



Sharpness Eco Village

VISION DOCUMENT

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Pegasus
Design

Pegasus Design
Pegasus House
Querns Business Centre
Whitworth Road
Cirencester
GL7 1RT
www.pegasusgroup.co.uk | T 01285 641717 | F 01285 642348

Prepared by Pegasus Design.
Pegasus Design is part of Pegasus Planning Group
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VISION

NATURE – HERITAGE – LANDSCAPE – SUSTAINABILITY – DISTINCT CHARACTER

Sharpness Eco Village will create a highly desirable, new self contained settlement connected with nature and seamlessly integrated into the landscape. The underlying aim is to achieve a healthy, energy-efficient high-quality self contained development with a strong identity, sense of community and 'sense of place'.

Sharpness Eco Village will connect nature, heritage and sustainable design across separate distinct neighbourhoods linked by green corridors, cycle paths and bus routes. The ambition is for a unique place that locates energy efficient buildings within a continuous natural landscape made up of ecological habitats, nature reserve, riverside landscape, new green spaces, parks, allotments and sports facilities.

Lying midway between Thornbury and Gloucester and in-between the M5 and the River Severn, the site offers an exciting opportunity to create a new, high-quality and vibrant place where people want to live co-existing with nature and the landscape. People will live within a distinct development character of personal scale and the place will become an aspirational destination for education and work.

The railway line will be revitalised as a new tram train route into Cam and potentially Gloucester strengthening the connections between Sharpness and the wider region. The Eco Village will include a wide range of residential properties, delivered at a range of densities to ensure all forms of housing need, including provision for both young people and the elderly will be efficiently met.

The new village will be designed to be inclusive of all users, encourage environmentally sustainable travel choice and promote healthy lifestyles. Sharpness Eco Village is more than just a development, it will offer benefits to the wider community, be designed to the latest design guidance and be driven by current best practice in minimising energy consumption. The new village will be an exemplar for new, large scale development.



hunterpage
planning



DAVIESLANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS



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PROPOSED CENTRAL HUB 3D VIEW



2. WHY A NEW COMMUNITY AT SHARPNESS?

The Stroud District Local Plan was formally adopted by the Council on the 19th November 2015 and sets out the strategy for development in the District until 2031.

However, as part of the adopted Plan, Stroud District Council made a commitment to an early review of the Plan commencing within five years of adoption or by December 2019, whichever is the sooner.

The Council is now undertaking the process of reviewing the current Local Plan to ensure it remains up-to-date and, importantly, can meet future needs up to the period of 2036.

In that context, Sharpness provides a unique and exceptional opportunity to secure sustainable development to meet the District's needs to 2036 and beyond.

Development at Sharpness would positively respond to the adopted Local Plan's principal aims including:

- Achieving sustainable development
- Creation of mixed, balanced and unique identity communities
- Improved public transport services
- Creation of a 'place to live and work'- reducing out-commuting and travel
- Greater employment opportunities
- Easily accessible and adaptable public open spaces
- Enhanced high quality environment
- Specialised facilities for young people and the elderly
- Increased capacity for renewable energy generation and energy efficiency
- Improved tourism industry performance with a wider range of leisure facilities

Sharpness has a unique character and is rich in history, it is an area relatively unconstrained which offers many opportunities. Sharpness is a privileged location for growth in which the demand for housing within the plan period and beyond can be addressed in a sustainable manner.

Sharpness has the potential to challenge existing ways of working and thinking to push the boundaries of residential led design quality to create a series of interlinked neighbourhoods, building on the principles of sustainability to create a new Eco-Village.

One of the main objectives will be to create a recognisably high quality development that people will aspire to live and invest in, with a vibrant mix of uses and a real 'sense of place', using the opportunities presented by existing landscape features as well as creating outstanding new spaces.

Sharpness Eco-Village will assimilate development into the landscape being both a place people choose to live and work in, but also a place people can enjoy visiting.

New places will be designed to be inclusive of all users and will encourage walking and cycling as the principal modes of transport (car users will be secondary to pedestrians and cyclists). Its location makes the future development ideal for the provision of safe and accessible 'green' route networks that will connect residential areas with areas of employment, education, shopping and leisure, thereby reducing carbon emissions and environmental impact.

Sharpness Eco-Village will be a planned, balanced and self-contained community. The intention will be for the village to grow in the future in a logical and sustainable manner benefiting from the new infrastructure created by the initial development. In this way, the District will have a concentrated growth point for its future, taking away the anxiety of where tiers of growth may end up in the future.

SITE CONTEXT

PROPOSED ECO-PARK



VIEWS OUT FROM THE B4066



SEVERN ESTUARY (FROM SEVERN WAY)



BERKLEY CASTLE



DURSLEY



GLoucester SERVICES (MSA)



