

# Down Ampney Site Assessments

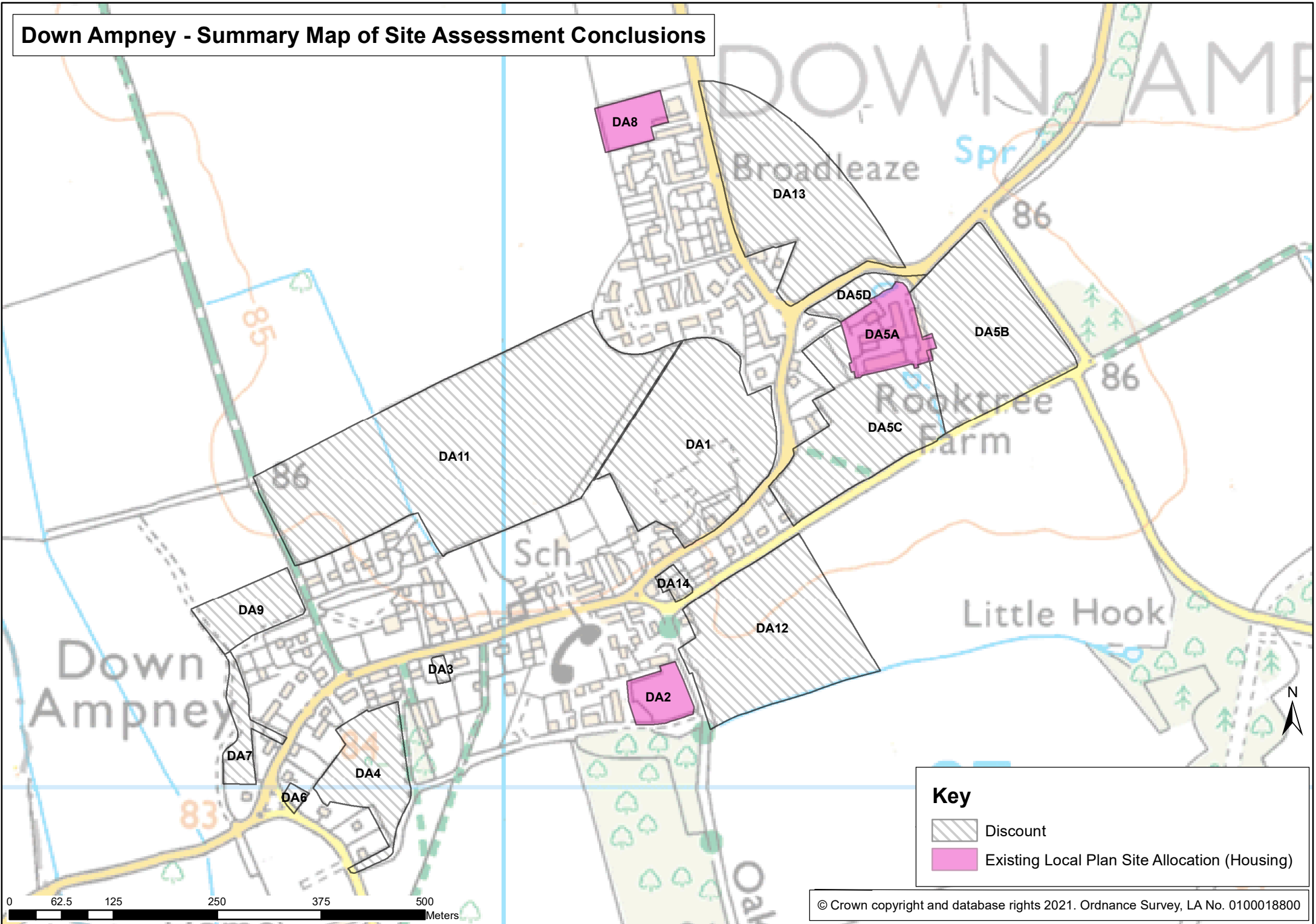
Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021)



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# Down Ampney - Summary Map of Site Assessment Conclusions



## Key



Discount



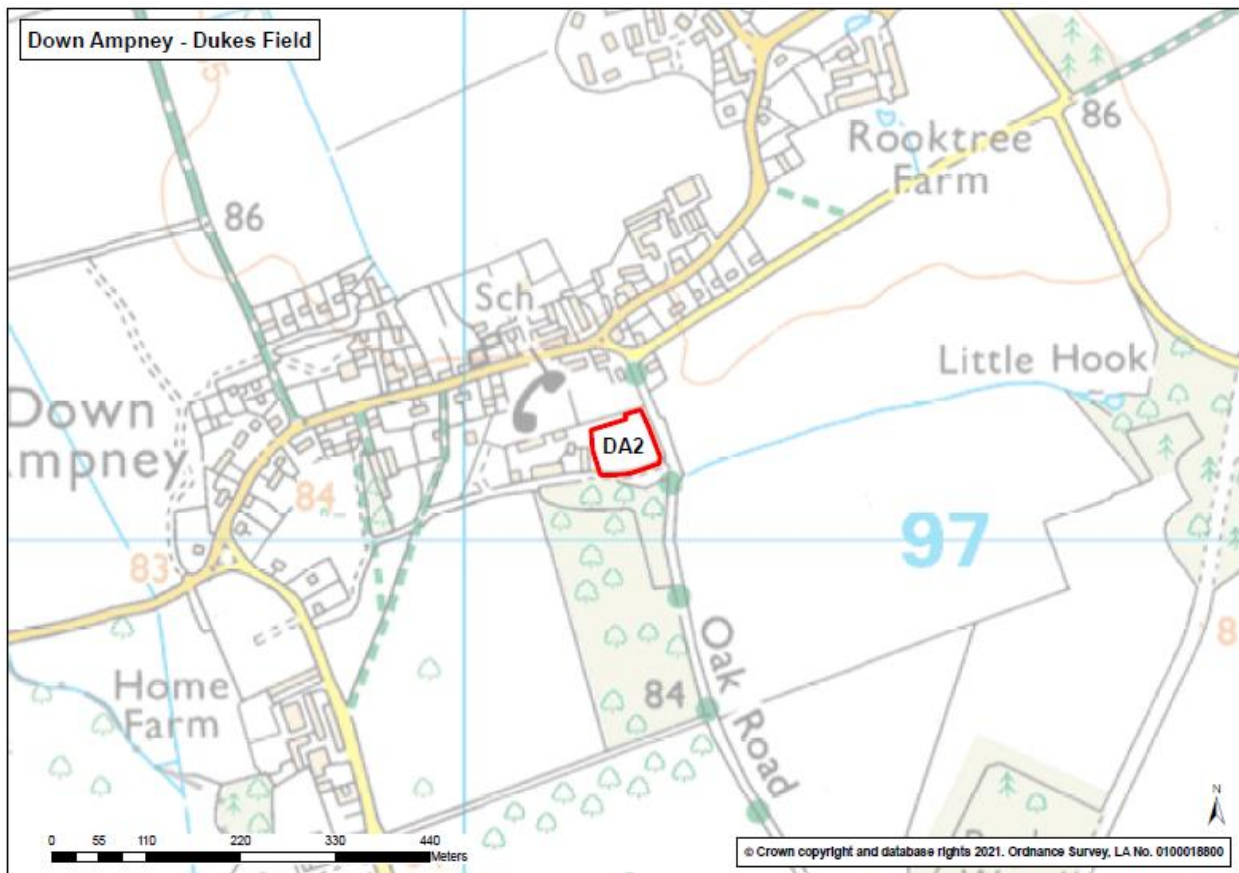
Existing Local Plan Site Allocation (Housing)

## Site Assessments: Part I

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
DA1	Broadway Farm	Housing	Extant planning permission for 44 homes. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
<b>DA2</b>	<b>Dukes Field</b>	<b>10 homes</b>	<b>Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2</b>	<b>See Part 2</b>
DA3	Land adjacent to 47	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold	Discount
DA4	Little Jim's	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold - backland site that retains landscape character of parkland to south and forms an important open space in the village's historic core. Any development would impact on the setting of Down Ampney and its Conservation Area and several Listed Buildings. Difficult access with a narrow single track - its widening / upgrading would detract from the landscape character of this area. Site also contains some trees worthy of protection. Development would have to be at such a low density that it would not meet the minimum 5 dwelling threshold.	Discount
<b>DA5A, DA5B, DA5C</b>	<b>Land at Rooktree Farm</b>	<b>75-112 homes</b>	<b>DA5A, DA5B and DA5C have been submitted as a single development proposal and have been assessed together in Part 2.</b>	<b>See Part 2</b>
DA6	Land to the rear of 55 Down Ampney	Housing	Development complete	Discount
DA7	Land rear of Charlham Way	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold - the site is linear shaped and 5 or more dwellings would be unsuitable	Discount
<b>DA8</b>	<b>Land west of Broadleaze</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2</b>	<b>See Part 2</b>
DA9	Land adjacent to Chestnut Close	Up to 5 homes	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2, although this finds this site to be unsuitable.	Discount
DA10	Broadway Farm	Housing	Duplicate of DA1A & DA1B	Discount
DA11	Field west of former Broadway Farm Buildings	78-117 homes	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2 – this found the site to currently be unsuitable for allocation in the Local Plan	Discount
DA12	Land east of Oak Road	Housing	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2, although this finds this site to be unsuitable.	Discount
DA13	Land east of Broadleaze	Up to 55 homes	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2, although this finds this site to be unsuitable.	Discount
DA14	Land at 38-39 Oak Road	4 dwellings	Below 5 dwelling threshold	Discount

## Site Assessments: Part 2

### Dukes Field (ref: DA2)



**Proposal:** 10 homes

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 0.43ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

#### Site description

The site is an area of disused horse paddock with flat topography, which is at the south-eastern edge of the settlement but within the village envelope. It is neighboured by housing to the north and west. There is deciduous woodland to the south and open arable farmland to the east.

Oak Road and Dukes Field form the respective eastern and southern boundaries, which are separated by a medium tall thick cut hedge with occasional trees. There is also a cluster of trees in the south-western corner and the derelict remains of a small building.

#### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan. It is within the Down Ampney development boundary.

A planning application is pending consideration on the site for the “Erection of 10 dwellings with associated access drives and drainage” (ref: 21/00949/FUL).

The land agent reports that the site has been acquired by Cotswolds Homes Ltd., who have delivered similar schemes in the area.

## Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A landscape and visual appraisal would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

### Description

The parcel was previously assessed as part of the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report. It was identified as parcel DA\_2.

The parcel is comprised of a small, flat area of grassland in use as horse paddock. It is enclosed by housing on two sides and by deciduous woodland to the south and lies on the south-eastern edge of the settlement. To the east it is separated from open arable farmland by Oak Road and a medium tall thick cut hedge with occasional trees. The parcel itself has a variable hedge around it, which permits views in.

### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TVIB: Down Ampney

### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: None

Other (floodplain, PROWs): None

### Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **Medium/Low**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the parcel as part of its inclusion within the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report was **Medium/Low**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and remains an appropriate justification for the parcel's landscape sensitivity:

*'This site is susceptible to development in as much as it contributes to the indentation of the settlement edge and has a pleasant character. However, it does not contribute open space to the core of the settlement, and its value is limited. It is not covered by any designations. Development here would have an impact on views from housing on two sides. Other views would be limited by surrounding vegetation and there would be limited impact on the wider countryside. Although on the edge of the settlement, this site lies within an envelope defined by local roads'*

## Biodiversity

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan, as well as being within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone.

The field is improved grassland, which has become fallow. This is likely to have low wildlife conservation potential, although a survey is required to confirm this. There are hedgerows along several of the boundaries, which also contain several individual trees. There are also a cluster of trees in the south-western corner, which may provide habitat for protected species. These may provide habitat for protected species – numerous bird species were observed when the site was visited.

Historic mapping shows that a pond once existed in the south-west corner of the site.

