



# VISION DOCUMENT

## LAND SOUTH OF WOTTON ROAD, KINGSWOOD



Vistry Group

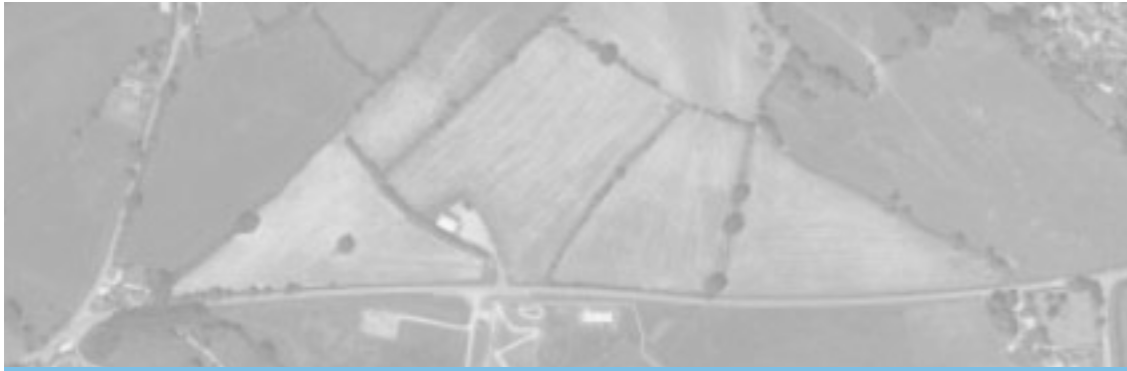
DECEMBER 2020

# CONTENTS

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>06</b>
location	07
surrounding context	08
the site	10
historic context	11
landscape & visual	12
drainage & flooding	13
opportunities & constraints	14
<b>3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT</b>	<b>15</b>
existing development context	16
emerging local plan	16
<b>4.0 VISION FOR SITE</b>	<b>17</b>
green infrastructure	19
access & movement	20
development parcels	21
development form	21
concept plan	22



**Vistry Group**



# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Vistry Homes to support the promotion of land at Wotton Road, Kingswood, through the Stroud Local Plan review process.
- 1.2 This document has been prepared by BBA Architects and Planners. The document provides a description of the existing site and the surrounding context; a review of the opportunities and constraints relating to the site; and analysis of how these elements could inform the development of the site. The document has been informed by initial studies undertaken by Orion (Heritage Consultants) and LVIA Ltd.
- 1.3 This vision document is structured as follows:
  - **Section 2** provides a description of the site and surrounding context and an analysis of the opportunities and constraints relating to the site.
  - **Section 3** provides the existing planning policy context.
  - **Section 4** provides the vision for the site, taking into account the surrounding context, opportunities and constraints and existing planning policy. The Concept masterplan is shown at very high level and shows how the site could come forward. Further work will need to be undertaken to develop and refine scheme proposals.



## VISTRY - WHO WE ARE?

Formed in January 2020, Vistry Group is made up of Vistry Housebuilding – featuring the Bovis Homes and Linden Homes brands - and Vistry Partnerships, which is the partnerships and regeneration section of the business.

With developments from Northumberland to Cornwall and Cheshire to Norfolk, Vistry Group is one of the top five housebuilders in the UK by volume. A real powerhouse of a business, creating fantastic opportunities for our customers, clients and communities.

## HOUSE DESIGN

Vistry Group is one of the country's leading housebuilders, with well-known brands that have an established reputation for quality that runs through their homes' design, build, specification and customer service. The range of properties across the Linden and Bovis Homes brands is wide and flexible - with designs that can be adapted to the changing needs of the market, the customer and the environment in which we build.

We build homes based on the following key design principles:

- **Arrival:** from designing external elevations and creating attractive street scenes through to maximising the flow and size of the rooms to meet modern lifestyle needs, we aim to create well designed places that are functional, accessible and sustainable;
- **Proportion:** the relocation of cloakrooms and kitchens has enabled deeper windows to be used on the property fronts creating well-proportioned, balanced elevations that maximise solar gain;
- **Light:** the size, positioning and number of windows has created bright and airy homes which relate positively to the private and public spaces around them;
- **Movement:** careful consideration has been given to the flow and layout of new homes to accommodate today's lifestyles and facilitate flexibility in the way rooms can be used;
- **Quality:** the homes have been created to embrace modern design and styling, whilst retaining the classic architectural traditions on which Vistry, through Bovis Homes and Linden Homes, has built its heritage and brand since 1885.



*We've improved the thermal efficiency of the walls, windows, and roofs by refining our designs and using proven, effective materials*

*We've used the latest energy efficient heating and hot water systems that will reduce CO2 emissions*

*We've used the latest energy efficient heating and hot water systems that will reduce CO2 emissions*

# Vistry Group



## 2.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT



# LOCATION

2.1 The site of approximately 4.3ha is located to the north of Vineyard Lane and to the east of Wotton Road on the edge of the Village of Kingswood. The settlement of Wotton Under Edge is circa 500m to the north.

