



A VISION FOR
LAND OFF ELBOURNE WAY
BASSINGBOURN



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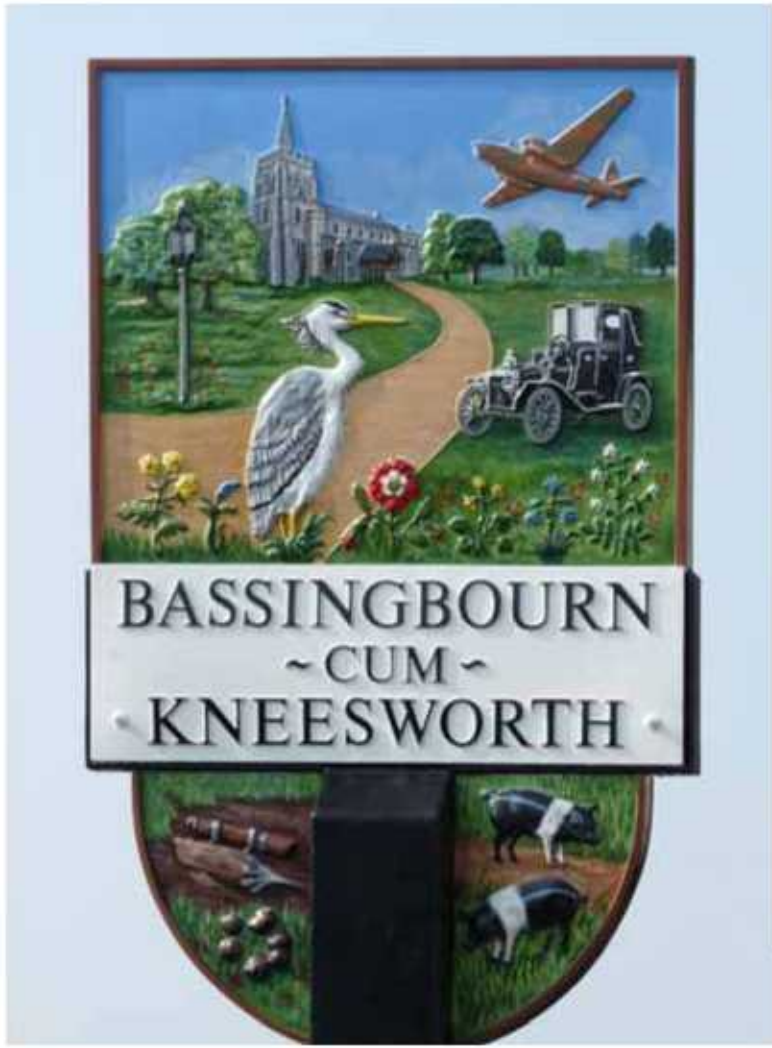
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CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 The vision
- 3 The site and context
- 4 Constraints and opportunities
- 5 Master plan concept
- 6 Conclusion



