



BRIZE NORTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

APPENDIX 08
April 2019

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC ASSESSMENT

*“our village
our community
our future”*

Brize Norton

Landscape character assessment





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Photo 1. Aerial view : Brize Norton parish

Introduction

This report considers the landscape within the neighbourhood plan study area (coincident with the parish boundary, Photo 1 and Fig. 1-2) and how it has been shaped through history to the present day.

The objective of this document is to identify, list and describe the distinctive elements that define the unique qualities of Brize Norton, in order to assist the local community to shape and guide the conservation and enhancement of its local character, in terms of both the village and the surrounding farmland, and to provide tools to the local authority (WODC) to assess any proposed change within the parish.

Scope and Purpose

This document, commissioned by the Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, has been prepared by Portus + Whitton Landscape Architects to form part of the evidence base for the Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan - specifically with reference to the assessment of the landscape, making informed judgements on both its intrinsic value and its value within the wider region. This subsequently supports the policies that express and define the aspirations and vision of the residents of Brize Norton.

The village of Brize Norton is located to the east to Carterton and to the west of Witney, the two largest towns in West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), and is strongly characterised by its close proximity to RAF Brize Norton.

The recently adopted WODC Local Plan 2031 (September 2018) allocates a considerable amount of the District's housing supply within the Carterton and Witney sub-areas. Policy HI 'Amount and Distribution of Housing' states that during the period 2011-2031, the Carterton sub-area is to provide 2,680 homes, whilst the Witney sub-area is to provide 4,702 homes. A large part of the growth planned for the Carterton Sub-area during the plan period is already allocated within the Brize Norton parish. An even larger development has now been commenced to the west of Witney, north of the A40. The open landscape surrounding the village is therefore being eroded by development from both the north-east and the west; this creates a potential risk of further erosion in the future, and establishes the context for the Neighbourhood Plan.

The boundaries of Brize Norton parish have already been crossed when the Shilton Park estate was developed as an extension to Carterton, under the previous Local Plan (2011). The current Plan includes a consented scheme for 700 new houses to the west of the village of Brize Norton, within the Brize Norton parish.

There is also a proposed development linked with Witney which will be located south of the A40, in the adjacent parish of Curbridge.

In addition to the proposals brought forward by the WODC Local Plan, future development options have been proposed by the Carterton Town Council's Masterplan 2015 (which remains an aspirational document) also include a number of sites within the Brize Norton parish, north of the Kilkenny Lane Country Park.

Notwithstanding that the current local plan considers no other allocations within the parish, when compared to the previous plan (2011), it has lost important policies such as NE1 'Safeguarding the Countryside' and NE2 'Countryside around Witney and Carterton' which were intended to protect the existing character and to prevent urban development within the Brize Norton parish.

The aspiration to maintain a 'local gap' to prevent coalescence between Carterton and Brize Norton is partly maintained on the Carterton Masterplan (2015), albeit suggesting an area greatly reduced in size as a landscape buffer.

The main challenge for the parish during this Plan period is to provide a policy framework to regulate development on any windfall sites which may be proposed either within its boundary or that may affect the landscape beyond Brize Norton parish.

The Brize Norton Neighbourhood plan is intended to provide such framework as it helps establish specific planning policies relevant to Brize Norton parish. This sits within the larger context of the WODC Local Development Framework (LDF) and is in alignment to National Planning Policy.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018), whilst it recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, places a strong emphasis on the protection and enhancement of *valued* landscapes. Neighbourhood plans are complementary but differ in that they contribute to establish the cultural, historic, social and environmental qualities of the local landscape, by identifying the local elements that characterise the landscape and describe its multi-faceted values.

From a landscape perspective, in order to identify the parameters for appropriate scope for change and enhancement within the parish, elements that need to be examined include: quality of natural form and human intervention, design, recognition and response to local character, scale, appearance, materials, detailing and choice of siting.

Methodology and sources

This report considers the character of the landscape in and around Brize Norton within the parish boundaries, its qualities and its relationship with the wider context. It draws conclusions on the sensitivity of the local landscape with regards to change, including future residential development.

The baseline information for this study has been gathered during desktop research through the analysis of historic and current Ordnance Survey maps at various scales, information from Natural England and Historic England to gain an initial understanding of the landscape and heritage assets, topography and potential inter-visibility between areas, listed buildings and other landscape designations, as well as analysing the policies and evidence base which underpin the current Local Plan, including Landscape Character Assessment studies at different levels of detail.

This report acknowledges and references the relevant documents within the WODC Local Development Framework, including the Local Plan (2031), the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA, 2016), the Design Guide (2016), Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016), Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Oxfordshire County Council, 2018) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Wilson, 2009), the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (WOLA, 1998), Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study (Oxfordshire County Council, 2004), Witney Landscape Assessment (Amanda Hopwood Landscape Consultancy, 2007), Carterton Landscape Assessment (Amanda Hopwood Landscape Consultancy, 2009) and the 'Kirkham Report' Landscape and Visual Review of Submissions for Carterton and Witney Strategic Development Options (Kirkham Landscape Planning, 2012). These sources of information were considered the most relevant for the purpose of this assessment.

Various landscape factors identified in the existing documentation have been reviewed and compared with site findings. Site and photography surveys were carried out in October 2018 and January 2019 in good weather conditions and fairly good visibility. Site photographs inform this report and provide evidence and a reference point for future assessments (Appendix A).

Consultation with Brize Norton residents has been successful in gathering local knowledge and interpreting the existing baseline information, to distillate the distinctive characteristics of landscape surrounding the village which make it precious, unique and valued.

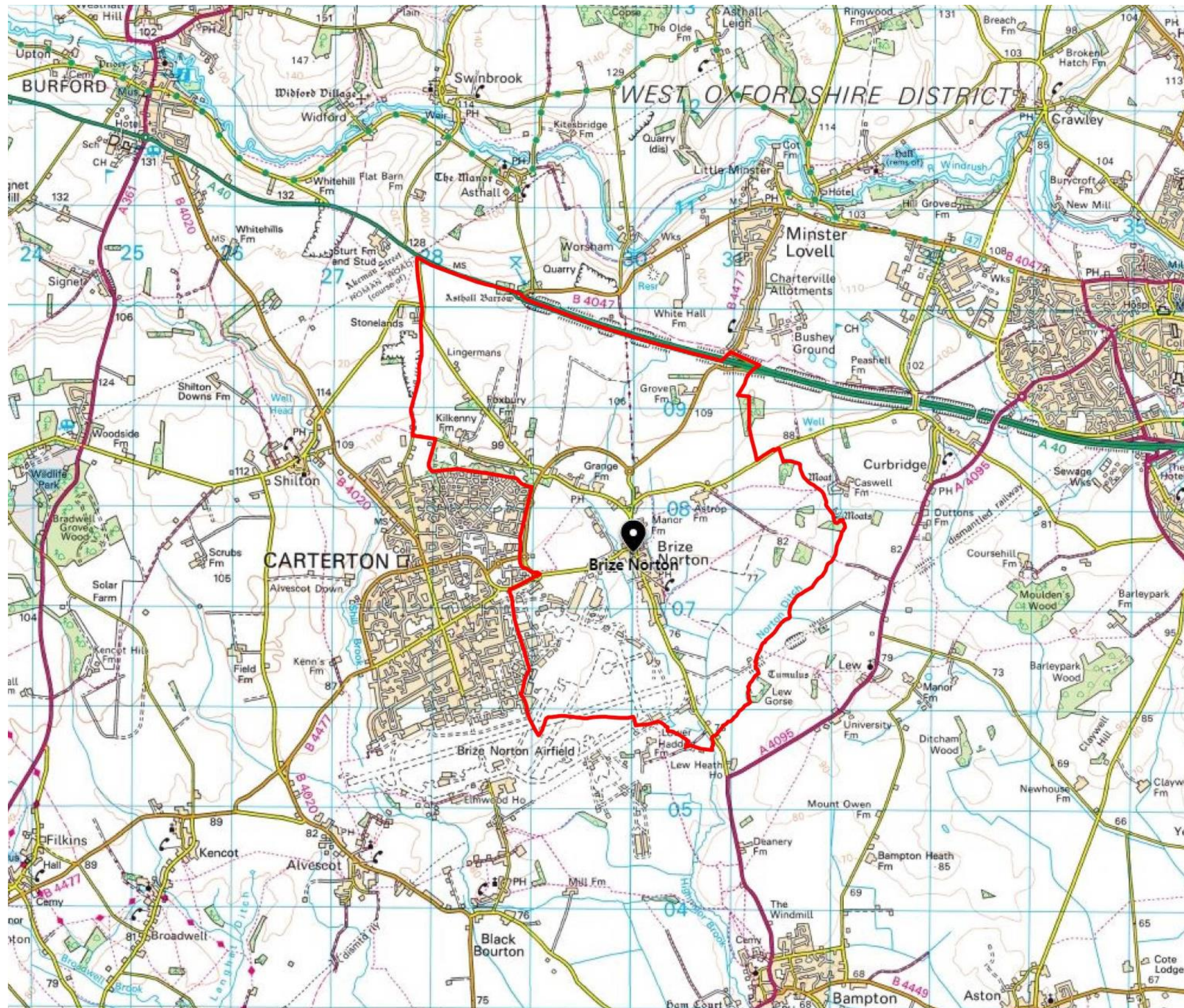


Fig. 1 OS wider context

Planning context

NPPF

Chapter 12 of the NPPF 'Achieving well-designed places' states that 'the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve' (para 124).

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. (para 127)

Brize Norton is a parish in the West Oxfordshire District Council. It is listed in the Local Plan as a 'village' within the hierarchy of settlements and sits within the strategic Carterton Sub-Area. It does not have a Conservation Area or a defined settlement boundary.

Statutory designations within the parish include 37 listed buildings and structures (under 29 separate listings), mostly consisting of stone houses and thatched cottages in the village and some of the surrounding farmhouses. The parish is also host to a number of locally designated wildlife sites. The parish lies within a locally designated Area of High Landscape Value.

The Local Plan

West Oxfordshire Local Plan highlights the role of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton to provide services and facilities as main towns. These are supported by six existing rural service centres, with a new one proposed in the form of a Garden Village. Within the plan, these are the areas designated for residential development and services. The District's remaining settlements comprise of medium-sized and smaller villages and hamlets, which distinctly contribute to the rural and vernacular character.

In its Vision, the Plan states that: '...the distinctive qualities of the District's other towns and villages will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. The larger towns and villages will accommodate growth of an appropriate scale and type to help ensure their future prosperity and that of the rural areas around them without

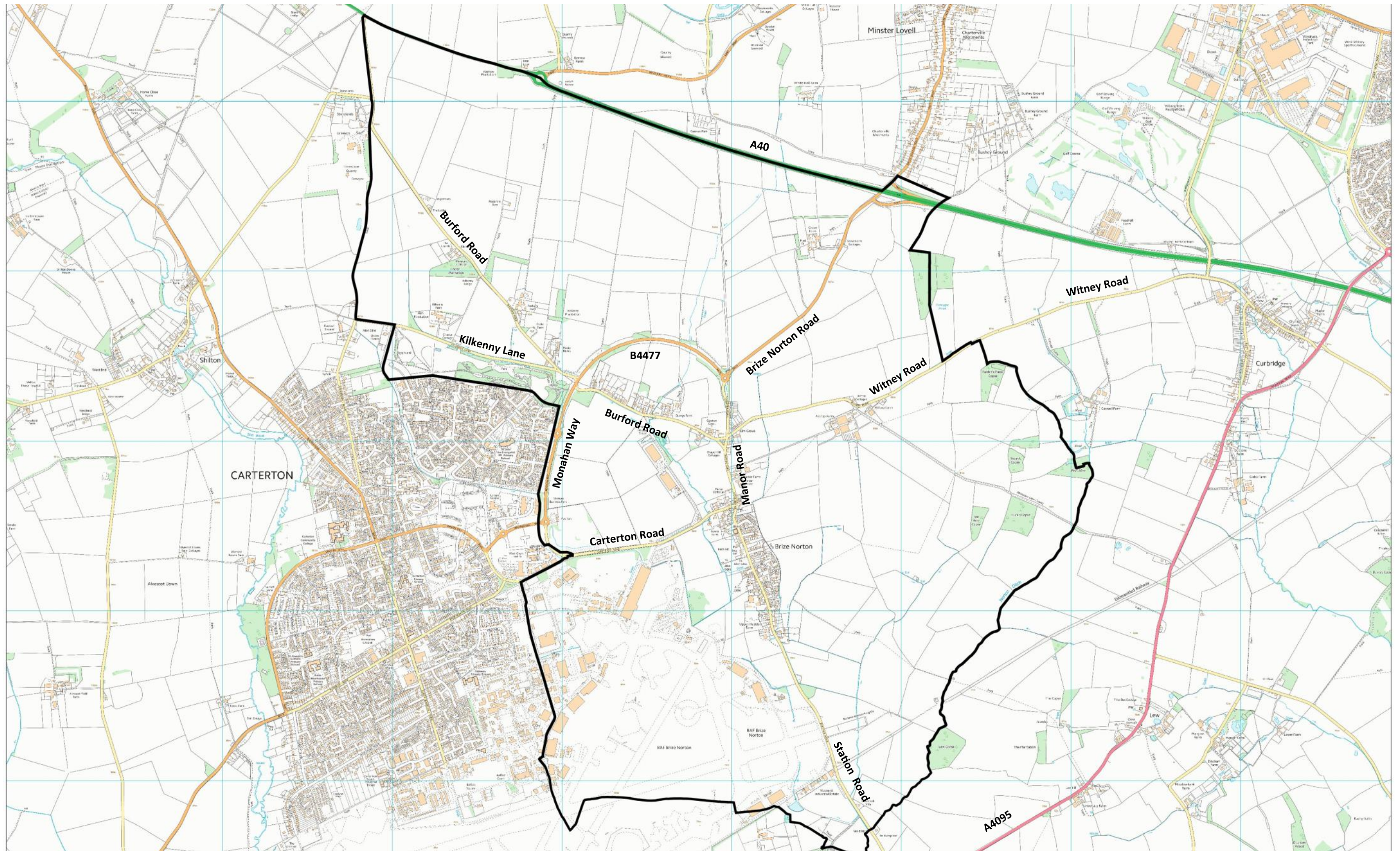


Fig. 2 Brize Norton parish and primary transport routes

compromising their intrinsic character, appearance and setting. New affordable housing for local families and development specifically to meet the needs of older people will be delivered to help maintain the vibrancy of rural communities.' (para 3.2)

The Plan supports the principle of limited development in these rural locations providing that *'it respects the local character and distinctiveness and that it would help maintain the vitality of the local community'* (para 4.19, Policy OS2 Locating Development in the Right Places). Inter alia, the following General Principles are relevant to Brize Norton: *'All development should:*

- *Be of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context having regard to the potential cumulative impact of development in the locality;*
- *Form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and/or the character of the area;*
- *Avoid the coalescence and loss of identity of separate settlements;*
- *Be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants;*
- *As far as is reasonably possible protect or enhance the local landscape and the setting of the settlement/s;*
- *Not involve the loss of an area of open space or any other feature that makes an important contribution to the character or appearance of the area;*
- *Be provided with safe vehicular access and safe and convenient pedestrian access to supporting services and facilities;*
- *Not be at risk of flooding or likely to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere;*
- *Conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment.'*

Local Plan - Carterton Sub-Area

The parish sits within the strategic Carterton Sub-Area. This covers a relatively small percentage of the District area but is well populated, mainly because of the huge growth of Carterton during the last 100 years, associated with the growing importance of RAF Brize Norton, now the country's main RAF transport base.

Most of the planned future development in this Sub-Area is concentrated within Carterton town and is anticipated to expand its development edge; this is accepted to result in development which overspills into adjacent parishes, such as Brize Norton. *'Whilst there are opportunities within Carterton, in order to meet the identified housing requirement for this sub-area it will be necessary to expand the existing urban area through development on Greenfield land. It is anticipated that this will take place on two sites which are both already committed through the planning process including land to the east of Carterton (700 homes) and land to the north-west (250 homes)'* (para 9.3.37).

A number of options which have been previously considered include land to the north and land to the north east of Carterton, both within the parish of Brize Norton (para 9.3.55-56). These have not been allocated at this point but it is anticipated that they may be re-considered at the next revision of the Local Plan. An important consideration in housing development is the aging population, in line with national trends, which is expected to rise considerably during the plan period.

