

AECOM

locality

# Two Sites Masterplans

Southwell Neighbourhood Plan

2022

### Quality information

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Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
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Report structure	11/05/22	Report draft structure	Wei Deng	Principal Urban Designer

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# Introduction 01

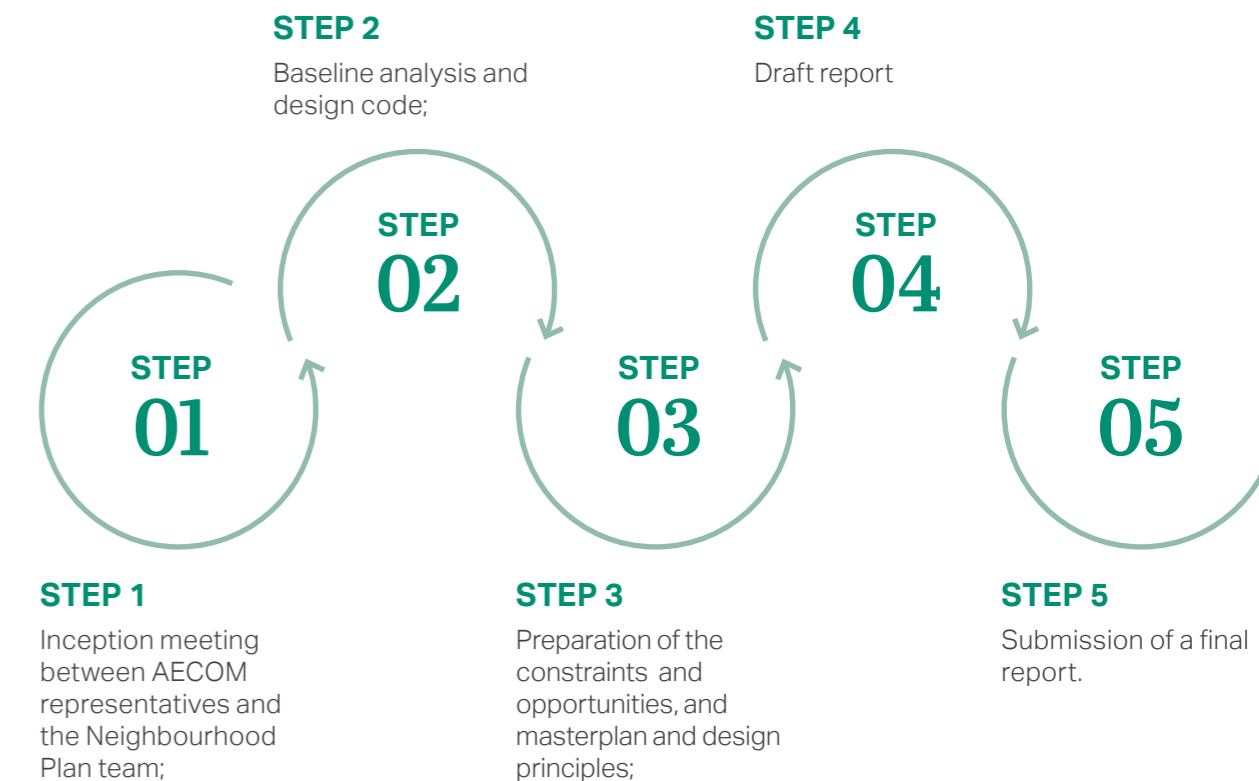
## 1. Introduction

This section provides context and general information to introduce the project and its location.

### 1.1 Objectives

This report presents an illustrative masterplan for two potential development sites in the Southwell Neighbourhood Area. It has been prepared by consultants at AECOM on behalf of Locality, working with the Southwell Town Council Neighbourhood Plan team. It is based on a combined appraisal of the area carried out through a desk study and fieldwork. The Southwell Neighbourhood Plan team selected the potential development sites identified for the illustrative masterplan based on the evidence base gathered, including consultation responses received as part of the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan consultation process.

The Southwell Town Council is well progressed in the production of its Neighbourhood Plan and has requested this work to access professional advice on the planning and design of potential new development in the area.



## 1.2 Process

This document has been prepared to provide high-level spatial plans for the selected sites, to show the scale and nature of the developments which can be accommodated on the sites, should other constraints be resolved and the sites are allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Process

The following steps have been undertaken to prepare this report:

- Initial meeting and site visit;
- Urban design analysis;
- Site constraints and design options;
- Draft report; and
- Final report.