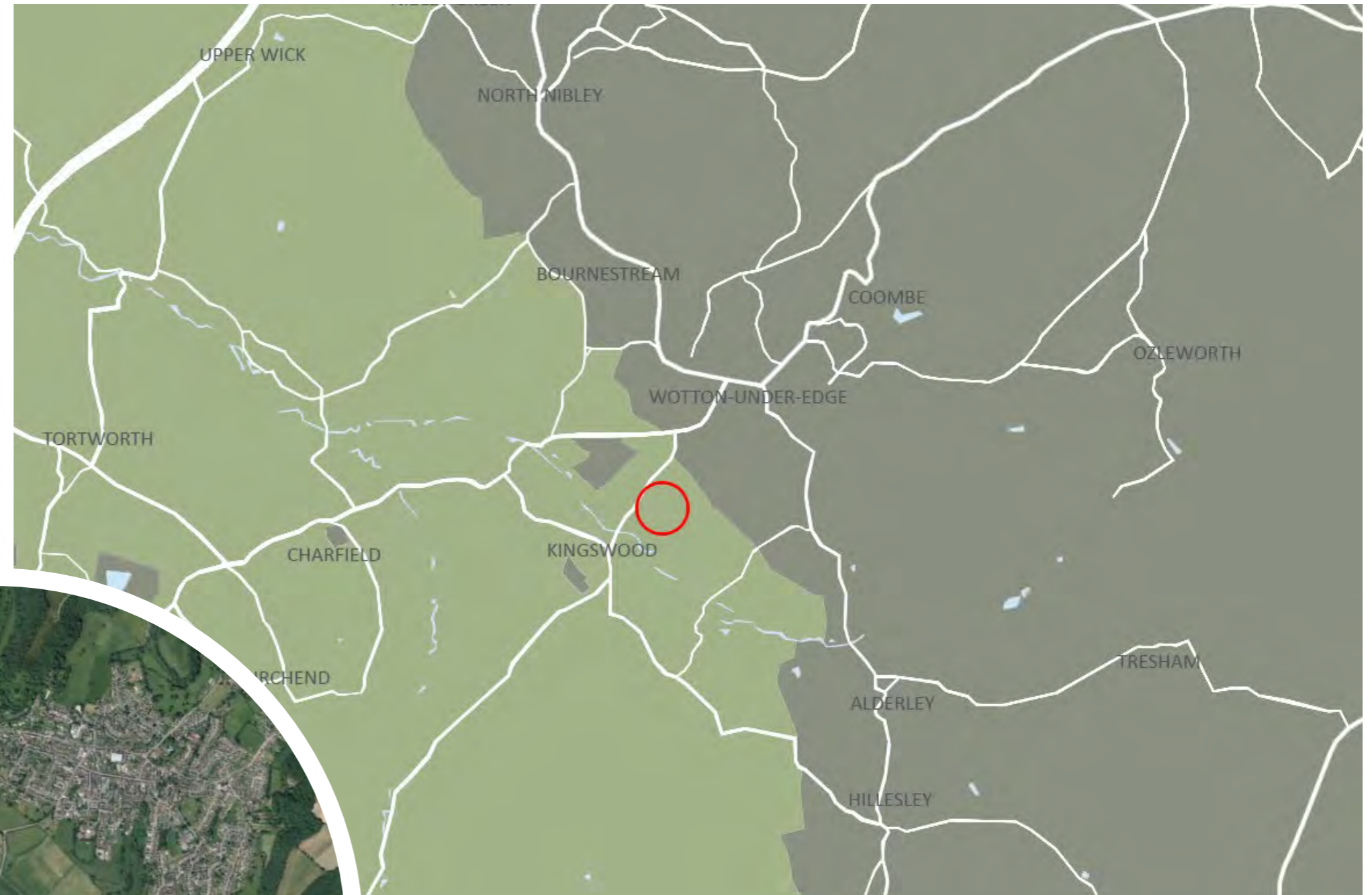


FIG. 02 WIDER CONTEXT PLAN

FIG. 01 AERIAL VIEW OF SITE



## SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 2.2 Whilst located on the edge of Kingswood, with clear linkages back into the village, the site is also well related to Wotton-under-Edge to the north. The proximity of the two settlements, with Katherine Lady Barkley School, on the western side of Wotton Road (opposite the site) essentially linking the two settlements together, means Kingswood and Wotton effectively form a settlement cluster, with many services shared across the settlements.
- 2.3 Wotton Road is the main road linking the two settlements, and it runs through the centre of Kingwood, turning into Old Rectory Road and Hillesley Road. Kingswood is typical of many villages in the area with an historic core with more modern, suburban development on the periphery of the village.
- 2.4 The Conservation Areas that covers the centre of Kingswood includes a total of 29 listed buildings. The site is not visible to or from the conservation area, however, there are glimpses of the top of the Church of St Mary from the site.
- 2.5 Marlees Brook runs roughly east/west just to the south of Vineyard Lane. The river is narrow with lots of vegetation around it so only discernible when close by. The majority of development in Kingwood is located to the south of the river, however two large care home buildings are located to the north, accessed via Wotton Road and are adjacent to the site.
- 2.6 The site, and area immediately surrounding it is relatively flat, but the land rises sharply further north, with edge of Wotton-Under-Edge located near the top of the hill.
- 2.7 Between Wotton and Kingwood there is a very good range of facilities and services including, Employment, Primary and Secondary Schools, Shops, public houses and churches.



