas of neglected landscape which require improvement. The poor condition of these areas contrasts with those landscapes that are actively managed i.e. the landscape around the existing settlements on the site and the areas that are actively managed for farming, leisure and nature conservation.

3.2.5 The site is highly visible from the surrounding higher landform and is, therefore, a sensitive landscape in terms of accommodating change. The central and southern parts of the site are highly visible from Winter Hill and large-scale development would be highly intrusive in these areas. The western part of the site is highly visible from the A404 and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the north-west corner, in particular, is visible from long distance views, north and south of the river. Development should be located away from these areas of high visibility. Important views into the site which it would be desirable to retain include: the north-west area of agricultural land and the western lakes.

3.2.6 The network of hedgerows and woodland belts, and the flat landform, creates a strong degree of enclosure which restricts views within the centre of the site. This structure minimises the impact of potentially intrusive land uses in this area. The least visible are the

enclosed landscapes of the north and north-eastern agricultural land.

3.2.7 Areas that would benefit from additional structure planting to integrate any changes into the landscape include:-

- The proposed new hotel and adjacent area
- Area between hotel development/central lakes
- The sewage works

3.2.8 The areas that have potential to accommodate development in landscape terms are shown in Figure 5. This plan shows proposed development directed to areas that:

- already have some form of urban land use;
- have a lower visual impact; and
- have lower landscape and scenic quality.

3.2.9 These areas do not allocate a minimum or maximum level of development but are intended to show those areas most able to accommodate development. The scale of development should reflect the small-scale character of the existing settlement forms. In addition, the areas shown do not represent wholly built form but include space for mitigation measures, such as tree planting, to integrate any new development into this landscape. Indeed the capacity of the landscape to accommodate new development is dependent upon these effective mitigation measures.

3.2.10 In all cases where development or change of use of land is proposed, the District Council will require applicants to submit a detailed landscape impact appraisal.

3.3 Ecology

3.3.1 Sites designated for their nature conservation interest within the study area are illustrated in Figure 6. Three non-statutory sites are present:

Marlow Gravel Pits Biological Notification Site: The most significant of the three, covers approximately 20% of the total study area and is designated primarily for its bird interest.

Little Marlow Churchyard Biological Notification Site: A small area of semi-improved natural grassland in the north of the site.

Abbotsbrook Field Biological Notification Site: An area of damp semi-improved grassland close to Spade Oak Farm.

3.3.2 Whilst Biological Notification Sites are not statutorily protected, they are considered of district/county significance and are afforded some protection by the local planning authority.

3.3.4 Although no nationally designated sites lie within the study area, 3 such sites are located within 1 kilometre of the study area. These are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and are therefore of national importance. As such, the local planning authority is required to

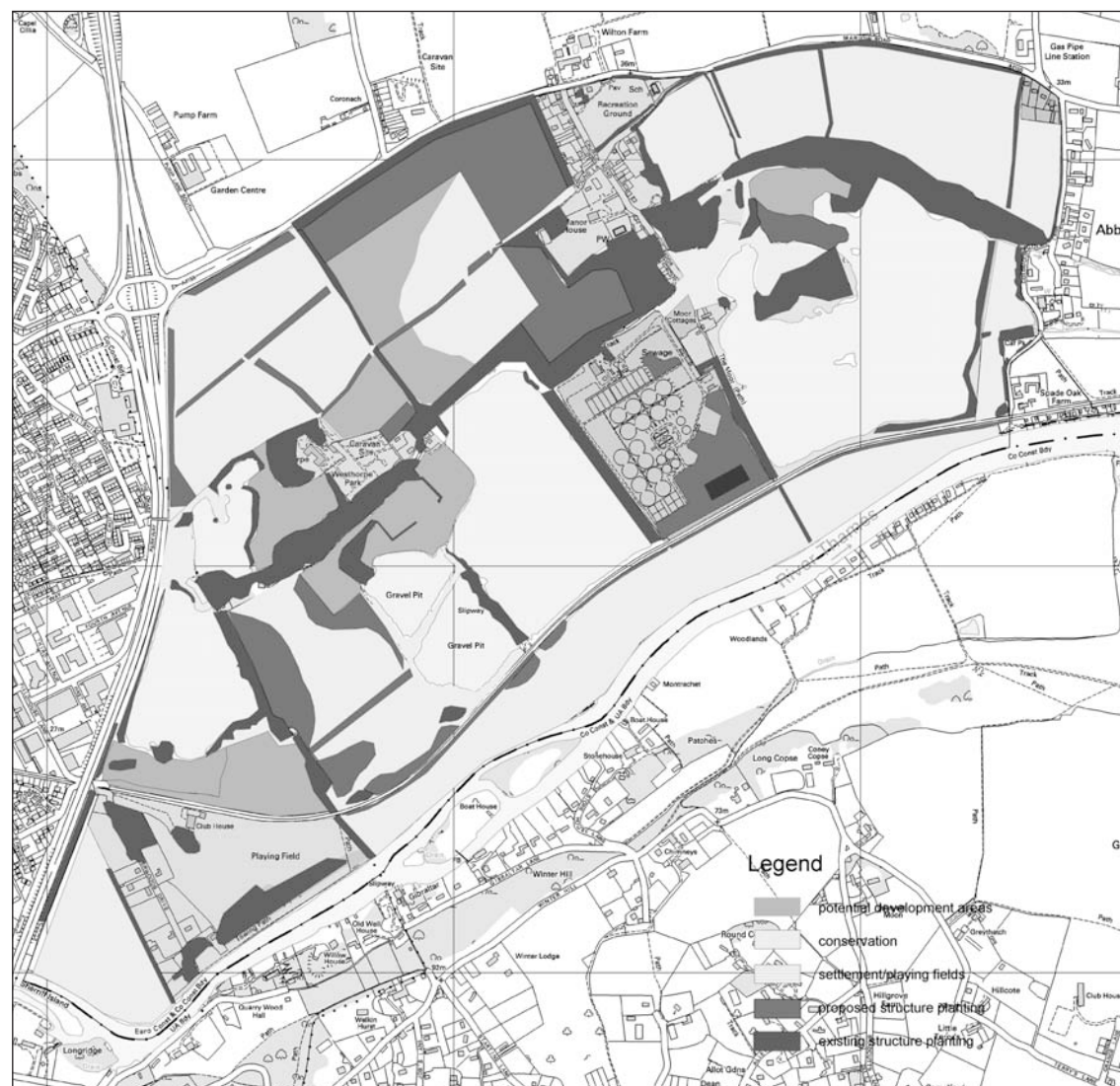


Figure 5 - Landscape - Development Impact Plan

consult with English Nature regarding planning applications in or close to such a site, or when an application is likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