PAINSWICK

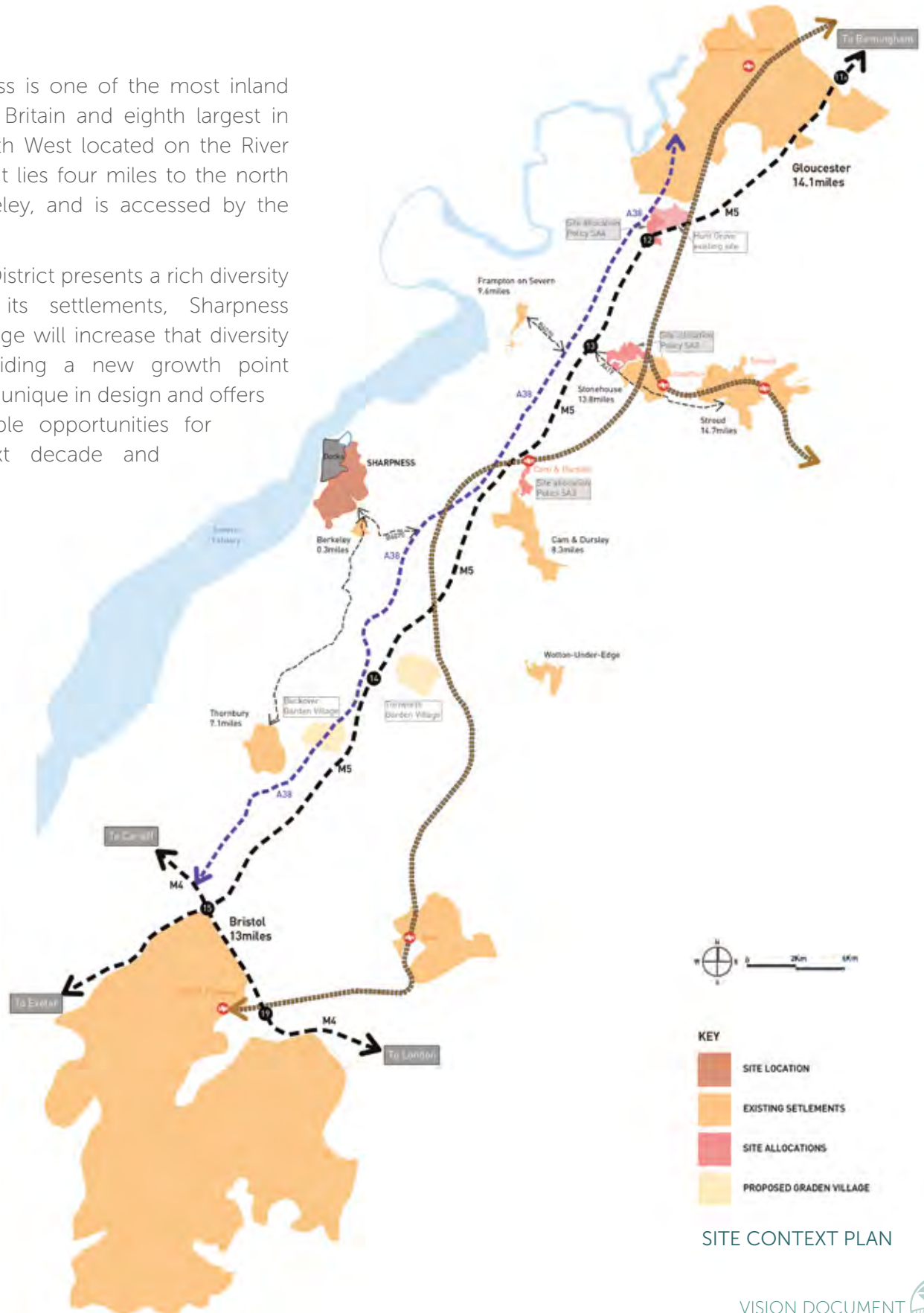


STROUD TOWN



Sharpness is one of the most inland ports in Britain and eighth largest in the South West located on the River Severn. It lies four miles to the north of Berkeley, and is accessed by the B4066.

Stroud District presents a rich diversity among its settlements, Sharpness Eco-Village will increase that diversity by providing a new growth point which is unique in design and offers sustainable opportunities for the next decade and beyond.



STROUD DISTRICT



- KEY**
- SITE LOCATION
 - EXISTING SETTLEMENTS
 - SITE ALLOCATIONS
 - PROPOSED GRADEN VILLAGE

SITE CONTEXT PLAN



3. THE GREENSQUARE-LIONCOURT PARTNERSHIP

GreenSquare and Lioncourt Strategic are working in partnership to create and deliver the ethos of an Eco-Village:

With GreenSquare bringing the experience of its long standing heritage to deliver socially sustainable communities, and Lioncourt bringing commercial experience that will enable the practical delivery of the Eco village and its multi-structural infrastructure requirements over the full term of the development phases. (See text separately below about Lioncourt Group)

GreenSquare Group

Passionate about great places to live for 150 years

On 10 August 1866 The Oxford Cottage Improvement Company Limited – the company which would eventually become Oxford Citizens Housing Association and then GreenSquare – was founded with the mission to tackle the poor housing conditions of the 19th century.

In fact, The Oxford Cottage Improvement Company Limited company quickly established itself as a local pioneer in driving housing reform in the area and was nationally one of the first of its kind outside of London. The company began by improving the quality of working class houses in Oxford, moving on to building sheltered housing, before changing its name to Oxford Citizens Housing Association in 1965 and, most recently, becoming known as GreenSquare in 2012.

Howard Toplis, GreenSquare's chief executive, said:

"Now GreenSquare owns and manages nearly 12,000 properties across Oxfordshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire – but providing high quality homes for those on low incomes and most at need remains as much at the heart of our purpose today as it did in 1866."

"We are immensely proud of how far we have come since then – and are proud to be able to say that we really have been passionate about great places to live for the last 150 years."

"The Oxford Cottage Improvement Company was born out of the need to address the wretched housing conditions of the mid-19th century, and now, 150 years on, we are dealing with a different type of housing crisis. With home ownership in England at its lowest rate for decades, we have ambitious plans for the future to build many more new homes across all our areas of operation."

"It is a credit to our ability to transform that we have continued to thrive – and thanks to the hard work of all of our board members and staff, who, over the years, have helped GreenSquare to stay true to its original mission."

Lioncourt Strategic Land

The Lioncourt group is a Worcestershire based company comprising Lioncourt Homes Limited, a five star quality rated housebuilder and Lioncourt Strategic Land Limited, a specialist land trading company. Formed in 2006, the Lioncourt group is committed to working with local communities to produce high quality developments that are promoted through and shaped by the planning system.



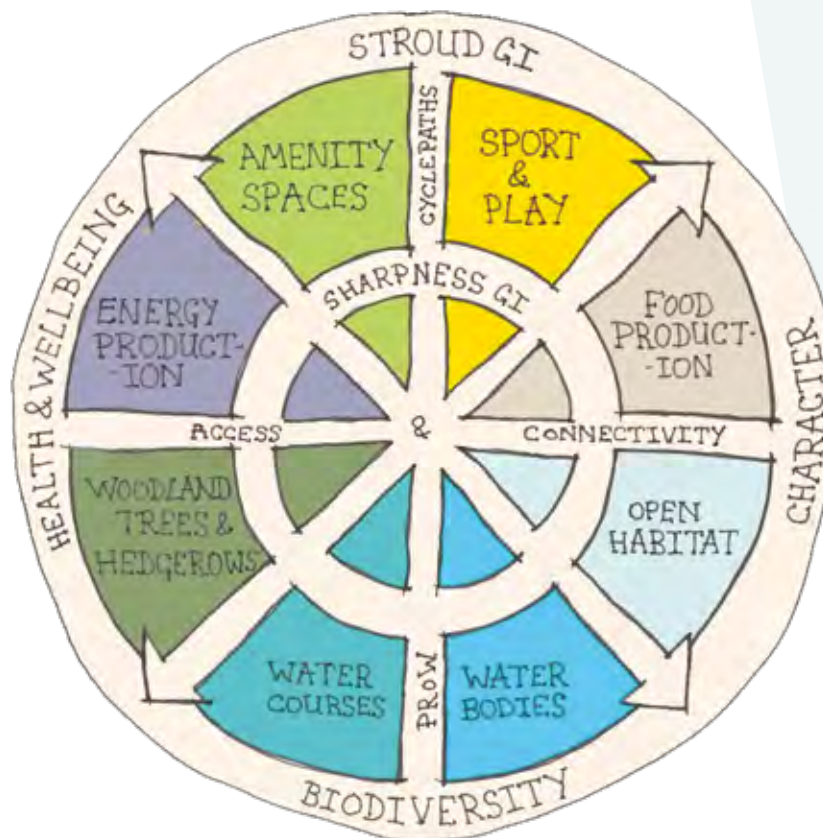


4. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE-LED STRATEGY

The proposed Eco-Village provides many opportunities to create a multi-functional, holistic environment which would form the green infrastructure (GI) strategy for Sharpness Eco-Village.

The proposal includes high quality GI elements including: parks, play areas, a nature reserve, an urban farm and street trees, as well as rivers, ponds and other water features as part of a high quality green infrastructure which will be designed for water management, public safety, and the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Sharpness Eco-Village will also look to protect, conserve and enhance the character of the local environment through key factors of which include:



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

Landscape & Visual Amenity

Understanding the landscape context is a key factor to the delivery of a holistically planned new sustainable settlement. A 'landscape led approach' recognises the attributes of the landscape which in turn provides the setting and structure for wider environmental considerations, such as biodiversity, heritage, food production, energy, amenity, connectivity, flooding and drainage.

The landscape character across the site presents distinct variations in terms of landscape and visual constraints and opportunities. Whilst the northern site area topography and vegetation forms a natural distribution of developable land, the southern area is predominantly in arable production and with remarkable views to the Severn Estuary.