The current imbalance between housing and employment in this Sub-Area currently causes a lot of out-commuting, mainly towards Witney. The lack of primary road links with the A40 creates traffic along B routes, including vehicles having to travel through the village of Brize Norton. The B4477 Brize Norton Road has been earmarked in the County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) as the preferred route for upgrading to 'A' road standard together with the promotion of west facing slip roads at the A40 junction.

The LTP4 also seeks to improve and promote pedestrian and cycle links between Carterton and Witney, this is likely to also effect changes involving Brize Norton.

An important environmental consideration for this area is the influence of the RAF Brize Norton: this includes adverse effects such as noise and air pollution, as well as a distinctive character associated with the unusual and imposing presence of large buildings on the skyline from a large number of public viewpoints in the parish.

Policy developments

The two maps to the right show the development of strategic policy affecting Brize Norton. The first, extracted from WODC Local Plan 2011, identifies the land between Carterton and Brize Norton as Policy NE2: 'Policy Area to Prevent Urban Sprawl and to Protect Existing Character'; the second, from the current Local Plan 2031, shows the same land now allocated as a Committed development area and an extension to the Country Park. This development is now referred to as Brize Meadow and the first phase is currently under construction.

Though this has now been abandoned by the Council, the Carterton Town Council Masterplan (2015, aspirational in status - Fig. 5, following page) shows strategic policy options relating to the growth of Carterton and how this would have affected the parish.

It is of note that the allowance of unidentified windfall sites for this plan period in the Carterton Sub-Area is of 238 units (para 9.3.48); it is expected that a portion of these may be brought forward within the Brize Norton parish.

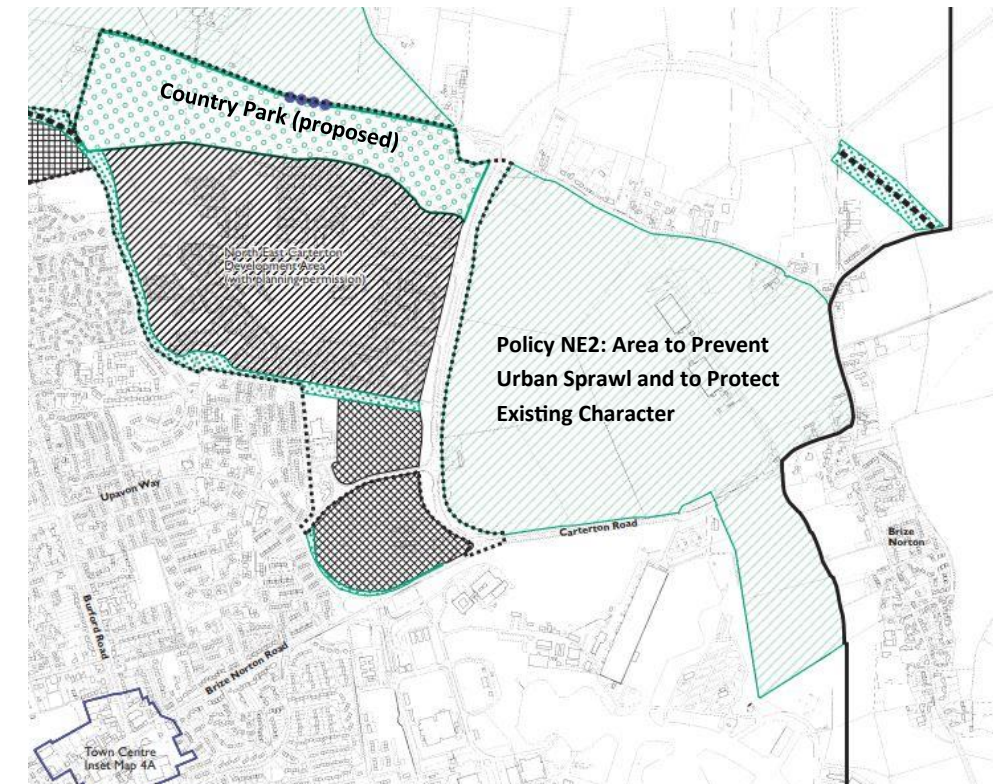


Fig. 3 WODC Local Plan 2011 - Carterton

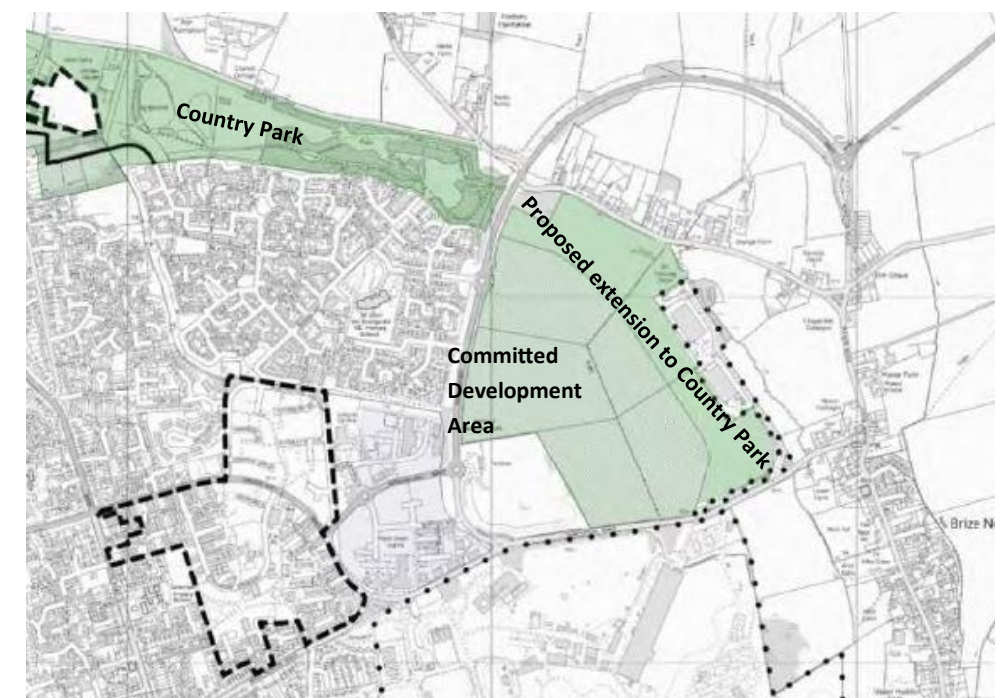


Fig. 4 WODC Local Plan 2031- Carterton Sub-area

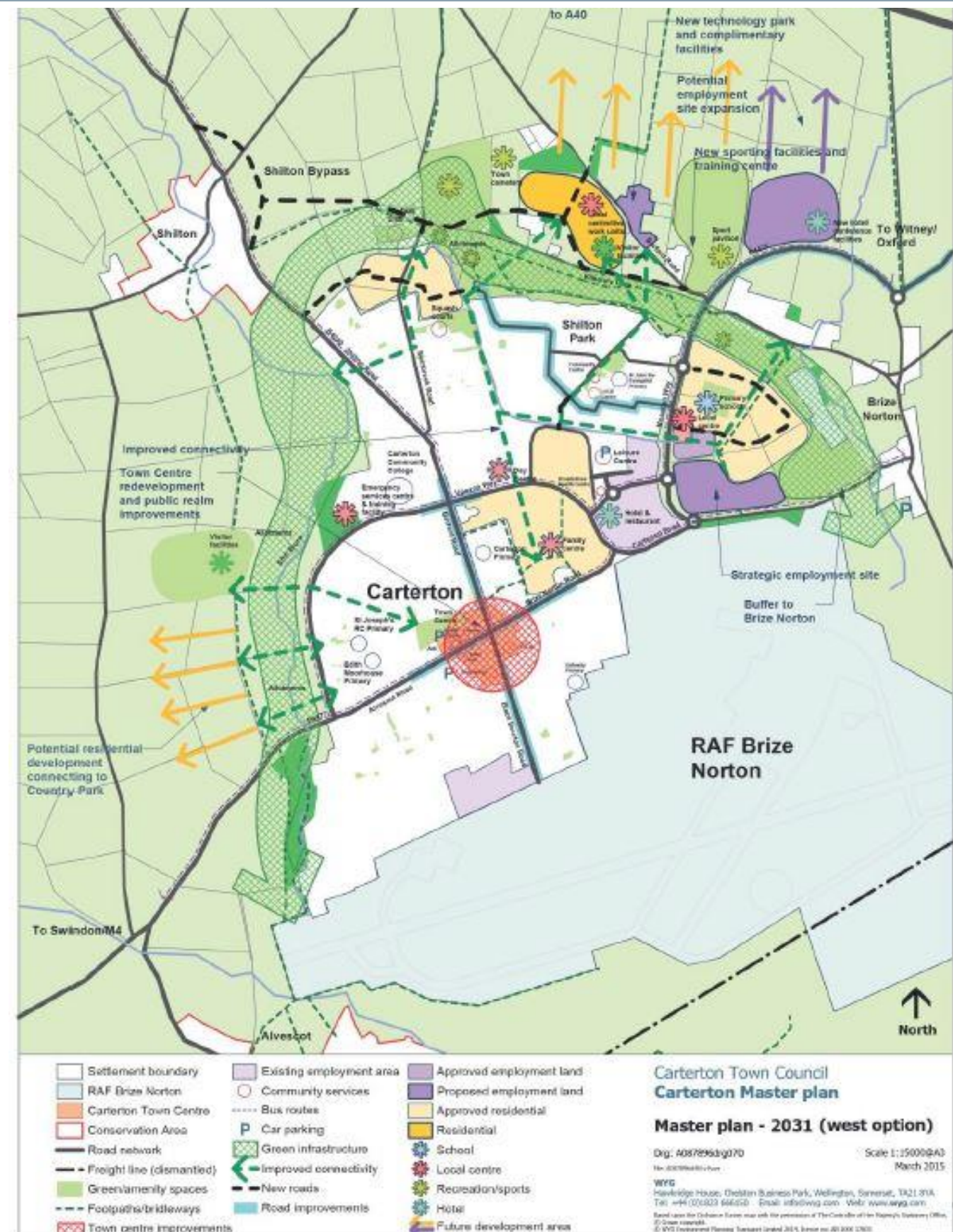
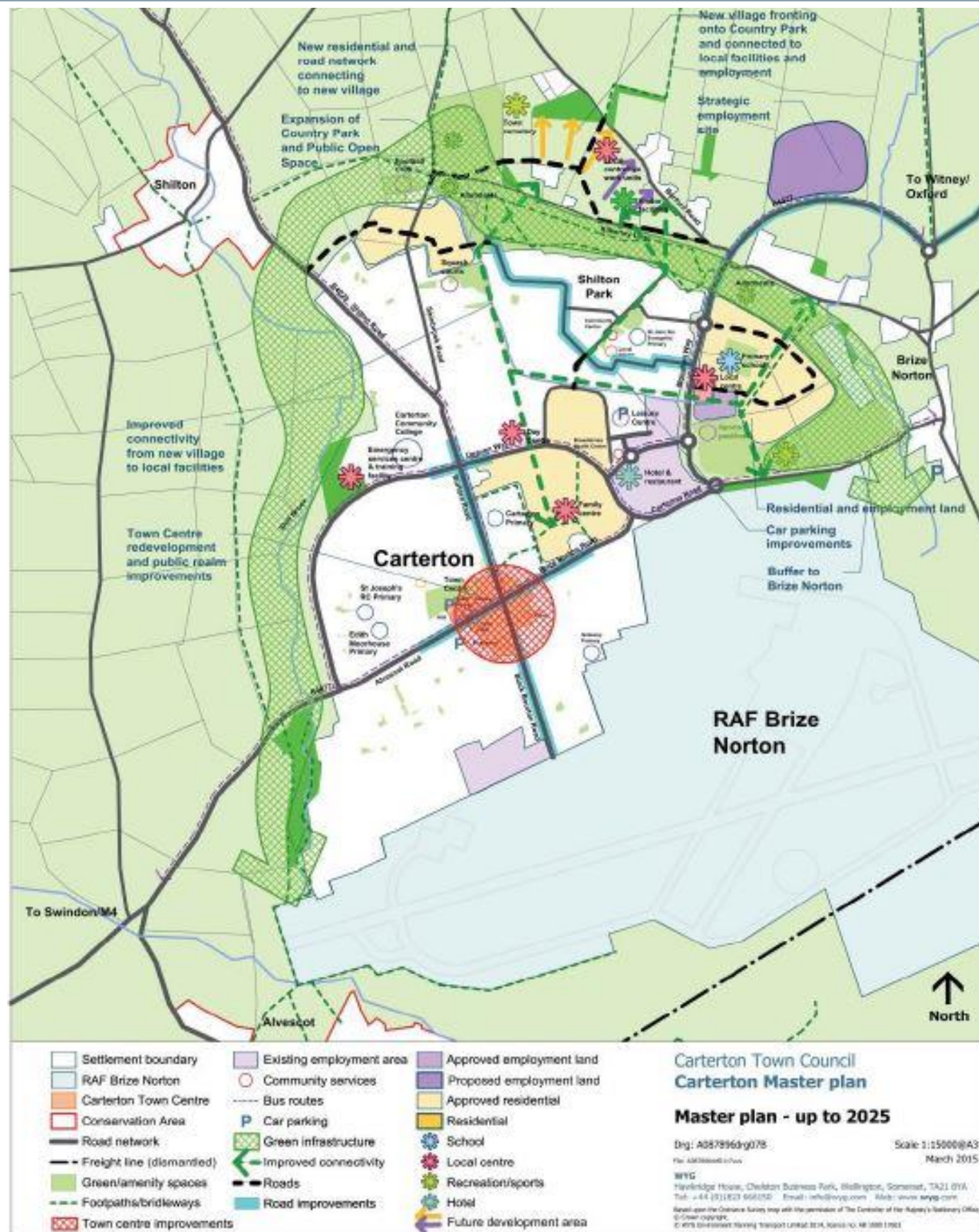


Fig. 5 Carterton Masterplan - up to 2025 and 2031

Brize Norton: a distinctive environment

The European Landscape Convention defines Landscape as: ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors’. Landscape character is defined as: ‘a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another’.

In order to understand the uniqueness of the neighbourhood plan study area (which coincides with the boundary of Brize Norton parish) it is necessary to identify the various layers, and the combination of elements and features which comprise its character.

The understanding of the various cultural, perceptual and aesthetic associations as well as specific natural characteristics is crucial to define and describe the character of a landscape.

Historic development

Brize Norton is a small historic village (population recorded by the 2011 Census: 938) now located in close proximity to Carterton, south of the A40 and surrounded by farmland. In terms of its topography, the parish lies on the northern edge of the Thames Valley between approximately 90m to the north and 75m AOD to the south (Fig.7).

From the Domesday Book (1086) we know that the village dates back to the Saxon period. The historic fabric of the village comprises of a linear arrangement of Cotswold stone cottages and farmhouses, with the occasional thatched building, loosely scattered along the main vehicular route linking Burford to Bampton. The parish church of St Britius is of Norman period.

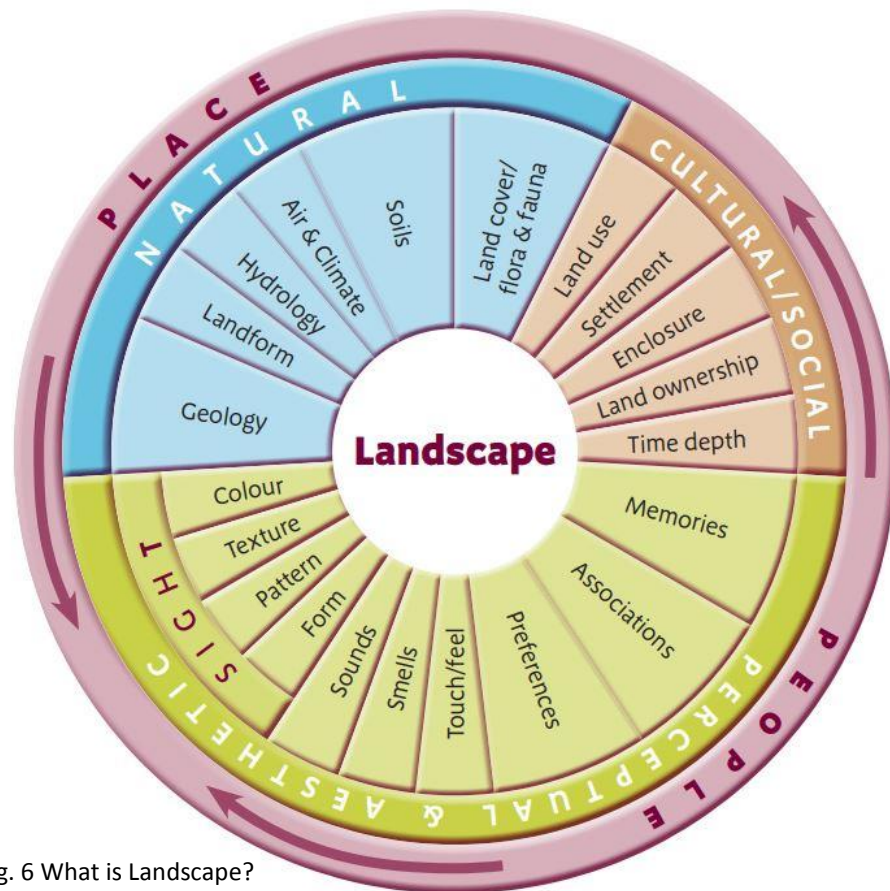


Fig. 6 What is Landscape?