3.3.5 Much of the site's importance lies in the range of notable waterfowl species that use the gravel pits, the presence of species rich semi-improved grassland and habitats which are likely to support protected species. Generally, development should be avoided in those areas identified as having high ecological value (see Figure 6).

3.3.6 In addition to the River Thames there are a number of streams and watercourses that flow across the site. These are defined by strong belts of trees and understorey plants which remain undisturbed in places. There is also a strong network of established and recently planted hedgerows on the site. These landscape elements provide a strong ecological network which provides valuable habitat and shelter for local flora and fauna. This network also acts as an important wildlife corridor providing important links across the site from the River Thames out to open countryside.

3.3.7 An evaluation of these habitats has been carried out through an ecological survey of the site and from information supplied by local nature conservation organisations. This has resulted in the site area being assigned ecological values of low, moderate, or high (see Figure 6). Areas categorised as having high importance for nature conservation include all the gravel pit lakes, the species rich semi-improved grasslands and the woodland strip associated with the watercourse. These



Figure 6 - Ecology

represent locations with the greatest restrictions and where development should be avoided.

3.3.8 In those areas identified as having a moderate ecological constraint, development should generally be avoided, although subject to suitable survey and mitigation the opportunity may exist for incorporation of elements of the country park activities.

3.3.9 The remaining habitats are likely to be of limited value for nature conservation at present, consisting of improved pasture, arable and gravel crushing/batching plants. Although such areas do not represent a significant ecological constraint in themselves, care should be taken that any change of use, due to either development or management, should not cause significant ecological disturbance to adjoining areas, in particular nearby Sites of Special Scientific Interest and protected species.

3.3.10 Because of the ecological sensitivity of the site, all proposals must be accompanied by a detailed ecological survey and analysis.

3.4 Contamination

3.4.1 A preliminary study has been carried out to explore possible contaminated ground or groundwater within the study area and the impact that this might have for leisure development.

3.4.2 In summary, the main sources of contamination are likely to be the contents of the various waste disposal (landfill) sites that