## 1.3 Area of study

The masterplan covers sites SO/HO/4 and SO/HO/5 (Figure 01), which are included in the Southwell's Housing Sites (Newark & Sherwood Allocations & Development Management DPD, 2013). Both sites are located in the north corner of the town, with allocations of strategic landscape buffers and public open spaces to screen the areas from the surrounding countryside (Figure 02).

The design studies are high-level and illustrative, based on current policies (Figure 02) and site visit appraisals, prepared to demonstrate how the design principles that the Town Council wishes to promote could be applied on the sites. We have not undertaken technical studies on topics such as ground conditions, traffic and drainage. It is expected that applicants undertake full design exercises on the sites. This report is just a step in that direction, enabling stakeholders to progress from an informed position.



### KEY

Site boundary

**Figure 01:** Southwell masterplan study area



**Figure 02:** Southwell proposals map showing two sites

Planning Context  
and Engagement

02

## 2. Planning policy and guidance

### 2.1 National planning policy

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's overarching economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. The policies within NPPF apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and act as a framework against which decisions are made on planning applications.

The Revised NPPF states that a key objective of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which will be achieved with reference to three overarching objectives. One of these is an environmental objective, which seeks to contribute to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment.

The parts of the NPPF which are of relevance to this masterplan are:

- Part 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
- Part 13 (Protecting Green Belt land)
- Part 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment).

#### Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance expands on the NPPF and outlines planning best practice. First published in 2014 it has had several updates, the most recent in October 2019. The section on design includes guidance on promoting good design (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20191001). It states that "good design is set out in the National Design Guide under the following 10 characteristics, context,

Identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan."

Paragraph 006 Reference ID: 26-006-20191001 states that masterplans focus "on site-specific proposals such as the scale and layout of the development, mix of uses, transport and green infrastructure. Depending on the level of detail, the masterplan may indicate the intended arrangement of buildings, streets and the public realm."

### 2021 National Model Design Code MHCLG

This report provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

### 2020 - Building for a Healthy Life Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the new (2020) name for Building for Life, the government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The new name reflects the crucial role that the built environment has in promoting wellbeing. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

### 2019 - National Design Guide MHCLG

The National Design Guide (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

### 2007 - Manual for Streets Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.



## 2.2 Local planning policy context

### Amended Core Strategy Development Plan Document

This document is one of the LDF's overarching primary documents covering the big issues the Council and their partners need to address in the next 20 years. It includes a vision, objectives, and policies to help deliver development and change in the district. The document is intended to be read alongside the Allocations & Development Management DPD, as well as with more detailed place-specific documents such as those within Neighbourhood Plans (i.e. Including this masterplan document).

The following core policies directly relate to the remit of this Design Code document and should therefore be considered:

- Core Policy 1 - Affordable Housing Provision
- Core Policy 2 - Rural Affordable Housing
- Core Policy 3 - Housing Mix, Type & Density
- Core Policy 8 - Retail & Town Centres
- Core Policy 9 - Sustainable Design
- Core Policy 11 - Rural Accessibility
- Core Policy 14 - Historic Environment

## 2.3 Neighbourhood plan

The Localism Act 2011 gives Town Councils new powers to prepare statutory Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) to help local areas develop. Through NDPs, local people have the opportunity to shape new development as the development plan determines planning applications unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Once made, the Southwell Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) will become part of the statutory development plan for Southwell, sitting alongside the Newark and Sherwood District Council Local Plan Core Strategy.

### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

The following SPDs directly relate to the design remit of this Design Code document, and are all part of Newark & Sherwood Council's LDF. The following documents are a material consideration in planning applications and should be read alongside this Design Code document and the wider LDF's content.

- Affordable Housing
- Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings
- Householder Development
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Residential Cycle & Car Parking Standards
- Shopfronts & Advertisements Design Guide

## 2.4 Engagement Process

This section provides a brief chronological breakdown of the key elements and milestones used throughout the duration of the production of this document.

### Inception Call with Steering Group

An inception call with the Southwell Steering Group allowed AECOM to confirm the brief and programme of works.

### Site Visit

AECOM undertook a visit to the neighbourhood plan area to further understand the Southwell neighbourhood area.

### Workshops

AECOM provided masterplan concepts and layouts to the local group for consultation. The sites themselves have been consulted on and this work has been done to indicate how these, and similar sites within Southwell settlement boundary, can be taken forward.



### 3. Site SO/HO/4 Masterplan

This section provides an analysis of the site and the evolution of the masterplan for site SO/HO/4.