(An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, 2014)

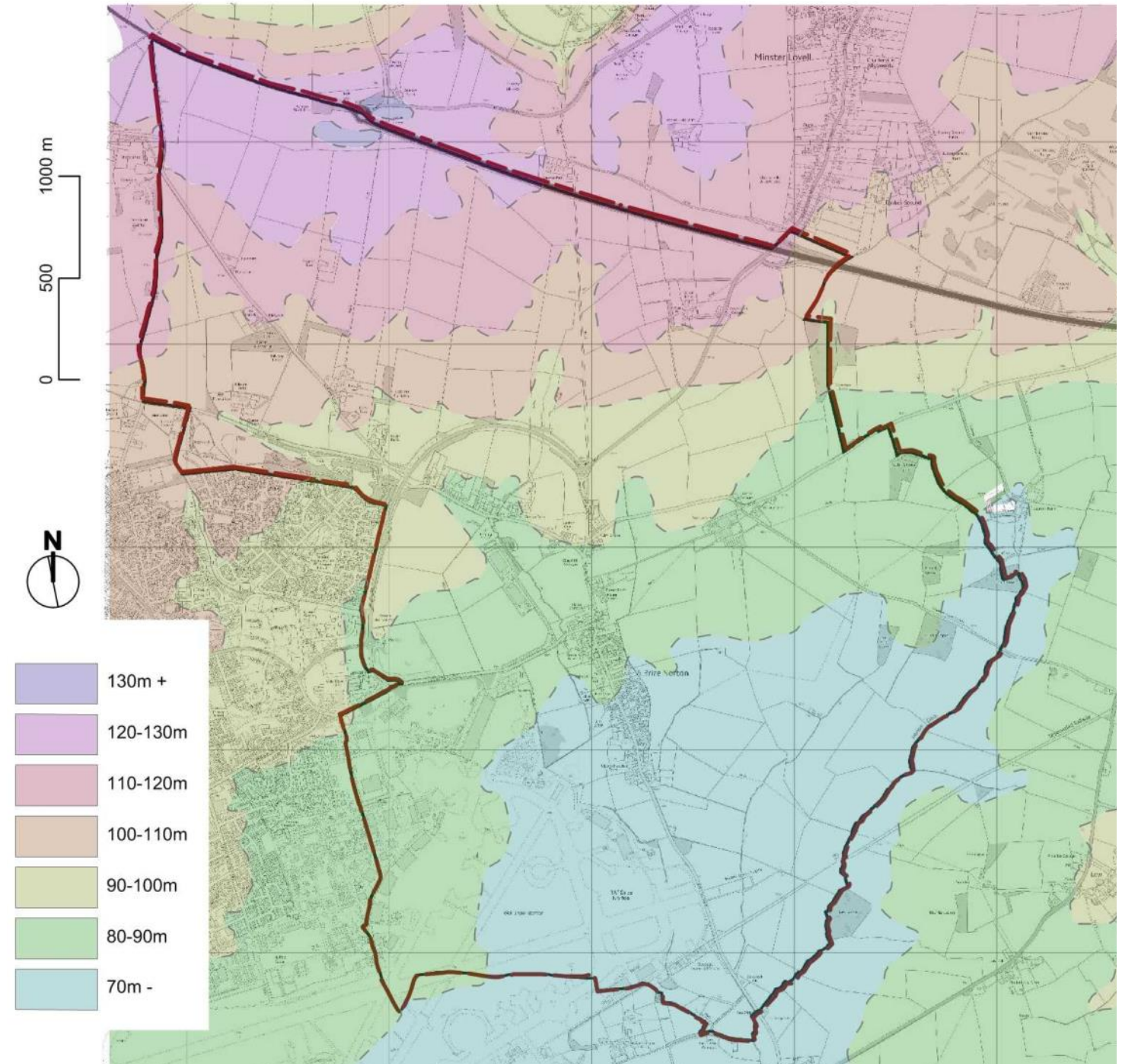


Fig. 7 Topography

The historic maps to the right show very little variation in the extent of the village between the first edition OS and the 1950s (Fig. 8).

The current name of the village gained public awareness since the 1950s when the RAF Brize Norton base became prominent. Its intended name was RAF Carterton, given its proximity and strong relationship with the purposely built adjacent town, but this was changed to Brize Norton to avoid confusion with RAF Cardington.

The majority of the parish is perceived within the context of two principal land uses: the agricultural farmland and the presence of the RAF base. Other influences on the physical landscape character are the proximity to the large town of Carterton and the A40 to the north.

The geographic extent of the village fluctuated very little during its historic development up until the 19th century, at which point the village consisted of three main parts, each including a public house (from south to north the Carpenters Arms, the Chequers, and the Masons Arms) and a principal shop. Of these elements, only two of the pubs exist today.

The farmland surrounding the village was historically split between the hamlets and farmsteads of Astrop, Caswell, and Marsh, Upper and Lower Haddon, respectively to the north, east and south of the village (Lower Haddon is in Bampton parish).

From the 1950s small closes of housing were built in the open spaces within the three clusters, most on the east side of the principal street (Station Road). Rows of bungalows and small single houses were also built during this period, infilling many gaps between the older buildings and generating a more unified, linear extent to the village. This development, started as infill along the north-south alignment, has then developed on a east-west axis.

The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project (2012-2017) has produced mapping information which examines the historic and archaeological processes that have influenced the modern landscape. This assists in identifying the specific characteristics of an area and its local distinctiveness, to guide its appropriate management. The maps (Fig. 9) show how the parish has changed since the late 19th century and illustrate the urban development of Carterton and the relatively unchanged extent of development of Brize Norton. The 19th century map shows the historic village split into three main areas and surrounded by ancient enclosures dating from the 1500s, with Grange and Astrop Farm dating from the 1700s.

The character and general extent of the village, embedded in its agricultural hinterland, remains fairly consistent for the following 200 years, and many of the locally distinctive characteristics relate to historic development up to the 20th century, when the rapid growth of the newly formed Carterton and the establishment of the RAF base set in motion a range of changes to the wider landscape and its perception and which also affect Brize Norton.

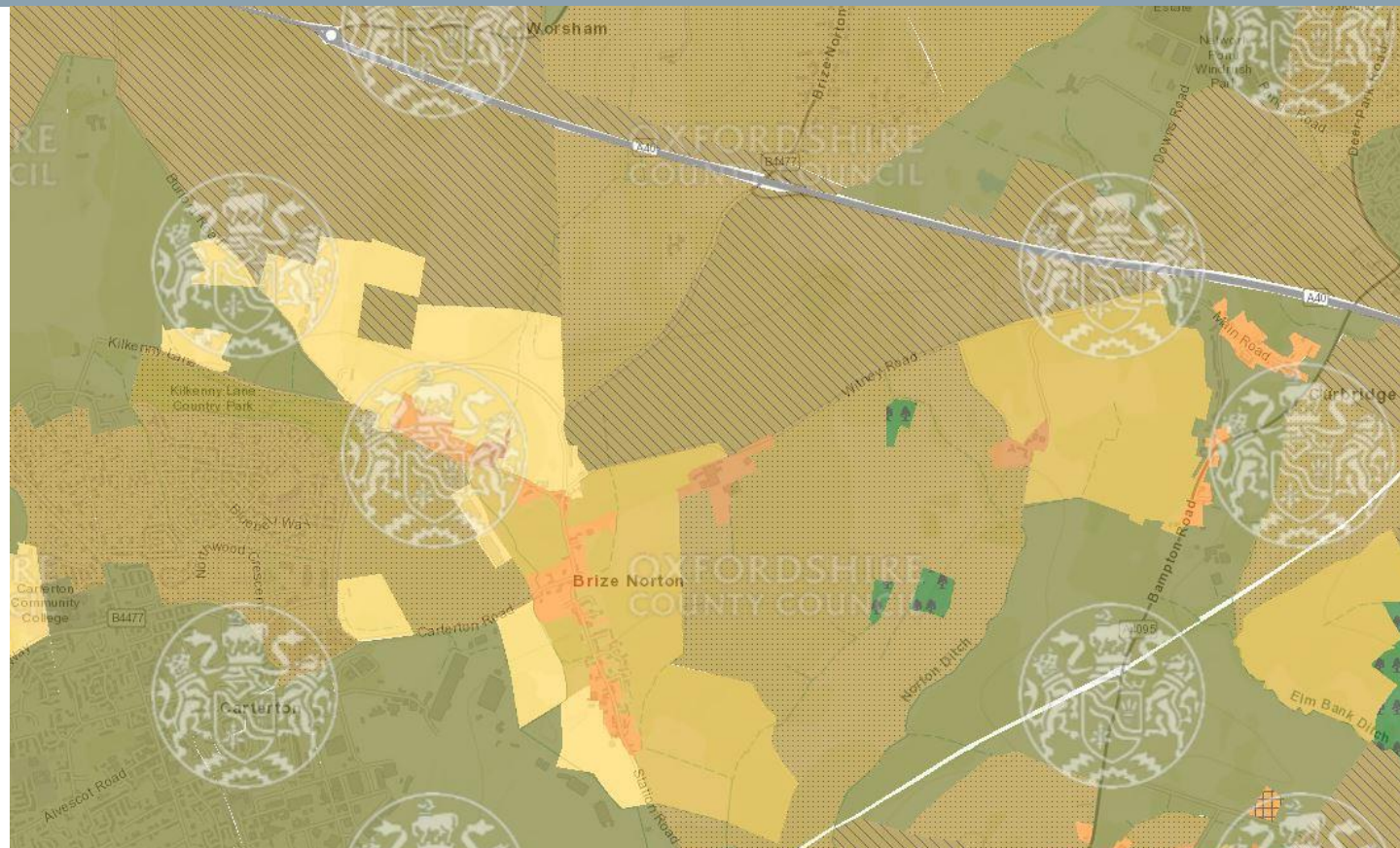


1885-1900 OS

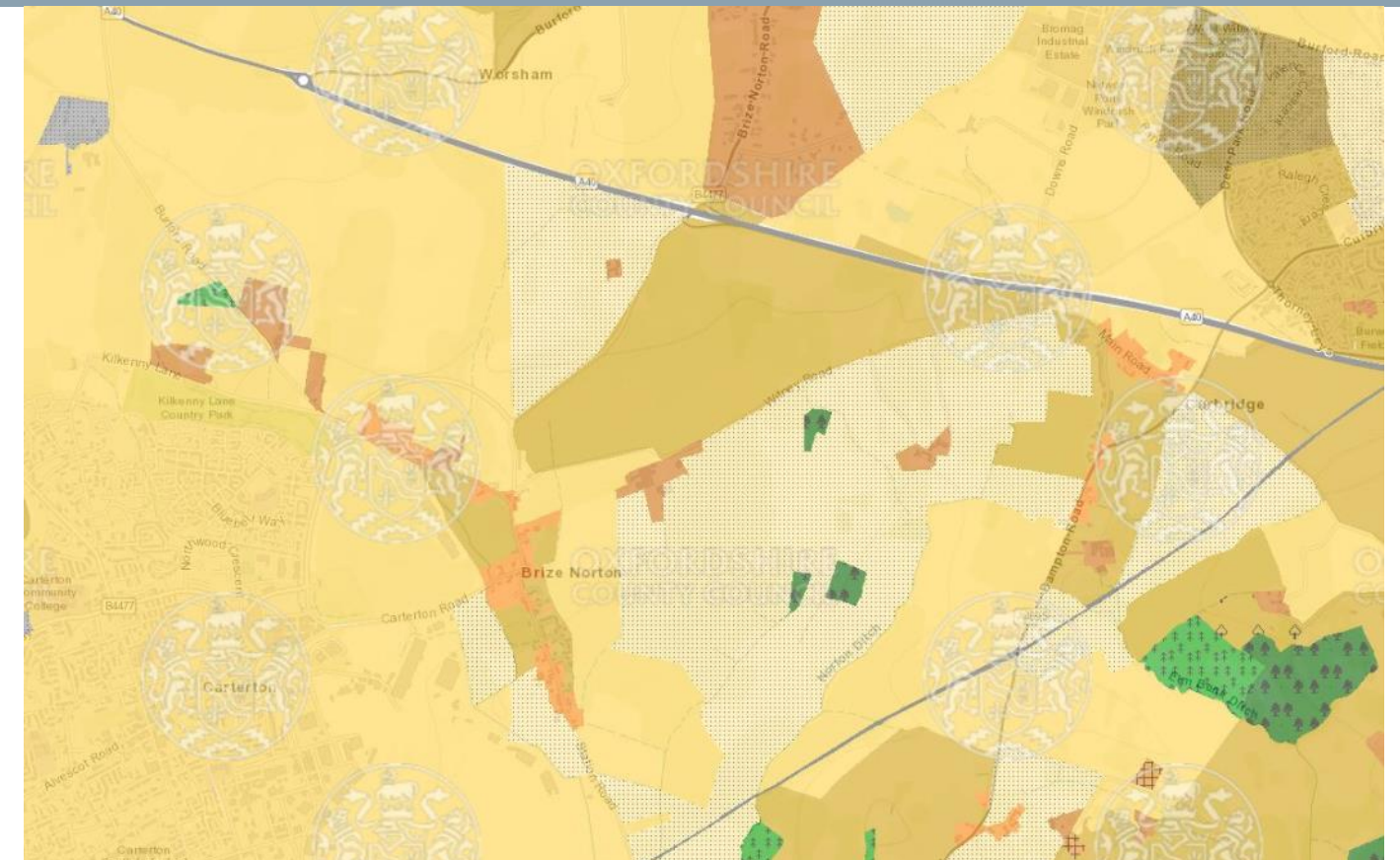


1955-1961 OS

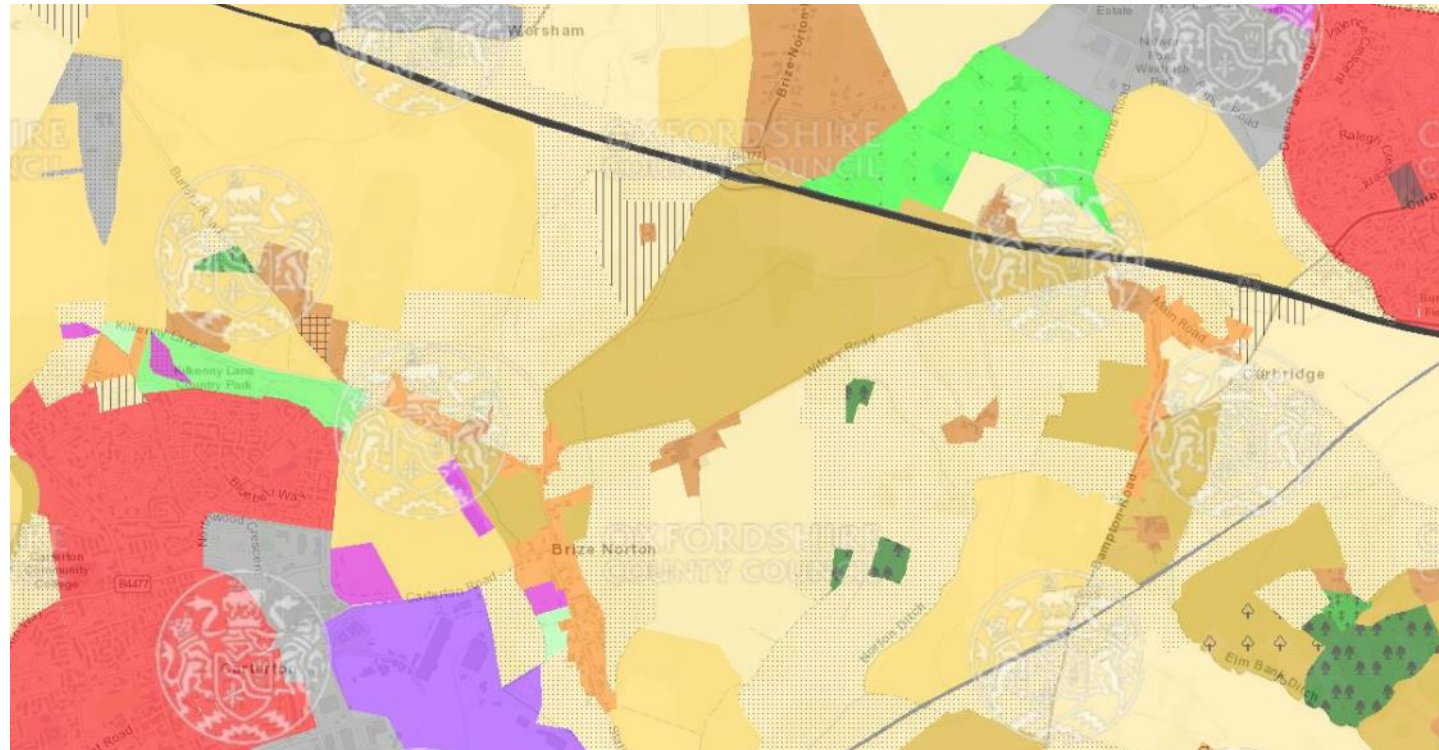
Fig. 8 Historic development



Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (OHLC) Late 18 century



OHLC Late 19 century



OHLC 21 century

Fig. 9 Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterization

 Civic Amenities	 Rural Settlement
 Civil Provision	 Unenclosed Land
 Commercial	 Urban Settlement
 Communication	 Water and Valley Floor
 Enclosure	 Woodland
 Industry	
 Military	
 Orchards and Horticulture	
 Ornamental	
 Recreation	