-  POST OFFICE
-  SCHOOL
-  SPORT & RECREATION
-  BUS STOPS
-  SHOPPING
-  HEALTH
-  RESTAURANT & BARS
-  PLACE OF WORSHIP

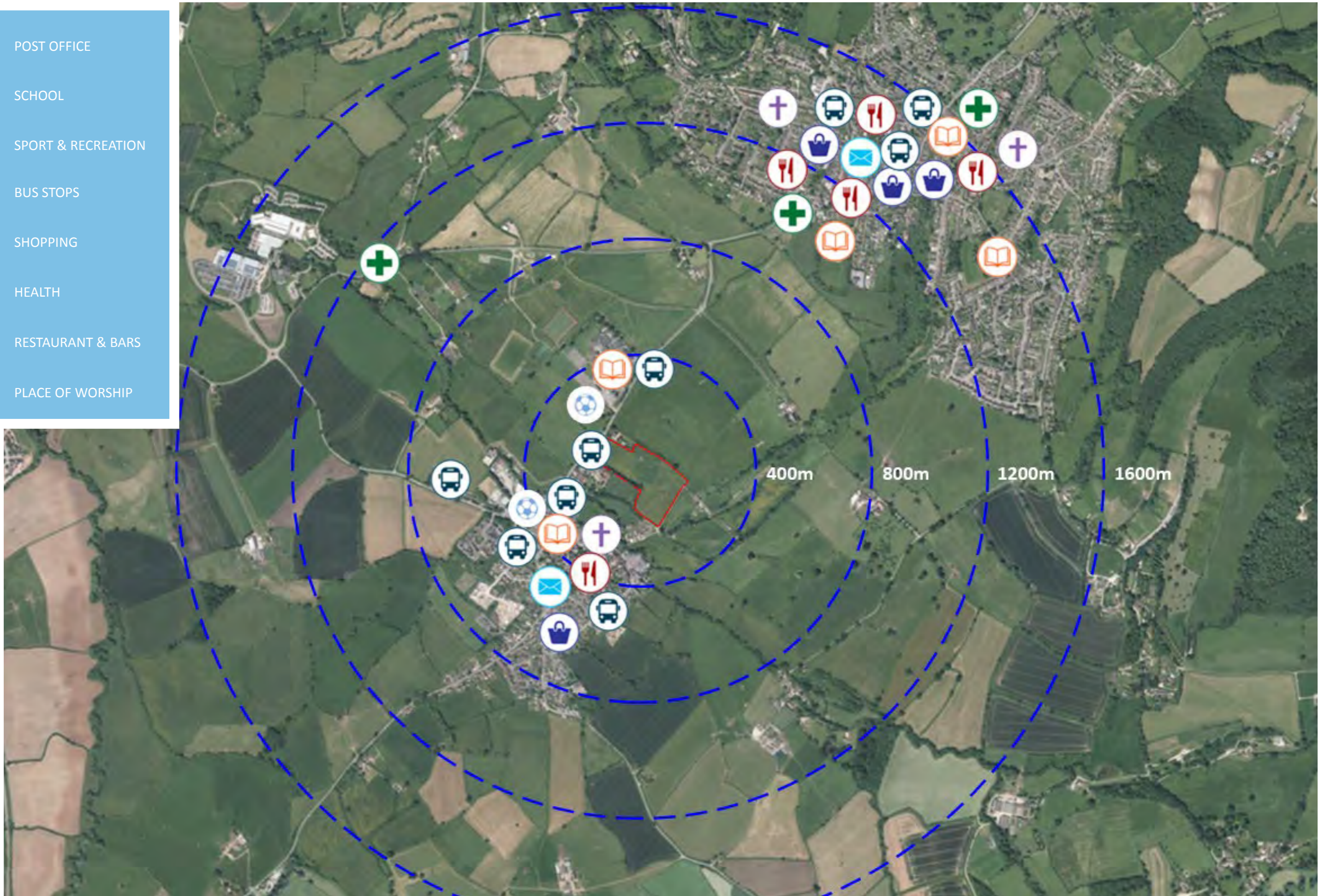


FIG. 04 FACILITIES PLAN

## THE SITE



FIG. 05 NORTHERN EDGE OF SITE



FIG. 06 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- 2.8 The site is currently in agricultural use and is not covered by any biodiversity, landscape or heritage designations. A public right of way passes through the site along the northern edge.
- 2.9 The landform within the site is gently undulating and sits within a relatively flat surrounding landscape. The landform becomes more steeply sloping further to the north and east in particular.
- 2.10 The site is crossed by a public rights of way (PRoW), and a network of PRoWs sit within the landscape local to the sites boundary.
- 2.11 Strong hedgerows with intermittent trees form the site boundaries providing enclosure. Further enclosure is provided by the existing development that sits around parts of the site boundary. Adjacent development includes Kingswood House and Katharine Lady Berkeley's School to the north/ North West; Wotton Road to the west; the retirement village, row of houses on Vineyard Lane and the settlement of Kingswood to the south and Park Mill Farm to the east.