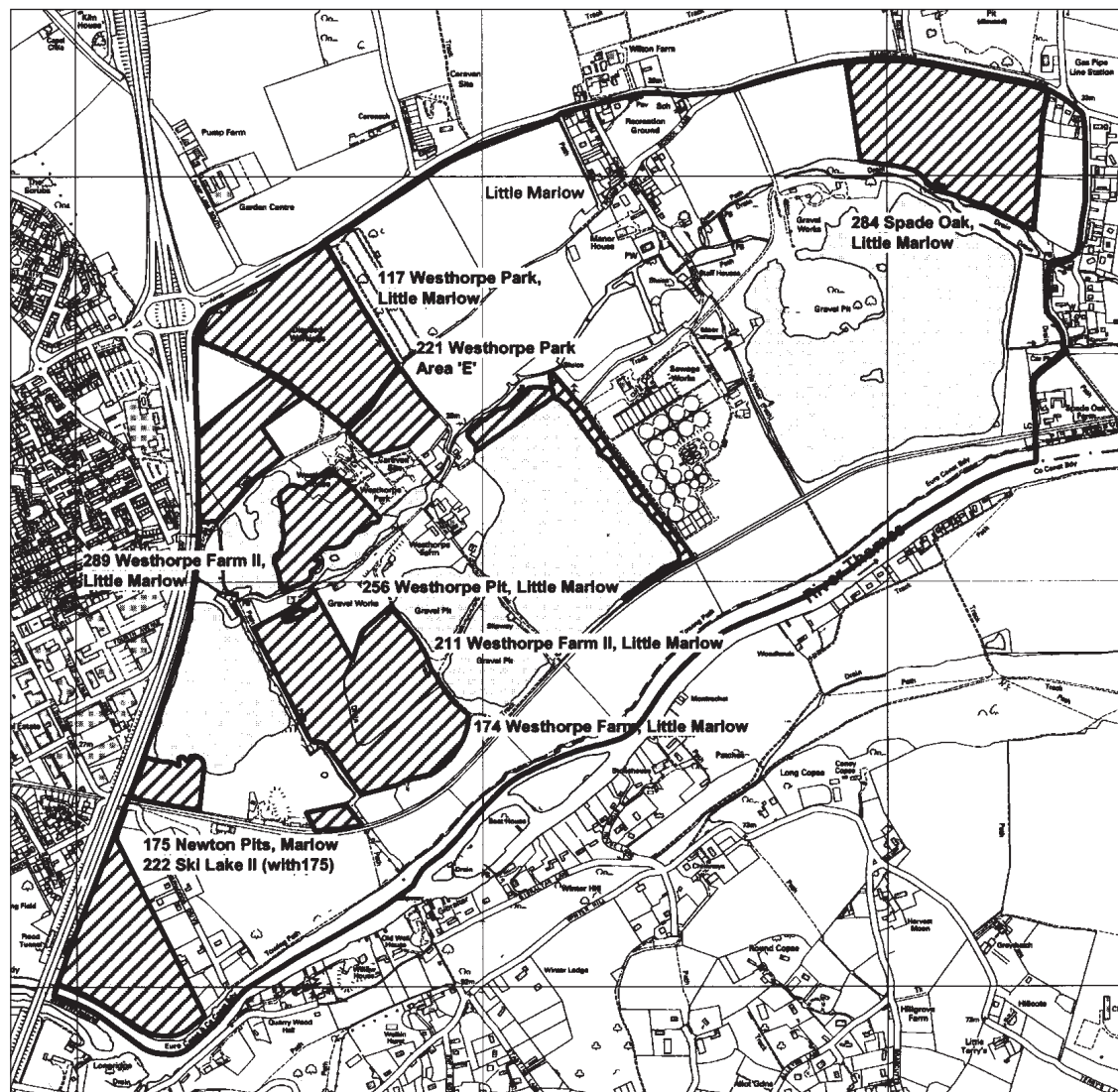


Figure 7 - Location of Landfill Sites

are situated in the former worked out gravel pits together with the former, and existing uses such as concrete crushing plants and sewage works. Figure 7 shows the location and extent of the landfill sites. Whilst many have been filled with inert material and pose little threat, some contain potentially contaminative materials and, as such, may affect the uses possible both on the landfill site itself and the adjacent area.

3.4.3 Development of the study area to provide facilities for tourists and leisure activities is not expected to involve major construction, although it is envisaged that both small-scale earthworks and building works may be undertaken (e.g. to provide car parking, visitor centres, etc.). The results of the study indicate that the siting of such development will need careful consideration in order to minimise remedial works. For example, it would be preferable to site buildings away from the landfill sites, which may be giving off landfill gases. The design of any works would also need to ensure that they do not cause mobilisation of contamination, or open up new migratory pathways.

3.4.4 The preliminary work carried out so far is general and provides only a broad indication of the issues. More detailed, site specific investigations will be required at each location as and when proposals are made by landowners and/or developers. As such, the Councils will expect all proposals within the study area which are likely to have an impact on, or be impacted by land that is potentially contaminated to include a thorough investigation of the quality of the ground.



Figure 8 - Flood Plain

Particular consideration should be given to:

- The thickness and integrity of the landfill surface covers at each landfill site if areas of the site are to have open access to the public.
- In other areas where the public would have open access, and which in the past may have contaminative uses (e.g. old workshops, concrete crushing facilities, etc.) a site specific investigation and risk assessment will be required to determine that there is an acceptable level of risk or to specify the remedial measures required.

3.5 Hydrology

3.5.1 There are two key water related issues that are significant to the development of the study area:

- most of the site lies within the flood plain of the River Thames and has a history of flooding; and
- developments on the site have the potential to impact directly on water resources.

3.5.2 In summary, the extent and location of the flood plain is a major factor in the consideration of what uses and buildings can be introduced within the Gravel Pits area. Figure 8 shows most of the Gravel Pits area to lie within the 1 in 100 year flood envelope. This means that there is a 1% chance annually that a flood will occur which will cover the area denoted in blue on the plan. The plan is supplied by the Environment Agency and,

whilst it is the best information available to date, it is indicative in the sense that it is not based on recent site survey work, but on previous experience of flooding in this area. It is recognised that a large number of topographical changes have occurred across the site since 1947 when the last flood risk assessment was carried out and any new proposals for development in the area will need to be accompanied by an up to date flood risk assessment following the guidelines set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 'Development and Flood Risk'.

3.5.3 As a matter of course, the Council will consult with the Environment Agency on any proposals for new land uses within the blue area on the plan that are likely to have an effect on the flood plain or be affected by flooding. All applicants will have to show that their proposals will not reduce the capacity of the flood plain. Specifically, the Environment Agency would not agree to proposals which involved raising land unless it included an equivalent and appropriate lowering of land elsewhere adjacent to the flood plain.

3.5.4 The Council will also consult with the Environment Agency on any proposals that are likely to involve changes to the water environment or impact on water resources. Proposed development should not result in any adverse change in flows or levels in any rivers, streams, ditches, springs, lakes or ponds in the vicinity. Development involving underground structures will need to include drainage systems capable of allowing groundwater fed streams, ditches or springs.

4. COUNTRY PARK OBJECTIVES

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The site is already used for a variety of formal and informal recreational activities. Westhorpe Farm is a centre for a number of wet sports such as water skiing, windsurfing, jet skiing, paragliding and sailing. The farm also caters for clay pigeon shooting and hosts a caravan site. The site is used considerably for informal recreation including angling, bird watching, horse riding, walking and orienteering. In terms of organised sports the site includes a number of playing fields including Marlow Rugby club.
- 4.1.2 The Council is currently undertaking a Local Cultural Strategy which is considering the local need and demand for recreation and community facilities in the District. This study will feed into negotiations, at any planning application stage, when proposals are considered for the site.
- 4.1.3 Before preparing this Brief and masterplan we asked consultants to give us an indication of the potential need for a Country Park and more commercial leisure facilities in this area.

4.2 Demand assessment

- 4.2.1 The results of the demand assessment show that the site is in an excellent location in terms of access by road and from the Thames Footpath. The research also identified that there is growing demand for countryside recreation, particularly walking, cycling and

horse riding and generally there is continued public interest in the countryside and nature.

- 4.2.2 A review of other facilities in the local surrounding area highlighted a gap in the provision of Country Parks. This, together with the current boom in the UK leisure industry, suggests that there is considerable demand for the type of recreational and educational resources that could be provided at the Gravel Pits.
- 4.2.3 However, there are issues that need to be addressed if this potential is to be realised. This includes:
- improved vehicular access into the site
 - additional parking for visitors to the Gravel Pits area
 - improved pedestrian and cycle links to main population areas
 - improved public transport to the site
 - separation of conflicting user groups
 - the need to take account of the concerns of local residents, managers and landowners
- 4.2.4 It is clear that the site is a valuable landscape for both informal and formal recreation and has potential to accommodate increasing recreational use. However, any additional recreational development must be tempered by an overall aim to protect and enhance the ecological and landscape qualities of the site.