#### 3.1 Site visit

The irregular-shaped site SO/HO/4, 2.89 ha, is located to the northwest of Southwell built-up area. Norwood Park Golf Centre and Kirklington Road bound it to the west, Lower Kirklington Road to the north, a Public Right of Way footpath (FP55) to the south, and several residential properties along Avondale Lane to the east. It is a flat greenfield area, divided into several pieces of land by trees and hedgerows.



Figure 04: View 1: The site is located at the gateway of Southwell town.



Figure 05: View 2: A site access point from Kirklington Road



Figure 06: View 3: Photo of an existing building next to the site



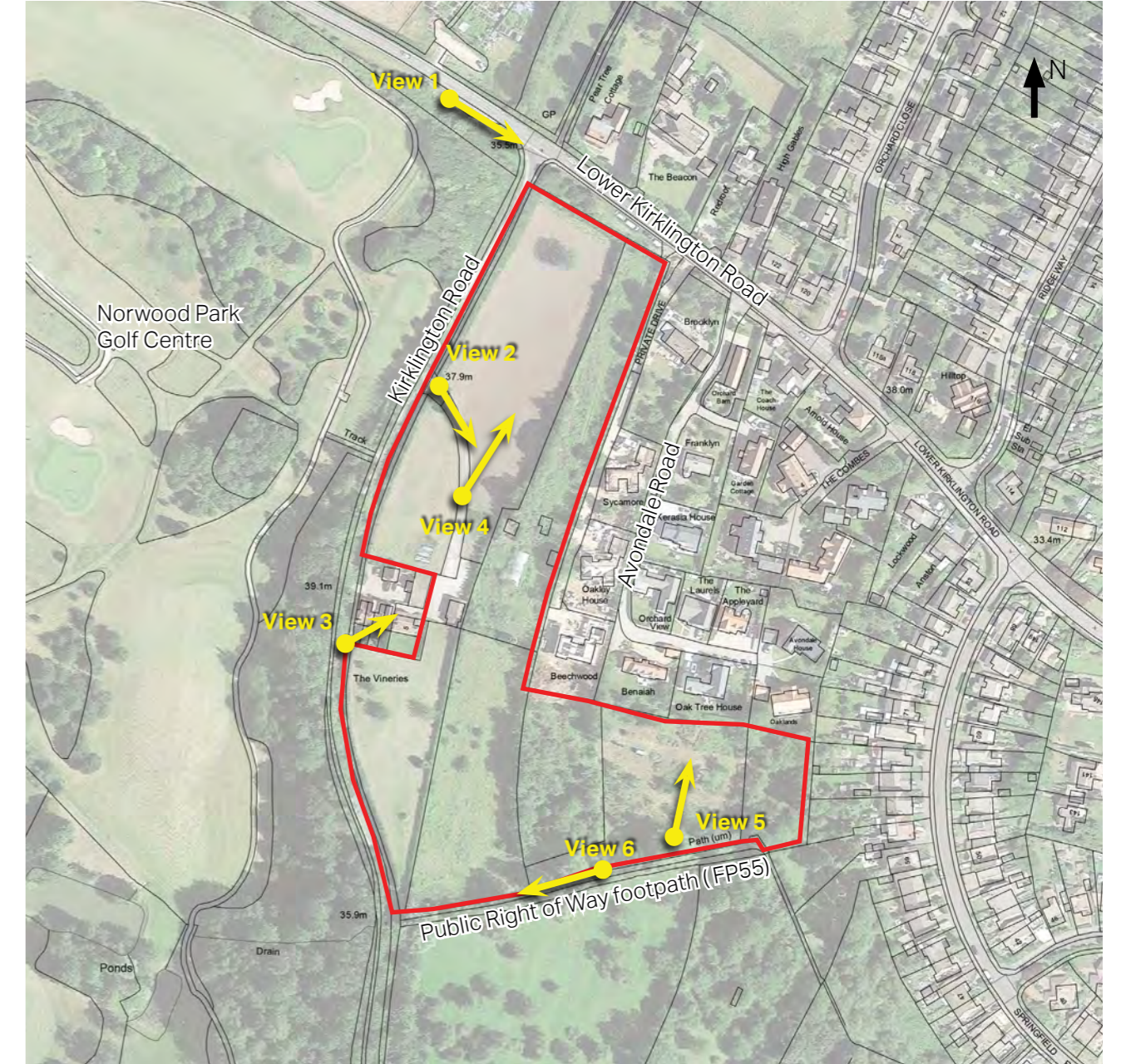
Figure 07: View 4: Overgrown long grass within the north part of the site



Figure 08: View 5: Overgrown scrubs within the east part of the site



Figure 09: View 6: A footpath along the southern boundary of the site



0 10m 50m 100m  
5m



### 3.2 High level constraints

Several key site constraints are concluded based on the site visit and baseline study. These issues will be integrated into the masterplan consideration process.