The woodland adjacent to the southern boundary is Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland). A drainage ditch also runs adjacent to the southern boundary and connects with the drainage ditches of the surrounding fields. This is likely to be a wildlife corridor.

The development of this site is likely to provide some opportunities for ecological enhancements. The trees and hedgerows would likely need to be retained within the design of the scheme or compensatory planting provided if

any are removed. The site could also incorporate SuDs, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site.

## Trees

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*

The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

There is a cluster of trees in the south-west corner of the site. There are also several trees within the hedgerow boundaries. There do not appear to be any particularly fine tree specimens within the site. The value of the trees is likely to be related to their ecological importance. It is expected that the trees could be retained within the development of the site.



## Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

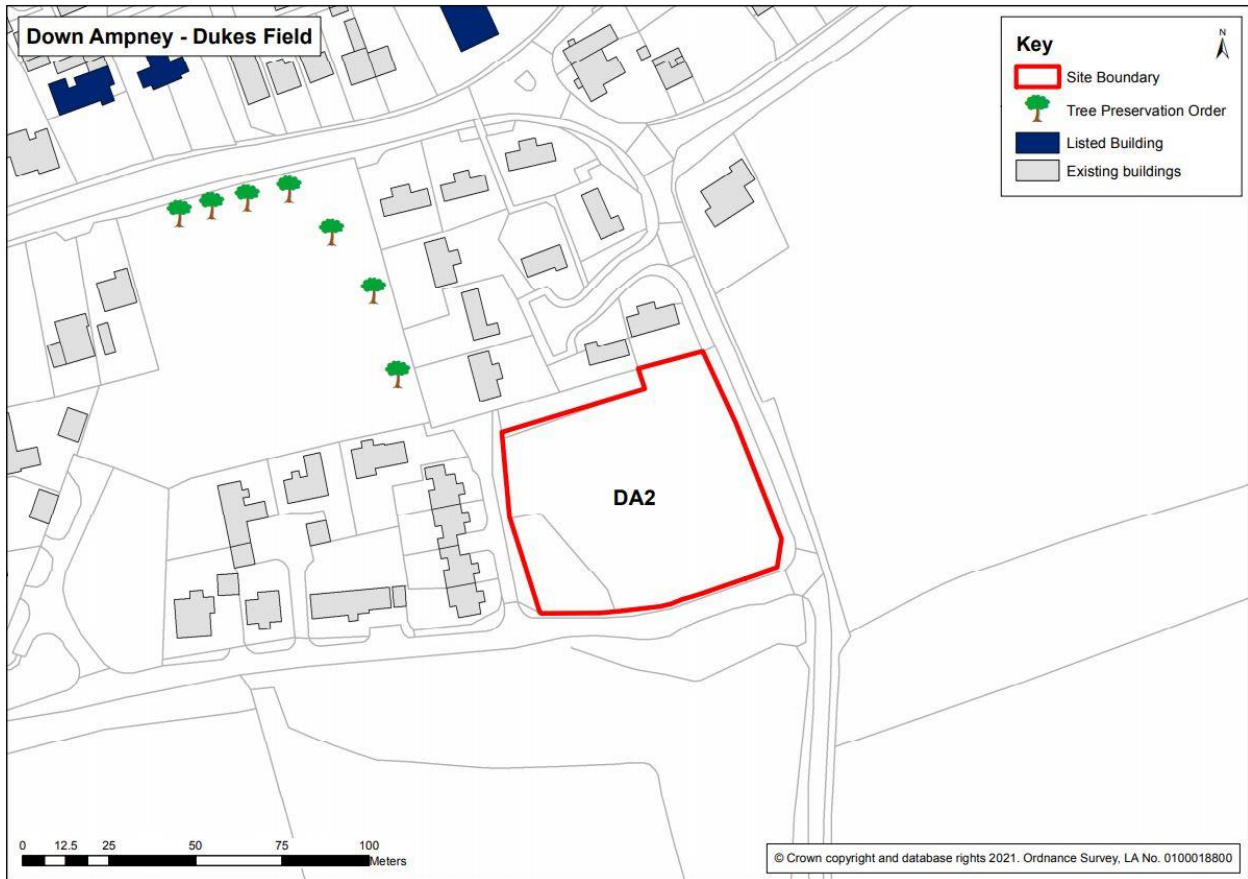
**Context:** The site was once part of a larger field, which included the adjacent housing development to the north. It was also wooded. There are late 20<sup>th</sup> Century houses to the north and the houses to the west were built in the early 2000s on the site of a former egg packing station. Although the adjacent houses mostly have a traditional design, the site is seen in the context of modern development on two sides. The site has a rural character.

**Designated heritage assets:** None – the Down Ampney Conservation Area is located over 300m to the south but is screened by woodland. Similarly, the site does not form part of the setting of any listed buildings.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** None known



**Other issues / constraints**

- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- The narrow approach lane has potential safety, parking and access problems;
- Reasonably well contained by housing to the north and west and the roads to the east and south;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

**Summary**

The site is allocated for residential development in the Local Plan. There continues to be a reasonable prospect that the site will come forward within the Local Plan period.

Recommendation

Continue to allocate the site for residential development.

Indicative capacity

10 homes (based on the development proposal, which is below the 12 dwelling estimate of the density multiplier assumption but is likely to exclude the land occupied by the cluster of trees in the south-west corner of the site)

Proposed site design brief if the site was allocated in the Local Plan



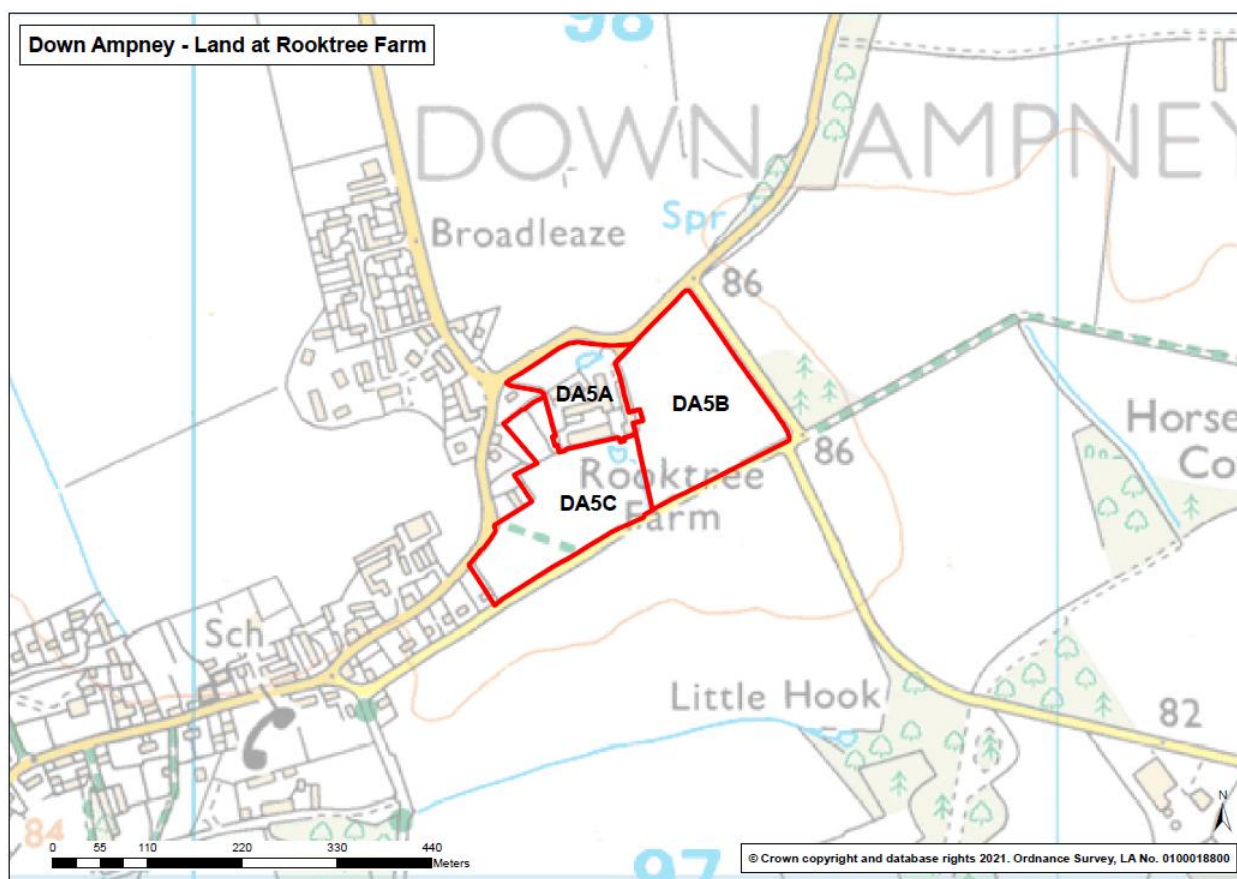
*The following is not an exhaustive list and further guidance on design requirements will be provided through the pre-application process. Developments will be expected to comply with the requirements of the Cotswold Design Code and to deliver high quality built and green infrastructure design.*

- Any new housing should have high design quality.
- The existing hedgerows and trees surrounding the site must be retained.

**Key actions required**

- Given a planning application has been submitted, this will be subject to the ongoing requirements of the planning application process.

## Land at Rooktree Farm (refs: DA5A, DA5B, DA5)



**Proposal:** 75-112 dwellings

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** Combined = 6.26ha (DA5A = 1.14ha; DA5B = 2.77ha; DA5C = 2.35ha)

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The sites are located to the east of Down Ampney on land with flat topography. The sites have a strong rural character and are enclosed by rural roads along the majority of the boundaries.

DA5A is partly a disused farm complex, which contains two existing dwellings. This site also contains a wooded area and a pond to the north. DA5B and DA5C together form a pastoral field.

The sites are surrounded by agricultural fields to the north, east and south with the built up area of Down Ampney to the west.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

DA5A is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan. It is also within the Down Ampney development boundary. However, neither DA5B nor DA5C are allocated for development in the Local Plan and both sites are outside the development boundary.

DA5A has a notification of demolition application to demolish existing barns (ref: 20/03853/NOTDEM), although no works have taken place yet. There is no other recent relevant planning history on any of the sites.

There is a significant planning permission for 44 dwellings at Broadway Farm, which is located adjacent to the western boundary of the site (refs: 15/01567/OUT and 17/03826/REM). However, this is on the opposite side of the road and the two sites feel quite separate.

## Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A landscape and visual impact assessment would be required for any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

Parcels DA5A and DA5C were previously assessed as part of the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report.

Local change has occurred due to the permission for 44 dwellings on the adjacent Broadway Farm site to the west and the demolition of the existing barns on DA5A.

### Parcel specific features

**DA5A:** This parcel is the curtilage of Rooktree Farm and consists of an attractive but simple farmhouse and associated disused steel frame farm buildings that are due for removal. The parcel is bound by outgrown hedges to the east and west, a building to the south and a group of trees between the site and the road on the northern edge. There are three Listed Buildings nearby on Down Ampney Road. The site has a degree of tranquillity but this is reduced by the adjacent minor road.

**DA5B:** This parcel consists of flat pastoral farmland associated with Rooktree Farm to the west. It is part of a larger field and flows seamlessly into parcel DA5C. The parcel is influenced by the farm structures in the adjacent parcel (DA5A) to the west. The northern, eastern and southern boundaries are bound by hedgerow and rural roads. Within the wider landscape it is readily appreciated as part of the mixed arable and pastoral farmland character. Due to the position of the parcel its association with the settlement is less pronounced than the two parcels to the west. The parcel is fairly tranquil, with little road noise.