# HISTORIC CONTEXT

2.12 As noted above, the centre of Kingswood is covered by a Conservation Area designation. However the conservation area is not visible from the site, and the site is not visible from the Conservation area. However, there are glimpsed views of the spire of the Church of St Mary, within the centre of Kingswood, from the site.

2.13 The SALA Heritage Appraisal concludes the following for the Wotton Road site:

*“Some impact on heritage interest. Although the site itself lies outside the Kingswood conservation area and contains no obvious features of heritage interest, it is flanked by two Grade II listed buildings (Kingswood House to the north and Penn House to the south). The site contributes to the setting of Kingswood House in particular, which derives much of its character from its rural setting and stand-alone situation on Wotton Road”.*

2.14 Kingswood House is a prominent house fronting the Wotton Road, and is located immediately to the north of the study site. The National Heritage List for England has the following description of the house:

*NHLE 1088853 – KINGSWOOD HOUSE, grade II Dwelling. Early C19. Rendered, slate roof. Square parallel range, moulded stone cornices and parapets back and front, coped M-gables, four stone stacks with moulded caps. Large projecting stone Doric porch, right side. Two storeys plus roof storey in part, four windowed front, three windowed back, large sashes with glazing bars in deep reveals; large arched staircase window, left, sash with bars, and two smaller arched windows above porch, flanked by blind openings. Six panel paired doors under decorative fanlight.*

2.15 The site occupies the field to the south and east of the house, and there are a number of views to the house from the site. At present, the house sits apart from any other development (aside from the school on the opposite side of the road) and is seen in the context of fields surrounding it.

2.16 Penn House and its context are separated from the site by the modern Pennwood Lodge development.

2.17 In addition to the two listed buildings identified in the SALA appraisal, Park Mill Farm is also grade II listed and located some 60m from the eastern site boundary. The house is located within a small enclosed field and forms part of a farmstead with a number of other associated outbuildings. Again, the site currently forms part of the rural context of the house, with limited views of the house from the footpath which runs along the northern boundary of the study site.



FIG. 07 VIEW OF CHURCH SPIRE



FIG. 08 VIEW OF KINGSWOOD HOUSE FROM SITE



FIG. 09 KINGSWOOD



FIG. 10 GRADE II LISTED THE LAURELS, KINGSWOOD



FIG. 11 GRADE II LISTED CHESTNUT PARK HOUSE, KINGSWOOD



FIG. 12 WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE HIGH STREET

## LANDSCAPE & VISUAL



2.18 The LVIA study prepared by LVIA Ltd notes that the site is situated in a gently undulating landscape that is populated by many hedgerows and mature trees. It notes that the site sits adjacent to existing development, such as Kingswood House and the retirement homes to the south. Katherine Lady Barkeley's School can also be seen to have an urbanising impact on the area and the site is perceived in a suburban fringe context without a distinct sense of identity.

2.19 LVIA Ltd note that due to the nature of the boundary vegetation, the proximity of existing development in the surrounding landscape and the gently undulating local topography, views into the site are somewhat limited. There are longer range views where the site can be perceived by virtue of the elevated land to the north, however in these views the site is seen in the context of the existing built elements of the settlement of Kingswood.

2.20 LVIA Ltd conclude that the site does not have a sensitive landscape context, being situated adjacent to the existing urban fringe of Kingswood and having existing development adjacent to it and that sensitively designed residential development could be accommodated on site without cause undue harm to landscape features, landscape character, the Cotswold AONB purpose and special qualities or the visual baseline.

2.21 Potential impacts on the landscape can be mitigated and the Landscape and Visual Study recommends the following landscape/green infrastructure principles are applied to successfully accommodate residential development within the site:

- Create a strong green infrastructure framework including green fingers running from the northern to the southern boundary to soften and break up the built form;
- Manage and enhance existing boundary vegetation to limit potential views from existing PROW network;
- Create a buffer between the site and the landscape to the north comprising native species and a green buffer/corridor, with lower density development along the northern and eastern boundaries;
- New planting within the site to include suitable ornamental and native species that are in keeping with the character of the area and enhance biodiversity; and
- Street tree planting throughout the site which will mature to soften the appearance of residential development.

## DRAINAGE & FLOODING

2.22 The majority of the site is located within flood zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. A very small area in the south east corner of the site is located within flood zone 2.