#### Key consideration points:

- ① • Lower Kirklington Road is very busy and relatively narrow, not the best location for site access if there are other options;
- ② • Mature hedgerows along the site boundaries should be retained;
- ③ • There are several hedgerows run across the site, which require further assessment and integration into future development proposals;
- ④ • The local character, such as redbrick buildings next to the site, should be respected;
- ⑤ • Existing trees should be assessed and retained where necessary; and
- ⑥ • The proposals should consider how to connect to a wider footpath network.



Figure 11: View 7: Lower Kirklington Road is the main road providing access to Southwell



Figure 12: View 8: Existing mature hedgerow providing screen along the western site boundary



Figure 13: View 9: The footpath (FP55) is well-used by public

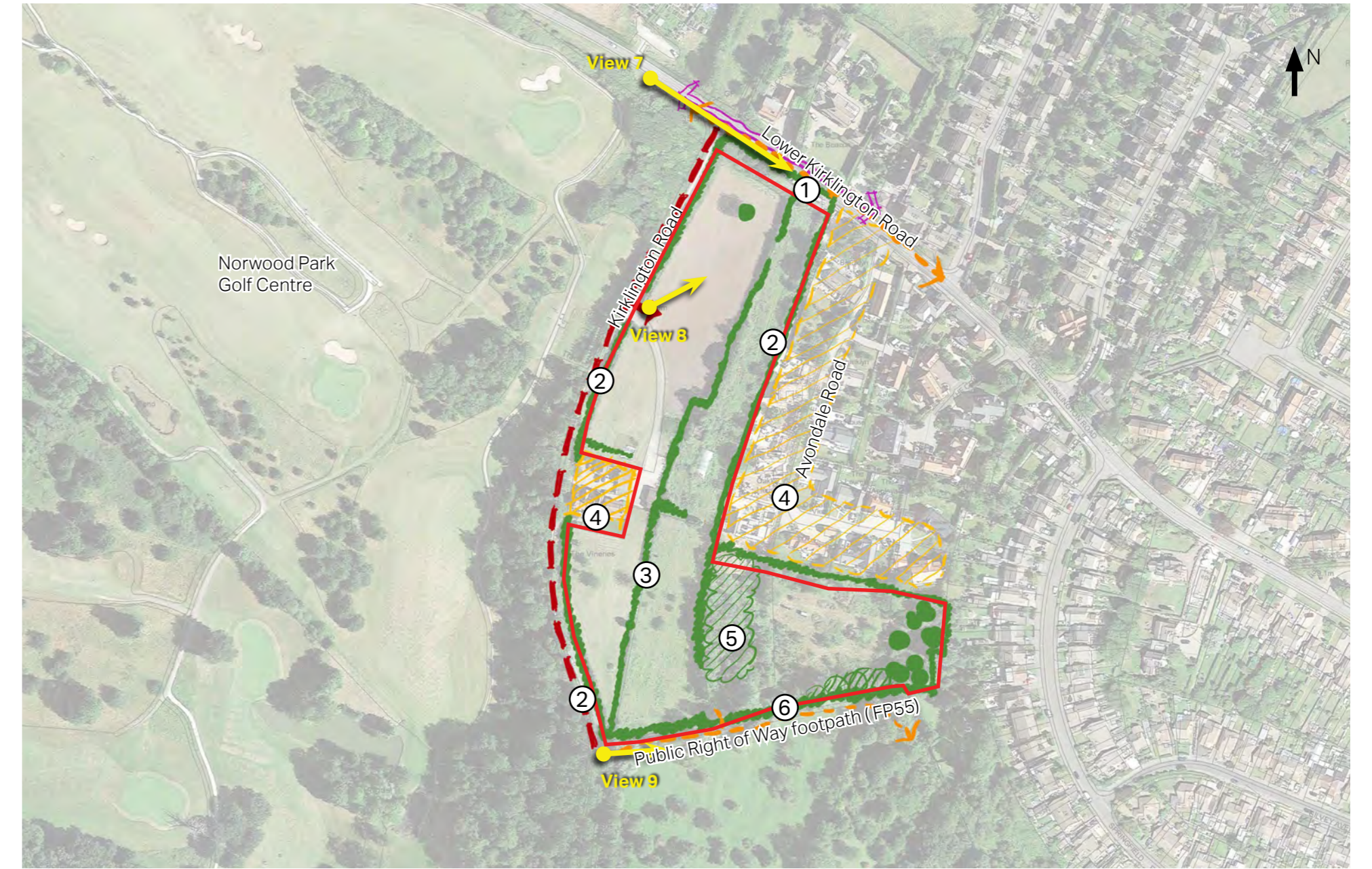


Figure 14: Site Constraints

### 3.3 Site opportunities

In response to the various constraints considerations, the following opportunities might be integrated into the masterplan:

#### Key consideration points:

- ① • Potential site access from Kirklington Road, using the existing gate, and potential emergency access will be obtained from Lower Kirklington Road;
- ② • Existing hedgerows to be integrated into future Green Infrastructure;
- ③ • Existing footpaths to be integrated into a proposed non-vehicular route network;
- ④ • Lower density development area to the eastern corner of the site; and
- ⑤ • High quality of development parcels.



Figure 15: View 10: Potential site access from Kirklington Road



Figure 16: View 11: Flat areas for high-quality residential parcels

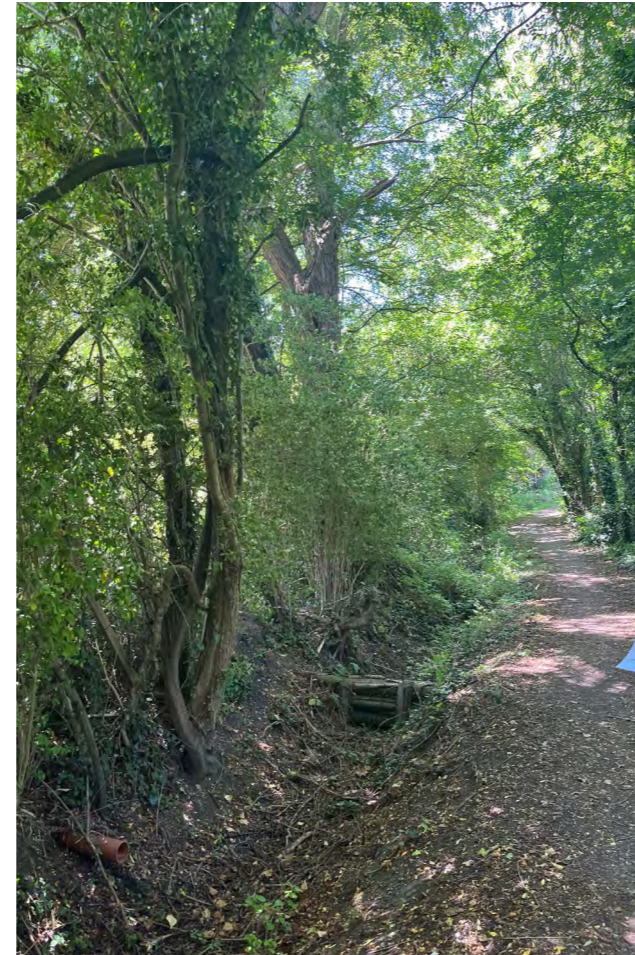


Figure 17: View 12: The existing public footpath to be integrated into the future non-vehicular network



Figure 18: Site Opportunities

0 10m 50m 100m  
5m

### 3.4 Green Infrastructure

The proposal for Site SO/HO/4 has preserved and, where possible, enhanced the sense of ruralness given by the surrounding countryside landscape. The scheme proposes small clusters of residential dwellings with front and rear gardens, grass verges and streets with trees. Existing natural features, such as existing hedgerows and trees have been retained, and where possible, additional planting has been provided.

The green space to the north edge of the site acts as a gateway to Southwell town and is connected to dwellings via a pedestrian network, which allows safe pedestrian access throughout the site.

A landscaping buffer area is provided along the western boundary between the proposed development and the existing golf course.



Figure 19: Precedent images





- KEY
-  Site boundary
  -  Green infrastructure
  -  Landscape buffer
  -  Potential green gateway



Figure 20: Green Infrastructure

### 3.5 Movement network

The primary distributor road will access the Site from Kirklington Road. The proposed route will take across the site has been designed concerning the existing vegetation. Emergency access to Lower Kirklington Road is offered through the green space located in the northern corner of the site. Proposed footpaths will increase permeability throughout the site and provide additional linkages to the village and the existing PRoW network.

It is important that the site is well-embedded into its surrounding context and integrates well with Southwell's existing village fabric. Although the site's internal movement structure is indicative at this stage, it helps demonstrate the fundamental principles which will be adopted at the detail design stage. New development should seek to integrate well within its surroundings and reinforce existing connections and create new ones.