**DA5C:** This parcel consists of flat pastoral farmland associated with Rooktree Farm to the north. It is part of a larger field with no boundary to the east. The parcel is influenced by the farm structures in the adjacent parcel (DA5A) to the north, housing including listed buildings along the western boundary and a road boundary to the south, where there is a strong, low hedge and ditch. Within the wider landscape it is part of the mixed arable and pastoral farmland, but its association with the settlement is clear, with housing along its western boundary. It does play a role as one of the remaining green spaces in the settlement form, which is one of its key characteristics. The parcel is fairly tranquil, with little road noise. A public footpath (Down Ampney Footpath 8) crosses the west of the parcel along a NW/SE axis.

### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TV1B: Down Ampney

### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: Three listed buildings are present to the west of parcel DA5C.

Other (floodplain, PROWs): Down Ampney Footpath 8 crosses the west of parcel DA5C.

### Landscape sensitivity

#### **DA5A**

Evaluation: **High/medium**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the parcel as part of its inclusion within the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report was **High/Medium**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and is still considered to be an appropriate justification for the parcels landscape sensitivity:

*The site is susceptible to development by reason of its location separated from the edge of the settlement adjacent to open farmland, its land use, which links it to the wider farmed landscape, its function as a gateway to the settlement and the presence of three Listed Buildings close to its western boundary. Its value lies in the proximity of these Listed Buildings. If development were permitted then the most appropriate way forward might be to restore the farmhouse, demolish the farm buildings (which are not of local materials and lack character) and design a layout and buildings that reflect farmyard character. Particular attention would be required to massing and detailing of*

*elements towards the exterior of the site, which could then make a positive contribution to the approach to the settlement from the east. The trees against its northern boundary are a significant local landscape element and should be safeguarded'*

## **DA5B**

Evaluation: **High**

Justification: The parcel has susceptibility to change through housing development due to its position within open countryside. Development would represent encroachment into the characteristically rural landscape around the Down Ampney settlement and form a prominent addition to local views. The vegetated field boundaries form an important landscape feature around the parcel and filter views across the agricultural landscape. The parcel is considered to have **High** landscape sensitivity due to the above factors.

## **DA5C**

Evaluation: **High/medium**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the parcel as part of its inclusion within the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report was **High/Medium**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and is still considered to be an appropriate justification for the parcels landscape sensitivity:

*'The site is susceptible to development by reason of its contribution to the settlement character by providing a gap in the road built frontage to the west, its character marking the transition to open farmland via a small-scale pastoral land use and pattern, and by the presence of a PROW. It is of comparatively low intrinsic value but adds to the visual setting of the three Listed Buildings adjacent to its north-western boundary and does serve as an attractive gateway to the settlement, contrasting with the large arable field to the south. There may be some biodiversity interest (pond)'*

## **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The sites are all located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. They are also all located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area, as well as being within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone. There is also Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland) adjacent to the north-east boundary of DA5C.

Surveys undertaken in support of the application to demolish some existing barns on DA5A found several protected bat species to be present, including bat roosts (ref: 20/03853/NOTDEM). There are various trees and hedgerows within the three sites which have strong potential to provide further foraging and roosting habitat for bats.

The part of the site that is pastoral farmland appears to be improved grassland. This is likely to have low wildlife conservation value, although a survey is required to confirm this. The hedgerows along the field boundaries contain several stand-alone trees and ditches. There is also a wooded area to the north of the site, which contains a pond and is of ecological interest. Historic mapping also shows that there was once a pond immediately to the south of the building, which is now reduced to boggy ground. There is an opportunity to restore this pond and increase the green and blue infrastructure network to better link the ponds.

If this site were to be developed, the design must provide further opportunities for ecological enhancements to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. The trees and hedgerows would likely need to be retained within the design of the scheme or compensatory planting provided if any are removed. The site could also incorporate SuDs, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site.

## **Trees**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*

The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). However, the trees against the northern boundary of DA5A are a significant local landscape element and should be retained.

The hedgerows running alongside the sites appear on the 1884 Ordnance survey and are therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The hedgerows

should be retained and a scheme for their management and protection during development works would be required within any development proposal.

The hedgerows that bound DA5B and DA5C also contain several standalone trees. Furthermore, there are also several field trees within these sites. It is expected that these features could be retained within a well-designed development.

If this site were to be developed, there would be an opportunity to provide a substantial amount of additional tree planting and restore the hedgerow network, particularly to screen views of the site from the wider landscape.



### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

**Context:** The site is agricultural in character. Any development would be a significant eastwards extension of the village into open countryside. DA5A is the curtilage of Rooktree Farm, which incorporates two dwellings and includes an attractive but simple farmhouse and associated apparently deteriorating and disused steel frame farm buildings. DA5B and DA5C together form a pastoral field, which was historically split into four smaller fields – the boundary between DA5B and DA5C used to be a field boundary.

**Designated heritage assets:** There are three Grade II Listed Buildings adjacent to the western boundary of the wider site (Hampton Cottage, Pear Tree Cottage and Cottage Immediately south of Pear Tree Cottage). The development of DA5A and DA5C in particular would have a harmful impact on the setting of these buildings. A Heritage Impact Assessment would be required to further understand the impact of development on these buildings and whether this could be mitigated.

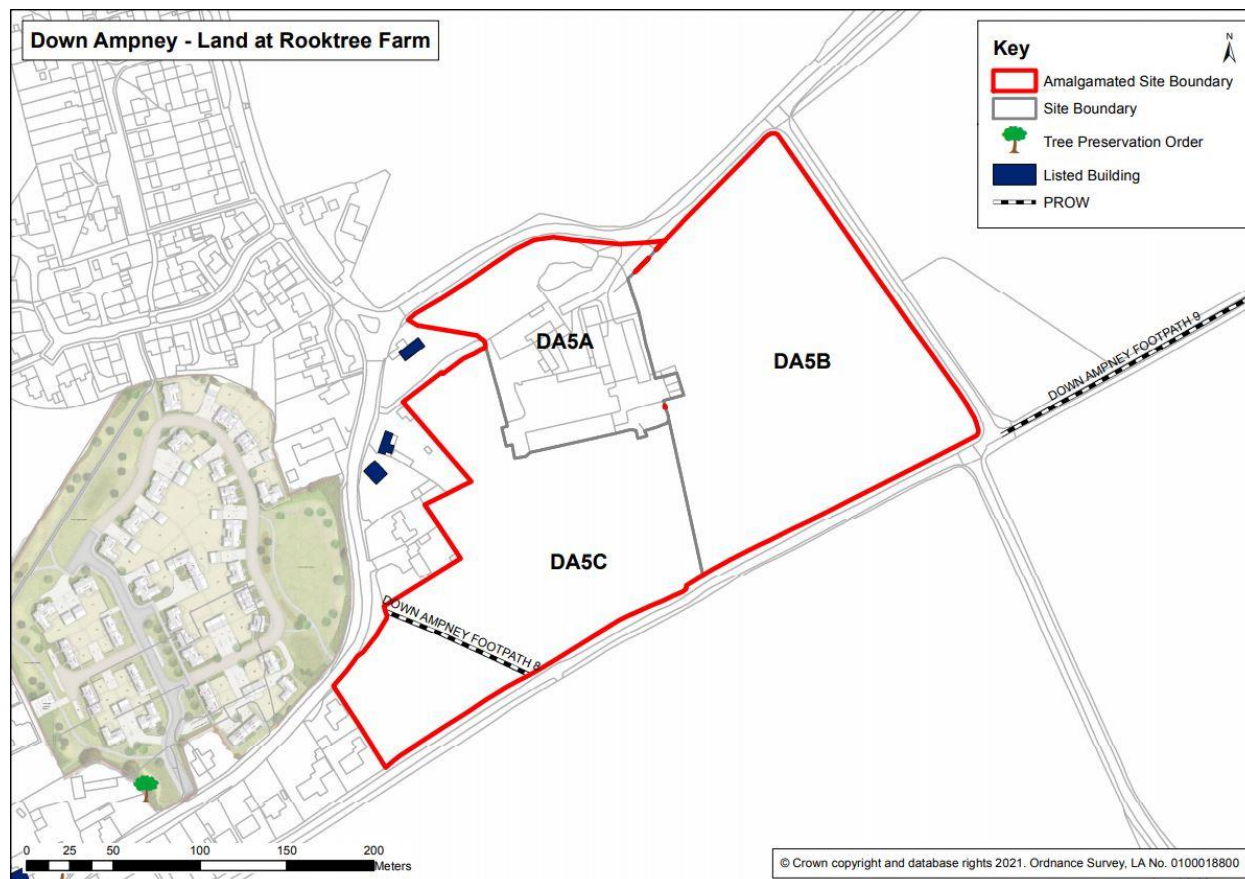
The Down Ampney Conservation Area is located approximately 550m to the south-west. The site is partially screened from the Conservation Area by hedgerow vegetation but development on the southern part of the wider site, in particular, may be visible from the Conservation Area and could therefore impact upon it. The impact is not expected to be significant but further analysis is needed to understand this impact in the Heritage Impact Statement and whether and how this could be mitigated.

Reference should be made to the Down Ampney Village Design Statement<sup>1</sup> in any development proposals

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** Existing farm buildings on the site.

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known.

**Opportunities:** To restore the historic field pattern. Any development proposals should also reference the Down Ampney Village Design Statement.



### Other issues / constraints

- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land – DA5B and DA5C are Grade 2 agricultural quality with the exception of the south-east corner of DA5B, which is Grade 3a, so contrary to NPPF (2021) para 174(b);
- Potential for currently unknown archaeological assets due to the lack of previous investigation;
- Source Protection Zone;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area; and
- Quarry or Landfill Buffer Zone.

<sup>1</sup> Note: this is currently being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.

## Summary

DA5A is already allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan. There continues to be a reasonable prospect that this site will come forward within the Local Plan period.

The proposal would extend the existing site allocation to include the adjacent pastoral fields, which form DA5B and DA5C. The additional land would have much higher landscape impact than the existing site allocation. It would be a significant eastwards extension of the village into open countryside. DA5B and DA5C are assessed to have a combination of High and High/Medium landscape sensitivity. Furthermore, development could harm the setting of three Grade II listed buildings and with further potential harm to the setting of the Conservation Area. The development of this land would also lose best and most versatile agricultural land.

### Recommendation

Continue to allocate DA5A for residential development.

DA5B and DA5C are unsuitable for development.

### Indicative capacity

DA5A = 8 dwellings (based on an estimation of how a low density farm redevelopment)

DA5B and DA5C = N/A

### Proposed site design brief if the site was allocated in the Local Plan

*The following is not an exhaustive list and further guidance on design requirements will be provided through the pre-application process. Developments will be expected to comply with the requirements of the Cotswold Design Code and to deliver high quality built and green infrastructure design.*