KEY: Broad types - (See <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/landscape-characterisation> for detail types key)

An earlier development is the East Gloucestershire Railway; this was built in 1861 and intersected the parish connecting Fairford to Witney – although the railway was dismantled following the line closure in 1962, most of the structural planting along its route, as well as the rail bridge along Station Road are present to this day. The site of the original railway station, 1 mile south of the village, is now a small industrial estate and borders the RAF land.

Since the 1900s, the construction of new infill housing, mainly concentrated in closes along the east side of Station Road has linked up the village and partly muddled its historic character. Carterton has seen recent expansion with new housing and industrial and business areas being developed towards the north-eastern edge of the town. This development, now known as Shilton Park, extended the town into agricultural land within the western boundary of Brize Norton parish, to provide 1,400 new homes. Monahan Way, conceived as a strong boundary to the Carterton Urban Area, was built to relieve traffic within the village and surrounding rural lanes. The parish boundary was later amended to its current extent and Shilton Park is now within the Carterton north-east parish.

Of the historic fabric of Brize Norton village, apart from the church which is of Norman origin, the earliest surviving residential buildings are the Manor House and Grange Farm, originally built during the 16th century, both of sophisticated design. Other important historic buildings include Church Farm House, Rookery House and Astrop Farm (Fig. 10 - listed buildings). The connection between the farm houses within the village and the agricultural landscape that surrounds them is stronger both from an operational point of view and in terms of form and layout of the buildings themselves.

Listed buildings

- 1-2: Grove Farm - Farmhouse, Barn and Outbuilding. Grade II
- 3-7: Grange Farm - Farmhouse, Dovecote, Outbuildings, Barn and Stables. Grade II
- 8-9: The Cottage, Rookery Farmhouse and wall. Grade II
- 10: Chapel Hill Cottage. Grade II
- 11-12: Astrop Farmhouse and Brewhouse. Grade II
- 13: The Manor House. Grade II
- 14: The Homestead, Barn and Outbuilding. Grade II
- 15: Church of St. Britius. Grade II*
- 16-23: Cottage by the Church, Various Tombs, Rose Cottage. Grade II
- 24: Yew Tree Cottage. Grade II
- 25-27: Labernum Cottages, Cottage, The Carpenter's Arms. Grade II
- 28-29: Upper Haddon Farmhouse, Thatcher's Place. Grade II

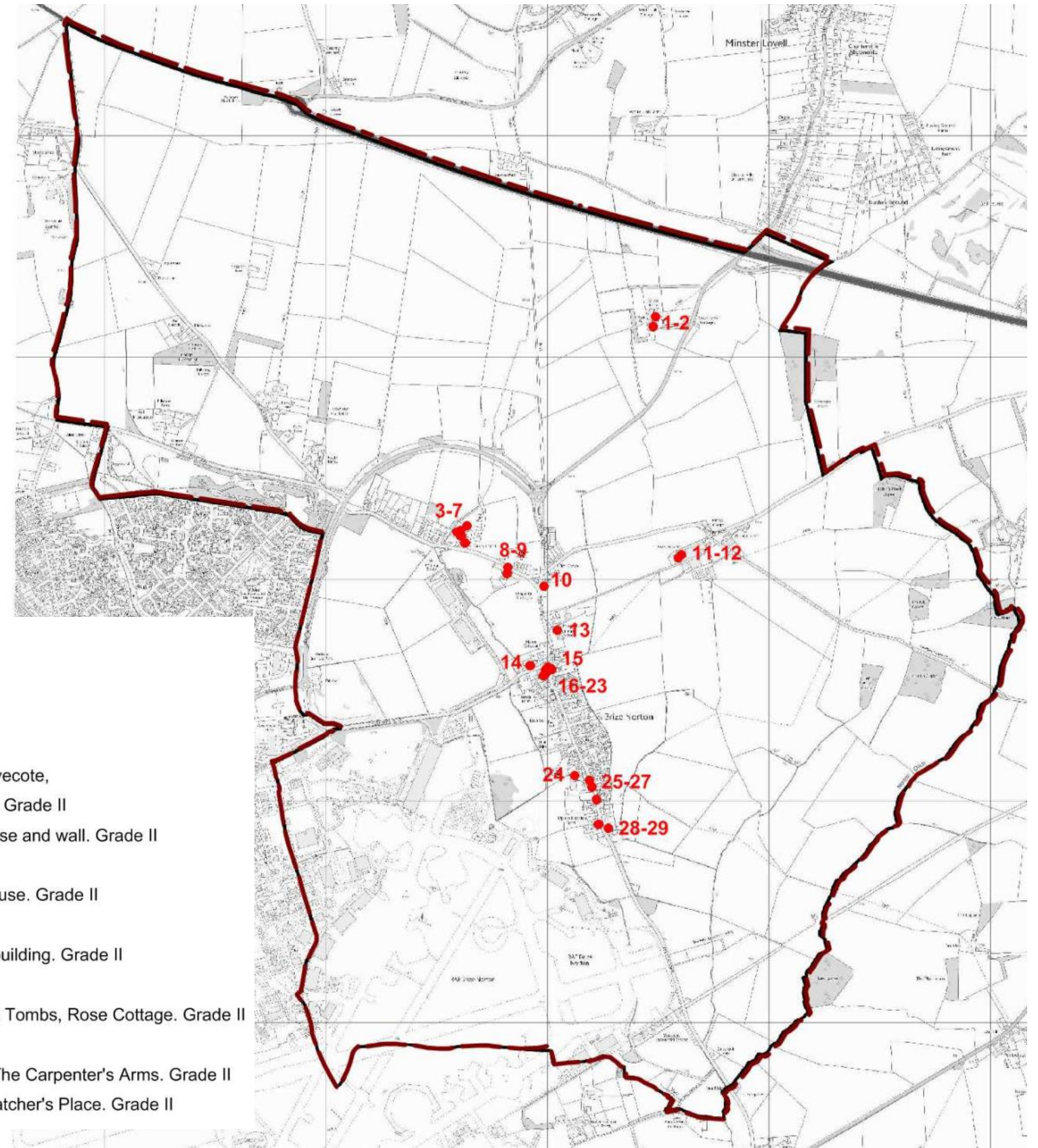


Fig. 10 Listed buildings and structures

Landscape character context

At national level, the parish belongs to two National Character Areas: NCA 108, 'the Upper Thames Clay Vales' and NCA 107 'Cotswolds' (Fig.11). The NCAs offer an understanding of how landscapes have evolved, the drivers for change and the benefits that they bring to people and wildlife. The northern part of the parish is part of the Cotswolds NCA and reflects most closely the character of the Cotswolds AONB; the southern part consists of open, gently undulating lowland farmland.

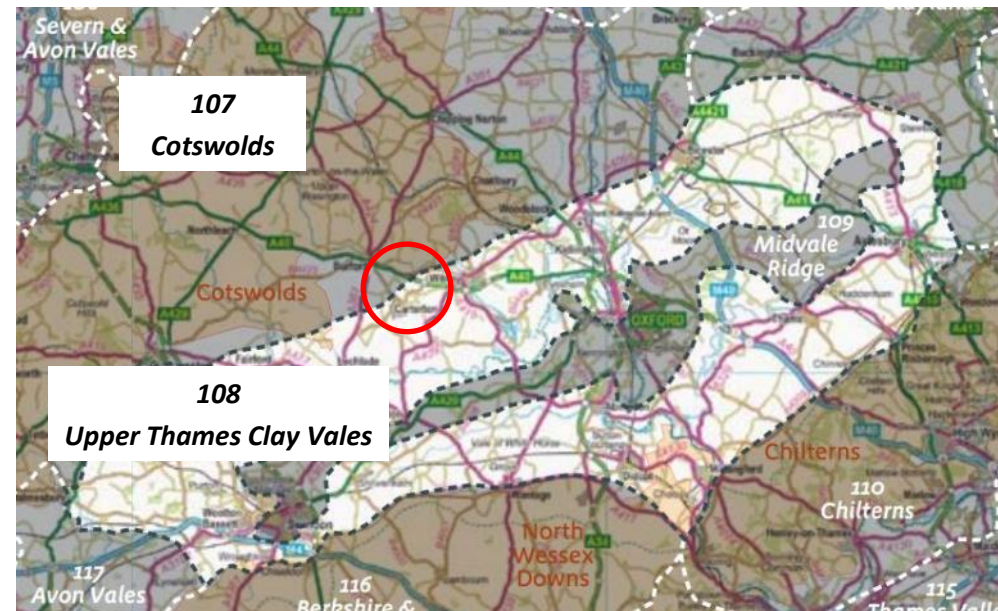
In 1998 a Landscape Character Assessment was published which covered the whole of West Oxfordshire and described the local character of the parish as split between Area 9: 'Shilton Downs' and area 10: 'Bampton Vale'. The northern part (Area 9) of the site can be identified as a limestone landscape, where the underlying geology characterises the patterns of typically large-scale, semi-enclosed farmland landscape of the limestone wolds. The southern part (Area 10) is described as a distinctively low-lying but gently rolling clay vale which separates the limestone to the north from the very flat, expansive floodplain landscape along the river Thames to the south ('Western Thames Fringes').

Area 9 presents itself as large fields enclosed by stone walls or low hedges and sparse vegetation cover, often in form of linear tree belts or woodland pockets. The strong influence of the MoD land is recognised, as occupying flat, exposed and prominent locations, and creating an open, expansive and bleak character with a very sparse landscape structure, and with visually prominent buildings and features. Area 10 has a stronger landscape structure characterised by large, regularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and trees.

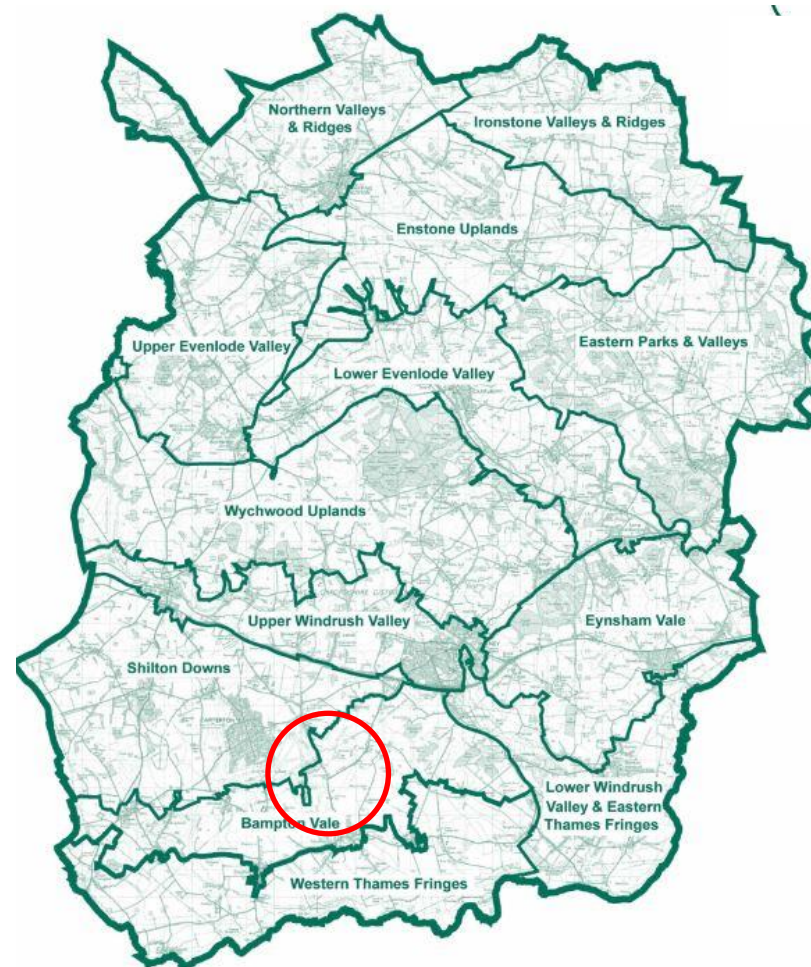
In terms of landscape patterns, Brize Norton accords with the description offered by these character areas; of sparsely settled landscape, with settlements avoiding the highest, most exposed areas and taking advantage of minor valleys and hillsides. As is the case with Brize Norton, villages in these character areas often feature an elongated form, with a north-south orientation, with buildings generally following the linear pattern of roads.

Although the parish is not covered by any statutory landscape designations, it lies within an Area of High Landscape Value and includes a number of features of conservation significance. This, within the Brize Norton parish, includes remnants of ancient semi-natural woodland and a large number of listed buildings. Overall, the character of this area is considered to be largely unspoilt and rural in essence, albeit with other influences, notably the more recent residential development around Carterton and RAF Brize Norton.

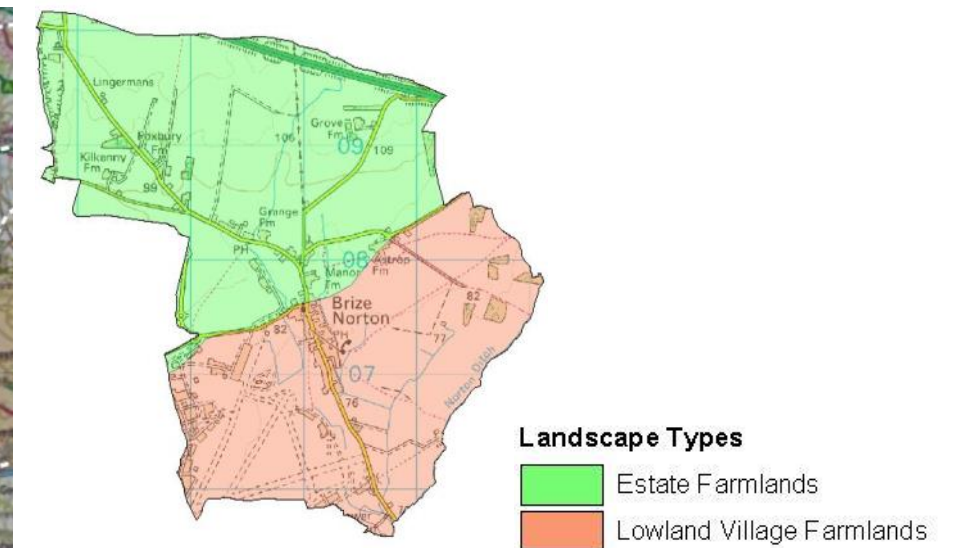
The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS, 2004) also divides the parish between north and south, with the 'Estate Farmlands' and the 'Lowland Village Farmlands' character types.