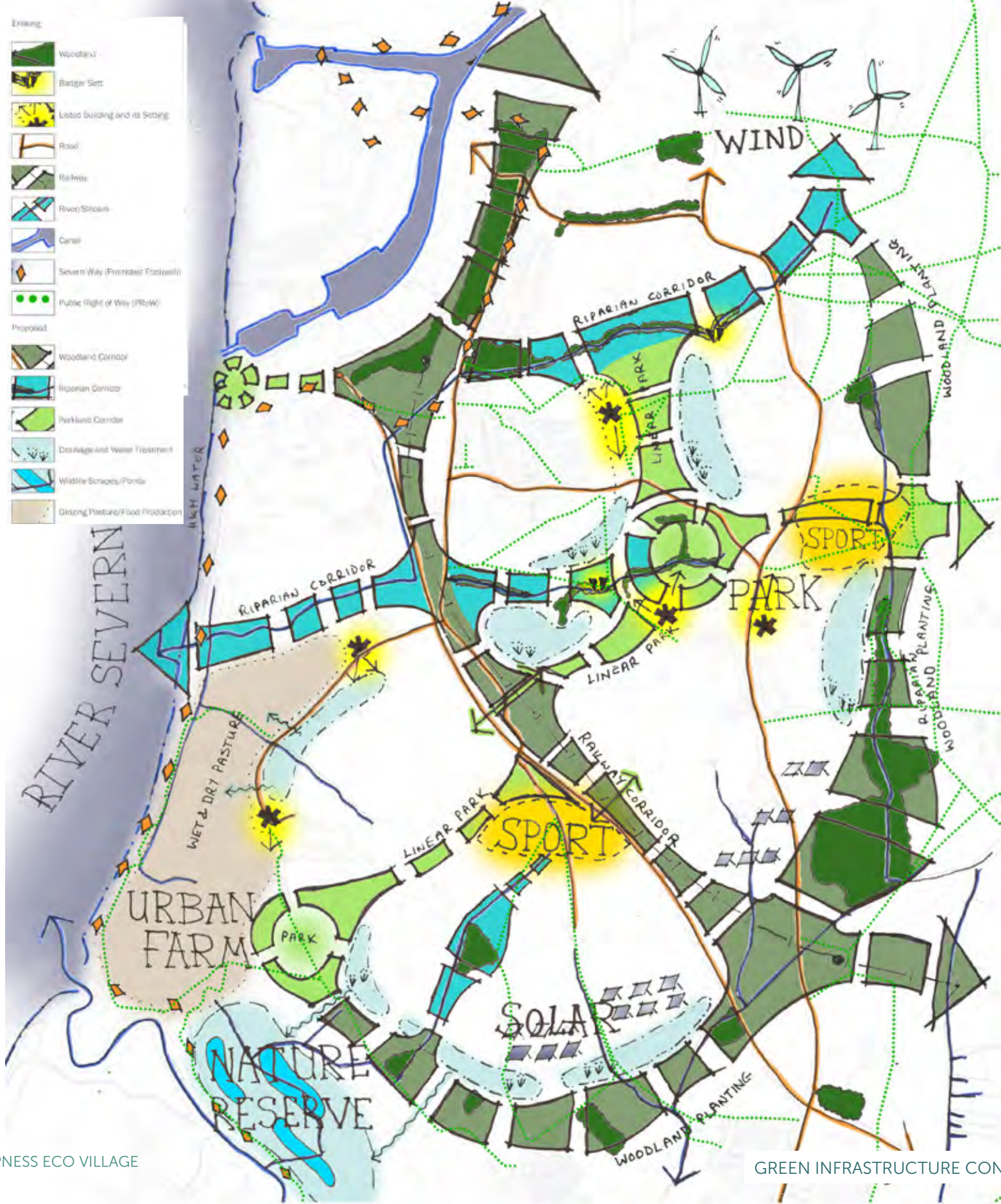
Sharpness Eco-Village will set out a series of strategic 'environmental opportunities'. These include aspirations to expand and link woodlands and hedgerows (to benefit biodiversity) and improve soil and water quality, including enhancement of the River Severn through its tributaries. The new Eco-Village will also look to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape through key factors of which include:

Biodiversity

The majority of the site consists of agricultural land (arable and improved grassland) interspersed with a strong hedgerow network comprising some species-rich hedgerows, and ponds.

With the exception of the strong hedgerow, survey work undertaken has shown that the existing habitats within the Site are neither unique nor exceptional (in terms of intrinsic value) and are therefore not 'in principle' (significant) constraints.

- Existing
- Woodland
 - Batter Sett
 - Listed Building and its Setting
 - Road
 - Railway
 - River/Stream
 - Canal
 - Severn Way (Priority) Footpath
 - Public Right of Way (PRoW)
- Proposed
- Woodland Corridor
 - Riparian Corridor
 - Parkland Corridor
 - Drainage and Water Treatment
 - Wildlife Scrubs/Ponds
 - Grazing Pasture/Food Production



The Site is set next to the River Severn which is designated as a Ramsar Site, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); these are statutory designations of the highest nature conservation value and reflect the importance of the Severn's estuarine habitats and passage of wintering birds that visit the estuary each year.

The new settlement will be designed to ensure that the Severn's wildlife and habitats are not adversely affected including:

- A focus on retaining the strong hedgerow network;
- Ensuring that development is located away from the estuary shoreline;
- Providing Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to divert recreational usage away from the estuary; and
- Ensuring appropriate management of recreational access to the estuary.

The site also represents a significant opportunity to deliver strategic tangible (District-level) biodiversity gain, ensuring compliance with local and national planning policy, for example:

- A significant opportunity to provide an extensive area of SANG in the south-west of the Site, to accommodate increased visitor numbers and create new Priority Habitats;
- A committed sum contribution to a pre-identified enhancement project along the estuary in line with Habitat Regulations Assessment and Stroud District Council's Strategic Mitigation Strategy for the Severn Estuary;
- Opportunities for significant habitat enhancement and creation, including creation of an extensive network of interlinked semi-natural greenspace, providing a network of wildlife 'corridors' through the site that will be of high wildlife and amenity value.

Connectivity

A fundamental principle for Green Infrastructure (GI) is to provide an inter-connected network of multi-functional spaces. The GI network presented in the GI concept plan has many connections at the macro scale. To this, will be added a finer grain of connections along retained Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and new streets and footpaths.

Each of the destination spaces and the inter connecting routes will serve many purposes and will also be designed to be accessible, in terms of gradient and surface treatment. The proposals will result in an attractive, high quality GI provision that will support a diverse wildlife population and contribute significantly to the health and wellbeing of the human population.

Arboriculture

The highest arboricultural value is associated with the large number of lapsed oak pollards present throughout the Site. A significant proportion of these have been given veteran status and therefore receive national planning policy protection. These lapsed pollards have the potential for exceptional longevity, for providing niche biodiversity opportunities at the Site, and for unique features of the landscape at the Site. As such their protection and conservation within the scheme has been prioritised. There are also notable trees which form the small woodland groups located throughout the Site, and the linear groups that bisect the Site from east to west towards the north of the site all of which are relevant to the design of a robust and sensitive scheme.