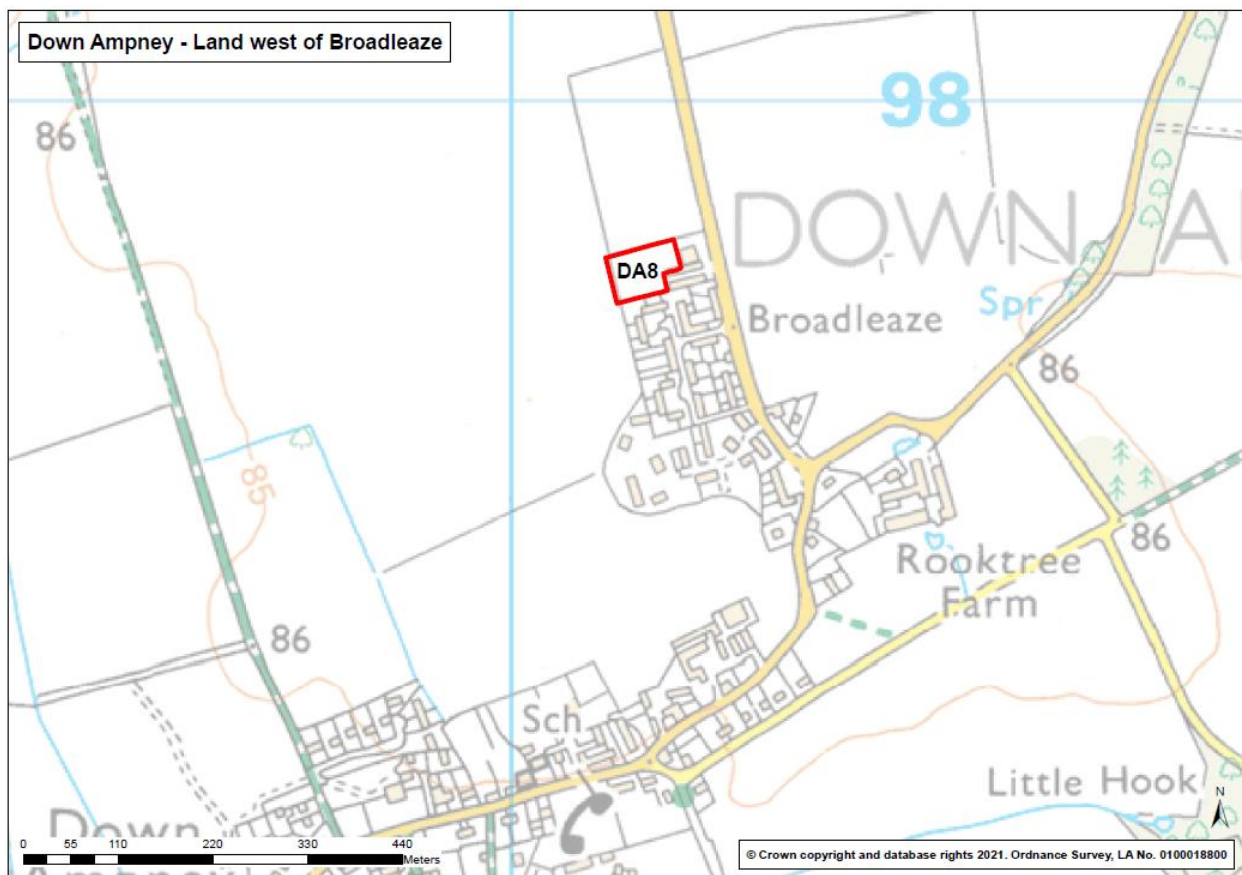
If DA5A, DA5b and DA5C were allocated in the Local Plan, the scheme must:

- Retain the rural agricultural character of this location and should have a high design quality; and
- Retain the existing hedgerows and trees within and surrounding the site.

### **Key actions required**

- Further investigation of Groundwater Flood Risk issue;
- Historic Environment Assessment;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment; and
- Resolution of sewage infrastructure capacity issue.

## Land west of Broadleaze (ref: DA8)



**Proposal:** Housing

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 0.41ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located at the northern extent of Down Ampney and comprises an area of disused rough ground, believed to be a former play area, which has flat topography.

To the north of the site is a sports field; to the east is a single-story building used by Down Ampney Football and Social Club, which is surrounded by a car park, with a road and arable farmland further to the east; to the south is two-storey early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing; and to the west is further arable farmland.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan and is inside the Down Ampney development boundary. The site has no other recent relevant planning history.

### Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

### Description

The parcel was previously assessed as part of the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report. It was identified as parcel DA\_2



and included additional land to the east, which forms part of the football and social club car park and is not part of the Local Plan site allocation.

This parcel consists of an area of flat rough ground to the west of the Down Ampney Football and Social Club. Houses are present on the southern boundary and have views across the parcel. It lies on the northern edge of the settlement, with open arable farmland on rising ground to the west and north, beyond the well-tended club ground. To the north there will be distant (nearly 1km) views of the outgrown hedge on the northern boundary of the parcel, but in the context of existing development. Three mature poplars adjacent to the neighbouring club building are a local landmark, although these are a non-native and short-lived species that are prone to shedding branches. To the east, the parcel is screened by the sports and social and a ditch and dense medium tall hedge to the east of the lane, with a woodland belt along the Meysey Road providing good screening from the wider landscape.

#### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TVIB: Down Ampney

#### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: None

Other (floodplain, PROWs): None

#### Landscape Sensitivity:

Evaluation: **Medium/low**

Justification: This parcel is susceptible to development by reason of its location within the settlement edge. It is of little landscape value, consisting of neglected grassland and the curtilage of the Football Club. Development here would not extend significantly into open farmland and from all views it would appear to be a natural part of the existing settlement. Development could have a positive impact on the existing settlement edge and neighbouring housing if well designed.

### **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area and is within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone.

Historic maps and photographs show the site was a greenspace associated with the sports and social club. In 2000, the site was mostly a grassed area with a hedgerow along the northern boundary and a copse of trees in the north-west corner. Since 2000, the site appears to have fallen out of use and has become overgrown with long grasses, brambles and trees. The hedgerow along the northern boundary has become outgrown. The site is now fenced off and receives little human disturbance. This type of site can provide habitat for protected species. A Preliminary Ecological Survey would be required to establish whether any are present.

If the site were to be developed, it is likely that the trees and hedgerow would need to be retained or compensatory planting provided within the site. The biodiversity net gain delivered as part of any development could include things like bird and bat boxes, bat access tiles, ponds or SuDS that are also designed to enhance biodiversity. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site. The Poplar Trees on the approach to the site could also be replaced with a longer-lived native species that is appropriate for this location.

### **Trees**

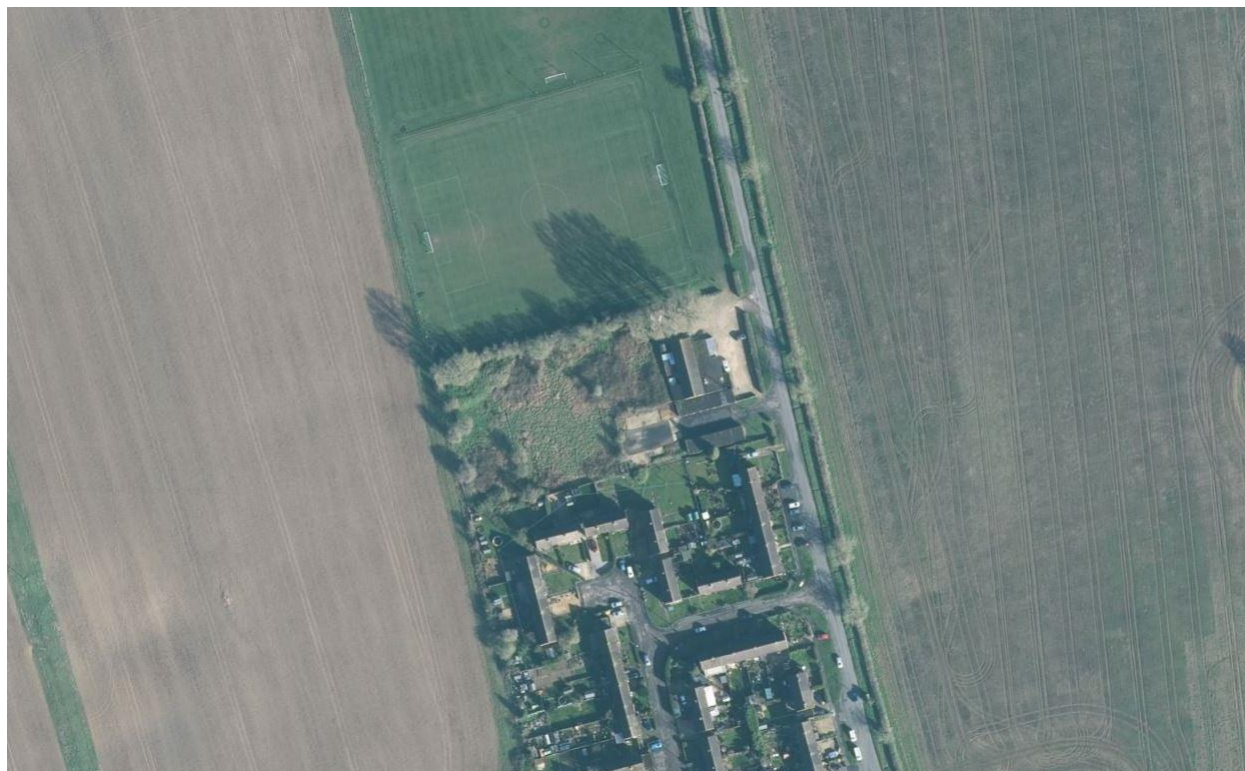
*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*

The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). There is one larger deciduous tree in the north-west corner, which is of better quality. There are further medium sized deciduous trees along the

northern and western boundaries, which are likely to have more of a landscape and ecological value than being particularly fine examples of their species (note: these are not Poplar trees).

If this site were to be developed, it is likely that the trees and hedgerows along the boundaries would need to be retained. There would also likely be an opportunity to bolster the screening within these boundaries with additional native species tree planting.

Although the Poplar trees on the approach to the site are a local landmark, usually they are not very long-lived and are prone to shedding branches with no pre-warning. There may be an opportunity to replace these with a native species that is more long-lasting and suitable for this context.



### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

**Context:** The site is located within a predominantly rural edge of village location. The site is viewed in the context of two-storey early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing to the south, which have rear gardens that back onto the southern boundary. The garages of those houses are located to the south-west. There is a late 20<sup>th</sup> Century single-storey sports and social club building to the east, which is set within a car park. The club's sports fields are located to the north. To the west and further to the east is an extension of the arable landscape.

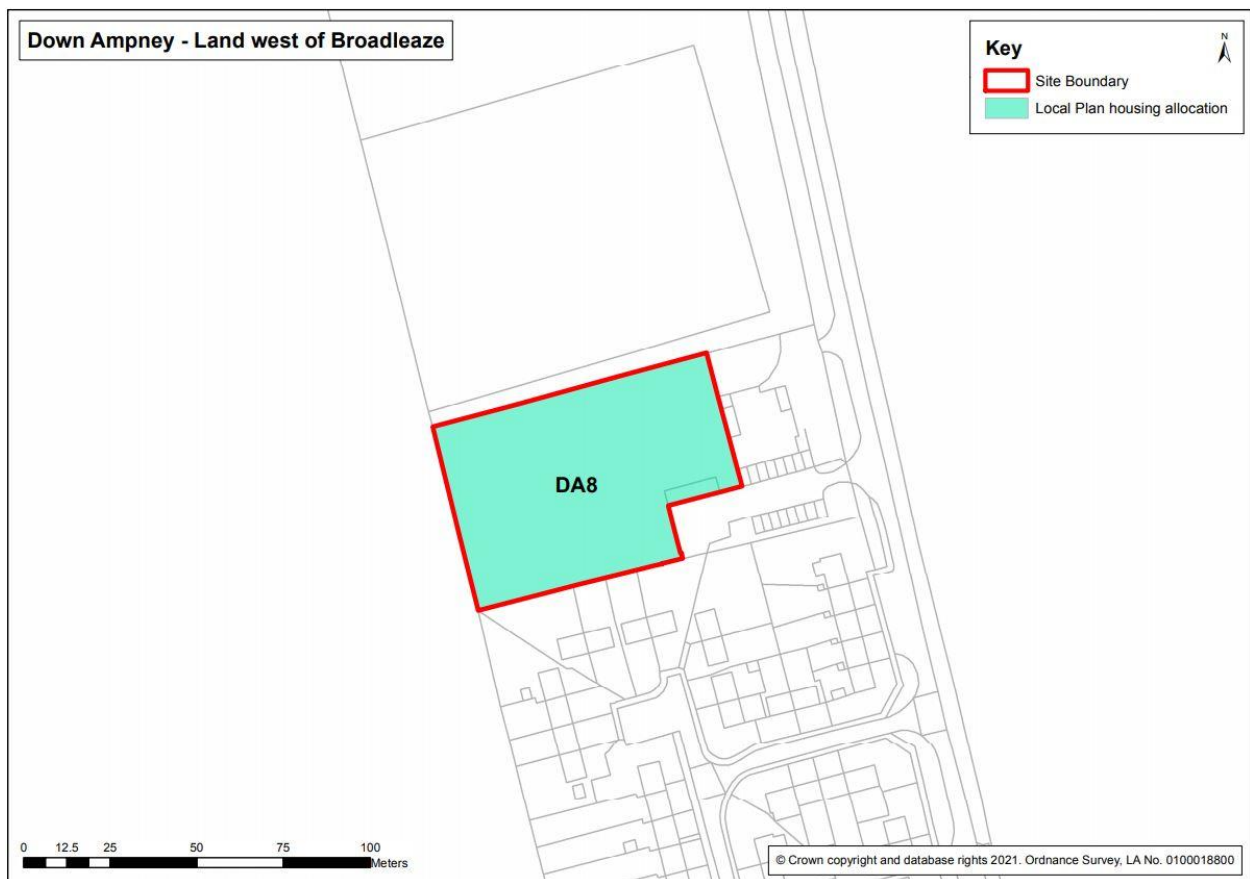
The site is fenced up and has become overgrown / derelict. It does not contribute positively to the character of the village or the amenity of adjacent housing. There is an opportunity for improvement through the development of this site.