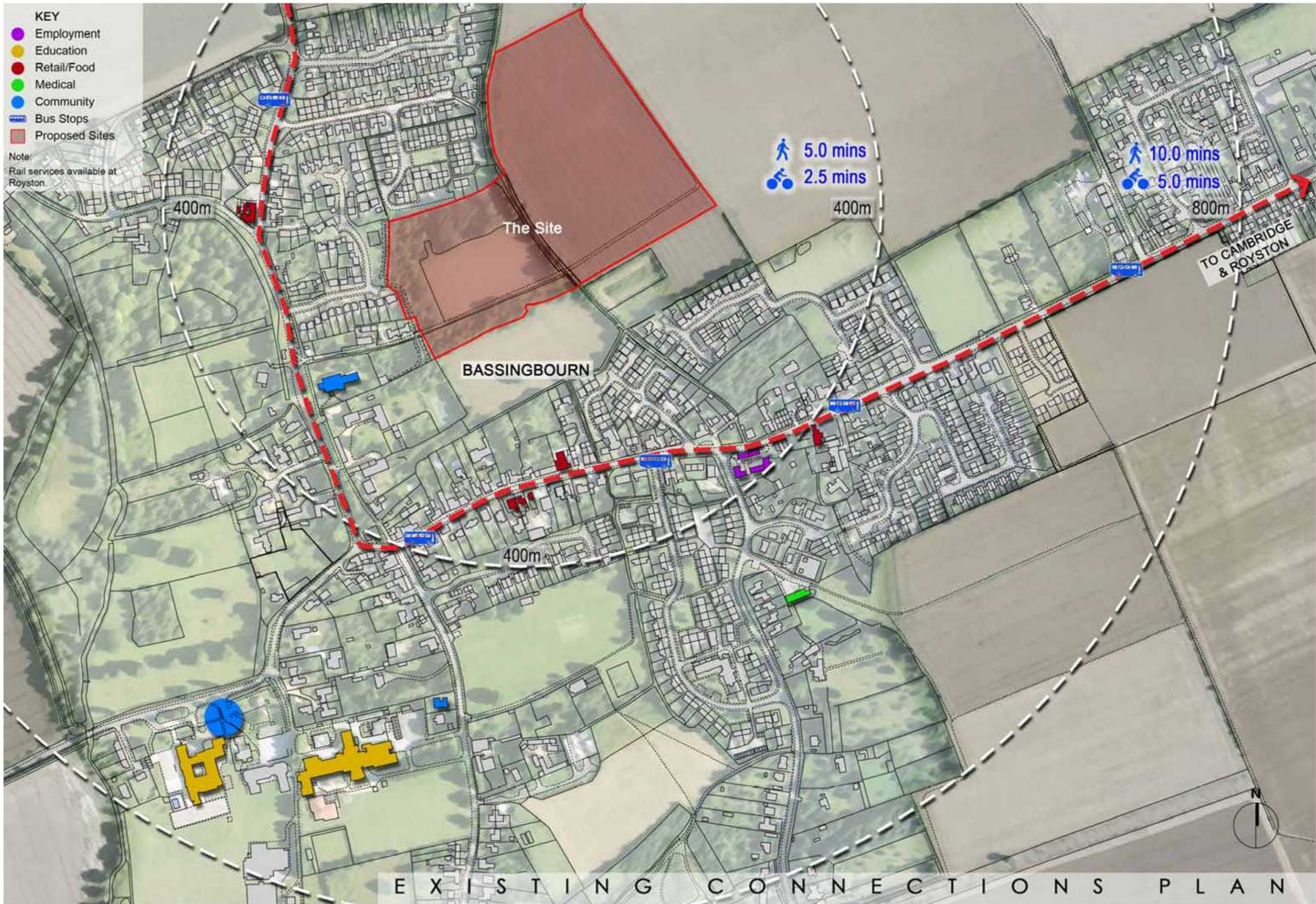
3. THE SITE AND CONTEXT

The site is located at the north eastern edge of Bassingbourn. It comprises two areas of land. The western parcel contains allotments, surrounded by woodland on the northern, western and southern boundaries. The eastern parcel contains an arable field. It is proposed that the western parcel of land would be subject social and environmental improvements as part of the proposed development; with an upgrade to the allotments, management of the woodland, and ecological enhancement measures. The proposed dwellings, including open space and additional landscaping, would be located on the eastern part of the site. The site covers a total area of 6.91ha.

The site is not within the Green Belt.

Bassingbourn is identified as a Minor Rural Centre in the defined settlement hierarchy for South Cambridgeshire. It contains a good range of services and facilities, including a secondary school (Bassingbourn Village College), primary school (Bassingbourn Primary School), convenience store, post office, doctor's surgery, dentist, pharmacy, public houses, mobile library, sports centre, and outdoor recreation areas. Bassingbourn is on bus routes, with regular services to Royston and a limited service to Cambridge.





4. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

TREES

Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants have undertaken a high level, preliminary review of the trees on site. The site comprises a number of arboricultural elements, divided between the eastern and western parts of the site that, if managed correctly could form an integral and valuable part of both new development and the existing villages green infrastructure, namely;

Woodland on the western and northern boundary of the existing allotments. This is neglected woodland that comprises Aspen, Ash, Elm, Field Maple and Hazel Coppice. Of particular concern are a number of very large, over-mature, Poplars, a number of which have fallen in recent years. Whilst these have considerable visual amenity, they do have a limited safe useful life expectancy and therefore any development of the site will have to provide a woodland management plan aimed at managing out the larger trees and re-establishing the safety of the woodland and a viable woodland habitat to enhance the long-term green infrastructure for the site and surrounding area.



The second element is the remnant orchard on the southern side of the access track. Again this has been neglected over recent years but still retains a number of the original trees adjacent to the ditch. It is recommended that the orchard be revitalised as part of any development of the site as part of the sites green infrastructure.