Key principles which have been adopted into this masterplan include:

- Providing a choice of safe, direct and attractive routes which will actively encourage walking and cycling;
- Creating a network of well-defined and legible streets; and
- Creating connections which are attractive, well-lit, direct and easy to navigate.

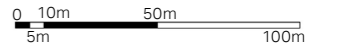


Figure 21: Precedent images

- KEY
- Site boundary
  - Green infrastructure
  - Existing road
  - Proposed road
  - ➔ Site access
  - ↔ Emergency access
  - Existing footpath
  - ▬ Public Rights of Way
  - Proposed footpath



Figure 22: Movement network



### 3.6 Land use

The opposite plan identifies the areas proposed for development and land use. The configuration of these areas has been defined by vegetation constraints, visual impact, access constraints, and a commitment to maintaining green infrastructure and open space within the site boundary.

All development parcels are designated for residential use, while the remaining land is used for open spaces and wildlife habitat. The site size will allow for around 35 units, with different housing types and tenures to be provided. A potential 30% of dwellings (10 units) could be affordable houses.

It is envisioned that most of the housing would be family homes with gardens, as per the existing Southwell town context. However, the precise mix of housing type and tenure is not specified in detail at this stage.

#### Key Land uses breakdown:

Site BO/HO/4:  
 Total area: 2.89 ha  
 Open space: 1.33 ha  
 Residential area: 1.39 ha  
 (potential units: 35 @ density of 25units/ha)  
 Road: 0.17 ha

- KEY
- █ Site boundary
  - █ Green infrastructure
  - █ Proposed road
  - █ Proposed residential parcels



Figure 23: Land use plan

### 3.7 Urban design principles

The proposed development will deliver a sensitively designed scheme which is grounded in the following objectives:

- Deliver a high quality, inclusive and well-designed masterplan which provides desirable housing whilst addressing housing needs and demand in the area;
- Improve the environmental quality of the site and create a sustainable and attractive neighbourhood;
- Enhance the ecological value of the site through new habitat creation and open space preservation; and
- Ensuring that development is effectively woven into the existing village context and fabric.

To achieve these objectives, a series of urban design principles are suggested below:

- The housing arrangement should reflect the existing vegetation and the proposed road orientation to create an enjoyable spatial experience for residents and visitors;
- A well-linked Green Infrastructure should be created that may integrate the existing hedgerows and mature woodlands;
- All open spaces should be well maintained to ensure the desired functions are delivered in the long term;
- Local building styles, materials, and architectural features should be considered for use on the new buildings; and
- Landscape buffers should be considered along the western boundary to mitigate the potential negative visual impact on the countryside areas.

- KEY
- Site boundary
  - Green infrastructure
  - Existing road
  - Key frontages
  - Proposed residential parcels
  - Lower density residential parcels
  - ➔ Site access
  - ➔ Emergency access
  - Existing footpath
  - Public Rights of Way
  - Proposed footpath
  - ☀ Landscape node



Figure 24: Urban design principles

### 3.8 Masterplan

A summary of the main masterplan components is listed below:

- The development has the potential to create an attractive gateway to Southwell;
- High-quality family homes to be delivered on development platforms;
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows where possible which will be used to create soft edges to development; and
- A network of open spaces and amenity areas is distributed throughout the development.

The illustrative plan provided in this section demonstrates one potential solution to achieving the design principles. It should not be seen as prescriptive but more as a guide to achieving a layered, comprehensive solution that responds to key issues.



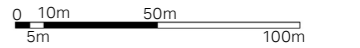
Figure 25: Precedent images

#### KEY

- Site boundary
- Green infrastructure
- Proposed residential parcels
- Indicative building frontage
- Existing road
- ➔ Site access
- ➔ Emergency access
- Existing footpath
- Public Rights of Way
- Proposed footpath
- Proposed road
- Private drive
- ☀ Potential green gateway



Figure 26: Concept masterplan



**Site S0/HO/5 Masterplan**

**04**



# 4. Site SO/HO/5 Masterplan

This section provides an analysis analysis of the site and the evolution of the masterplan for site SO/HO/5.

## 4.1 Site visit

The site SO/HO/5 (3.68ha) is an irregular-shaped site located on the northern side of Lower Kirklington Road, opposite site SO/HO/4. Most of the site is covered by long grass, mature hedgerows and trees, and an informal track providing access to residential houses at the northeast corner. A well-used allotment defines the western boundary, Southwell Trail (BW77) to the north, and several residential properties to the south and east. A public open space joins the site at the east corner. The site is generally flat, with a gentle slope dropping towards the north.