4.3 Aims and objectives

- 4.3.1 With consideration for the technical and policy constraints, stakeholder aspirations and the considerable opportunities to provide recreation and leisure facilities, the following has been identified as the key aims and objectives for the creation of a country park.
- To protect and enhance landscape character and ecology
 - To protect the openness of the Green Belt
 - To provide a facility that meets the needs of the local community
 - To develop existing leisure facilities on the site and meet local leisure and tourism demand
 - To minimise the visual impact of development from the local area in particular the Chiltern Hills, Winter Hill and other areas of higher ground
 - To increase access to the site for pedestrians, vehicles, cyclists and horses.
 - To minimise the impact of additional traffic
 - To promote sustainable land use and building design
 - To protect the context of existing settlements in the area
 - To ensure that building design and layout reflects local character and scale
 - To restore areas degraded by gravel extraction

- To promote the use of the River Thames.

4.4 Key Improvements

4.4.1 In summary, the following are the key improvements which should be achieved through proposals in the Gravel Pits area:

- landscape improvements
- environmental upgrading
- provision of improved pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access routes
- provision of parking
- improvements to enable the greater leisure enjoyment of the natural environment of the area.

4.4.2 Further details on these improvements are set out in Section 5.

5. PLANNING GUIDANCE AND MASTERPLAN

5.1 Introduction and Green Belt

- 5.1.1 Incorporating the aims and objectives, a masterplan has been produced for the Gravel Pits. It is envisaged that the area will remain predominantly open in character with clustering of activities (and any new building structures) being located in areas where development already exists. The guidance looks to harness the potential that exists in the area, rather than introducing major new development.
- 5.1.2 To be clear, this guidance does not alter Green Belt policy which involves a general presumption against development. However, in interpreting these policies consideration will be given to how an individual proposal helps to achieve the overall objectives of the country park and improvements summarised in paragraph 4.4.1. As such, there may be special circumstances when some limited, small scale, related 'enabling' development may be justified. Whilst individual enabling proposals may not, on their own, be acceptable in the Green Belt, their very special circumstances in achieving comprehensive and positive improvements may make them acceptable. It is the finance from these uses that can help cross fund other elements of the country park.
- 5.1.3 Any enabling development will have to be justified and to clearly show the special circumstances as to why it is acceptable. This will involve clearly setting out the financial

characteristics of the proposals and why they are necessary to deliver benefits in relation to the country park objectives/ key improvements outlined in Section 4 above. As set out in Section 6, the amount of any enabling development proposed must be strictly proportionate to the achievement of the vision of the country park.

- 5.1.4 The Councils will not be implementing the masterplan directly, but are looking to work with developers to bring forward proposals in the context of the existing policy framework and this guidance. Many proposals will require further environmental studies, and would be subject to normal planning procedure, including consideration by statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and Countryside Agency.
- 5.1.5 In essence, the masterplan envisages only a limited amount of change, with a large amount of the area devoted to quiet enjoyment and low intensity uses. However, there will be the opportunity for the introduction of leisure, recreation and tourist facilities over and above what is there at present, particularly on the western side of the site. The use of existing buildings may be changed to support the introduction of these activities together with the introduction of a small number of new buildings if justified. Access into the area by foot, cycle and car can be significantly improved. This is likely to include some limited provision of new roads together with junction improvements, new footpaths and cycleways and areas of new car parking. Opportunities will be taken to restore large areas of existing gravel pits. Many of the existing gravel

extraction activities require restoration of the landscape, as secured through planning permissions. New woodland can be introduced and there may also be the opportunity to increase or decrease the size of the existing water areas.

- 5.1.6 Figure 9 illustrates in broad terms the 'zoning' of the study area developed from the earlier site appraisal and planning background. Within these different zones, appropriate activities can be accommodated.
- 5.1.7 The following section outlines potential improvements and facilities. It should be noted that these do not represent Council policy when taken in isolation. The Section incorporates the type of enhancements envisaged in Chapter 4, together with some 'enabling' uses which in their own right would be "inappropriate development", but which may be justified as part of a comprehensive approach. Whether such proposals are acceptable will depend upon the circumstances of individual applications. It is recognised that the balance of any enabling development cannot, at this stage, be specified as this will depend upon the costs and benefits involved. However, this guidance is intended to assist the process.

5.2 Land uses, facilities and activities

1. Parkland Area

- 5.2.1 Situated in the north west corner of the study area, adjacent to the A404/A4155 roundabout, this 20 hectare site could provide a quality landscape setting for the entrance to the Country Park and Westhorpe House. The