**Designated heritage assets:** None – the Down Ampney Conservation Area is located approximately 1km to the south and is screened by existing development. Similarly, the site does not form part of the setting of any listed buildings, the nearest being the Grade II listed Pear Tree Cottage, which is located approximately 280m to south and is also screened by existing development.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** To create an improved gateway into the village and improve the amenity of adjacent housing development. Reference should be made to the Down Ampney Village Design Statement in any development proposals, which is being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.



### Other issues / constraints

- The south-east corner of the site has a bit cut out, which would otherwise make a rectangular site. This land appears to not be used for anything in particular, although it is tarmacked. That land is in a separate ownership but there may be an opportunity to extend the site;
- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- Access could be provided through the club or via the garages to the south, although the latter option may involve crossing third party land;
- There is potential for currently unknown heritage assets due to the density of known archaeological sites in the surrounding fields;
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

### Summary

There continues to be a reasonable prospect that this site will deliver housing by 2031, although the undisturbed and overgrown site may now provide habitat for protected species. Notwithstanding this, the development of this site would square off the settlement edge and there is an opportunity to improve the gateway into village with high quality design, as well as the amenity of adjacent properties.

There may also be an opportunity to extend the site in the south-west corner.

Recommendation: The site should remain allocated for residential development in the Local Plan.

Indicative capacity: 12 dwellings (based on a density multiplier assumption of 30 dwellings per hectare)

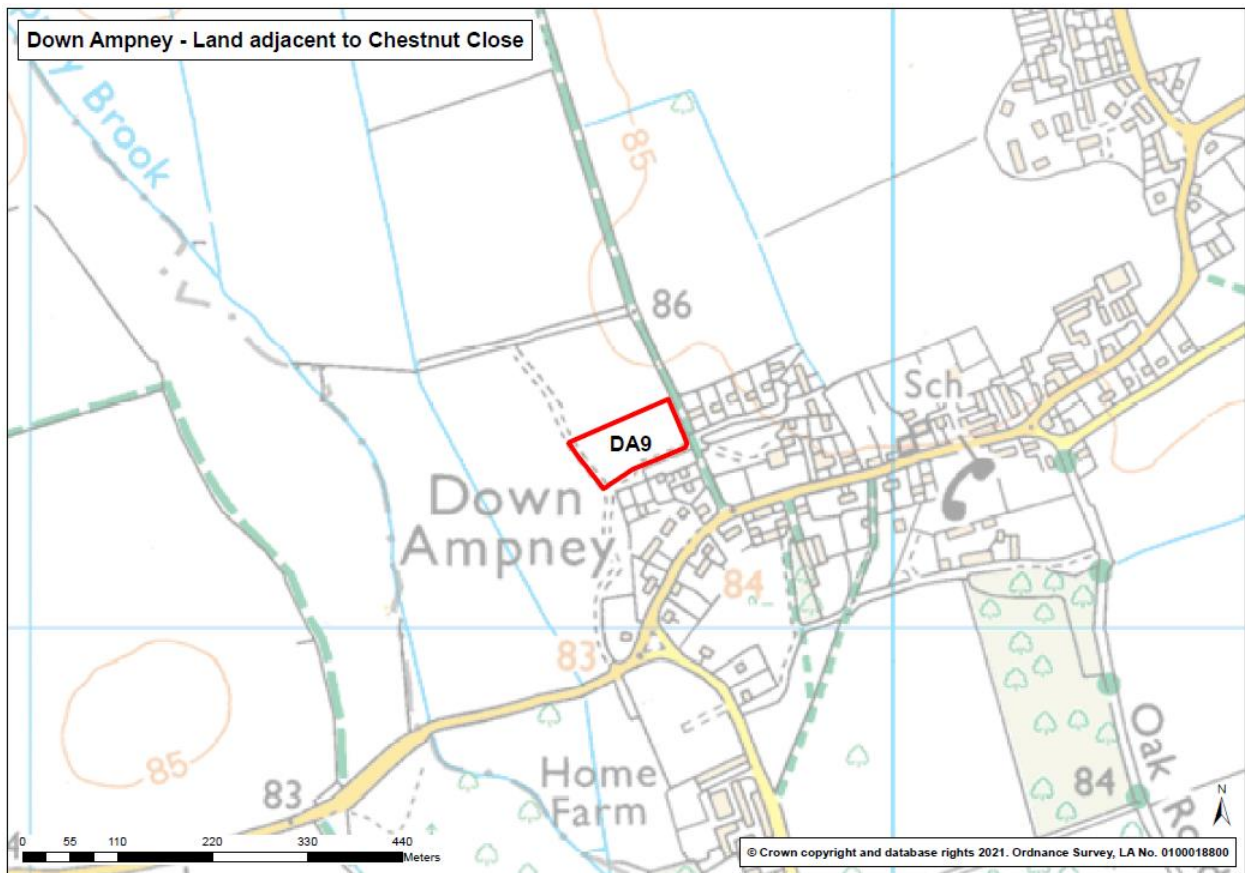
Proposed site design brief if the site was allocated in the Local Plan

*The following is not an exhaustive list and further guidance on design requirements will be provided through the pre-application process. Developments will be expected to comply with the requirements of the Cotswold Design Code and to deliver high quality built and green infrastructure design.*

**Key actions required**

- Further investigation of Groundwater Flood Risk issue;
- Clarify the access arrangement;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment; and
- Resolution of sewage infrastructure capacity issue.

## Land adjacent to Chestnut Close (ref: DA9)



**Proposal:** Up to five dwellings

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 0.71ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

This site comprises part of a large, flat arable field on the north-western edge of the settlement, with no visible boundaries to north or west. To the south, it is overlooked by the frontages of houses on Chestnut Close, with a low fence and grass verge against the road permitting clear views into the site.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan and is outside the Down Ampney development boundary. The site has no other recent relevant planning history.

### Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

#### Description

The parcel was previously assessed as part of the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report. It was identified as parcel DA\_9.

This parcel consists of part of a large, flat arable field on the north-western edge of the settlement, with no visible boundaries to north or west. To the south, it is overlooked by the frontages of houses on Chestnut Close, with a low fence and grass verge against the road permitting clear views into the parcel. There are clear views to the western

edge from Down Ampney Road to the south where users see the settlement for the first time as they cross over a watercourse. The broad footpath which lies along the eastern parcel boundary is well hedged to either side, with occasional large trees and this, together with the dense trees around the perimeter of the field, provide a good degree of screening to the north and east and screens houses on Suffolk Place. There are long views to the west and north westwards over the hedge boundaries to low wooded hills. The parcel is moderately tranquil.

#### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TV1B: Down Ampney

#### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: None

Other (floodplain, PROWs): PROW along eastern boundary (Down Ampney Bridleway 1); track along northern boundary; close proximity to Flood Zone

#### Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **Medium**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the parcel as part of its inclusion within the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report was **Medium**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and remains an appropriate justification for the parcel's landscape sensitivity:

*'This site is susceptible to development by reason of its visibility from the Down Ampney Road to the south which means that any development on its western end would clearly extend the settlement and the site has no existing vegetation boundaries on this or its northern edges to help mitigate effects. Also its location on the settlement edge, the presence of houses facing the site from Chestnut Drive and the PROW along its eastern boundary contribute to sensitivity. However, the site is of limited value, being part of a large arable field which is well screened by topography from the wider landscape. If development were permitted, built form should be kept as far away from the western edge as possible with housing designed to face towards the settlement along Chestnut Drive, and vegetative screening to filter views from the wider landscape. As there is no existing boundary to the north and west, the establishment of a strongly vegetated boundary, using locally indigenous species, should also be a condition of consent for development'*

### **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area, and the southern part of the site is within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone.

The site comprises ploughed arable farmland, which is likely to have low wildlife conservation potential, although a survey is required to confirm this. There is well-established hedgerow with a ditch along the eastern boundary, which is likely to provide a wildlife corridor and may provide habitat for protected species.

Some ways to Biodiversity Net Gain on this site might include SuDs that are designed for biodiversity enhancement, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site. The trees and hedgerows would likely need to be retained within the design of the scheme or compensatory planting provided if any are removed.

### **Trees**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*



The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). There are some medium size deciduous trees in the south-east corner, although no particularly fine specimens that would be worthy of specific protection.

There is a hedgerow along the eastern boundary, which appears on the 1884 Ordnance survey and is therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The hedgerow would need to be retained and a scheme for its management and protection during development works would be required within any development proposal.

### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

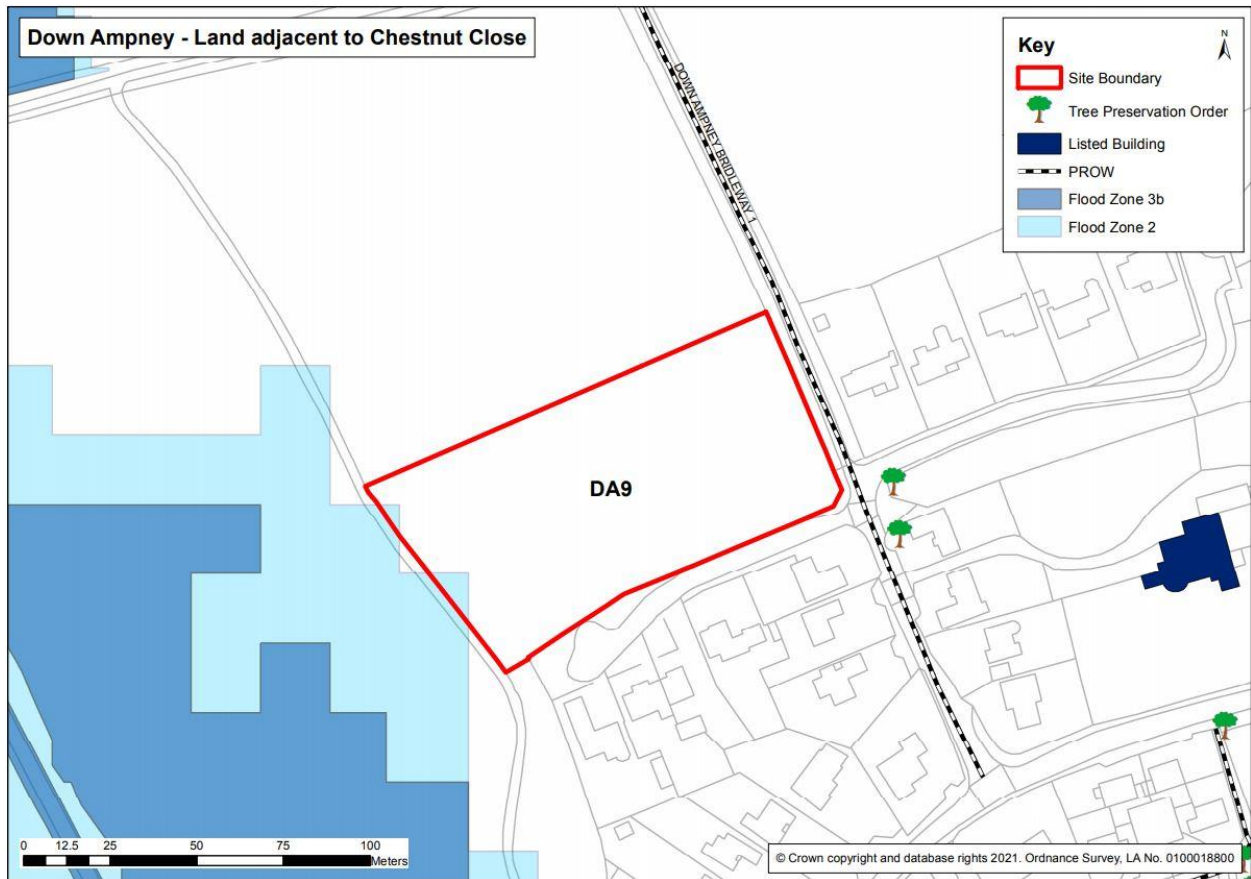
**Context:** The site is part of a larger field, which has always been the situation historically. The proposal would therefore depart from the historic field pattern. The site is seen in the context of mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century housing to the east and late 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing to the south. The site has a distinctly rural character.