On the eastern boundary of the allotments, dividing the whole site is a ditch and tree line comprising a mature hedge/trees, mainly Ash and Sycamore. This is broken in the south eastern corner where the ditch is bridged and access gained into the larger field. Immediately adjacent to the bridge is a protected Horse Chestnut, subject to a Tree Preservation Order. Whilst the tree is not in a particularly good condition with poor vigour, due to Horse Chestnut Leaf minor and other pathogens, it should still be considered a constraint on prospective development.

This tree line continues both north and south alongside the adjacent field with a public footpath immediately adjacent. This provides a pleasant green screen between the site and adjacent residential dwelling.

To the south of the larger field is a lagoon surrounded by willow and the occasional Birch and Ash tree that will need to be managed if it is to be retained. It is suggested that should this feature be retained as part of any future development the willow will have to be coppiced on a cyclical basis.

Any future development of the site must be based on a detailed Arboricultural Assessment of the site and Woodland Management Plan to guide development/management.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE

CgMs Heritage have undertaken an initial site appraisal of the extent and nature of known archaeological and heritage assets within the proposal site and surrounding area. The site is partially located within the Bassingbourn Conservation Area and there are a number of built heritage assets located to the west of the site which comprise the Church of St Peter & St Paul (Grade I), Manor Farmhouse (Grade II), Church Farmhouse (Grade II). There is intervisibility between the site and these built heritage assets, but they are not likely to be a constraint to the development of the site through the incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures.

The site is known to contain a former Medieval pond and a former Post-Medieval ice-house. Within the vicinity of the site is a typical spread of Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Medieval activity, suggesting an enhanced potential for currently unknown remains of these periods to be present within the site. These assets are, however, highly unlikely to be constraints to development.

A future planning application would be supported by a Built Heritage Statement which would establish the nature of any impact to any designated and non-designated built heritage assets, and would inform the design of the scheme to minimise any harm to the significance of the identified built heritage assets.

A formal Archaeological Desk-Based assessment would also be prepared which will incorporate the results of a detailed geophysical survey that will be undertaken across all accessible areas within the site. This work will inform the need for and scope of further survey work – which may include intrusive trial trenching.

KEY:

- Listed Building
- Tree Protection Order
- Protected Amenity
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Development Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Defined Countryside Frontage
- Allotments



O P P O R T U N I T I E S & C O N S T R I A N T S

LANDSCAPE

The Landscape Partnership has provided initial observations concerning potential landscape and visual opportunities and constraints at the site. A Briefing Note (prepared by The Landscape Partnership) is submitted with this response. In summary, the western part of the site is bound by established planting and so is well contained and has a strong association with the edge of the village. The eastern part of the site comprises an arable field, and is more open. There are public footpaths into and through the western part of the site.



The existing vegetated edge at the site would need to be replicated within the proposed development, albeit further out from the existing settlement edge. This approach would ensure that a strong green and defensible edge to the village is provided with the proposed development. The landscape treatment at the site might include the planting of a woodland belt, or of native hedges with hedgerow standard trees, either side of a perimeter track.

ECOLOGY

Applied Ecology have provided initial observations in relation to on site ecology. The site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory wildlife site designation and does not fall within any Site of Special Scientific Interest impact risk zone described by Natural England. The nearest designated wildlife site is called Bassingbourn Barracks County Wildlife Site. It is a non-statutory designated site of importance for calcareous grassland located 1.4 km to the north of the site, and is isolated by the suburban infrastructure of Bassingbourn village and arable land beyond the village envelope.

The site is comprised mainly of three broad habitat types: arable land in intensive arable production; an adjoining allotment (formed recently from arable land); and broad-leaved plantation woodland and a derelict orchard with mature trees and scrub around three sides of the allotment. The arable and allotment land are separated by a small flowing-water stream. An off-site surface water attenuation pond occurs within a few metres of the Site boundary and may have amphibian interest - although Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre has confirmed there are no known records of the legally protected amphibian great crested newt within Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth and land immediately around the village envelope.

Other protected animal species interest relates to the confirmed presence of a badger sett within the Site, the potential value of the woodland, orchard and adjoining farmland for garden/woodland and farmland nesting birds, and the possible use of mature trees and wooded habitats by foraging, commuting and, potentially, roosting bats.



HIGHWAYS

Transport Planning Associates have reviewed the access arrangements required to serve the proposed development. Access to the site is currently provided via a dropped kerb footway crossover that leads to a field gate at the south-west end of the site. The design of this existing access is not considered suitable to accommodate a residential development of the scale proposed.