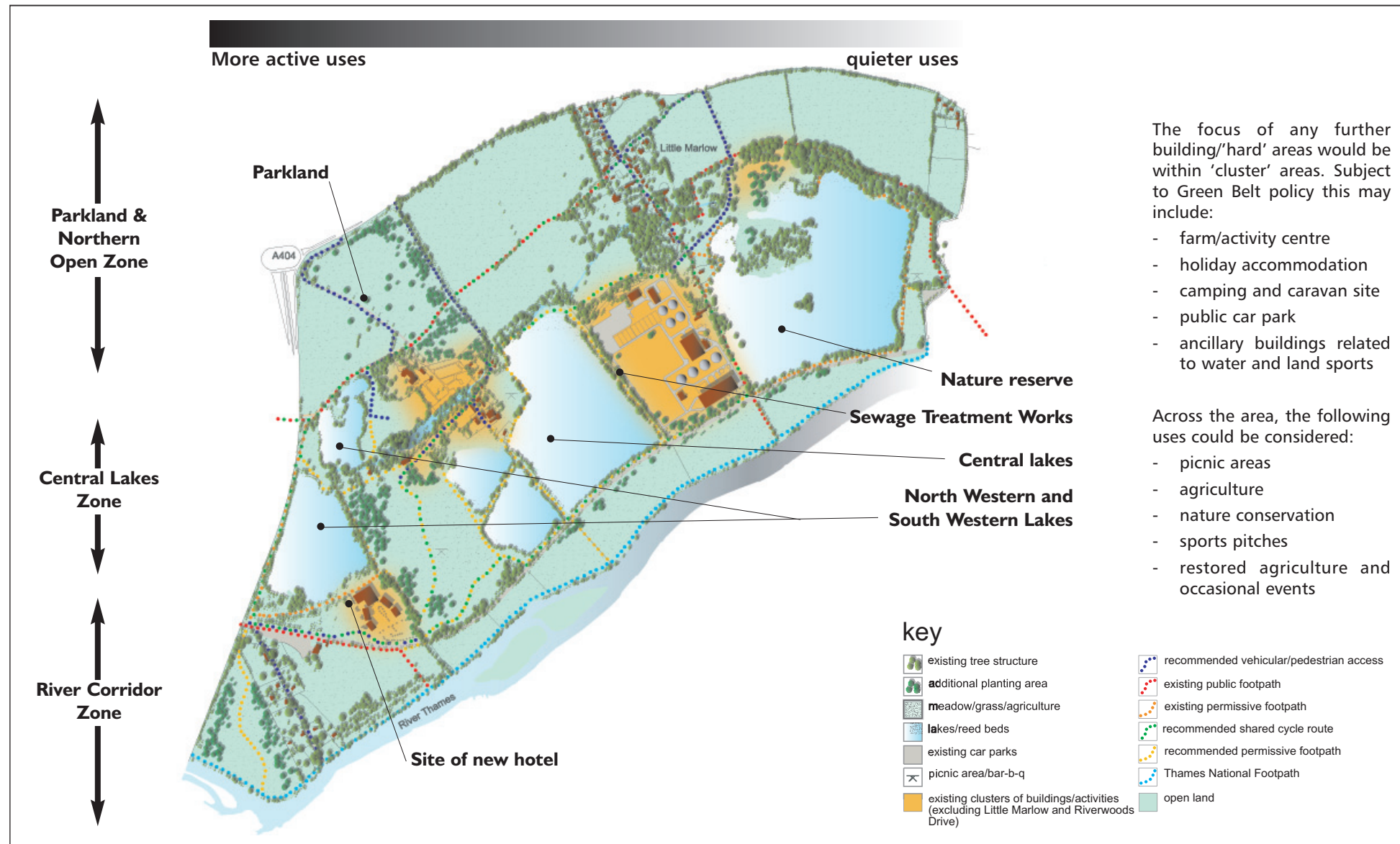


Figure 9 - Masterplan

parkland might consist of extensive arboretum style specimen tree planting set in a close mown lawn adjacent to the House with longer grass in areas adjacent to the site boundaries. A flower garden could also be acceptable. The existing roadway to Westhorpe House is likely to remain. Footpaths in this area should be informal and unsurfaced with no external lighting.

2. Farm Activity Centre

- 5.2.2 The existing farm complex has a number of buildings that could be converted for reuse and there is potential for new buildings close to, or within, the existing 'courtyard'. Uses contained within this area might include: small-scale craft workshops/retail units, an environmental centre, a teasop and facilities for youth activities. To accommodate these the existing complex could be supplemented by a small number of additional small units. These might be used for the retail of craft products, organic market gardening produce, a blacksmiths, pottery, a preserves and herbs shop for example. All the new units should be grouped close to the farm and reinforce its existing courtyard.
- 5.2.3 On the edge of the farm complex, a block of new stables and a tack room could be constructed together with a clubhouse to accommodate a new equestrian centre. Grazing fields could be provided to the north east on reclaimed agricultural land. Pony trekking could be accommodated on the majority of the footpaths within the site area and fields for organised events, such as show jumping could be accommodated in the area to the north east of the Farm.

- 5.2.4 Immediately to the south of the farm complex, adjacent to the large lake, a new clubhouse for a rowing centre could be constructed. Such a facility should be well related to the Westhorpe Farm activity cluster. Any clubhouse should be single storey and accommodate changing, storage and training facilities.

3. Holiday Accommodation

- 5.2.5 To the south west of Westhorpe House, small-scale, discreetly located holiday accommodation could be constructed within a native woodland setting. Vehicular access could be gained by extending the existing road to Westhorpe House. The access drives to individual units should be surfaced with compacted gravel. Warden's accommodation could be provided together with a small reception area. The gravel footpaths should be lit with low level lighting. Car parking should be grouped in small, well screened areas close to, but not adjacent to, individual units. Any development should be focused on the existing activity cluster.

4. Site of the new hotel

- 5.2.6 The area to the west of the new hotel could accommodate ancillary uses related to leisure and recreation, this could include further facilities related to the use of the lake, and perhaps facilities such as a golf driving range.

5. Camping and caravan site

- 5.2.7 An additional camping and caravan site could be created to the south west of Westhorpe Farm, with any essential built form located within the activity cluster. The site could extend close to the side of the lake with access

from the existing concrete crushing/batching plant extended from the existing road to the farm complex. Caravan pitches should be heavily screened by new native tree and shrub planting. Compacted gravel roads should provide access to these pitches. Each pitch should be provided with electric and water points, external lighting of the routes must be kept to a minimum. The site may also have shower and toilet facilities, a small laundry and kitchen provided in two new single storey purpose built structures. One of these should be situated close to the entrance to the caravan site in the area currently occupied by a concrete crushing/batching plant, the other positioned at the southern end of the site. The camping site should be grass, there should be no internal access roads and no external lighting, though there may be a fresh water supply. The camping ground could share the shower, toilet and waste disposal facilities with the caravan site.

6. Picnic areas

- 5.2.8 Picnic areas and barbecue facilities could be provided in a number of locations throughout the Gravel Pits area. The main locations are likely to be adjacent to the proposed camping ground, the area to the east of Westhorpe Farm and an area to the north of the County Council car park adjacent to Coldmoorholm Lane.
- 5.2.9 All picnic and barbecue areas should be provided with picnic benches, barbecue grills and litter bins. Footpaths within these areas should be informal unsurfaced or hoggin surfaced with no external lighting. Car parking could be accommodated at adjacent parking facilities.

7. North western and South western lakes

5.2.10 The northern most lake adjacent to the A404 could be set aside for bankside angling only with access off the road leading to the new holiday accommodation.