**Designated heritage assets:** None – the Down Ampney Conservation Area is located over 420m to the south but is screened by existing development. Similarly, the site does not form part of the setting of any listed buildings, the nearest being the Grade II Old Vicarage, which is located 90m to the east but is also screened by existing development.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** None known



### Other issues / constraints

- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- The western extremity of the site is located within Flood Zone 2;
- The site is Grade 2 best and most versatile land and its development would be contrary to NPPF (2021) para 174(b);
- The site has no defined northern boundary;
- Access – Charlham Lane is very narrow and does not have a footpath. The intensification of use of this road may be unsuitable;
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

### Summary

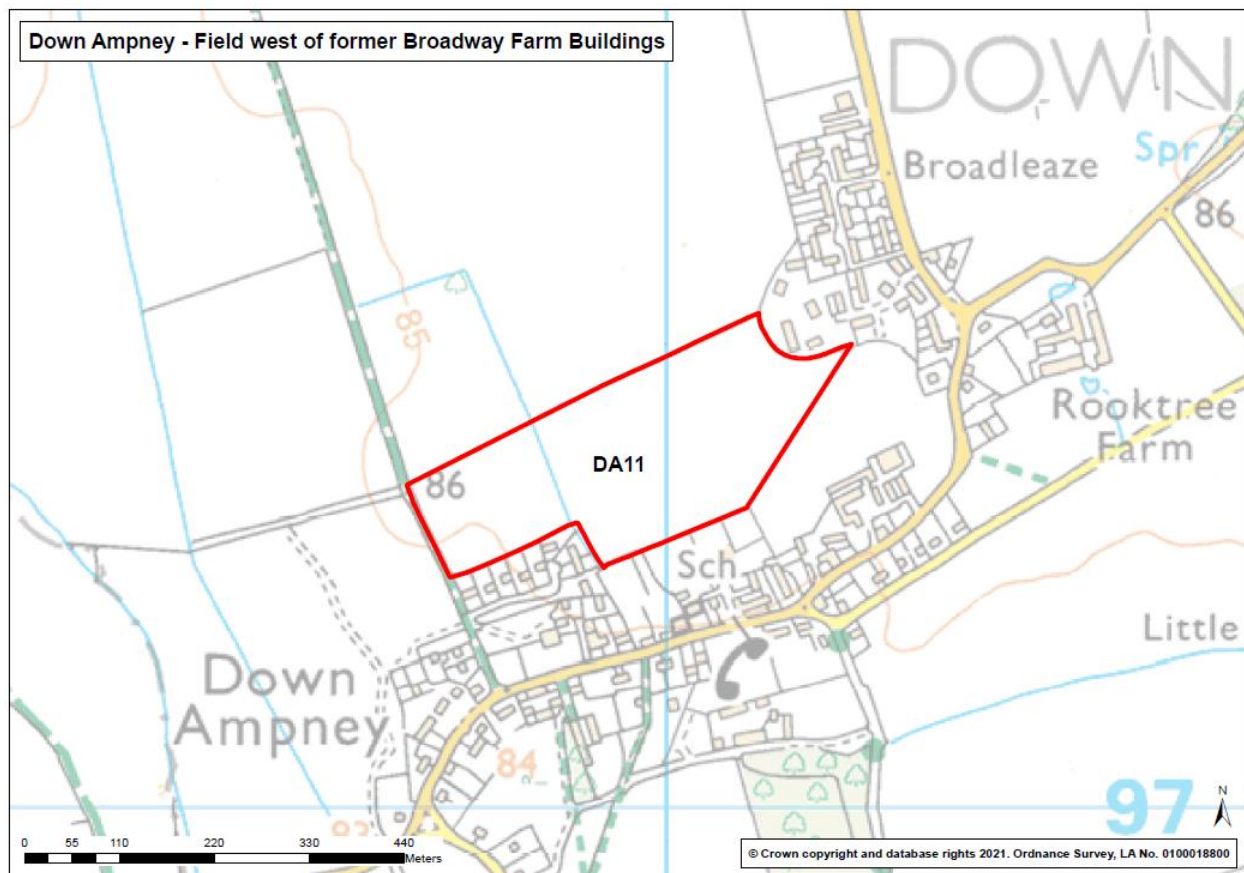
The site is part of a larger field and there is no defined northern or western boundary. The site is Grade 2 best and most versatile land. There are also concerns over intensification of access to the site along the existing road, which does not have a footpath.

### Recommendation

The site is unsuitable for development.



## Fields west of former Broadway Farm Buildings (ref: DA11)



**Proposal:** 78-117 homes

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 7.64ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located to the north-west of Down Ampney on land with flat topography. It comprises the southern part of two arable fields – the site has no defined northern boundary. The larger eastern field has been allowed to go fallow.

A tree-line stream cuts through the boundary between the two fields. The site is surrounded by housing to the south and north-east. Down Ampney Primary School, the village hall, a shop and some sports facilities are also located adjacent to the southern boundary. A 44 dwelling development has planning permission adjacent to the eastern boundary but is yet to commence development. To the north is the continuation of the arable fields which the site forms part of and there is open countryside beyond. The arable landscape also extends to the west of the site.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is located outside the Down Ampney development boundary, as defined by the adopted Local Plan. It has no recent relevant planning history.

#### Land to the south-east (Broadway Farm)

13/01667/OUT – “Demolition of barns and erection of up to 22 residential units (of which up to 50% would be affordable)”. Permitted

15/01567/OUT – “Demolition of redundant buildings and redevelopment with up to 44 dwellings (all matter reserved except for access)”. Permitted

17/03826/REM – “Reserved Matters Application in conjunction with outline planning permission reference 15/01567/OUT for demolition of redundant buildings and redevelopment with up to 44 dwellings”. Permitted

19/02916/FUL – “Variation of Condition 2 of 17/03826/REM to replace drawing no. P001 Rev D with P001 Rev E to amend affordable housing provision from 50% to 40% in accordance with adopted Local Plan policy”. Refused

## **Landscape**

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

### Description

Part of the parcel was previously assessed as part of the ‘Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update’ Additional Sites 2015: Final report (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, November 2015) report. It was identified as parcel DA11.

The parcel comprises part of two larger fields. The east field comprises a level pastoral/fallow field north of the centre of the village including village hall and play/recreation/sports area. It effectively links this with the separate lock of housing to the north-east and the permitted development to the east (17/03826/REM). The western field is comprised of an arable field.

There is no defined northern boundary to the fields as these are open to the wider provision. A permissive footpath runs along the northern boundary of the eastern field. The two fields are divided by a hedgerow. The western boundary is defined by a hedgerow with Down Ampney Bridleway 1 and track beyond. There is a path (non PRoW) which defines the south east site boundary linking the housing with the community facilities. Views from the road to the east are limited by intervening hedgerow and in time the permitted residential scheme mentioned above. From the south the parcel is highly visible from the village recreation area, adjacent houses and the path, allowing views to the rising countryside to the north.

Users of the public footpath to the north-west would have oblique views of the parcel. Views from the Poulton Hill road to the north would be screened by newly planted poplars. The parcel plays a role as part of one of the remaining green gaps in the settlement form, which is one of its key characteristics.

### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TV1B: Down Ampney

### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: Listed buildings are present within the settlement to the south and east.

Other (floodplain, PROWs): Down Ampney Bridleway 1 is located along the western parcel boundary.

### Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **High/medium**

The parcel is susceptible to development by reason of its contribution to the settlement character as one of its green gaps/wedges integrating the countryside with the settlement, allowing views out, and its agricultural land use, making it part of the wider characteristic farmed landscape. It is of limited intrinsic value in itself.

Development would make a linear edge to the settlement completely changing the current settlement’s indented character, which the Village Design Statement<sup>2</sup> sought to reinforce as a pragmatic approach to accommodating development. It appears that the design of the recent housing to the north-east made some effort to retain this character with a curved edge and a gap with the main settlement to the south west. This gap has now been removed by the neighbouring permission to the east (17/03826/REM). The visual connection between the community facilities and the wider landscape would be lost. Now the parcel extends across two fields there would be additional harm to the historic field pattern of the area.

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<sup>2</sup> Currently being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan

Development here is undesirable. If development were permitted, it should provide high quality green infrastructure links across the site from the developments to the north-east and have a very strong vegetated/tree edge and corridor to the north to provide screening and continued access as a permissive route. The northern boundary of built development should also be indented. Any developer should demonstrate how development here would contribute to the character of the settlement.

Green Infrastructure improvements could be delivered through additional boundary planting to soften and assimilate built form within the parcel. Flood resistant planting and SuDs provision along the existing ditch at the centre of the parcel could provide improved water management and biodiversity gain through habitat creation. The north of the parcel should retain its undeveloped rural context.

## **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area. The eastern part of the site is also located within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone.

The tree-lined stream which runs between the two fields is a wildlife corridor. There is also a drainage ditch running alongside a hedge at the eastern boundary, which has a similar function. There are also several trees along the southern boundary, which are may also provide a habitat for protected species.

The arable fields have been intensively cultivated in recent years and are unlikely to have significant nature conservation value, although further survey work is needed to confirm this.

The site would need to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. The trees and hedgerows would likely need to be retained within the design of the scheme or compensatory planting provided if any are removed. Some ways to deliver BNG in this location might include the incorporation of SuDs, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles. There would likely be a requirement for a substantial landscape buffer to the north of the site, which could include a substantial amount of new tree planting.

## **Trees**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*



The site does not contain any trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The two fields do not have any trees within their central areas but there are some trees around the boundaries of the fields. There is one particularly fine Oak tree on the north-eastern boundary of the eastern field, which may be worthy of a TPO. There are also several further fine Oak trees and other deciduous trees alongside the stream which bisects the two fields.

The southern boundaries of the site in particular contain a number of trees, including several Poplar trees, Oak, Birch and a Willow – some of these trees are within the rear gardens of adjoining properties but would be affected by the development of this site. There is also a well-established hedgerow along the eastern boundary.

The Poplar trees are a non-native and short-lived species, which are prone to shedding branches. If this site were developed, there may be an opportunity to replace these with native species that are appropriate to this location.

The site presents an opportunity for a considerable amount of tree planting, particularly towards the north of the site.

### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

**Context:** The eastern part of the site is (and will increasingly be) seen in the context of modern development. The rear of the houses of Linden Lea look over the site from the north-east – this estate was built in the early 2000s and comprises modern design Cotswold Stone housing. The 44 dwelling Broadway Farm development will provide further traditionally designed Cotswold Stone housing to the east.

To the south-west, there are the large detached mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century houses of Suffolk Place. The rear gardens of these properties overlook the site.