Amenity

The overall GI created by the development would have an amenity benefit and support the health and well-being of residents and visitors alike. For example, the extensive woodland planting will help with noise mitigation, air quality and even shelter the urban areas from cold north-westerly winter winds.

A 'Country Park' is proposed running north-east to south-west. This would link both sides of the settlement(s) via the two existing railway bridges, which would be cycle/pedestrian links only.

This park could also serve as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), to keep dog-walkers away from the inter-tidal mudflats and avoid disturbing the birds. The park would include an extensive series of circular walks and include a mix of landscape character (open and wooded) and include parking and appropriate signage. There are destinations within this green corridor, which could also serve a more formal play function.

The park would also serve to prevent coalescence of the nuclear settlement of Newton with the linear settlement of Brookend/Wanswell.

Rather than 'pepper-potting' sports facilities around the development, a central sports facility is proposed that is well connected by sustainable cycle and footpath links, but also close to the main road for ease of access. The vision is to create a multi-functional sports hub to encourage healthy lifestyles, ranging from casual leisure pursuits to sporting excellence.

Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

There are three listed buildings within the Site, and the Site lies within the setting of a further four. All the listed buildings represent farms or associated farm buildings.

In this regard, the land does in some cases, make a positive contribution to the significance of the listed buildings whereby it forms part of the associated farmland landscape and forms a location from where their significance can be appreciated.

However, a sensitive and robust scheme can be achieved for the Site which takes into account this contribution to the asset's significance, which would serve to minimise or remove any potential harmful effects to the asset. As a result, it is considered that the Site has the capacity to accommodate the magnitude of change proposed, ensuring compliance with planning policies and a positive approach to the historic environment. A suite of further archaeological investigations will be required for non-statutory heritage assets to inform the design of a robust and sensitive scheme and inform any planning application for the Site.



Energy

Energy efficient building methodologies, systems and equipment will support the sustainable use of energy throughout the lifetime of the buildings that comprise the Sharpness Eco Village. The energy hierarchy will be adopted to apply lean, clean and green energy conservation principles to the scheme to contribute to an energy efficient, low carbon design strategy.

Lean

In the first instance, passive measures will be adopted to reduce the demand for energy. A fabric first approach will include measures to reduce winter heat losses such as thermally efficient building fabric elements (low U values), air tight construction techniques and the use of accredited details to reduce the effects of thermal bridging. Where building services systems will be required to heat/ cool/ ventilate/ light spaces they will be specified to have efficiencies exceeding the minimum requirements stipulated in the Building Regulations.

Clean

A decentralised energy centre is proposed for the Sharpness Eco Village to provide heating and power. At this stage, it is proposed that the Energy Centre will include a mixture of high efficiency gas fired boilers, Combined Heat and Power (CHP) engines and potentially additional renewable technologies. There is scope for capacity to be built into this energy centre to serve existing buildings in vicinity of the scheme in addition to the new scheme- providing a tangible benefit to the surrounding area.

Green

The feasibility of a number of renewable technologies are currently being explored:

Photovoltaic (PV) Panels

Wind Turbines

Water Turbines

Heat Pumps

Food production

The land to the west could be an Urban Farm with organic dry pasture and wet pasture (the latter supported from Surface Water (SW) and recycled greywater). This could include horticulture or a market garden with the farmer liaising with the local community in terms of what would be planted to be sold locally. There might be a pick-your-own element. Some of the existing farm buildings could be converted into a community centre to add value to the harvested produce.

We are proposing to plant an extensive band of woodland around the southern and eastern boundaries linking existing blocks. This is primarily for reasons of landscape character/visual amenity. However, this woodland could be managed for game and/or foraging and include elements of orchard.

We envisage allotments would occupy indents in the settlement edge within easy walking of dwellings.

WILDLIFE/HEALTH/WELLBEING FUNCTION

LAND USE

FOOD

RECYCLING/
ENERGY
(ES2)

CONNECTIVITY

BIODIVERSITY
(ES6)

AMENITY
(ES3,5 14, 15)

WATER

- POTABLE WATER (1)

- GREYWATER
- BLACKWATER
- SUDS

- PROW
(along water courses)

- INTER-TIDAL
- RIPARIAN
- STILL-WATER

- RIVER/STREAM
- LAKE/POND

**OPEN
LAND**

- LIVESTOCK (6)
- ARABLE
- HORTICULTURE
- VINES

- PV CELLS (2)
- WIND TURBINES (3)
- BATTERY STORAGE

- ROAD
- RAIL
- PROW
- POS

- GRASSLAND (4)
- ARABLE HABITAT
- STANDARD TREES

- PARKLAND (SANG)
- SPORTS PITCHES
- PLAY/PT

WOODLAND

- GAME
- LIVESTOCK (6)
- FRUIT/NUT

- COPPICE

- HEDGEROW
- ECOTONE (5)

- WET WOODLAND
- DRY WOODLAND
- ECOTONE
- COPPICE

- NATURAL PLAY
- NOISE REDUCTION
- AIR QUALITY
- COPPICE

**URBAN
FRINGE**

- ALLOTMENTS
- ORCHARD

- DISTRICT HEAT (6)
- PASSIVE GAIN
- FABRIC FIRST

- STREET
- CYCLEWAY
- FOOTPATH

- GREEN
- POCKET PARK
- DOMESTIC GARDEN

- PARK
- PLAY

1) OFF GRID SUMP/FILTER 2) SOUTH FACING, AWAY FROM SPD 3) AWAY FROM SPA 4) WET & DRY 5) WOODLAND EDGE 6) ENERGY FROM WASTE

GROWTH POINT - GI STRATEGY MATRIX

5. LIVING WITHIN AND BY WATER AND NATURE

'As a key principle of green infrastructure, multifunctionality recognises that green infrastructure can fulfill a wide range of functions and diverse benefits to both human populations and nature' and that interactions between functions is emphasised; to serve the requirements of local economics, the environment and social objectives'. (Building with Nature 1.0, 2017).

Sharpness Eco-Village will be designed to protect, conserve and enhance existing wildlife and habitats. The development will be away from the estuary shoreline and will provide Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to divert recreational usage away from the estuary.

Existing large areas of natural green spaces and water features, together with the provision of a green travel corridor and further landscape design proposals will create an extensive green infrastructure framework across the site, connecting spaces, activities and habitats, thereby providing a better and more attractive place to live.

Having Building with Nature involved from an early stage of the planning and design process will enable Sharpness Eco-Village to provide high quality green infrastructure and promote its benefits to the future population.

'Building with Nature introduces a positive way of thinking about new development. By providing an opportunity for people and nature to flourish together, Building with Nature sets the standard for places that existing and future communities can enjoy and be proud of'.





Three mandatory standards are Building with Nature's starting point. These define the basic approach to green infrastructure through a development scheme. They include alignment with the local policy context and a commitment to long-term maintenance. Next, there are three key themes:

Wildlife

To protect and enhance wildlife, creating networks where nature can thrive, and supporting the creation of development which more effectively delivers a net gain for wildlife.

Water

A commitment to improving water quality, on site and in the wider area; reducing the risk of flooding; and managing water naturally for maximum benefit.

Wellbeing

To deliver health and wellbeing benefits through the green features on the site, making sure they can be easily accessed by people close to where they live and work.

Building with Nature helps to create places where people want to live, work and play; places where people can enjoy the environment around them; and places where people can have happier and healthier lives.