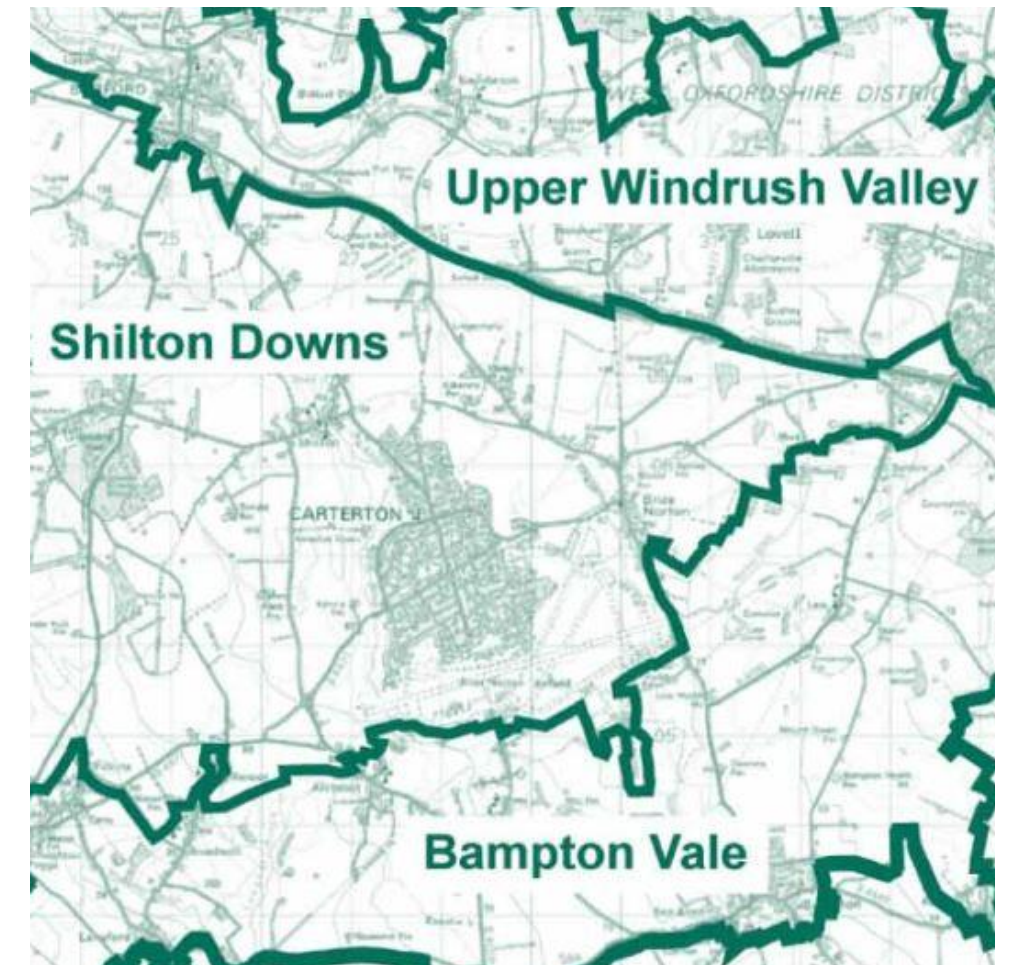
National Character Areas



West Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (1998)



Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study - Brize Norton character types



WOLCA Inset

Fig. 11 Landscape Character Assessment

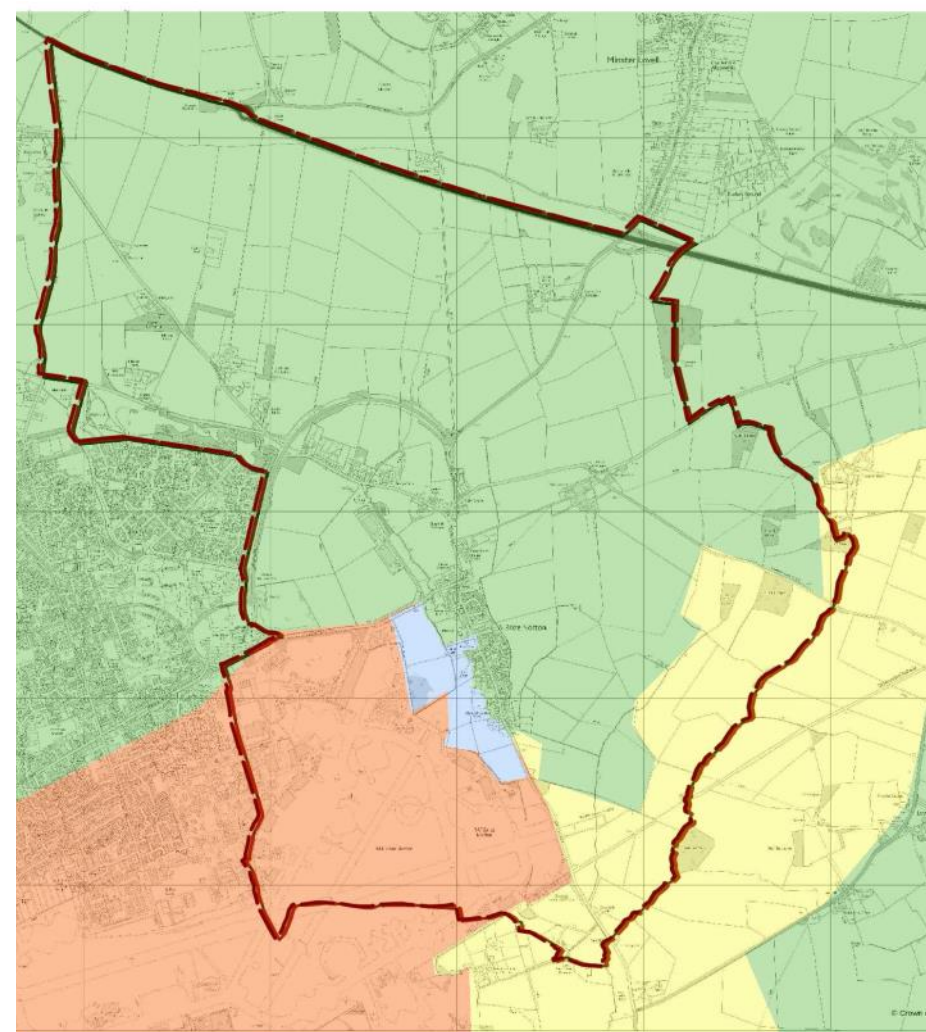
The 'Estate Farmlands' type is described as a rolling agricultural landscape with a well-ordered pattern of fields and small, geometric plantations. Arable cropping is dominant, and the main structural component of the landscape is the large number of small, rectilinear mixed plantations and linear tree belts, often along field boundaries and roadsides. Field boundaries are formed by late enclosure hedgerows and some stone walls. Sparsely scattered hedgerow trees contribute to a sense of enclosure. Scattered farmsteads and the network of straight roads reinforces the ordered pattern of the landscape.

The 'Lowland Village Farmlands' type, to the south, is described as a gently rolling and almost flat topography, populated by medium to large arable hedged fields, with trees sparsely present along hedgerows, and more prominent along ditches and streams, and a number of deciduous plantations and remnants of ancient woodland to the east of Brize Norton.

The Agricultural Land Classification map for London and the South East (ALC007) classifies most of the area in the parish as Grade 3 land, with a pocket of Grade 2 to the west of the village adjacent to the MoD land, and an area of Grade 4 along the south-eastern boundary of the parish – Agricultural land is graded from 1 to 5, from excellent to very poor, in the parish and surroundings the land ranges from Grade 2 to Grade 4 (Fig.12).

WODC comprehensive Design Guide (2016) contains a detailed analysis of both natural and manmade aspects of the District and provides design advice. Chapter 3: Geology and Landscape identifies the vegetation type in the parish as typical of the Wolds, and of the Clay Vale.

Chapter 4: Local Character identifies the local architectural character as typical of the Limestone Wolds and lists distinctive building features including creamy limestone, red 'Oxford' brick chimneys, lime render, stone slate, welsh slate and thatch for roofing (Fig.13). Chapter 5: Settlement type identifies Brize Norton as a linear / dispersed settlement on the open Wolds in a generally open and exposed setting. It is described as having a loose-knit form with a number of dispersed farms, some of which have been linked by later infill development, and with the RAF site covering a large area to the south west of the village.



Agricultural Land Classification

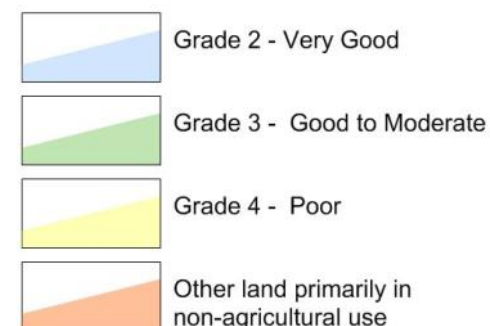


Fig. 12 Agricultural Land Classification

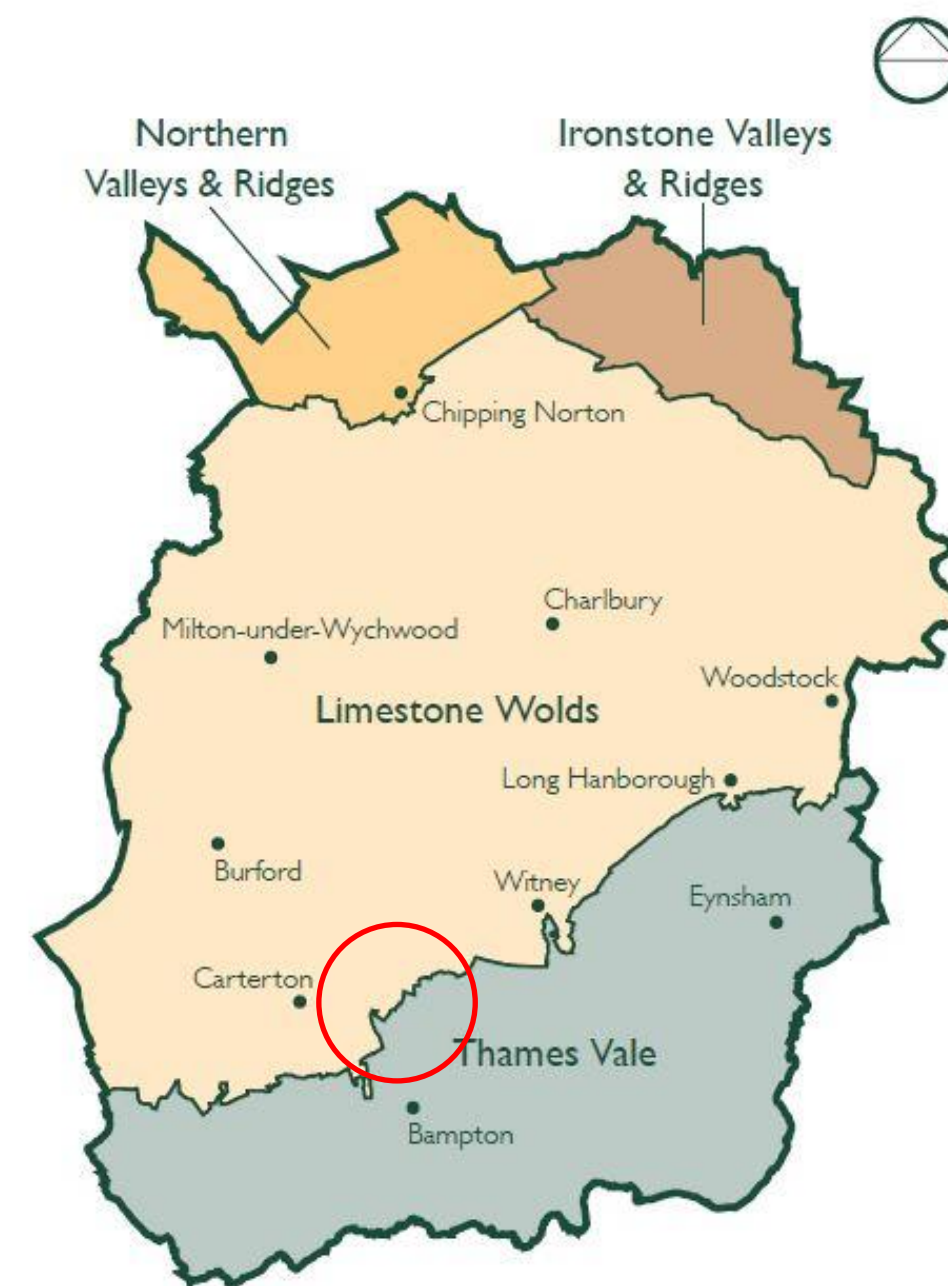


Fig. 13 WODC Design Guide . Local Character areas

The Carterton Landscape Assessment (2009) by Amanda Hopwood Landscape Consultancy provided a detailed study of the character of identified parcels of land surrounding Carterton (Fig. 14). The report recognises the integral role played by open agricultural fields in forming the setting of Brize Norton; it recognises the strong historic links between rural villages and their agricultural hinterland and that replacing fields even with a planted buffer would remove that visual and physical linkage. It states the importance of maintaining a landscape gap between the busy and expanding Carterton and the relatively tranquil, long established settlement of Brize Norton.

The report recognises that, due to the general topography and sparsely vegetated landscape structure, there is high inter-visibility across the parish, which often makes it difficult to integrate or absorb development, and even to screen it from views.

It also recognises that, due to local topography being characterised by gently rolling agricultural land with a general gradient north-south, ranging from 130m AOD along the A40 and 75m AOD to the south of the village, views from the south east of Brize Norton are directed towards an outlying area of high ground, Lew Hill. This rises out of the low-lying vale, forming a characteristic landmark in the surrounding landscape.

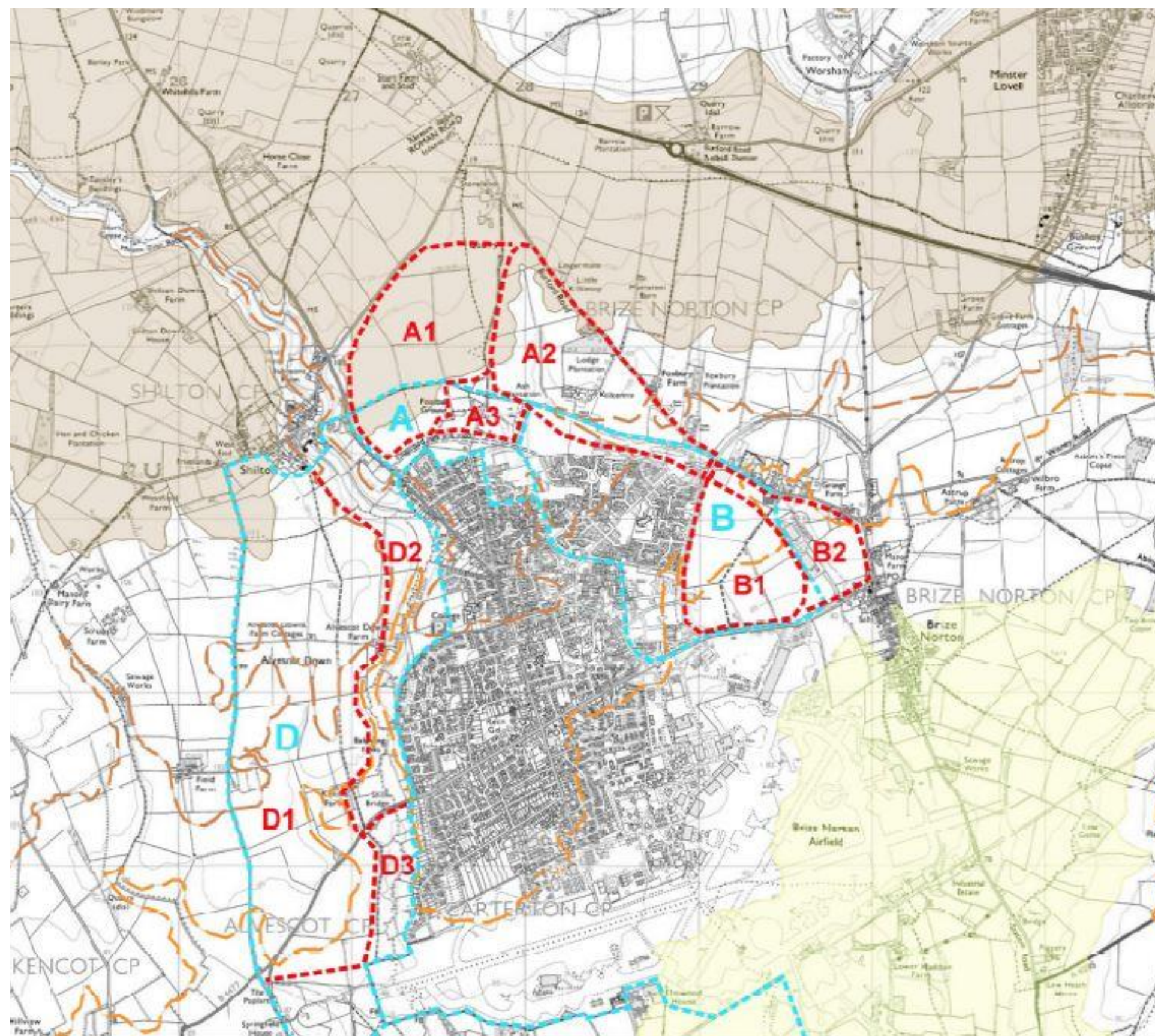


Fig. 14 Carterton Landscape Assessment - Settlement edge areas

The Landscape and Visual Review of Submissions for Carterton and Witney Strategic Development Options (Kirkham Landscape Planning, 2012), generally referred to as the 'Kirkham Report', was commissioned by WODC in response to changes of circumstance including the publication of the NPPF (2012) and the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2011). This assessed the landscape and visual aspects of a number of options for major development, re-examined the role of Green Infrastructure not only as landscape buffers but as a multi-purpose space to serve the community and aimed to identify meaningful landscape buffers to protect the separate identity and local distinctiveness of individual villages.