The southern boundary of the larger eastern field is primarily seen in the context of the sports pitches and the village hall, which are late 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments. There are also the long rear gardens of several older houses, which front onto the main road through Down Ampney.

Regarding the historic field pattern, both fields are currently part of larger fields and have no defined northern boundary. The western field was once three fields, which have been merged together. The development of the western part of the site would restore part of the historic field pattern (the northern boundary of this part of the site follows the historic field boundary). There is an opportunity to further restore the historic field pattern through the provision of an internal boundary, such as a hedge, within the western field.

The eastern field was once part of four fields, which extended further to the north and east. The Linden Lea development has already departed from the historic field pattern and the Broadway Farm development will be a further departure. Developing up to the northern boundary of the eastern field within DA11 would be another departure from the historic field pattern. There may be opportunities, however, to restore the historic field pattern within the internal layout of the site.

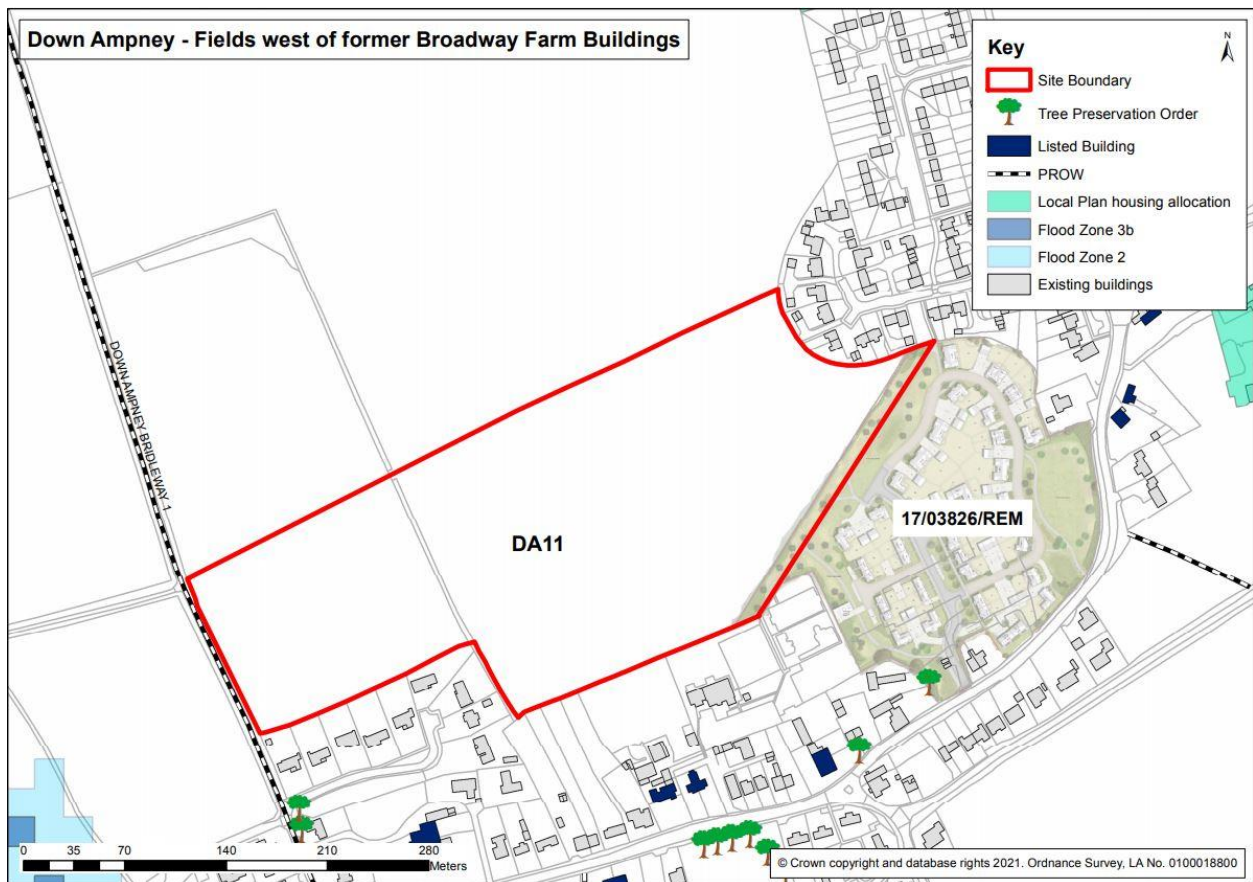
**Designated heritage assets:** There are several Grade II listed buildings within the vicinity the site, but the site does not form part of the setting of any of these buildings. Nos 16, 17 and 20 Down Ampney and Down Ampney Church are all located approximately 160m to the south - these buildings all appear to be screened by existing development. Pear Tree Cottage, Cottage immediately to the south of Pear Tree Cottage, and Hampton Cottage are all located around 300m to the east of the site. These listed buildings will all be screened by the Broadway Farm development, once it is completed.

The Down Ampney Conservation Area is located approximately 1km to the south of the site and is also screened by the built up area of the village.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** Reference would need to be made to the Down Ampney Village Design Statement in any development proposals, which is being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.



### Other issues / constraints

- Scale of development is extremely large relative to Down Ampney;
- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- The site's development would break away from Down Ampney's settlement pattern;
- A detailed survey shows the western part of the site to be Grade 3a best and most versatile land and a small area to the far west is of Grade 2 quality. Although part of the site is now fallow, the land has potential to be reused for agriculture (note: the use class is still agricultural). The development would therefore be contrary to NPPF (2021) para 174(b);
- Access – an access has been retained through the Broadway Farm site and there is also a potential access from linden Lea. Confirmation from the Highway Authority is needed about whether these accesses would be suitable to serve the proposed development.
- The site has potential to deliver some required community infrastructure within the village, including new allotments; additional recreational open space; and footpath improvements;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- Local electricity network power line cuts through the eastern part of the site;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

## **Summary**

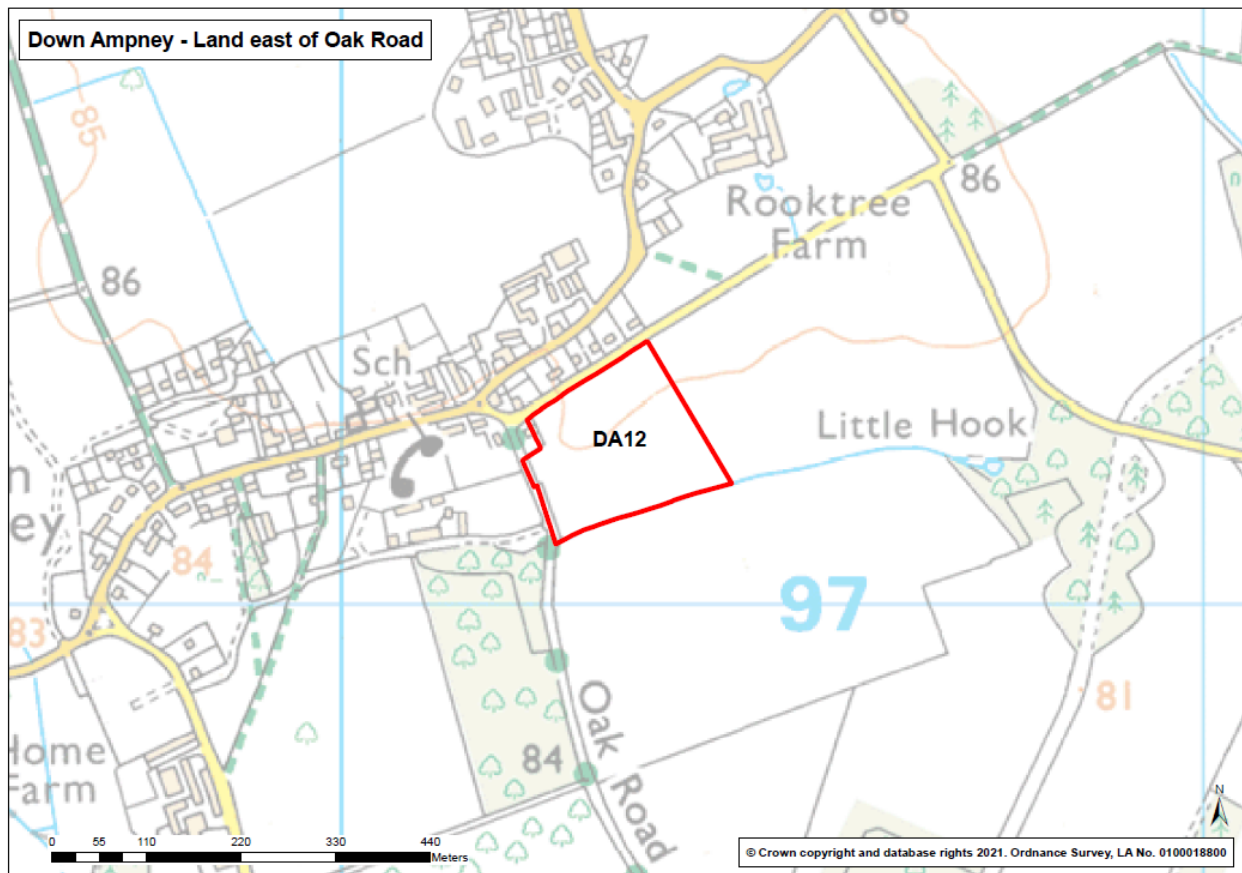
The Broadway Farm development has changed the context of this site. However, the scale of development on the proposed site would be extremely large relative to the size of Down Ampney and would break away from the village's development pattern. It would change the character of the village. There are also concerns regarding the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

The site has no defined northern boundary and the development of the eastern part of the site in particular would depart from the historic field pattern. Although this site is not located in an area with a landscape protection designation, the development would still have a "High/medium" landscape impact as the site is exposed within the wider landscape.

## **Recommendation**

The site is unsuitable for development.

## Land east of Oak Road (ref: DA12)



**Proposal:** Housing

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 3.19ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located at the eastern extent of Down Ampney and forms part of a larger field used for arable farming. It has no defined boundary to the east. A tall hedge defines the boundary to the north and west with housing opposite. There is a wooded area to the south with open countryside beyond.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan and is outside the Down Ampney development boundary. The site has no other recent relevant planning history.

### Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

### Description

The parcel forms part of a much larger arable field to the south east of Down Ampney. Because of this the eastern boundary is open to the wider field. The northern, southern and western boundaries are bound by mature hedgerow, to the south this hedgerow forms part of a small woodland with fields beyond. A dwelling is present to the north-west boundary of the field. Beyond the northern and western boundaries are roads with dwellings within

Down Ampney beyond. The field the parcel is located within forms an important part of the characteristic rural landscape around the settlement.

#### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TV1B: Down Ampney

#### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: None

Other (floodplain, PROWs): None

#### Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **High**

Justification: The parcel has susceptibility to change through housing development due to its position within open countryside. Development would represent encroachment into the characteristically rural landscape around the Down Ampney settlement and form a prominent addition. The vegetated field boundaries form an important landscape feature on three sides of the parcel and filter views between the settlement and the wider agricultural landscape. The parcel boundary does not follow any historic boundary. Development would create a linear edge to the settlement completely changing the current settlement's indented character, which the Village Design Statement<sup>3</sup> sought to reinforce as a pragmatic approach to accommodating development. The parcel is considered to have **High** landscape sensitivity due to the above factors.

### **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area, and the western parts of the site is within a Great Crested Newt Red and Amber Zones. The southern part of the site is within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Risk Zone, where applications of 50 or more dwellings may negatively impact a SSSI, which would require further investigation. The southern boundary is also located next to Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland) and there is a large area of similar priority habitat further to the south-west.

The site comprises ploughed arable farmland, which is likely to have low wildlife conservation potential, although a survey is required to confirm this. There is well-established hedgerow along the eastern and northern boundaries, which also contain several standalone trees and are likely to provide a wildlife corridor and may provide habitat for protected species. The northern boundary also has a ditch, which further adds to its ecological interest.