2.23 Whilst generally described as relatively flat, the central area of the site around existing hedgerows does have a more noticeable slope and it is likely that surface water is channelled and will collect around this area. Indeed, it is noted that a “pond” is marked on the OS Base in this location.

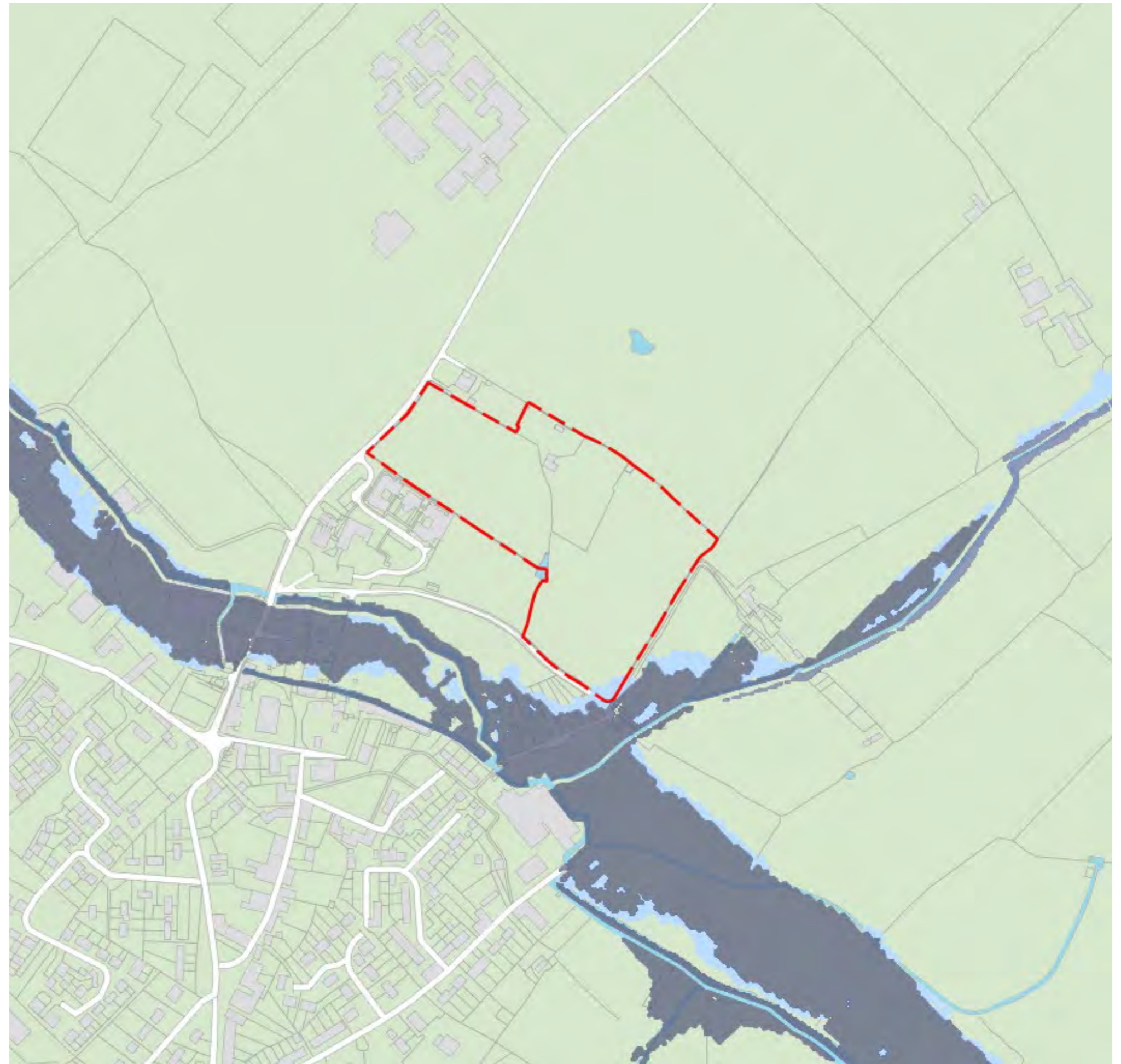


FIG. 14 FLOOD RISK MAP

# OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

2.24 The constraints and opportunities plan highlights particular parts of the site which need to be considered when assessing the appropriate form and location of development. This can be summarised as follows:

- The site represents a natural extension to the settlement of Kingswood.
- The site is not in a sensitive landscape setting with limited views into the site for local and wider range views. In any longer range views the site is seen in the context of the built form within Kingswood
- Public Rights of way go through the site and the access through the site can be enhanced
- Existing hedgerows and strong boundary vegetation should be retained and enhanced where necessary
- Opportunities exist to provide biodiversity enhancements by creation of varied grassland tree and hedge habitats in place of arable fields. A strong green infrastructure framework can be created including green fingers running from the northern to the southern boundary to soften and break up the built form;
- Limited internal trees, shrubs and hedges create clear potential areas for development
- Existing access and road frontage onto Wotton Road
- The sites proximity and impact of development on heritages assets need to be considered. The retention of open space along the Wotton Road frontage south of Kingswood House would preserve much of the rural character of its setting, and also its prominence in views along the road. The green space would also maintain views of the house, which provide an important means of appreciating the heritage value of the house. This green space would also protect limited views to Penn House to the south.
- Open space and additional screening should be planned for the northern boundary of the study site. This would protect the inter-visibility between Kingswood House and Park Mill Farm, which is an important element of their shared setting. Open space and screening here would also soften the effects of any development on views from the footpath to the north, as well as from the high ground near to Hawpark Farm. It would also preserve the rural character of the approach to the conservation area along the footpath from the north.
- Development should look to incorporate framed views of the church spire within the study site, which would largely preserve the heritage values of the views.

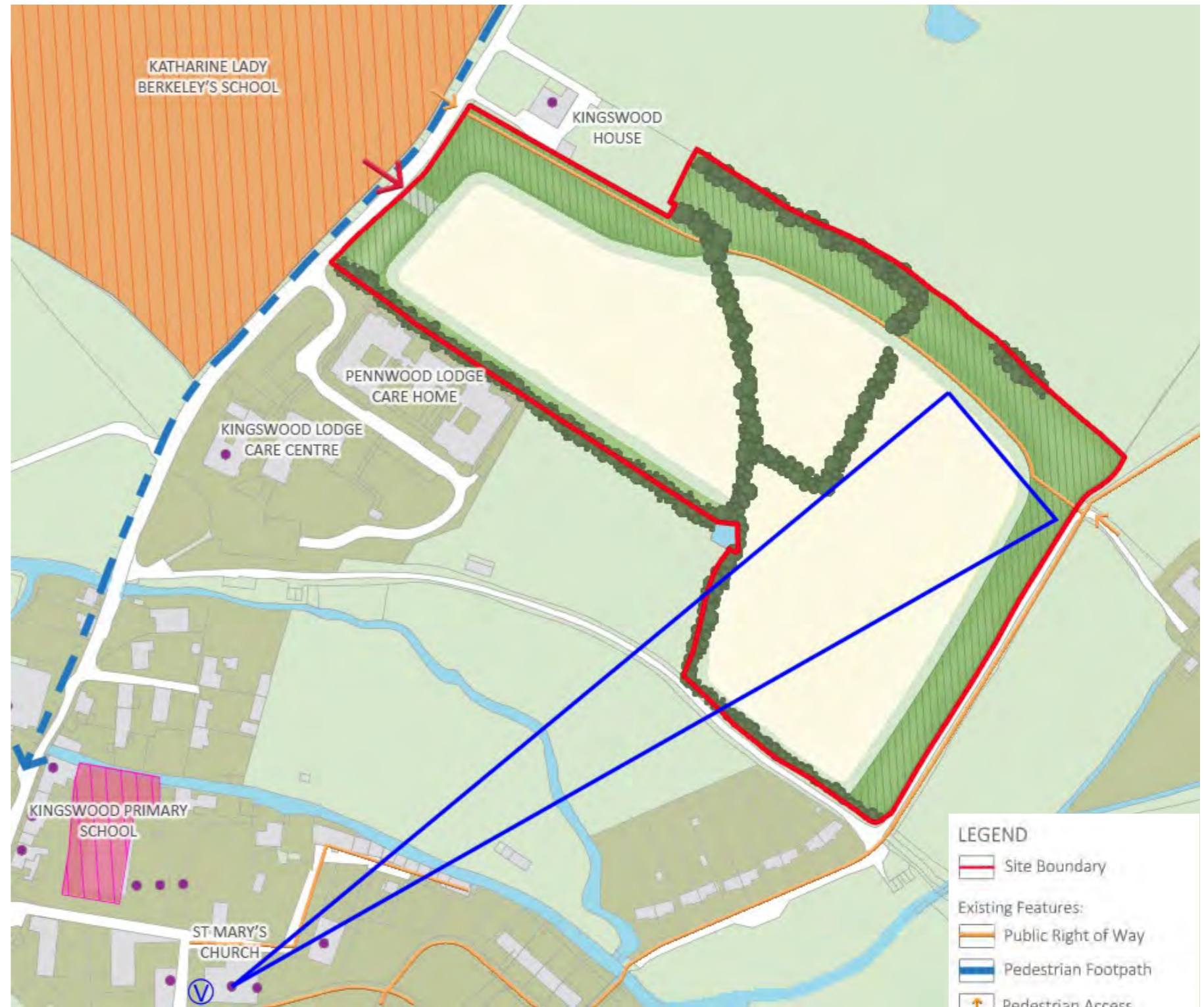


FIG. 15 CONSTRAINTS PLAN



## 3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT



# EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Stroud Local Plan was adopted in November 2015, and provides the planning policy framework for the district for the period up to 2031.
- 3.2 The proposals map shows the site located outside of the settlement boundary of Kingswood, within an area of “white land” (undesigned land). In Policy CP3 (Settlement Hierarchy) Kingswood is designated as a 3rd tier settlement (Accessible Settlement with limited facilities).

## Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.3 The Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in November 2017 and provides a vision and development guide for the parish of Kingswood from 2014 to 2031. It forms part of the Development Plan for the district alongside the Stroud District Local Plan.
- 3.4 The site falls outside of the designated neighbourhood area (Kingswood Parish Boundary) which covers the neighbourhood plan area.

## Kingswood Design Statement

- 3.5 The Kingswood Design Statement was adopted as supplementary planning advice (SPAs) on 11th December 2014. SPAs have not been subject to the same level of process as either SPGs or SPDs, However, they can be referred to for guidance and may be used in decision making.

# EMERGING LOCAL PLAN

- 3.6 Stroud District Council is in the process of reviewing the Stroud Local Plan. A Draft Local Plan was published for consultation in November 2019.
- 3.7 The Draft Local Plan identifies a total need for 12,800 homes across the District over the 20 year plan period 2020 – 2040

(applying the standard method) and draft policy CP2 sets out how much growth is directed to individual settlements, with 50 houses currently being allocated to Kingswood.

- 3.8 Draft policy CP3 of the Draft Local Plan categorises settlements in the District into tiers:

- Tier 1 – Main settlements
- Tier 2 – Local Service Centres
- Tier 3a – Accessible settlements with local facilities
- Tier 3b – Settlements with local facilities
- Tier 4a – Accessible settlements with basic facilities
- Tier 4b – Settlements with basic facilities

- 3.9 Wotton-under-Edge is a tier 2 settlement, described as follows:

“These market towns and larger villages have the ability to support sustainable patterns of living in the District because of the facilities, services and employment opportunities they each offer. They have the potential to provide for modest levels of jobs and homes, including through sites allocated in this Plan, in order to help sustain and, where necessary, enhance their services and facilities, promoting better levels of self-containment and viable, sustainable communities”.

- 3.10 Kingswood is a tier 3a settlement, described as follows:

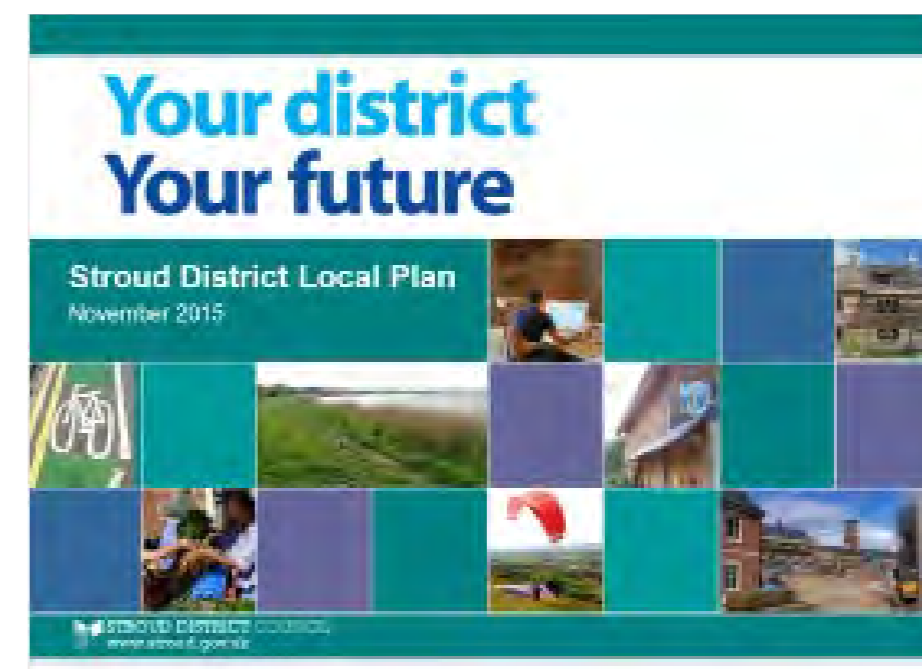
“These medium-sized and large villages are generally well-connected and accessible places, which provide a good range of local services and facilities for their communities. These villages benefit from their proximity and/or connectivity to higher tier settlements or transport corridors, which enable access to employment and key services and facilities elsewhere and which may offer some scope for further transport and accessibility improvements.