The assessment included the area between Carterton and Brize Norton (option A: East - in purple on the plan to the right), now under development as Brize Meadow.

Its recommendations for this option include: the provision of a landscape transition zone to protect the character of the village and its landscape setting, green infrastructure links with Kilkenny Country Park - including landscape, visual, ecological, recreational and access links, a landscape setting to Brize Norton and open tree lined approach along Carterton Road, the development main frontage to face Monahan Way, internal green space to link into surrounding green infrastructure, and to avoid a long linear urban eastern edge.

KEY

- DEVELOPMENT OPTION A: EAST
- DEVELOPMENT OPTION B: WEST
- DEVELOPMENT OPTION C: KILKENNY FARM
- DEVELOPMENT OPTION D: NORTH
- EXISTING ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION, PERMISSION GRANTED SUBJECT TO S.106
- EXISTING AND RECOMMENDED URBAN-RURAL LANDSCAPED TRANSITION ZONES

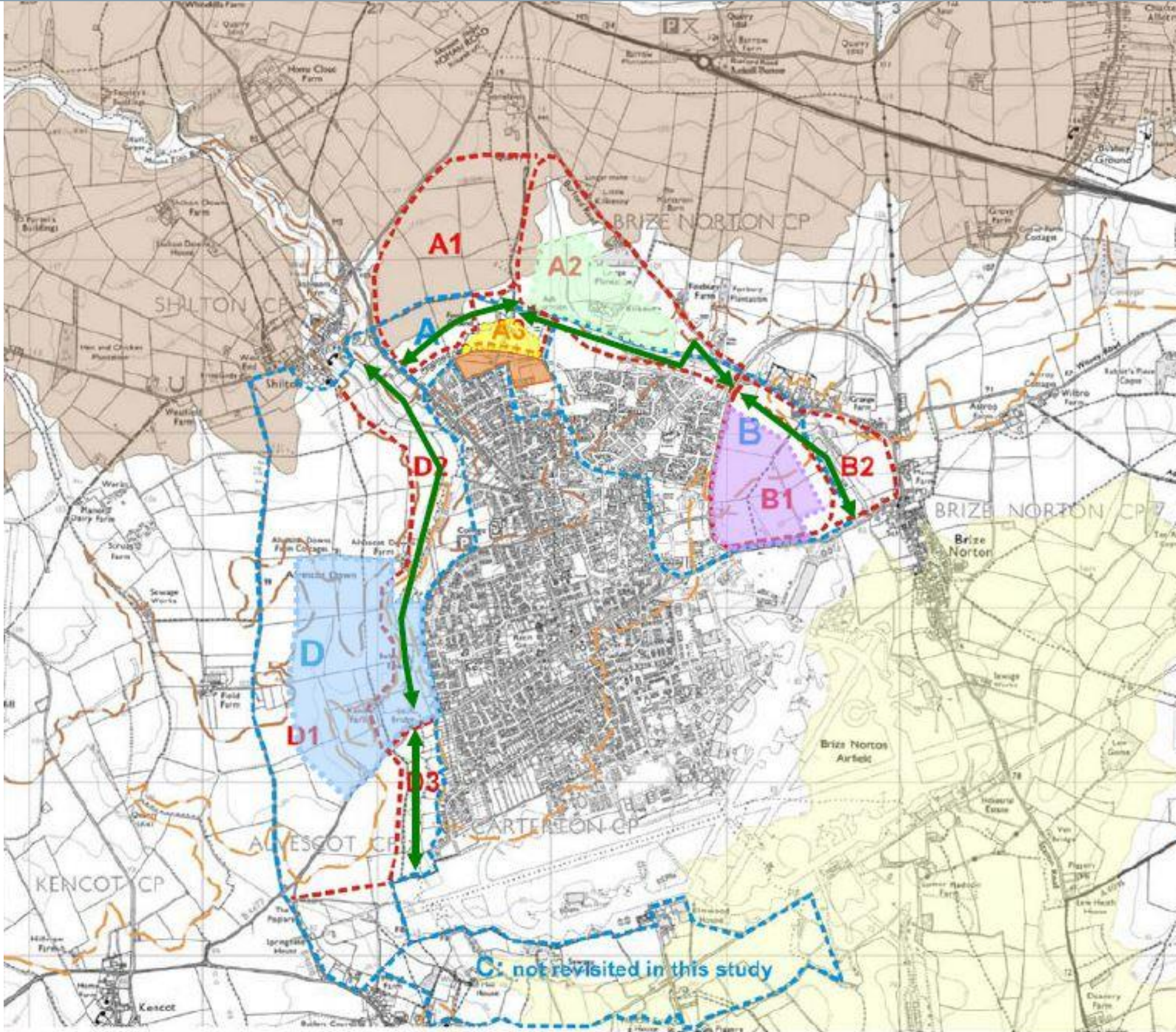


Fig. 15 Kirkham report - Carterton option areas

Designations, Amenities and Access

The map on the right shows the designations within the study area and its immediate setting, or more accurately, their absence. It also highlights the locations of amenities and facilities within the village and the provision of Public Rights of Way and accessible open space within the parish, including those currently being considered for development / designation.

The Cotswold AONB is adjacent to the parish north boundary, and there are areas of Ancient Woodland in the east of the parish. A country park was established in recent years, when Shilton Park was developed. This is to be extended as part of the development of Brize Meadow, in conjunction with new footpaths to link with the existing infrastructure and a new area of allotments.

An area to the north of the parish is allocated for mineral extraction.

In terms of public rights of way, the existing provision is mainly distributed to the south east of the parish, with only one designated footpath in the north - an additional one, the historic 'Ting Tang lane' is currently being considered for designation. The development of the RAF base in the past has caused the abrupt interruption of some of the public footpaths, which now do not connect with the wider access infrastructure. These missing links could be addressed with the creation of short sections of footpath to restore interconnectivity.

Some of the recent woodland planting, mostly introduced as screening in relation to the B4477 bypass to the north of the village, is out of character with the typically rectilinear woodland belts and geometric plantations. Additional tree planting could be introduced to restore the appropriate woodland patterns across the parish, where this would also contribute to soften the edges of developments and strengthen the ecological value of existing and proposed green infrastructure.

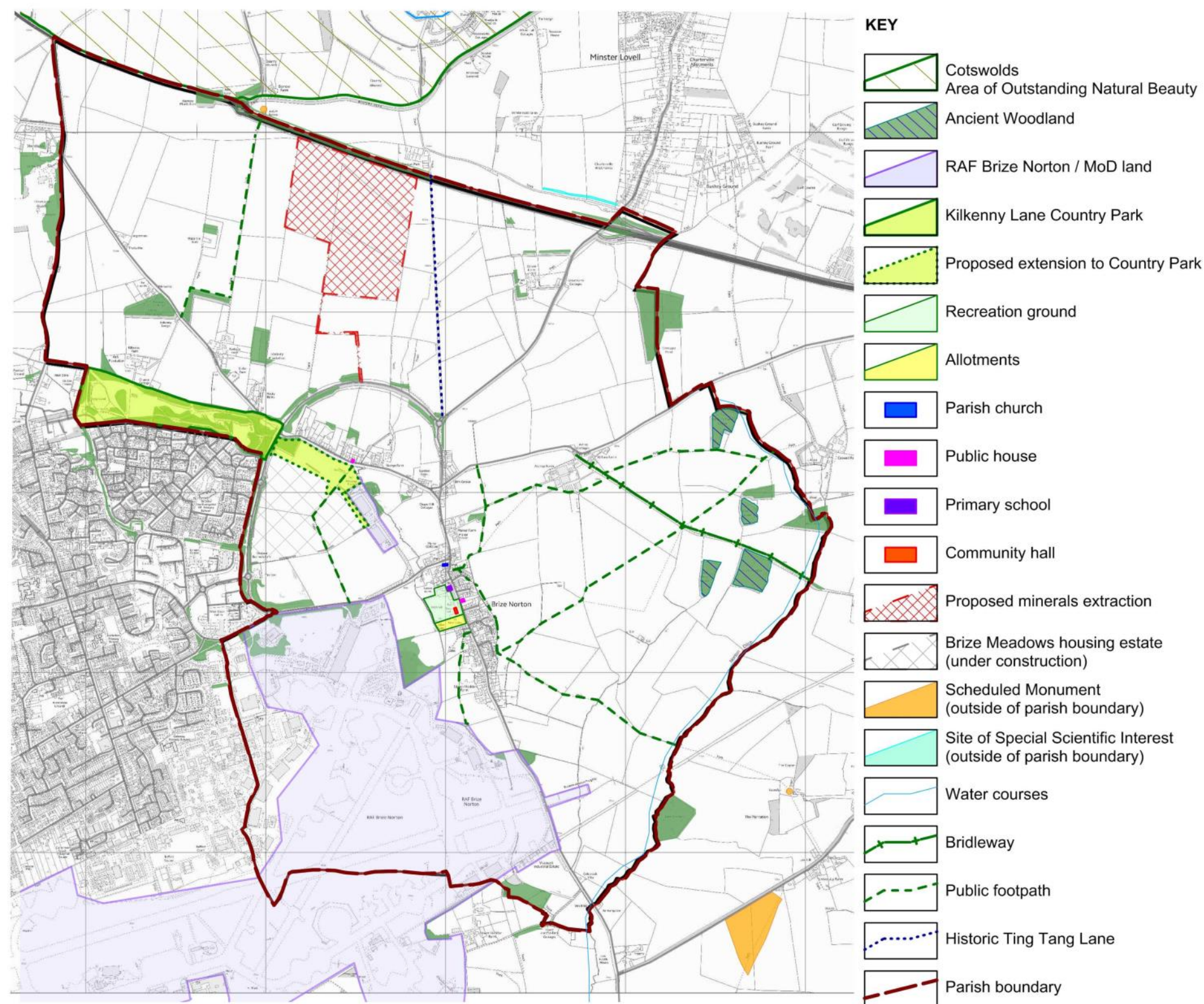


Fig. 16 Designations, amenities and access

The landscape character of Brize Norton

Whilst landscape of the study area is representative of the general character of the wider District, it has distinctive characteristics and features which make it a unique place. West Oxfordshire is described as a district of high environmental quality which makes it an attractive place to live, work and visit; a predominantly rural area with a strong sense of place derived from the Cotswold vernacular style of building, rolling countryside and river valleys. It is a sparsely populated district and about one third of its landscape is designated as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Whilst Brize Norton parish is not within the AONB, it is partly adjacent to it and forms part of its setting due to its proximity and character, and despite the proximity and urban influence of Carterton.

The open arable farmland surrounding the village forms a typical agricultural setting of a historic rural village. Despite the developments of the last century, the overarching impression in the parish is of a rural landscape with scattered farmsteads, well integrated within the landscape structure. In the northern part of the parish, the character of the landscape is consistent with that of the AONB, and its integrity should be maintained as part of the setting of the AONB.

The existing landscape structure within the parish provides valuable habitats for wildlife and includes irreplaceable areas of ancient woodland. The parish contains the following UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats: Deciduous Woodland, Ancient Woodland, Traditional Orchards, especially along the eastern boundary. Whilst these habitats are limited in their extent, this makes them even more precious and should be preserved, and where possible, enhanced and expanded in a manner that is consistent with the overarching character type.

A Green Corridors assessment has been carried out by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. Green Corridors are identified as corridors that allow people and wildlife to move through the landscape. They are important both in connecting patches of habitat to allow wildlife to find food, homes and mates, but also in helping people to access the countryside and to experience wildlife first hand. The assessment has produced a map of existing green corridors within the parish and proposes additional ones that should be either created, protected or implemented as part of any development.

The local landscape character is informed by RAF Brize Norton, which comprises of dominant buildings and structures in the south of the parish but not diminish the rural quality of the surrounding vale landscape.

Since 2010, the RAF Brize Norton has further expanded with a number of buildings and facilities, ahead of the closure of RAF Lyneham in 2012, at which point Brize Norton became the sole air point of embarkation for British troops and repatriation. The base is the largest employer in the area and has a physical impact and presence on the town and surrounding villages. Because of the frequent appearance of planes in the sky

above Brize Norton, and their noise, the influence of the airbase is perceived not only where the RAF base can be seen, but also from a much wider area.

The visual elements that form the facilities of the RAF site include extended tall security fencing, numerous visually imposing utility buildings spread across a wide area, and most notably a 24,000sqm hangar, inaugurated in February 2018, to carry out maintenance of the Airbus A400M Atlas fleet. The huge hangar, designed by AWW architects, 28m high and larger than 3 football pitches, is said to have a 'stealthily composed form' (Tony Whitehead, DEEP Report) and was described as a 'phenomenally impressive' facility by the Defence Minister Guto Bebb.

The local character is also informed by its proximity with the more recent expansion to Carterton, Shilton Park, which, despite woodland planting within the adjacent country park, forms a stark and continuous urban roofscape on the horizon in views from the north of the parish. Kilkeny Lane country park is located at the edge between Carterton and Brize Norton, on an area of relative high ground within the

boundary of the parish and with a strong visual relationship with the adjacent farmland. However, its sign-posted main access is through the Shilton Park estate and the country park itself is physically severed from Brize Norton village by the B4477 bypass.

Though the sub-urbanising influence of Shilton Park on the character of the parish should be mitigated in time by maturing vegetation, the forthcoming development of Brize Meadow to the west of Brize Norton is anticipated to bring more urban densities right to the doorstep of the village.

The remaining pockets of undeveloped land between the two settlements form a crucial transition zone that has been identified as paramount to retain the separate identity of Brize Norton, protect its character and prevent physical coalescence, it is also tasked with providing important ecological and recreational functions as green infrastructure, as well as flood alleviation.



Photo 2. Aerial view of RAF Brize Norton (Carterton to the bottom right)

Across the whole of the study area, the following local character areas have been identified:

- Area 1 : 'Open Limestone Wolds Estate Farmland'
- Area 2 : 'Open Rolling Clay Vale Village Farmland'
- Area 3 : 'Country Park and its setting'
- Area 4 : 'Strategic airfield buffer'
- Area 5 : 'RAF Brize Norton'

These are explored in more detail in the following pages, where their unique characteristics are highlighted.

The main drivers for change are identified and recommendations for future planning, management, protection and enhancement are made.

The map to the right shows the location and distribution of the local landscape character areas within the parish.