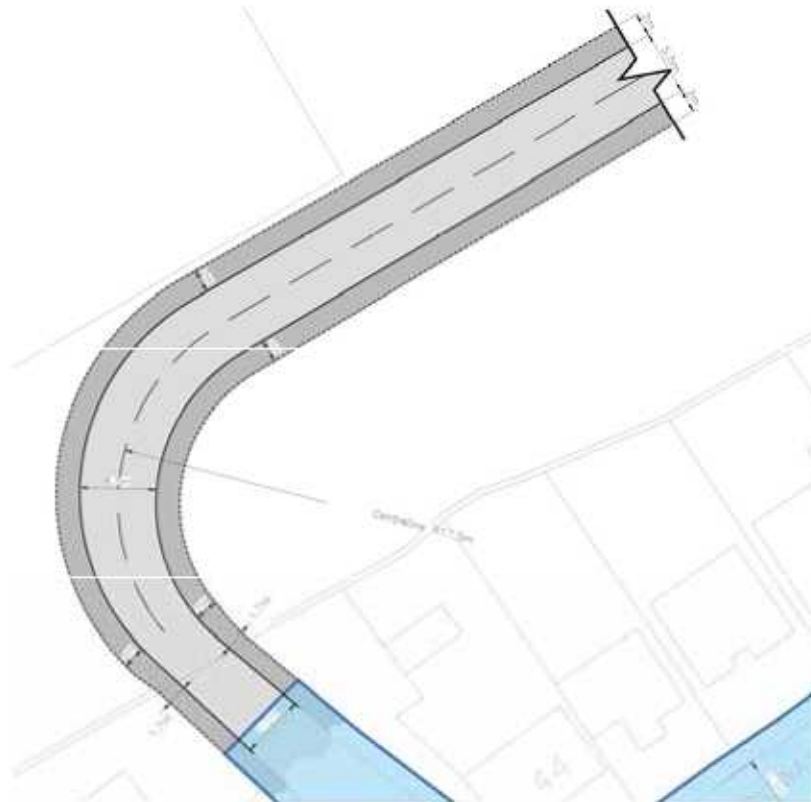
A preliminary access strategy drawing has been prepared and is extracted below. In summary an extension of the residential carriageway Elbourn Way is proposed as an internal access road into the site. The road is indicated as being 5.5m wide with 2 metre footways, with localised widening at the bend that is required to avoid the existing attenuation pond for Elbourn Way.

The site is considered to be adequately served by public transport given that there are a number of bus services operating directly south to the site along High Street, with the closest bus stops to the site located approximately 156 metres away, and the nearest railway station, Royston, located approximately 4.8km south, accessible within a 17 minute cycle ride or 20 minute bus journey.

The existing local network of publicly available footpaths helps ensure the sites accessibility credentials.

The level of vehicle trips associated with a development of the proposed scale is considered to be limited and is not expected to result in and significant adverse impact.

On the basis of this preliminary review of transport and highway matters, it is concluded that development of the site for the scale proposed is a viable proposition.



FLOOD RISK AND SURFACE WATER

MLM have undertaken a preliminary review of flood risk and drainage opportunities for the site. The site is split into two distinct areas formed by the eastern section which is used for arable farming and the western section which is used for allotments with wooded areas to the north, south and west. A watercourse which flows south to north separates the two sections.

Ground levels on site fall from east to west with the eastern section at an approximate level of 1.5m to 2.0m above the watercourse. The western section lies at a lower level in the region of 0.5 m above the watercourse level.

The majority of the site lies in Flood Zone 1 (low risk). Flood Zone 3 (high risk) is shown around perimeter of the western half of the site, particularly towards the south. Flood Zone 3 is also shown through the centre of the site following the line of the existing drain/ditch.



The watercourses on/surrounding the site, coupled with the information from the BGS website, suggests that shallow infiltration drainage is unlikely to be viable at the site and that an alternative method of discharging surface water will need to be determined, however this will need to be confirmed through appropriate testing.

UTILITIES

The proposed development will need to provide new utilities infrastructure, but there are services to the neighbouring urban area and so new connections will be possible.

KEY:

-  Listed Building
-  Tree Protection Order
-  Pedestrian Access
-  Vehicular Access
-  Existing Footpath
-  New Public Footpath
-  Controlled Vehicular Route
-  Emergency Vehicle Access



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