There is a substantial body of research demonstrating the multiple benefits of GI to people and wildlife. In Gloucestershire and the West of England, there is also a considerable amount of guidance on the planning, design and delivery of GI. Despite this, what is delivered on the ground can be extremely variable and opportunities for delivering high-quality GI are often missed. There is also a huge challenge around securing long-term benefits for people and net gains for wildlife through management and maintenance.

A limited number of Listing Buildings are located within and in the proximities of the site. Associated buildings are mainly agricultural and industrial buildings, these latest ones being associated with the docks. Another valuable asset is the disused railway branch line that runs from Berkeley Road Station to Sharpness which was used originally for goods and passenger traffic between the docks and the main Bristol and Gloucester Railway.

Development proposals will include the reopening of the train station and Sharpness branch line as a new tram train route into Cam and potentially Gloucester. The associated infrastructure will be designed to reflect and emphasise historical assets which will also be reflected into the wider scheme through landscape, streetscape and buildings, along with opportunities for public art.



6. USE OF HERITAGE IN DESIGN

This approach will create a distinctive place with a strong identity and will establish a resilient community founded on sustainability principles. Sharpness Eco-Village will add value to and form part of the rich diversity among the existing settlements within Stroud District.

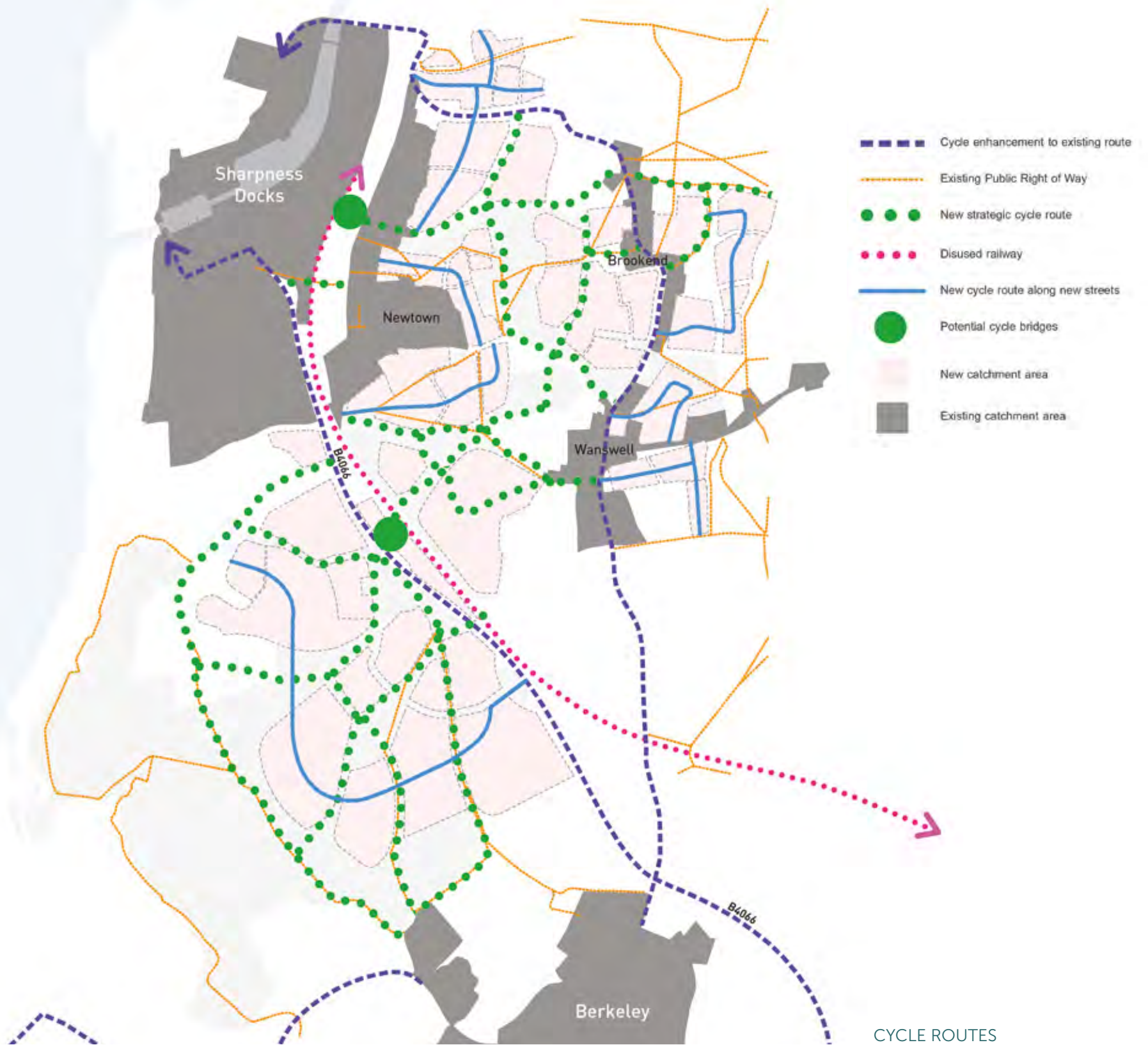




7. A COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRANSPORT

Sharpness Eco-Village will bring the opportunity to develop a modern and efficient transport infrastructure, as well as upgrade the existing services. The future development will need to consider and respond to the way the travel demands are changing.

The best way to create a transport and movement vision for Sharpness is to define what we want people to be able to do - not what we want them to do - but what choices and opportunities do we want then to have.



CYCLE ROUTES

Cycling & Walking

New housing will be close to areas of employment, local shops, schools, recreation and leisure facilities as part of a strategy to reduce the need to travel, and thereby reducing resource consumption and environmental impact, as well as increasing safety and accessibility for all.