Figure 29: View (1) from the track looking north towards the Public Rights of Way (FP58)



Figure 27: View (2) from Public Rights of Way (FP57) looking north



Figure 28: View (3) from Lower Kirklington Road looking north towards a building within the site



Figure 30: View (4) from Public Rights of Way (FP57) looking west



Figure 31: Site boundary and Photo locations

## 4.2 High level constraints

Several key site constraints are concluded based on the site visit and baseline study. These issues will be integrated into the masterplan consideration process.

### Key consideration points:

- ① Lower Kirklington Road is the only potential access road, and the area next to the allotment may be a better location to accommodate site access and entrance gateway green space;
- ② Mature hedgerows along the site boundaries should be retained;
- ③ There are several hedgerows with trees running across the site, which require further assessment and integration into future development proposals;
- ④ The local character, such as redbrick buildings next to the site, should be respected; and
- ⑤ The proposals should consider connecting to a wider footpath and bridleway network.



**Figure 32:** View (5) from footpath 58 looking west towards the existing hedgerow along the western boundary



**Figure 33:** View (6) from the existing track looking north towards the footpath 58



**Figure 34:** View (7) from footpath 57 looking south toward the overgrown shrubs and trees



**Figure 35:** Site Constraints

0 10m 50m 100m  
5m

### 4.3 Site opportunities

In response to the various constraints considerations, the following opportunities might be integrated into the masterplan:

**Key consideration points:**

- ① • Potential site access from Lower Kirklington Road, next to the Allotment;
- ② • Footpath or emergency access will be obtained from a narrow corridor connecting to Lower Kirklington Road;
- ③ • Existing hedgerows to be integrated into future Green Infrastructure; Existing footpaths to be integrated into a proposed non-vehicular route network;
- ④ • Lower density development area to the eastern part of the site; and
- ⑤ • High quality of development parcels.



**Figure 36:** View (8) from footpath 57 looking south towards the dense trees and shrubs, the potential for public green space



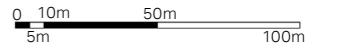
**Figure 37:** View (9) from footpath 57 looking north towards the flat area for development



**Figure 38:** View (10) from Lower Kirklington Road, looking north into the site; the narrow corridor may be only suitable for footpaths, cycle routes, or an emergency route



**Figure 39:** Site Opportunities



## 4.4 Green Infrastructure

The proposal for site SO/HO/5 considered a comprehensive multi-functional Green Infrastructure network. It has preserved the sense of ruralness given by the surrounding countryside landscape. The scheme proposes small clusters of residential dwellings with front and rear gardens and streets with trees. Existing natural features, such as existing hedgerows and trees, have been retained, where possible, and additional planting has been provided within new open spaces.

The green space to the southwest corner of the site acts as a gateway to Southwell town. It is connected to wider areas via a pedestrian network, which allows safe pedestrian access throughout the site. Landscaping buffers will be provided along the western and northern boundaries to reduce the impact on the character of the surrounding countryside.



Figure 40: Precedent images





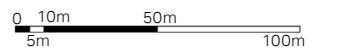
- KEY
-  Site boundary
  -  Green infrastructure
  -  Landscape buffer
  -  Potential green gateway



Figure 41: Green Infrastructure



## 4.5 Movement network

The primary road will access the Site from Lower Kirklington Road. The proposed route that this will take across the site has been designed concerning the existing vegetation. Emergency access to Lower Kirklington Road is offered through the narrow gap in the south corner of the site. Proposed footpaths will increase permeability throughout the site and provide additional linkages to the village and the existing PRoW network.

It is essential that the site is well-embedded into its surrounding context and integrates well with Southwell's existing village fabric. Although the site's internal movement structure is indicative at this stage, it helps demonstrate the fundamental principles which will be adopted at the detail design stage. New development should seek to integrate well within its surroundings, reinforce existing connections, and create new ones.

Key principles which have been adopted into this masterplan include:

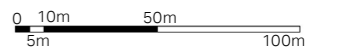
- Providing a choice of safe, direct and attractive routes which will actively encourage walking and cycling;
- Creating a network of well-defined and legible streets; and
- Making connections which are attractive, well-lit, direct and easy to navigate.



Figure 42: Precedent images



Figure 43: Movement Network



## 4.6 Land use

The opposite plan identifies the areas proposed for development and land use. The configuration of these areas has been defined by vegetation constraints, visual impact, access constraints, and a commitment to maintaining green infrastructure and open space within the site boundary.