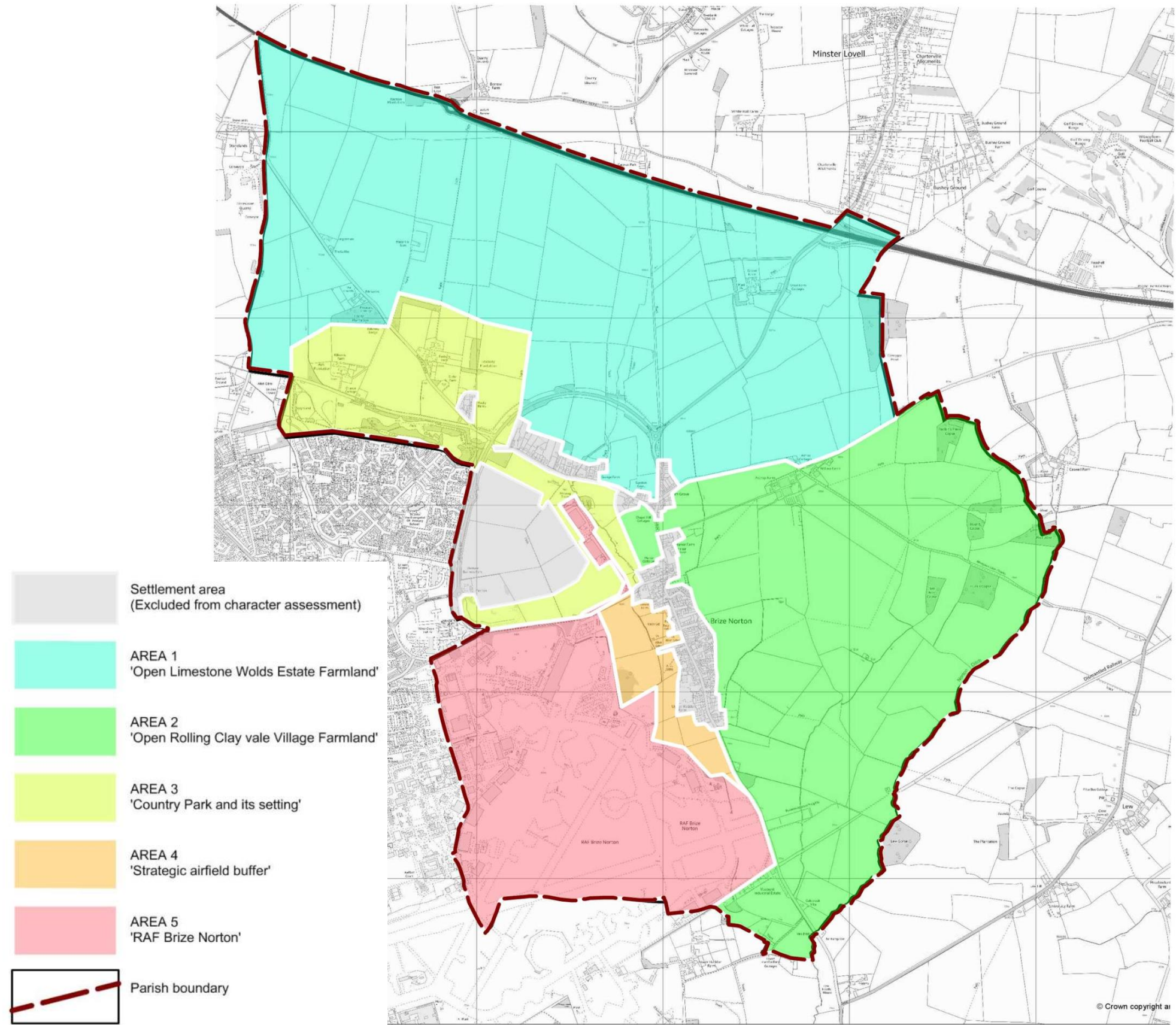


Fig. 17 Parish Local Character Areas

The map on to the right shows the key views analysed during the preparation of this report and the zones of inter-visibility within the parish.

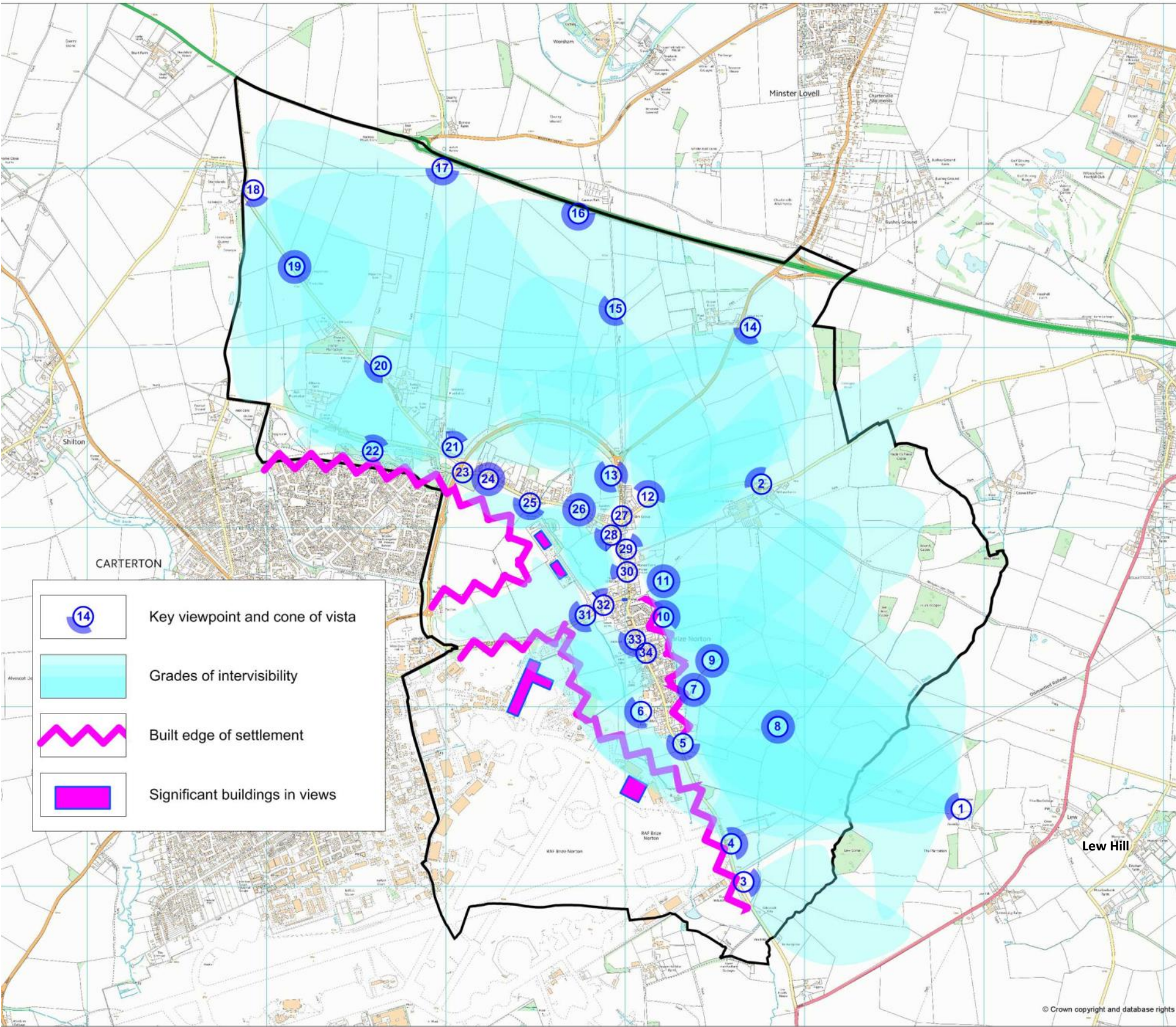


Fig. 18 Inter-visibility and key views

Area 1: ‘Open Limestone Wolds Estate Farmland’

This area relates closely to the relevant National and Regional Landscape Character Assessments in terms of its geology, landform and landcover. Although not covered by any statutory landscape designations, it lies within an Area of High Landscape Value and forms part of the setting of the adjacent Cotswolds AONB.

It has a generally attractive and largely unspoilt rural character but with visible human influences of the urban development at Carterton (most notably its more recent additions, Shilton Park) and the substantial presence of the RAF airbase.

Along the northern boundary of the parish, the gently rolling landform, which forms part of the Cotswold dislope, forms a ridge with the Windrush valley to the north. The gentle gradients of the limestone plateau and dislope, coupled with large fields, low enclosure systems and general sparse vegetation cover, allow long-distance views to the south from prominent locations.

In these views, the large structures of the RAF base are seen in the wider context of the valley and generally do not detract from the largely unspoilt rural character of intervening farmland. The open, rural nature of this area makes it an important part of the agricultural setting of the long-established village of Brize Norton.

Key landscape characteristics

- Large scale, smoothly rolling farmland occupying the limestone plateau and dislope
- Large fields with rectilinear pattern of dry-stone walls and weak hedgerows, with frequent gaps and few trees
- Productive farmland under intensive arable cultivation

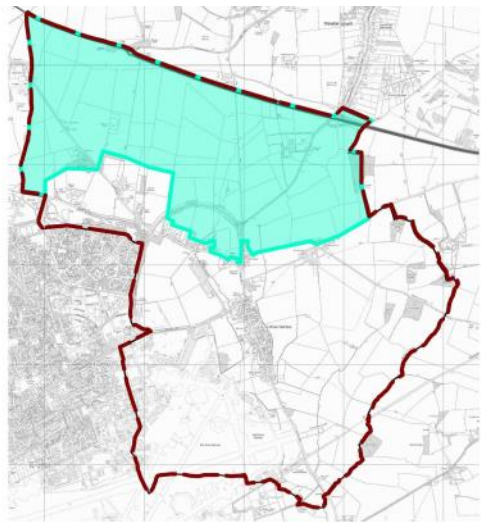


Fig. 19 Local Character Area 1

- Sparse natural vegetation
- Very open and exposed character
- Distinctive elevated and expansive character with sweeping views across surrounding areas
- High inter-visibility

Forces for change in the landscape

- Agricultural intensification, which can lead to removal of natural vegetation cover and poor maintenance and loss of field boundaries.
- Declining condition of hedgerows
- Noise and visual intrusion of RAF Brize Norton
- Ongoing expansion of Carterton
- Suburbanisation of rural settlements and roads

Management recommendations

- Protect :
 - * Dry-stone walls and hedged field boundaries

- * Areas of existing pasture
- * Sparsely settled character of the landscape
- * Integrity of vernacular character of the village
- * Long-distance views
- Manage and Plan :
 - * Maintain existing field boundaries
 - * Rebuild and maintain any derelict dry-stone walls
 - * Replant gappy hedgerows and introduce new hedgerow trees
 - * Plant woodland blocks and belts of broadleaved woodland to restore a mosaic of woodland and farmland, strengthen the landscape structure and soften the impact of recent development
 - * Encourage less intensive farming practices
 - * Improve wildlife value of field margins
 - * Improve approach to towns and villages with judicious planting of tree and shrub species to better integrate buildings within the surrounding farmland.



Photo 3. View from Brize Norton Road, near Grove Farm

Area 2: 'Open Rolling Clay vale Village Farmland'

This area relates closely to the relevant National and Regional Landscape Character Assessments in terms of its geology, landform and landcover. It is not covered by any statutory landscape designations, however, it partly lies within an Area of High Landscape Value and contains a number of features of conservation significance, including remnants of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland. Overall, the rural character is largely unspoilt with localised variations in quality and condition, and tangibly influenced by the presence of the adjacent RAF Brize Norton.

Due to the generally low-lying topography, the village eastern edge is prominent in views from a number of footpaths in this area; though the large buildings of the RAF base, and especially the newer A400M Atlas hangar, appear in views from the southern part of the character area.

Lew Hill, south-east of the parish boundary, is a unique landmark in views from the south of the village and within this area, due to it being a solitary hill in an otherwise flat landscape.

Key landscape characteristics

- Distinctively low-lying and gently rolling topography
- Productive farmland with predominant arable use
- Patchwork of medium to large-sized fields, mostly regular in shape and bounded by hedgerows and some trees
- Fairly weak general landscape structure provided by clipped hedgerows and few hedgerow trees

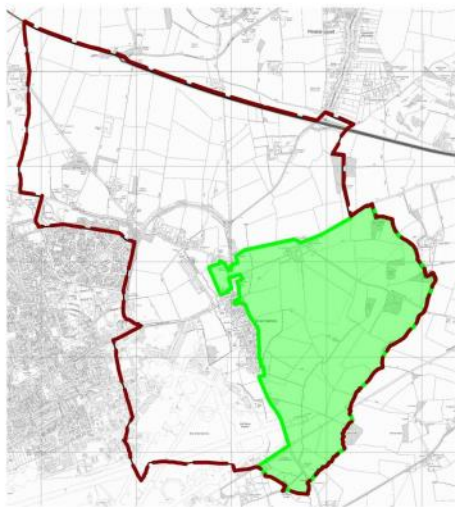


Fig. 20 Local Character Area 2

- Areas with stronger landscape structure provided by willow-lined ditches and occasional small plantations and blocks of ancient woodland
- Open character and high intervisibility within area
- Two-dimensional, expansive landscape with dominant sky
- Lew Hill prominent in views to the south-east
- Prominent visual influence of the large buildings, fences and structures, including tall pylons and power lines associated with the RAF base

Forces for change in the landscape

- Agricultural intensification, which can lead to removal of natural vegetation cover and poor maintenance and loss of field boundaries.
- Large scale agricultural barns can be visually dominant when located on roadsides
- Suburbanisation of rural settlements and roads
- Noise and visual intrusion of RAF Brize Norton especially where the field pattern is weak
- Potential further development within the RAF site

Management recommendations

- Protect :
 - * Hedged field boundaries and vegetation
 - * Riparian vegetation along ditches and watercourses
 - * Sparsely settled character of the landscape
 - * Integrity of vernacular character of the village
 - * Long-distance views to Lew Hill
- Manage and Plan :
 - * Promote traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management and hedgerow coppicing and layering as appropriate
 - * Strengthen character of tree-lined watercourse by introducing new planting
 - * Strengthen landscape structure where weak by planting gappy hedgerows and increase the number of hedgerow trees
 - * Plant woodland blocks and belts of broadleaved woodland to restore a mosaic of woodland and farmland
 - * Minimise impact of visually prominent land uses by the judicious planting of tree and shrub species to better integrate these structures within the surrounding farmland



Photo 4. View from Station Road, by approach to village

Area 3: 'Country Park and its setting'

This area is included within the NCA 107 'Cotswolds' and described in the Regional Landscape Character Assessments as part of the Area 9 'Shilton Downs'. The underlying geology and the general landform characteristics are shared with the higher level landscape characterisation. At local level, this area has its own identity and character which is informed by the experiential quality and communal values attached to its use as a country park, including its proposed extension and its immediate setting.

Due to the topography and recent tree planting, Shilton Park forms a stark edge to the country park .

Key landscape characteristics

- Rolling topography of the semi-enclosed limestone wolds
- Large scale farmland to the north
- Recently established country park to the south
- Fairly contained views, restricted by topography and existing woodland blocks to the north
- Shilton Park roofscape forms the horizon to views towards the south
- Developing internal landscape structure within country park: anticipated to achieve better screening of Shilton Park housing estate and an harmonious interface with the farmland setting.

Forces for change in the landscape

- Agricultural intensification, which can lead to removal of natural vegetation cover and poor maintenance and loss of field boundaries.
- Declining condition of hedgerows
- Ongoing expansion of Carterton
- Suburbanisation of rural settlements and roads

Management recommendations

- Protect :
 - * Dry-stone walls and hedged field boundaries
 - * Sparsely settled character of the landscape
 - * Integrity of vernacular character of the village
 - * Views from the country park to the agricultural hinterland

- Manage and Plan
 - * Maintain existing field boundaries
 - * Rebuild and maintain dry-stone walls
 - * Replant gappy hedgerows and introduce new hedgerow trees
 - * Maintain and strengthen the landscape structure to soften the impact of recent development
 - * Encourage less intensive farming practices
 - * Improve wildlife value of field margins

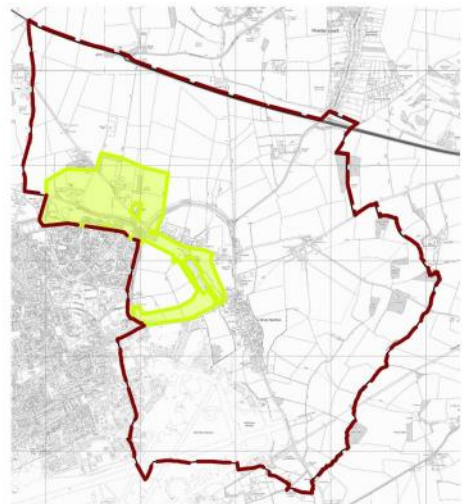


Fig. 21 Local Character Area 3



Photo 5. View from existing Country Park, looking over Kilkenny Lane

Area 4: 'Strategic Airfield Buffer'

This area comprises the precious last remnants of the farmland hinterland that once characterised Brize Norton's western setting. It forms the interface between the historic village of Brize Norton, the RAF base and the recent expansion of Brize Norton (currently under development). Its identity and character is informed by its crucial role in maintaining a physical and perceptual separation between the built settlement and the airfield.