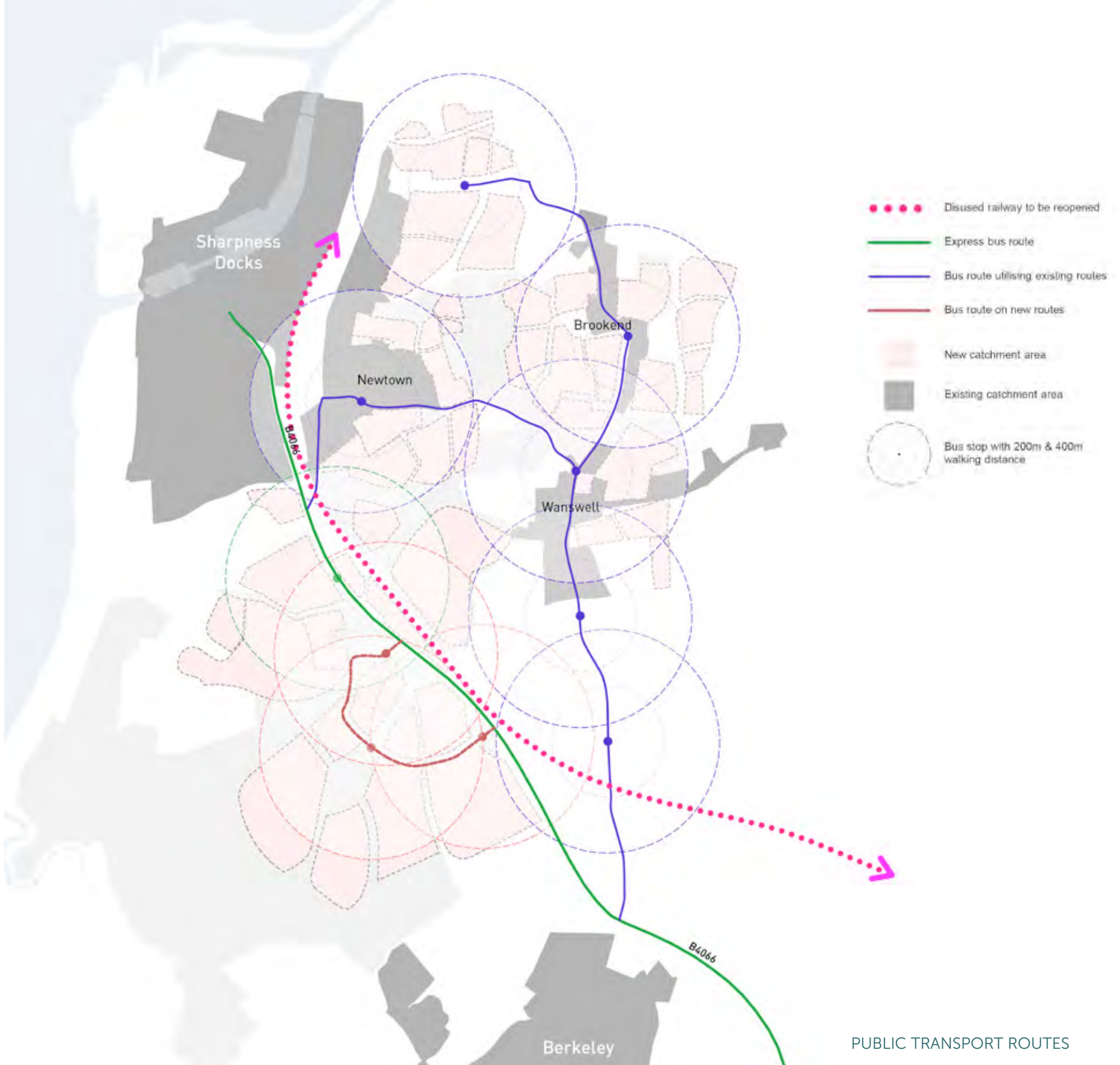
Sharpness Eco-Village will be designed to promote walking and cycling as the main modes of transport, including a 'cycle to school and work' scheme. The provision of a green travel corridor throughout the site together with improved public transport facilities will result in a settlement that is not dependent on the private car.

The proposed green corridor will provide convenient pedestrian and cycle route networks that will easily link residential areas with existing and new facilities.

A comprehensive network of walking and cycle routes and facilities will be provided to enable residents to conveniently and safely navigate around the development. The key elements of this network are summarised below:

- Routes
- Cycle Parking
- Cycle Hub
- Cycle Hire
- Wayfinding (easy to understand signage)





PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES

Public transport

Sharpness Eco-Village will bring the opportunity to improve the existing public transport links and services, this will allow for modern and more frequent services using the existing road networks as well as new routes.

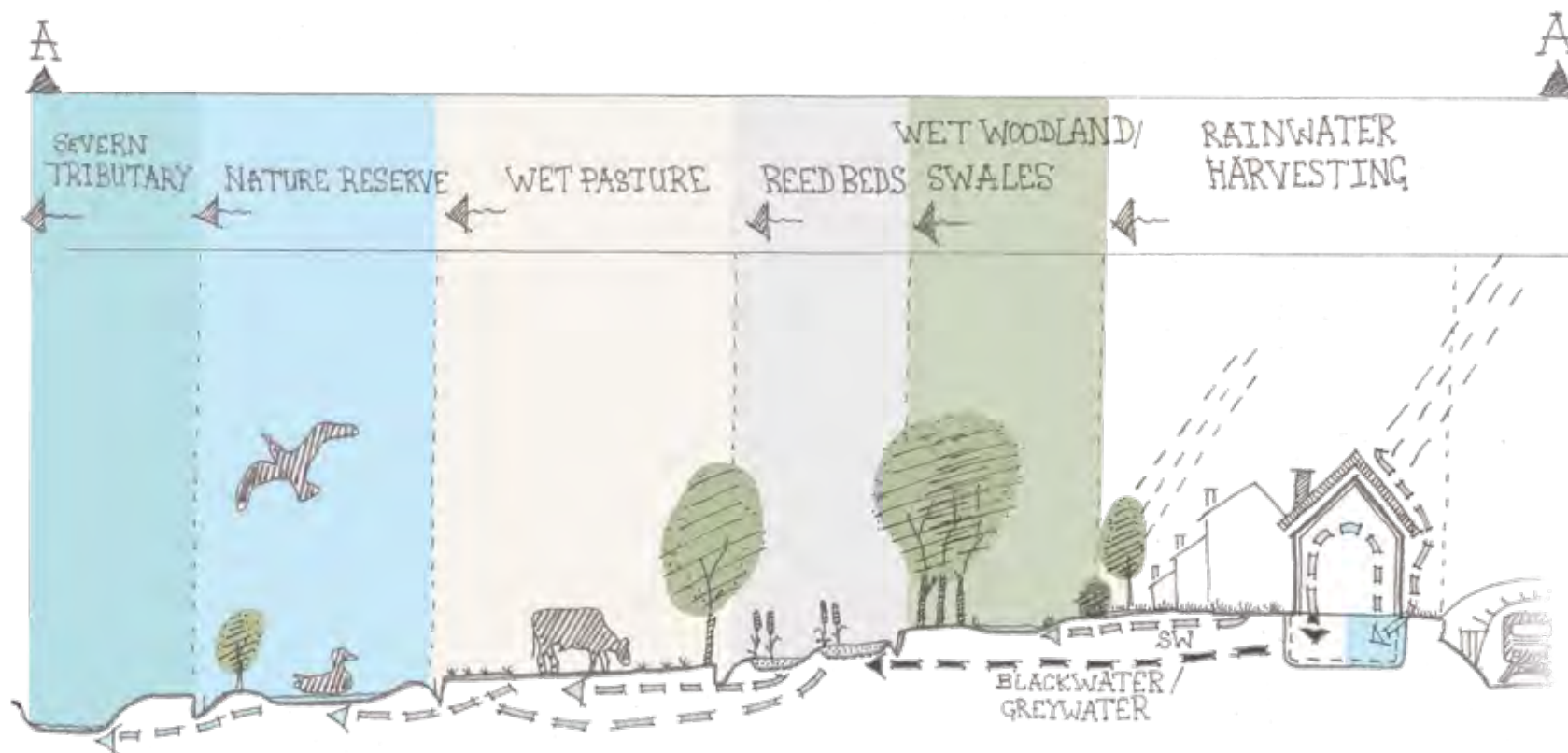
A new railway station will be open for passenger services and will be adjacent to a new public transport interchange, including provision for buses, taxis and a cycle parking. It will also incorporate a cycle hub to encourage visitors to the Sharpness Docks, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal and new SANG areas to travel by sustainable modes of transport.

Sharpness Eco-Village will deliver a transport network which is integrated within the existing neighbourhoods and provides a high quality experience for walking, cycling and public transport users.