All development parcels are designated for residential use, while the remaining land is used for open spaces and wildlife habitat. The site size will allow for around 45 units, with different housing types and tenures to be provided. The detailed housing mix should refer to 'Policy He1 – Housing Type And Density' of the Neighbourhood Plan. A potential 30% of dwellings (14 units) could be affordable houses.

It is envisioned that most of the housing would be family homes with gardens, as per the existing Southwell town context. However, the precise mix of housing type and tenure is not specified in detail at this stage.

### Key Land uses breakdown:

Site BO/HO/5:  
 Total area: 3.68 ha  
 Open space: 1.60 ha  
 Residential area: 1.77 ha  
 (potential units: 44 @ density of 25units/ha)  
 Road: 0.31 ha

- KEY
- █ Site boundary
  - █ Green infrastructure
  - █ Proposed road
  - █ Proposed residential parcels



Figure 44: Land Uses

## 4.7 Urban design principles

The proposed development will deliver a sensitively designed scheme which is grounded in the following objectives:

- Improve the environmental quality of the site and create a sustainable and attractive neighbourhood;
- Deliver a high-quality, inclusive and well-designed masterplan which provides desirable housing whilst addressing housing needs and demand in the area;
- Enhance the ecological value of the site through new habitat creation and open space preservation; and
- Ensuring that development is effectively woven into the existing village context and fabric.

To achieve these objectives, a series of urban design principles are suggested below:

- A well-linked Green Infrastructure should be created that may integrate the existing hedgerows and mature woodlands;
- Landscape buffers should be considered along the western and northern boundary to mitigate the potential negative visual impact on the countryside;
- All open spaces should be well maintained to ensure the desired functions are delivered in the long term;
- The housing arrangement should reflect the existing hedgerow and the proposed road orientation to create an enjoyable spatial experience for residents and visitors; and
- Local building styles, materials, and architectural features should be considered for use on the new buildings.

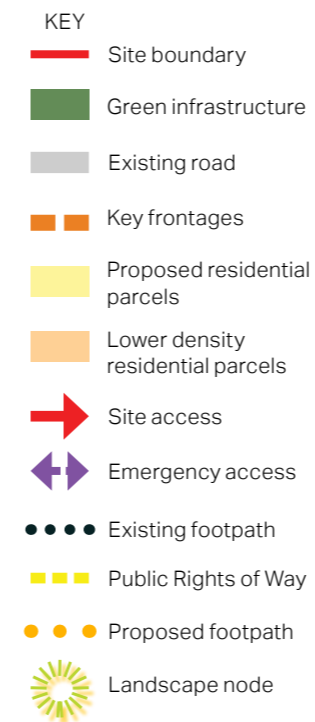
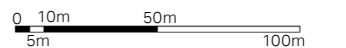


Figure 45: Urban Design Principles



## 4.8 Masterplan

A summary of the main masterplan components is listed below:

- The development has the potential to create an attractive gateway to Southwell;
- High-quality family homes to be delivered on development platforms;
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows where possible which will be used to create soft edges to development; and
- A network of open spaces and amenity areas is distributed throughout the development.

The illustrative plan provided in this section demonstrates one potential solution to achieving the design principles. It should not be seen as prescriptive but more as a guide to achieving a layered, comprehensive solution that responds to key issues.



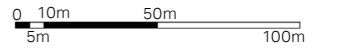
Figure 46: Precedent images

### KEY

-  Site boundary
-  Green infrastructure
-  Proposed residential parcels
-  Indicative building frontage
-  Existing road
-  Site access
-  Emergency access
-  Existing footpath
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Proposed footpath
-  Proposed road
-  Private drive
-  Potential green gateway



Figure 47: Masterplan







**Next Step**  
**05**

## 5. Next Step

This document provides a masterplan and recommendations for the potential site layouts in Southwell and should be read in conjunction with the Southwell Neighbourhood Plan Design Code document. The report is based on high-level reviews of the town's site context, constraints, and designations.

The review suggests that any future development should be in line with the local characteristics and the existing context. Therefore, the general design principles and concept masterplan will guide future developments in Southwell to respect the area and conserve the existing setting, heritage, links, and townscape character.

The Town Council will use this document to embed the design policies within the Neighbourhood Plan to achieve the objectives set out in this document. Developers should also observe this document to understand the design quality expected to achieve.

Overall this document provides a holistic set of design principles and conceptual masterplans for development in Southwell, which will ensure that the town's character and appearance are protected in the event of future developments coming forward.

## About AECOM

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