5.2.11 The southern most lake adjacent to the A404 could accommodate bankside angling and watersports such as jet-ski and water-skiing. A small purpose built store and changing area could be provided on the southern edge of the lake related to the cluster/activity zone. Vehicular access to this building should be provided via the new road created to serve the hotel development to the east.

8. Central lakes

5.3.12 On the lakes in the centre of the study area, the smaller lakes to the west could be used for general recreation and angling. These should not have motorised watersports, but could include sailing and windsurfing. The adjacent large lake could, however, be a centre for a range of watersports, including: sailing, water-skiing, jet-skiing, windsurfing. This lake could also become a new short course for rowing. A store and clubhouse for these uses may be located in a new purpose built single storey building situated on the northern edge of this lake close to the existing farm complex at Westhorpe Farm. This building might include, a store, changing facilities a small gym and training room, a clubroom and viewing platform over the river. The existing network of footpaths should be enhanced around all of these lakes, with additional tree planting in parts to provide a screen along the southern boundary with the existing railway line. All

necessary ancillary buildings should be accommodated within the activity cluster zone.

5.2.13 The edge treatment of the central lake should be varied to include regrading to create shallow shelves for the establishment of reed beds.

9. Nature reserve

5.2.14 This should be a low key facility in terms of scale of development and introduction of facilities. The reserve should be centred on the large lake to the east of the existing sewage works. Access into this area will be gained off Marlow Road (A4155) to the north via the existing access to the concrete crushing/batching plant and sewage works. Upon cessation of the crushing/batching activities a small gravel surfaced car park, with cycle parking facilities, could be created and set within a newly planted wooded area. Adjacent to this car park could be a single storey environmental visitor centre comprising a small reception area and shop, public toilets, a permanent exhibition room and a small lecture theatre.

5.2.15 A hoggan footpath should be provided around the perimeter of the lake. This footpath could provide access at regular intervals to a number of viewing points set down at the waters edge. A number of these viewing points and the footpath along the northern edge should provide for disabled access. There should be additional native tree and shrub planting in appropriate locations all around the perimeter of the lake with possible wet land area. A further facility could be the introduction of hides for bird watchers.

5.2.16 In addition to a new car park on the site of the crushing/batching plant, use could also be made of the existing County Council owned car park off Coldmoorholm Lane on the eastern side of the lake.

5.2.17 The large area of agricultural land to the north of the existing concrete crushing/batching plant and to the east of Little Marlow village should remain as agricultural land.

10. Moorings

5.2.18 Along the banks the River Thames new moorings could be introduced. These may involve works to strengthen the bank and provide simple timber landing stages. There may be some scope for moorings towards the eastern end of the site. The footpath along this section of the Thames should be upgraded with compacted gravel. A water supply, waste disposal facilities and electric power points could also be provided to each of the mooring stages.

11. Sewage Treatment Works

5.2.19 Thames Water have plans to alter and upgrade the sewage works in connection with the closure of the works in High Wycombe. This could be accommodated without increasing the built-up appearance of the site. However, it will be important that odour is strictly controlled and new screen planting introduced within the site. New tree planting should be provided on the boundaries of this site to screen distant views into the area. It should contribute to the creation/improvement of pedestrian/cycle routes in the vicinity of the site and some environmental interpretation for visitors to the area.

12. Sports pitch activities

5.2.20 Across the area, consideration could be given to the introduction of sports pitches which fall within Green Belt policy. Where ancillary buildings are justified in association with such pitches, these should be focused on the activity cluster areas. Additional sporting provision such as running tracks could also be acceptable where within policy.

13. Restored agriculture, occasional events

5.2.21 The northern portion of the 32 hectare site currently being excavated immediately to the west of Little Marlow should be restored to agriculture or managed as meadowland. The remainder of the area could be kept as pastureland and used for the grazing of horses, for equestrian events such as show jumping or for possible sports pitches. The area may also be used intermittently as a venue for travelling shows and events such as open air concerts, circuses and fairs. In this respect, a water and electric supply may be provided and possibly a timber 'stage' constructed adjacent to the lake to accommodate occasional performance.

5.2.22 Access to this site should be off the A4155 using the existing access road to Westhorpe Farm via an upgraded existing junction. The area to the south of the railway line and to the east of the Marlow Rugby Club should be retained as open pasture land.

14. Public Car Parking

5.2.23 It is expected that some public car parking for visitors to the area will be beneficial at the western end of the site, similar to that provided on Coldmoorholm Lane. Such a parking area could be provided on the western edge of the

Westhorpe Farm access road, in association with activities there and within the activity cluster zone. The car park's roadways and parking bays should be surfaced with compacted gravel. Overspill car parking for occasional events may be accommodated within the field on the adjacent side of the access road. Lighting within the car park must be kept to the minimum necessary for safety and security. The parking layout should allow ample space for tree planting between 'banks' of cars. The facility could also provide access for coaches and information boards.

15. Pedestrian/Cycle Routes

5.2.24 It is envisaged that there will be an improving and upgrading of what links currently exist on the site, together with the introduction of new links, with a view to achieving a network of foot and cycle routes across the area. This is a key target improvement, which will form part of any negotiations for proposals in the Gravel Pits area.

5.2.25 The Thames Footpath should be improved as required.

5.2.26 The east-west route between Marlow and Little Marlow, in the northern part of the study area should be upgraded for use as a shared footpath/cycleway. A new cycle/pedestrian bridge over the A404 could be provided. This route could also provide an opportunity to introduce a sculpture trail. The introduction of a circular cycle track will be encouraged.

5.2.27 There is the opportunity to provide an additional east-west pedestrian route in the southern part of the Study area. This will

connect as a hoggin vehicular access road from Gosmore Lane, Marlow to the new hotel and continue to Spade Oak Farm.

5.2.28 The main north-south route through the study area will connect Little Marlow with the River Thames. The route will start as the existing vehicular/pedestrian route through Little Marlow village.

16. Sculpture

5.2.29 Public art could be incorporated into the area and could include sculptures that reflect the area's landscape qualities.