A high quality bus network will be vital in enabling residents to travel sustainably. The key elements of this could include:

- Fully Integrated Bus Stops
- Modern Buses
- High Quality Bus Stops
- Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)
- Bus Priority Measures





8. ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY AS A DRIVING FORCE

The integration of sustainable design measures will be a key strategic principle embedded into Sharpness Eco Village. There are various sustainability assessment and benchmarking schemes that are available to aid in informing the development of sustainability strategies for developments. Particular attention, however, will be paid to the Building with Nature scheme as this is a locally developed initiative which has come about through a collaboration between Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the University of the West of England therefore it is particularly relevant to the proposed development area.

The Building Research Establishments Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) standard defines the following main areas of sustainability which have been used to shape the overarching sustainability strategy for the Sharpness Eco Village;





- **Management** of the development is a key consideration during three key stages; design, construction and occupation. Management of the design process is critical to ensure that the proposals identify and strive to meet the necessary sustainability objectives.
- **Health & Wellbeing** is a factor that is also singled out by the Building with Nature scheme. By taking into account the features that can have a significant impact on people's experience of the new development, the Sharpness scheme will aim to provide an exceptional environment for everyone.
- **Energy** will be dealt with in line with the energy hierarchy integrating lean, clean and green energy conservation measures. Key to this will be early consideration of passive design measures that can be incorporated into the development, a scheme of this nature provides unique opportunities to tackle the issue of energy on a larger scale and to achieve efficiencies that smaller schemes are not able to address.
- **Transport** will be a key consideration for this development with ambitious aims to minimise car use and maximise the availability of alternative transportation options by putting in both new and refurbished infrastructure. The scheme will aim to get the basics right, providing easy ways to move around the development and beyond either by foot or by bike rather than by car.
- **Water** is intrinsically linked to this development given its location and history. The development will aim to honour these linkages and provide the infrastructure from the outset to improve the use of water on a large scale.
- **Materials** have an inherent impact on the environment throughout their lifecycle whether it's where they are produced or sourced from, how they are transported to construction sites or how the finished elements are protected to ensure longevity.
- **Waste** is an unavoidable challenge for new developments both during the design and construction stage and also when the development is in use. A new scheme of this scale provides a unique opportunity to consider waste management and achieve efficiencies that are usually unattainable on smaller developments, particularly with regards to recycling and reuse.
- **Ecology** is a major factor for the proposed development given the location and recognised status of adjacent areas and the topic of Wildlife being the third and final theme of the Building with Nature scheme. This development will aim to respect and enhance the existing ecology by providing links to encourage interactions with local features in accessible but sensitive ways. There is a delicate balance to be struck and this development will strive to manage the interactions for the benefit of all through collaboration with local specialists.
- **Pollution** impacts from a development can arise from a variety of sources, the Sharpness Eco Village will aim to minimise and manage these as far as possible to limit its impact on the local area. As discussed under the water section SUDs will be utilised as much as possible, the lighting design will be carefully developed to ensure it meets any ecological considerations and minimises night glow and the use of refrigerants on the scheme will also be carefully considered and minimised as much as possible.



PROPOSED WETLANDS PERIPHERY 3D VIEW



9. DISTINCT NEIGHBOURHOODS AND CHARACTER



VIEW LOCATION

Sharpness Eco-Village will provide a distinct and innovative design response that creates a strong character and sense of place. In order to achieve this objective, two principal character areas have been identified: northern distinct communities and southern community.

- The northern part of the site will provide four well-connected distinct neighbourhoods. Existing topography naturally defines the new settlements that will also form an extension of the existing neighbourhoods such as Sharpness, Newtown, Brookend and Wanswell. A series of green corridors will physically define the edge of these new settlements as well as provide walking/cycle route networks which will connect the new communities with public transport services, employment, leisure, amenity and health facilities.

The character of the northern communities will be influenced by the surrounding landscape and the existing settlements which in turn will give this area a strong identity and character.

- To the south of the B4066, the character of the development will be strongly influenced by its proximity to the estuary and natural open spaces to the south, and Sharpness Docks to the north. This land could be promoted to attract eco housing developers which together with the proposed urban farm and its closeness to the community centre and the proposed locally sourced food market could create a strong sense of eco-community.

As an eco-community, Sharpness Eco-Village could be designed to reduce the ecological footprint by capturing, recycling and reusing waste. Sustainable and energy efficient materials could be also used throughout the site for housing, surfaces and urban furniture.

Providing part of the development for employment and commercial use will make the community a self-contained environment where the need to travel will be considerably reduced, thereby providing a live-work-play lifestyle.



Community

Designing a new settlement from the outset has clear advantages and opportunities in planning social, physical and green infrastructure in a comprehensive manner. This is a clear advantage of Sharpness Eco-Village Community. It will include a range of facilities sufficient to meet future users' basic needs on-site, allowing them to 'live life locally'. The ability to deliver benefits through urban design and travel planning incentives will also be possible within the proposed development.

The concept will base an innovative and sustainable community centre around the area of the future railway station and next to the employment area. This will be the main mixed use centre with a broad range of facilities such as:

- Retail - including a main food store and smaller retail units;
- Market – with locally sourced fresh vegetables and products;
- Employment - likely to be in the form of workshop style units and small scale offices;
- Leisure, Health and Community Facilities e.g. Doctor's surgery, community building and sports facilities.

Additional neighbourhood centres will be located within residential areas in order to create a walkable place. These smaller local centres include:

- Retail - including a convenience food store and small range of retail units;
- Community Building
- Primary School

10. COMMUNITY, WELLBEING & ECONOMIC BENEFITS'

Wellbeing

Sharpness Eco-Village will be designed to prioritise sustainable modes of transport over the use of private vehicles. Routes will be adaptable and accessible for all and designed to a high standard, thereby making walking and cycling a pleasant experience and the chosen option to travel within the development.

New schools will be located within walking distance to the majority of the residents. Convenient and safe walking and cycle routes will be provided throughout the Eco-Village, cycle and scooter parking will also be provided at strategic points.

Ample green corridors will offer a wide range of spaces and activities such as parks with play and amenity areas and a sports hub which will contribute to a healthy community. Dog walking will also be considered in the design process, fields and paddocks equipped with dog play equipment and waste bins will be provided within the green corridors.

A proposed urban farm could also be part of the natural spaces and green corridors provided. This could include horticulture or a market garden with the farmer liaising with the local community. It will offer the community the opportunity to access good quality and fresh locally sourced food, one of the pillars of a healthy community.

Employment

Sharpness Eco-Village will provide long term direct employment opportunities through the proposed employment space, district centre and local food market and retail centres creating connected, flexible and integrated spaces. Small scale business units will be available for new and existing businesses. However, key to the success of this new settlement will be its sustainable transport location with direct rail connections to existing and future employment areas. Attractive, safe and direct cycle routes in combination with an efficient and frequent community bus system will create a new and more attractive commuter lifestyle reducing dependency and necessity of the car.

Employment land could be promoted to attract green economy business and companies that include nature principles as part of their business strategy and in the workplace, to suit the new community needs, as well as knowledge-based industries enabling quality employment opportunities.

A proposed nature reserve together with the Eco-Village proximity to Sharpness Docks and Marina, and Gloucester and Sharpness Canal could be a great opportunity to promote 'green tourism' as part of its economic benefits.