*These are relatively sustainable locations for development, offering the best opportunities outside the District’s Main Settlements and Local Service Centres for greater self-containment. Some of these settlements outside the AONB may have scope to help meet the housing needs of more constrained Tier 1 or Tier 2 settlements.” (DLP, page 50).*

- 3.11 Vistry submitted representations to the Draft Stroud Local Plan consultation which, whilst generally supportive of the principle of the “hybrid development strategy” proposed in the Plan, commented that the plan was too concentrated on the large towns and over-reliant on large strategic sites that will not deliver during the plan period. Vistry conclude

that more housing should be focused on the “Wotton Cluster” and Kingswood should be re-designated as a tier 2 settlement given the presence of 4 strategic level services within 500m. The Land at Wotton Road, Kingwood is suitable for residential development and should be allocated for around 120 dwellings in the new Stroud Local Plan

- 3.12 The next stage of the plan is the pre-submission consultation was timetabled for Autumn 2020. However, due delays as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council are currently revising their timetable and this consultation is now likely to be in early 2021.







4.0

THE VISION FOR THE SITE



- 4.1 Kingswood is a highly sustainable location for new residential development to help meet the emerging housing requirement which will be set within the Stroud Local Plan. Together with Wotton-under-edge the two settlements perform as a cluster with the sharing of facilities and services across the two closely related settlements.
- 4.2 The site would provide a logical and sustainable extension to Kingswood, whilst being located to the north of the settlement to take best advantage of the proximity of the secondary school and facilities in Wotton Under Edge. It is noted that the site is not in a sensitive landscape context and the large majority of the site is at low risk of flooding. Whilst there are historic buildings close to the site, the impact on these buildings can be mitigated through good layout design.
- 4.3 The concept plan has been developed by working through the following aspects of development in consideration of the opportunities and constraints of the site:
- Green infrastructure
  - Access and movement
  - Development parcels
  - Development form



# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.4 The existing green infrastructure network of trees and hedgerows would be retained as far as possible to ensure a continuous green network across the site, retain habitat features and provide an attractive setting for the development.
- 4.5 The heritage assessment has identified that the retention of open space along the Wotton Road frontage would preserve much of the rural character of the Kingswood House setting, its prominence from views along the road, and would maintain views of the house.
- 4.6 Open space along the northern boundary of the site would protect the intervisibility between Kingswood House and Park Mill Farm. This would also preserve the rural character of the approach to the conservation area from the north and enhance the setting of the footpath through the site.
- 4.7 A “green wedge” could also be introduced through the site. This would have the advantage of linking the green spaces within the development, creating an additional north/south green space to improve connectivity and also enhance views towards St Mary’s church in the centre of Kingswood.



FIG. 16 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

# ACCESS & MOVEMENT

- 4.8 The site benefits from an existing access from Wotton Road and this would continue to represent the most appropriate vehicular access into the site. Whilst the site does have a frontage on to Vineyard Lane, the lane is very narrow and would not be suitable to provide vehicular access into the site (apart from emergency access). Therefore the existing access via Wotton Road would be the only vehicular access into the site.
- 4.9 Movement through the site would be via a clearly defined and legible hierarchy of streets. A main street would lead from the access from Wotton Road, with secondary roads leading from this into distinct residential parcels. On the periphery of the development, particularly on the northern side of the site, smaller scale, less formal “shared surface” roads could be provided which would provide an appropriate edge to the development and transition to the green landscape to the north.
- 4.10 The existing public right of way that runs broadly east west along the northern part of the site will be maintained. New public links could be made through the site to improve permeability and could assist with access to the secondary school from Kingswood.



## DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

- 4.11 Within the framework of the green infrastructure and the main route through the site, development parcels can be formed.
- 4.12 The main street would be the focus for development. Larger dwellings at a lower density could be proposed on the edges of development, particularly on the northern boundary.
- 4.13 Development would be based on the principle of loose perimeter blocks to ensure dwellings as far as possible front the street and public spaces to avoid blank frontages.

## DEVELOPMENT FORM

- 4.14 The scale and form of dwellings would need to reflect the character of Kingswood. Whilst there are two large scale retirement homes adjacent to the site which set a precedent for larger scale buildings, it is seen most appropriate to provide 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses, two storey in height to reflect the scale of development predominately found on the periphery of Kingswood. Buildings along the main street should be positioned up against pavement to frame the street and provide a sense of enclosure, much like what it found in the central streets of Kingswood. Dwellings on the edges of the site could be set back from the street, to provide a more open character.
- 4.15 It is anticipated that the site could accommodate 100 - 120 dwellings subject to precise mix of houses.
- 4.16 There is a mixture of architectural styles and palette of materials in Kingswood which broadens the scope for appearance of development on the site. The Kingswood Design Statement would be considered at the appropriate stage for the design of individual dwellings.



FIG. 18 DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

# THE CONCEPT PLAN

- 4.17 Vistry Group consider that land south of Wotton Road, Kingswood provides a viable, deliverable and sustainable extension to the village of Kingswood to assist the council in meeting housing needs over the local plan period.
- 4.18 The proposals for the site have carefully considered the physical and policy context and responds to the constraints and opportunities of the site.
- 4.19 The vision for the site is to provide an attractive housing scheme which connects back into the village and links with the school. It will reflect the local vernacular and retain the existing landscape features which would give the development character and sense of place.
- 4.20 Vistry Group would welcome further discussions with council officers.



# Vistry Group



bba architects & planners