5.3 Masterplan transport requirements

5.3.1 Since it is the intention to introduce additional leisure and recreation uses into the study area, and possibly some 'enabling' development, we have considered:

- how people might travel to the site;
- what additional traffic could be generated;
- how vehicles might gain access to the different parts of the site; and
- what impact this could have on peoples amenity in, and adjacent to, the area.

5.3.2 With the type and scale of activities shown in the masterplan it is not envisaged that there will be a need for major new road

infrastructure. This is because:

- The uses are unlikely to generate a high volume of traffic.
- Most of the additional traffic would be at the weekend.
- Very few visitors would arrive or depart during the morning or evening peak periods.
- Most vehicles would carry more than two persons.
- Every encouragement would be given to visitors who wish to arrive on foot, by bicycle or using public transport.

5.3.3 If an acceptable package comes forward, in line with the masterplan it is expected that this will have a small impact on the surrounding road network and on the amenity of those living in adjacent areas. However, there will still need to be some minor improvements to junctions along the A4155 and some of the internal roads will need to be widened. Consideration where possible must be given to the introduction of quiet road surfaces where new roads are provided. Figure 10 shows the main vehicular and pedestrian routes proposed plus associated junction improvements.



Figure 10 - Draft Masterplan Transport Proposals

5.4 Marlow Parking and Transport Strategy

5.4.1 In addition to new uses within the Gravel Pits, the area could also be affected by proposals arising from the Marlow Parking and Transport Strategy. In particular:

- A possible new road through the Gravel Pits linking Fieldhouse Lane with the A4155; and
- a park and ride facility adjacent to the A4155.

5.4.2 The new road, linking Fieldhouse Lane with the A4155, would provide an alternative access and egress for Globe Park and the associated business areas and thereby potentially ease peak hour congestion at the Parkway roundabout and the A404/A4155 junction. The case for the road has still to be made and a route is not fixed yet but the plan opposite suggests that if this road were to be introduced then it would be appropriate for it to run parallel and close to the A404. This would reduce its impact on the country park. It should be clear, however, that this road will need its own justification and funding – separate from the country park.

5.4.3 The park and ride facility could be introduced within the Gravel Pits area as part of a wider strategy of parking management for the town. If park and ride was to be introduced then it could be used jointly by visitors to the country park as well as visitors to the town since peak

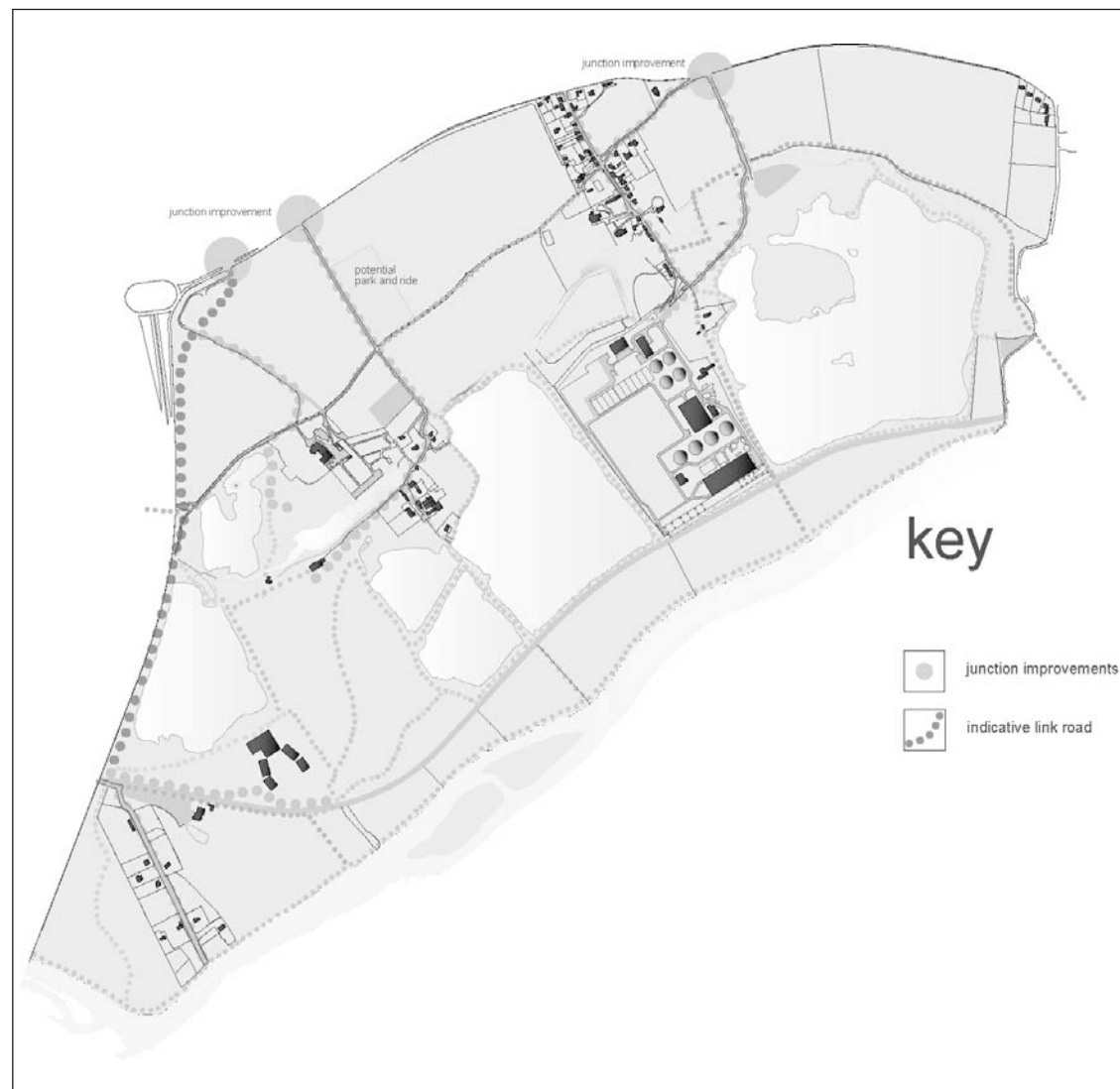


Figure 11 - Marlow Parking and Transport Strategy Implications

business use and peak park use would occur at different times. Figure 11 suggests a location for the park and ride facility that would enable it to function effectively in relation to Marlow whilst minimising its impact on the landscape setting. Any such Park and Ride site should be as integrated as possible with an existing activity zone cluster. Such a location also maximises its potential to serve the leisure/recreation uses in the new country park. If a park and ride facility were to be introduced it would require additional road improvements over and above that required by the country park. This would include road widening and improvements to the access junction with the A4155.