STRUCTURING ELEMENTS



SHARPNESS DOCKS



NEW EMPLOYMENT



SANG (NATURAL RESERVE & URBAN FARM)



MAIN NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE



EDUCATION



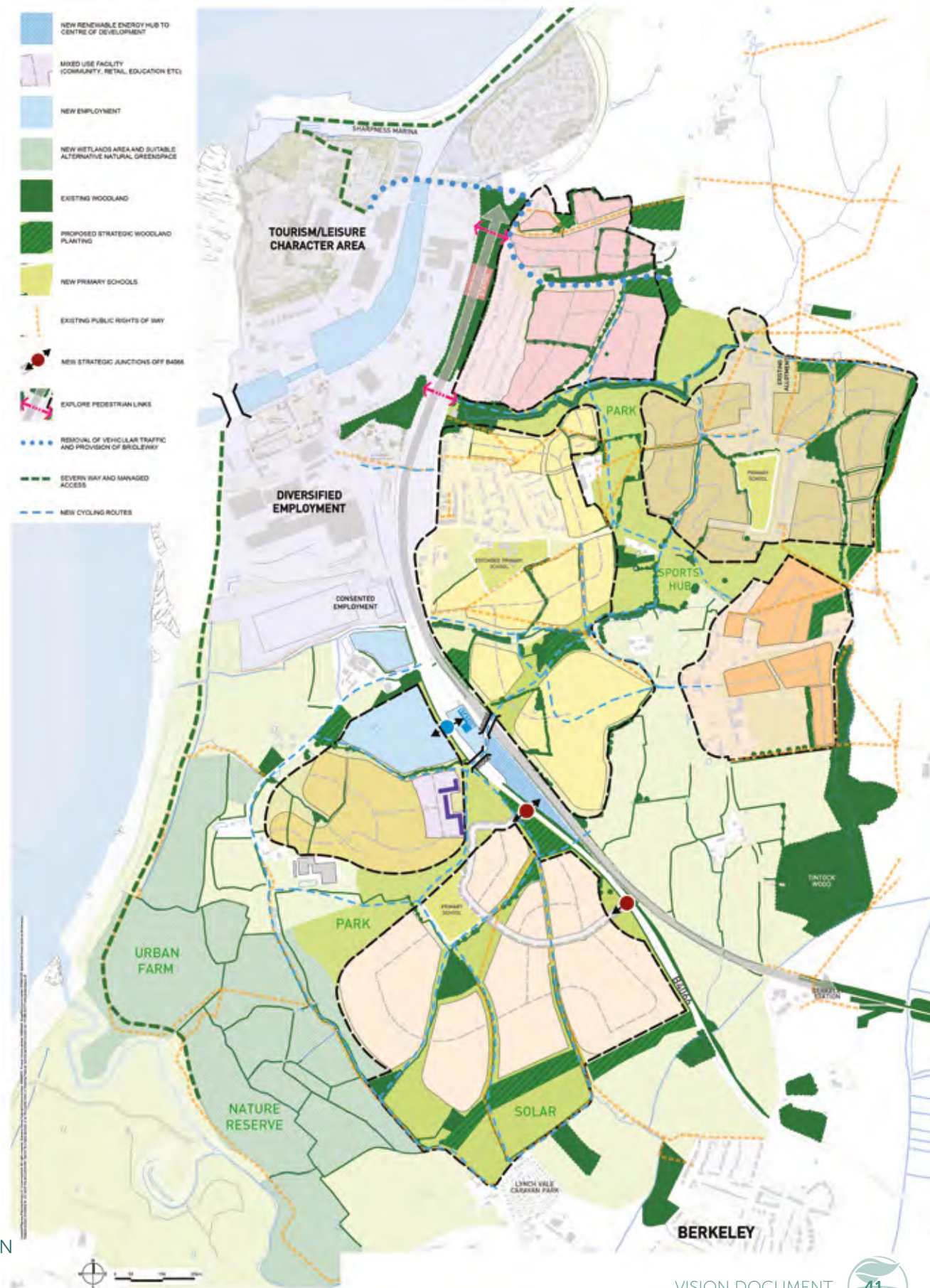
The Indicative Masterplan is not a detailed masterplan and is not a fixed design but the first steps in shaping a place that is flexible enough to provide guidance on the development of the area whilst providing specific enough guidance to ensure the area is designed appropriately.

The Indicative Masterplan shows the general disposition of land uses and the proposed structure of the development. These proposed new access points from the B4066 would lead to a strategically positioned community centre that provides direct, safe and attractive routes within walking distance of the majority of the dwellings. To promote the creation of a walkable place, a well-connected movement network within a network of green corridors, accessible by all users is proposed which helps ensure that all areas of the development are easy to navigate, safe and secure.

CONCEPT PLAN

Further design proposals include:

- Up to 5000 dwellings to meet the District's needs up to 2036 and beyond;
- 10.2Ha of employment land;
- 2.45Ha of mixed use land, including residential apartments;
- 2 new primary schools (2Ha/each) and the expansion of the existing Sharpness primary school (2.4Ha);
- Allowance of 7Ha for a secondary school (location to be determined);
- Approximately 13.5Ha of new wood planting;
- 67.9Ha Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) which could include a Nature Reserve and an Urban Farm.



INDICATIVE MASTERPLAN



Preliminary technical studies have established that Sharpness Eco-Village provides a realistic and deliverable development opportunity.

With the potential to deliver up to 5,000 new homes, together with a comprehensive package of accompanying social and physical infrastructure, it is clear that Sharpness Eco-Village could provide a steady stream of housing delivery to help meet Stroud District's future housing needs.


As set out earlier in this document, our Vision comprises a series of inter-linked neighbourhood areas, which will enable the delivery of houses, schools and open spaces from an early stage. Our Vision will ensure the delivery of new houses alongside the required infrastructure to support the new Eco-Village.

The site benefits from access to the strategic road network and has the potential to improve the existing infrastructure. It will also be designed to address flood risk, landscape and heritage issues. Sharpness Eco-Village can therefore be demonstrated to be suitable to address the District's needs up to 2036.

The Greensquare-Lioncourt Partnership has been created to deliver this Vision, and help plan for the District's housing needs up to 2036 and beyond.



12. NEXT STEPS



The Stroud District Local Plan Review presents an exciting and unique opportunity to deliver Sharpness Eco-Village whilst creating a sustainable and healthy new community with a strong landscape infrastructure, well connected to public transport. The development can create a dynamic new place and an exemplar development.

The development will comprise a combination of distinct neighbourhoods, education, community facilities and retail. This document has identified that it is possible to develop the land in a sensitive and sustainable way which gives the confidence that the site can be delivered to a very high quality.

Sharpness Eco-Village will also provide the opportunity to provide new jobs, open space and new and improved public transport services. Linkages between existing areas of ecological interest can be developed and new habitats provided to preserve and enhance biodiversity and wildlife across the site.

In this context, the Eco-Village will respect the setting and will accord with the principles of high quality design, best practice and sustainability to create a new place that is rich, varied and sympathetic to its environment. The aim is to achieve a high-quality place with a strong identity, activity and a strong 'sense of place'.





www.pegasusgroup.co.uk



PLANNING



DESIGN



ENVIRONMENT



ECONOMICS

Pegasus Group
Pegasus House
Querns Business Centre
Whitworth Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1RT

Telephone: 01285 641717

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