Key landscape characteristics

- Low-lying and fairly flat topography
- Productive farmland with predominant arable use
- Patchwork of medium to large-sized fields, mostly regular in shape and bounded by hedgerows and some trees
- Fairly weak general landscape structure provided by clipped hedgerows and few hedgerow trees
- Two-dimensional, expansive landscape with dominant sky
- Prominent visual influence of the large buildings and structures, associated with the RAF base and the Medical Wing

Forces for change in the landscape

- Noise and visual intrusion of RAF Brize Norton especially where the field pattern is weak
- Potential further development within the RAF site
- Ongoing pressure from housing development
- Loss of village character and coalescence with other settlements and land uses
- Agricultural intensification

Management recommendations

- Protect :
 - * Dry-stone walls and hedged field boundaries
 - * Sparsely settled character of the landscape
 - * Integrity of vernacular character of the village
 - * Views across the fields from within the village

- Manage and Plan :
 - * Maintain existing field boundaries
 - * Rebuild and maintain dry-stone walls
 - * Replant hedgerows and introduce new hedgerow trees
 - * Maintain and strengthen the landscape structure to soften the impact of recent development
 - * Encourage less intensive farming practices
 - * Improve wildlife value of field margins
 - * Establish a clear policy to maintain this undeveloped Strategic Buffer and protect the character of Brize Norton (This can be achieved by pursuing a designation for this area as Local Green Space - where inappropriate development criteria would be similar to those for development in Green Belt).

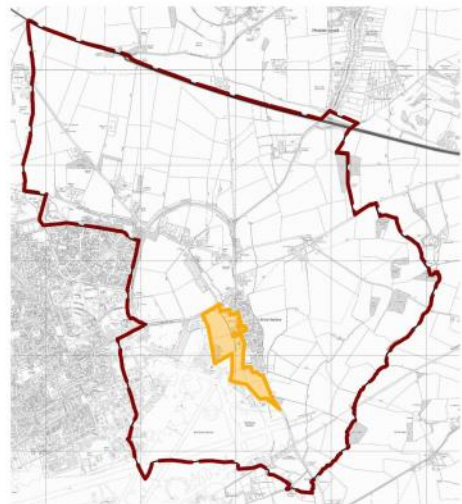


Fig. 22 Local Character Area 4



Photo 6. View from Manor Road, by junction with Burford Road

Area 5: 'RAF Brize Norton'

This area is included within the NCA 108 'Upper Thames Clay Vales' and described in the Regional Landscape Character Assessments as part of the Area 10 'Bampton Vale'. The underlying geology and the general landform characteristics are shared with the higher level landscape characterisation. At local level, however, this area has its own identity and character which is informed by its unique use and purpose.

Key landscape characteristics

- Low-lying and fairly flat topography
- Extremely weak internal landscape structure: grassed surface with no trees or hedges
- Robust boundaries comprising of dense tree belts along fields and tall security fencing along roads
- Extensive presence of metallised surfaces and very imposing structures and buildings
- Inaccessible and off-limits
- Two-dimensional, expansive landscape with dominant sky
- Light and noise impact on surrounding landscape by both permanent structures and moving aircraft

Forces for change in the landscape

- Large scale buildings appearing within the area
- Potential changes to scale, size and requirements of aircraft and consequential impacts
- Future decommission of the site
- Future considerations for land reclamation

Management recommendations

- * Establish clear policies for future land uses to prevent coalescence between Brize Norton and surrounding settlements
- * Establish clear principles for future land uses to best integrate within surrounding character areas



Photo 7. Aerial view of Atlas hangar

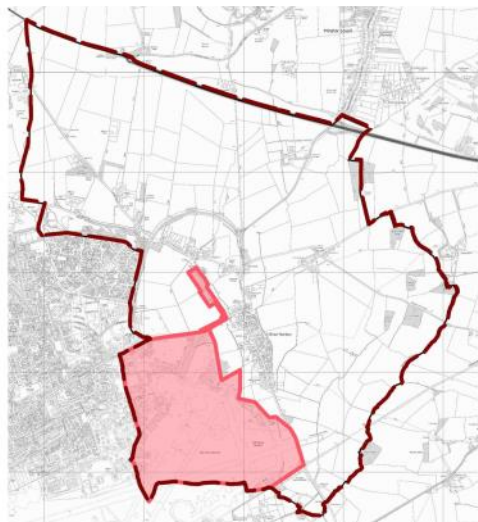


Fig. 23 Local Character Area 5



Photo 8. View from Station Road, near main runway

Summary and policy recommendations

The landscape of the study area is not only representative of the general character of West Oxfordshire, it also has distinctive characteristics and features which make it unique. The parish forms part of the setting of the adjacent AONB and contains a number of features of local heritage, conservation and ecological significance.

Five local landscape character areas were identified across the parish and their unique contribution to the landscape of the parish is described in the previous pages.

Consistent with the wider district, the parish is described as an area of high environmental quality; predominantly rural and with a strong sense of place derived from the Cotswold vernacular style of building, their arrangement and spatial distribution in relation to the historic road network and landform, the rolling countryside and river valley. The sub-urbanising influence of adjacent Carterton and the presence of RAF Brize Norton, even though they are strong characterising elements affecting the parish, do not lessen the overall rural, agricultural character of Brize Norton. Indeed, in the case of the RAF base, its presence defines the character of Brize Norton by contrast. This results from their sharply different scale, material and palpably differing purpose, as well as the abrupt and uncompromising nature of the RAF boundaries.

In terms of the landscape character, the gently rolling, sparsely vegetated agricultural landscape is characterised by the openness of many views, and the contribution made by agricultural buildings within their open farmland context. The strong historic relationship between the village, its form and arrangement of buildings, and its agricultural hinterland is demonstrated by the visual and physical linkage between the two.

However, since the 1950s, the extent of agricultural fields to the west of the village has seen a progressive reduction as these have been eroded by the ongoing expansion of Carterton and RAF Brize Norton. With the development of Brize Meadows, which has expanded the extent of the village to the edge of Carterton, it is now of the highest priority for the parish to establish and maintain a landscape gap to prevent coalescence and further erosion of the rural landscape of Brize Norton.

The character of the structural vegetation in proximity of the village has been weakened in places by recent introductions associated with the development of Monahan Way and Shilton Park. These do not follow the typical narrow linear or rectilinear arrangements of hedgerows or woodland copses which generally maintains the open character of views, but in contrast comprise of juxta-posed planted buffers aiming to screen views to and from transport links and built up areas.

The high inter-visibility within the parish, due to the general topography and characteristically sparse landscape structure, makes it difficult to integrate or absorb growth, particularly high density residential estate developments.

While it is accepted that future change within the parish is inevitable; this can positively contribute to maintaining the vitality of the community and bring about positive enhancements to the physical fabric and the experiential qualities of the village - a number of which have been specifically advocated by local residents. However, it is paramount that a framework is established, which provides clear criteria-based policies to define what is ‘appropriate development’ in Brize Norton.

This report makes proposals for future management and outlines policy recommendations to regulate changes affecting the landscape. These are divided into five categories as follows:

Rural character

- * Any proposed development should be focused on small sites and should aim to achieve relatively low densities that are consistent with the rest of the village and achieve a high quality, complementary streetscape.
- * Development should be concentrated on infill or backfill sites where change can be best absorbed and integrated into existing development and vegetation.
- * Development should contribute positively to the local vernacular character, by the use of appropriate materials, scale, quality of design, workmanship, property boundaries and green infrastructure.
- * Development should maintain and enhance affected views and areas with inter-visibility, and have beneficial effects on key public views.
- * Development must achieve environmental net gains and contribute beneficially to the wider landscape context.
- * Development should not detract from the key components of the rural landscape character in the parish. These include: the agricultural land use, the openness of views and resulting inter-visibility within the parish, the characteristic pattern of hedgerows and limited tree cover arranged along linear or rectilinear arrangements.
- * Development should not seek to integrate or obfuscate the relationship between RAF Brize Norton and the village.
- * When planning for change, including new vegetation planting, it is important that key views are retained and restored, and that inter-visibility between the village and its agricultural hinterland is maintained.
- * Development can contribute to enhancing areas of weakened character, i.e. at approach to the village, where the transition between agricultural and

residential use could be softened and improved.

- * Development must contribute to restoring the rural character in areas where this has been diluted, weakened or lost.
- * New tree planting, which fulfils one of the key aims of the local community and contributes to the aspirations of the Thames Valley Green Corridor Assessment, should replicate and maintain the historic character of agricultural field boundaries, which comprise of hedges and intermittent hedgerow trees. New tree planting should not provide wide shelterbelt planting, as this would inappropriately compartmentalise the landscape and creating dense enclosures.

Strategic Airfield Buffer / Local Green Space Designation

The local character area 4 (Fig. 17) should be designated as Local Green Space to maintain and protect the separate identity and local distinctiveness of the village of Brize Norton, and halt further erosion to the setting of the village.

The NPPF states that:

‘The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment insufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

The policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belt.’ (para 99-101).

Though the NPPF (para 145) lists a number of exceptions to this, generally ‘A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt’.

Public Access (Fig. 24)

Existing Public Rights of Way:

A detailed survey of footpaths and vegetation across the parish would provide an assessment of the baseline conditions and help to identify desirable improvements on a map; The community should identify areas requiring improvement and notify the relevant land owner. Existing Public Rights of Way should be managed to maintain physical accessibility.

Management should include:

- * Clearing encroaching vegetation,
- * Replacing derelict stiles and bridges with like for like,
- * Retaining timber as construction material (avoiding recycled plastic or metal) ,
- * Restoring gappy hedgerows and providing succession planting to ensure the landscape qualities of the footpaths are maintained in perpetuity.

Proposed pedestrian links:

The local community of Brize Norton is an integral and proactive stakeholder in the design and implementation process of new pedestrian and cycle links as identified in the Local Plan. In planning new Public Rights of Way the following criteria should be included:

- * Proposals for new footpaths should restore links that were severed in the past
- * New links should be implemented where connectivity between different parts of the parish, and beyond, is deemed desirable for the community
- * The designation of the historic Ting Tang Lane as Public Right of Way should be pursued.
- * Implement a Nature Trail as advocated by the community survey. This would run along the eastern bank of the brook which flows between Burford Road and Carterton Road.
- * Establish a permissive footpath to link the recreation ground with the new development at Brize Meadow on Carterton Road.

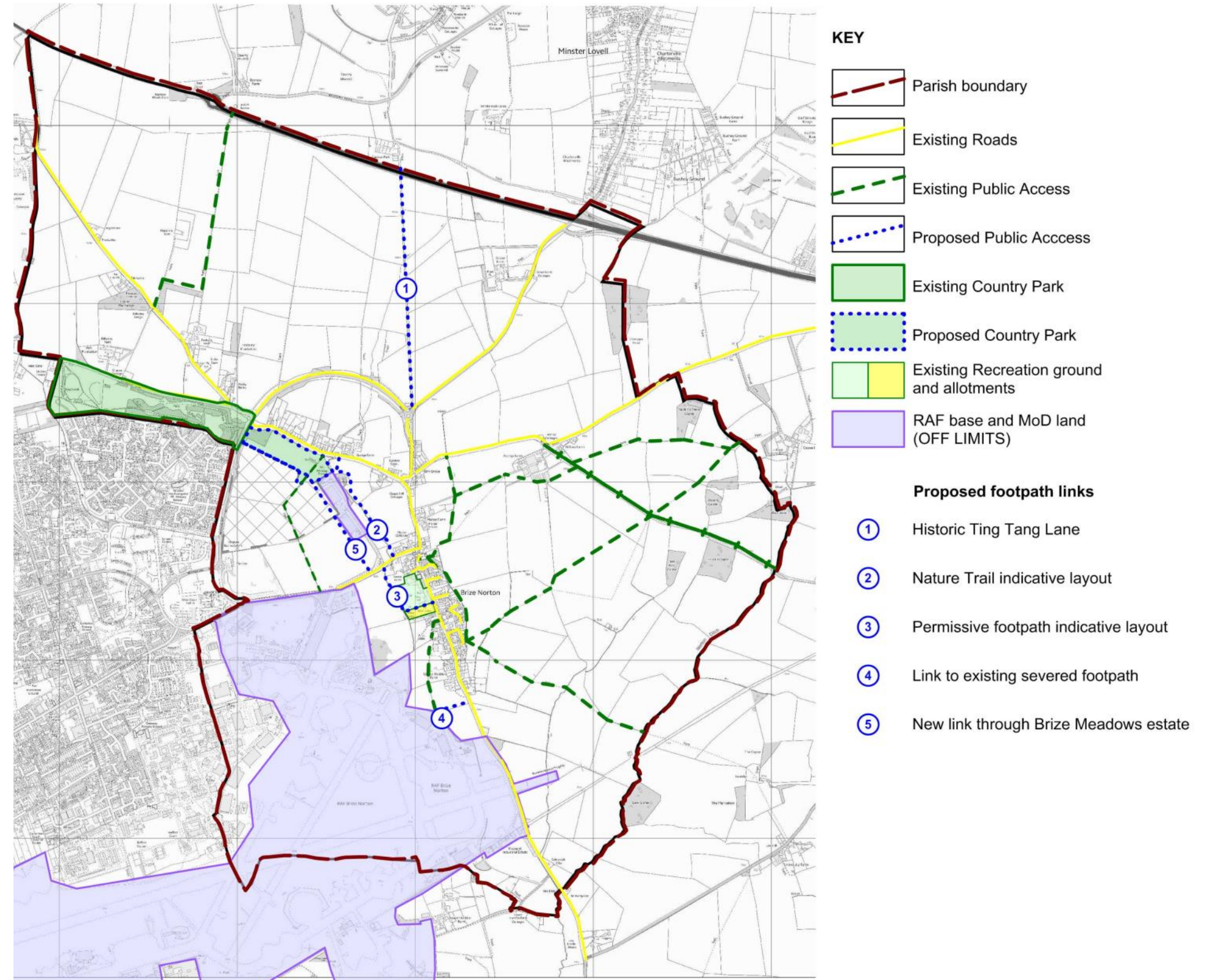


Fig. 24 Proposed pedestrian access links

Cycle network :

The local community of Brize Norton is to be an integral and proactive stakeholder in the design and implementation process of new pedestrian and cycle links as identified in the Local Plan. In planning new Cycle ways, the following criteria should be included:

- * Cycle lanes within the village, as have been advocated by the community, should be designated by passive signage and road markings. This would also achieve narrower carriageways and reduce traffic speed.
- * Create new connections and work alongside the adjacent parish of Curbridge to design a *Sustrans* route to Witney. Survey potential options and consult with local community to establish most appropriate route, generally aim to follow existing hedgerow lines and field boundaries where possible.

Country Park (existing and proposed extension)/ Designation

Country Park (existing and proposed extension):

- * It is necessary to improve physical and perceived accessibility, and permeability across Monahan Way.
- * Burford Road / Monahan Way junction: Reduce current severance by improving pedestrian connectivity across Monahan Way (potential raised surface crossing, signposting existing entrance to the Country Park from its east boundary)
- * Ensure that plans for the proposed extension to the country park include improved pedestrian crossing and signage across Monahan Way. This must prioritise a safe and pleasant pedestrian experience, and a visually enhanced link for users of the extended country park as a whole. It is proposed that these measures are an integral part of highway junction improvements to the Monahan Way / Burford Road crossing in the context of upgrading the B4477 to A status.
- * Areas to the south of the development of Brize Meadows (within local character area 3) should also be included in the Country Park designation, due to their contribution as Green Corridors, their benefits to wildlife and for improving accessibility to existing and future residents.