- 5.4.4 In terms of accommodating the Strategy within the Gravel Pits, the Councils are mindful of the government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 – Transport. Paragraph 62 states:

“In some circumstances, park and ride schemes may be permissible in the Green Belt, where assessment shows such locations to be the most sustainable of the available options, taking account of all the relevant factors. The scale and design of such schemes will be crucial factors in determining whether the impacts on the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt are acceptable. This advice should be read in conjunction with the guidance in Annex E, which contains amendments to PPG2 (Green Belts).”

- 5.4.5 The Annex E referred to makes the point that, in considering the location of park and ride,

non-Green Belt alternatives should be investigated first. “However, there may be cases where a Green Belt location is the most sustainable of the available options.”

- 5.4.6 PPG13 makes it clear that in any park and ride scheme within the Green Belt particular attention will have to be given to the layout, design and landscaping so that it preserves, as far as possible, the openness and visual amenity of the Green Belt.
- 5.4.7 The government guidance also advises that any park and ride proposal should be contained in the County Council’s Local Transport Plan (LTP). At present the LTP refers to park and ride for Marlow as a longer term possibility. The detailed need for, timing and funding considerations of any park and ride scheme, or other highway proposals to address the wider transport problems in Marlow, will be reviewed as part of the LTP process.
- 5.4.8 In view of the Green Belt status and environmental sensitivity of the Little Marlow Gravel Pits area such detailed transport proposals will have to be very carefully considered by the Councils and a view taken at the time as to whether or not the transport and wider benefits of the proposals outweigh the harm to policy and the local environment. This consideration will be in the light of the detailed evidence advanced, the circumstances pertaining at the time and the planning policy framework outlined above and as set out in the Local and Structure Plans.
- 5.4.9 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

does not preclude such transport proposals, if they are acceptable and justified in detail. The SPG does provide a steer regarding their location so that impacts are minimised whilst recognising functional considerations and integrating them into the vision for the Country Park.

- 5.4.10 In view of the Green Belt status it would not be acceptable for transport proposals aimed at addressing the transport problems of the Marlow urban area to be funded by development within the Little Marlow Gravel Pits area.

6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The introduction of this Brief responds to a need to provide a framework that will support the Councils and landowners working together in a positive and pro-active way to achieve a recognisable goal for the Gravel Pits. As such, the Brief aims to assist in achieving a facility that is significantly more than the sum of its individual parts and that this will benefit all landowners and the local community considerably in the long term.
- 6.1.2 The guidance represents a long-term strategy that may be implemented over many years. Many of the existing gravel extraction works have existing permissions which have some time to run. Since the Councils own very little land within the Gravel Pits we are reliant on landowners coming forward with proposals to realise the 'vision'. Whilst the various facilities and activities proposed by the masterplan could be more easily achieved if the park was in a single ownership this is not considered essential if landowners are prepared to act together. As such, the continued involvement and support of landowners is very important and, the Councils will work with landowners to promote and structure the implementation of the Park.
- 6.1.3 Whilst some uses and activities may be profitable in their own right others will not be. This raises the issue of who will pay for those proposals that are not profitable and what incentive is there for landowners to implement them.

6.2 An action plan

- 6.2.1 As part of the proposed action plan, the Councils will help secure the masterplan proposals by:

- Implementing planning conditions
- Entering into legal agreements
- Helping to secure grant funds
- Working alongside local interest groups

Planning Conditions

- 6.2.2 Some existing planning permissions already have conditions that require developers and landowners to carry out works that will improve the amenity and setting of the Gravel Pits area (e.g. restoration of gravel pits to agricultural land). Future proposals requiring planning permission could have conditions that require, for example, tree planting, provision of footpaths and cycle paths and public art, etc.

Legal agreements

- 6.2.3 Development proposals that come forward, which fall outside of Green Belt policy, will be expected to be accompanied by full financial information justifying the special circumstances as to how the proposal contributes to and supports the Country Park objectives and in particular the identified key improvement areas.
- 6.2.4 The amount of any enabling development proposed must be strictly proportionate to the achievement of the vision for the Country Park referred to in Chapter 4. Initial work undertaken on the costing of such improvements points to only modest enabling development being potential justified. Enabling development which has minimal impact on the

area and provides low key facilities for visitors to the area will be considered more favourably than that which has a major impact.

- 6.2.5 The developers of 'enabling' development, will be required to enter into legal agreements with the Councils to carry out work and/or to provide funds which will then be used to pay for items such as new footpaths, interpretation boards and staffing.

Grant Funding

- 6.2.6 Some of the elements suggested in this guidance may attract grant funds for part of their cost. This might include the new woodland planting, a sculpture trail and possibly some of the watersports facilities.

Local Interest Groups

- 6.2.7 The Councils will work with interest groups, such as the Bucks Bird Club, to secure support and assistance in establishing some of the recreation and leisure facilities.

6.3 Management of the park

- 6.3.1 In addition to providing the physical infrastructure and facilities, there is the issue of day-to-day management of the Park and its maintenance over the long term. Whilst the Councils may be able to direct some existing resources into this, it is clear that additional funding will be needed. It is proposed that part of the necessary funding could be provided by developers through legal agreements. By investing a capital sum in a trust fund sufficient funds could be made available each year to secure the management and maintenance of the Park.