The southern boundary has a stream running along its length, which provides another wildlife corridor.

Opportunities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in this location might include the enhancement of the existing wildlife corridors. The trees and hedgerows would likely need to be retained within the design of the scheme or compensatory planting provided if any are removed. The site could also incorporate SuDs, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site – a holistic approach to Green Infrastructure would be required in the design.

### **Trees**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*

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<sup>3</sup> Note: this is currently being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan





The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). There are some medium size deciduous self-setting Ash trees the hedgerows along the northern and eastern boundary, which are likely to have landscape and ecological value.

The hedgerows along the northern and eastern boundaries are not pre-1840 hedges but are well-established and are important features in the landscape.

If this site were to be developed, there may be opportunities to provide additional tree planting, particularly within the east of the site to screen development and to provide an extension of the tree-line along the southern boundary.

### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

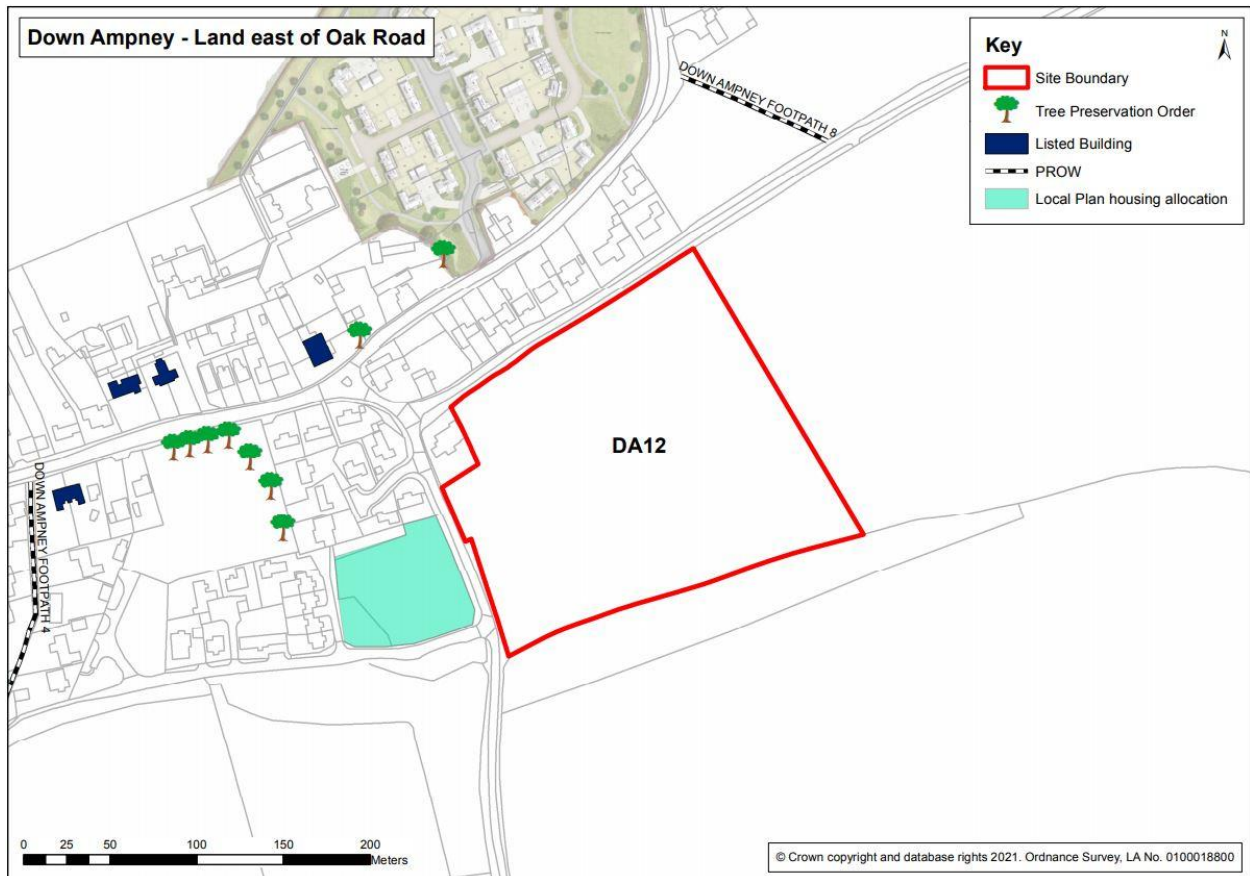
**Context:** The site is part of a larger field and has no defined eastern boundary. The field has remained unchanged in agricultural since the 1840 Ordinance Survey. The site has a distinctly rural character but is seen in the context of mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century housing to the north. Dukes Field to the east is allocated in the Local Plan for residential development and has a planning application pending consideration for 10 dwellings (ref: 21/00949/FUL). If granted, this would provide a modern but traditional housing development adjacent to the western boundary. However, the development of this site would depart from the historic field pattern. It would also not be in keeping with the village's building pattern and its development would be harmful to the village's character. A linear development adjacent to the roads would have the same detrimental impact in terms of breaking new ground on the opposite side of the road than if the whole site were developed.

**Designated heritage assets:** None – the Down Ampney Conservation Area is located over 310m to the south but is screened by dense and tall vegetation. Similarly, the site does not form part of the setting of any listed buildings, the nearest being the Grade II listed No. 20 Down Ampney Village, which is located approximately 75m to the north west but is screened by existing development.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** Reference would need be made to the Down Ampney Village Design Statement in any development proposals, which is being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.



### Other issues / constraints

- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
  - The majority of the site is Grade 3b quality but parts of the east of the site are Grade 2 and Grade 3a best and most versatile land. The development of the whole site would lose agricultural land but development of the parts of the site that are best and most versatile land would be contrary to NPPF (2021) para 174(b);
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone;
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

### Summary

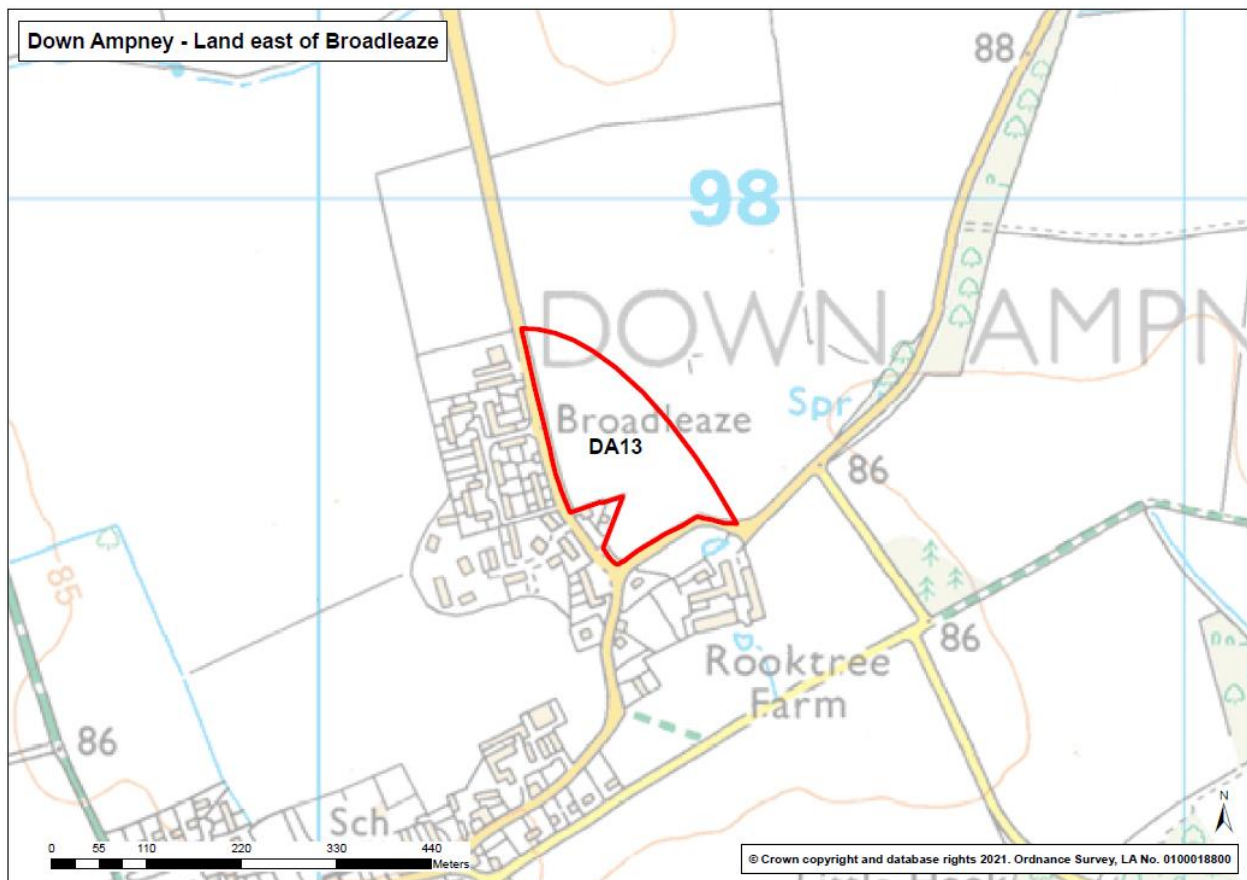
The site is part of a larger field with no defined eastern boundary. Development here would break away from the historic field pattern and would be harmful to the character of the village. Its development is assessed to have a 'High' landscape impact, which is the most sensitive grading.

Part of the site is best and most versatile agricultural land and the development of any part of the site would lose agricultural field.

### Recommendation

The site is unsuitable for development.

## Land east of Broadleaze (ref: DA13)



**Proposal:** Up to 55 dwellings

**Assessment date:** February 2021

**Site area:** 3.18ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located to the north-eastern of Down Ampney on land with flat topography. It forms part of a larger field, which is used for arable farming. The site has no defined north-eastern boundary and the extent of the field continues northwards and eastwards.

Poulton Road defines the western boundary with housing opposite. The site boundary doglegs around three dwellings in the south-west corner. Down Ampney football and social club is located opposite the north-western corner with the football pitch further to the north-west. Another rural road forms the southern boundary with a disused farm complex further to the south.

### Planning history

*This is a summary of the key planning applications and is not a comprehensive list*

The site is not allocated in the adopted Local Plan and is outside the Down Ampney development boundary. The site has no other recent relevant planning history.

Land to the south (Rooktree Farm) and west (Land west of Broadleaze) are allocated in the adopted Local Plan for residential development.

### Landscape

*These comments are made on the basis of a survey conducted by a qualified Landscape Officer. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required of any development proposal (desktop and site assessments) undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced landscape professional.*

### Description

The parcel forms part of a much larger arable field to the north east of Down Ampney. Because of this the northern and eastern boundaries are open to the wider field. The southern and western boundaries are bound by mature hedgerow. A small number of dwellings are also present on the western boundary of the parcel. The field the parcel is located within forms an important part of the characteristic rural landscape around the settlement.

### Landscape context

National Character Area 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales

Landscape Character Type: River Basin Lowland

Landscape Character Area TV1B: Down Ampney

### Constraints/designations

Landscape: None

Historic: None

Other (floodplain, PROWs): None

### Landscape sensitivity

Evaluation: **High**

Justification: The parcel has susceptibility to change through housing development due to its position within open countryside. Development would represent encroachment into the characteristically rural landscape around the Down Ampney settlement and form a prominent addition to local views. The vegetated field boundaries form an important landscape feature on two sides of the parcel and filter views between the settlement and the wider agricultural landscape. The parcel has an uncharacteristic boundary that does not follow any historic boundary. This would create a discordant and uncharacteristic addition to the local landscape. The parcel is considered to have **High** landscape sensitivity due to the above factors.

### **Biodiversity**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. Further specialist survey work may be required before the site can be allocated in the Local Plan.*

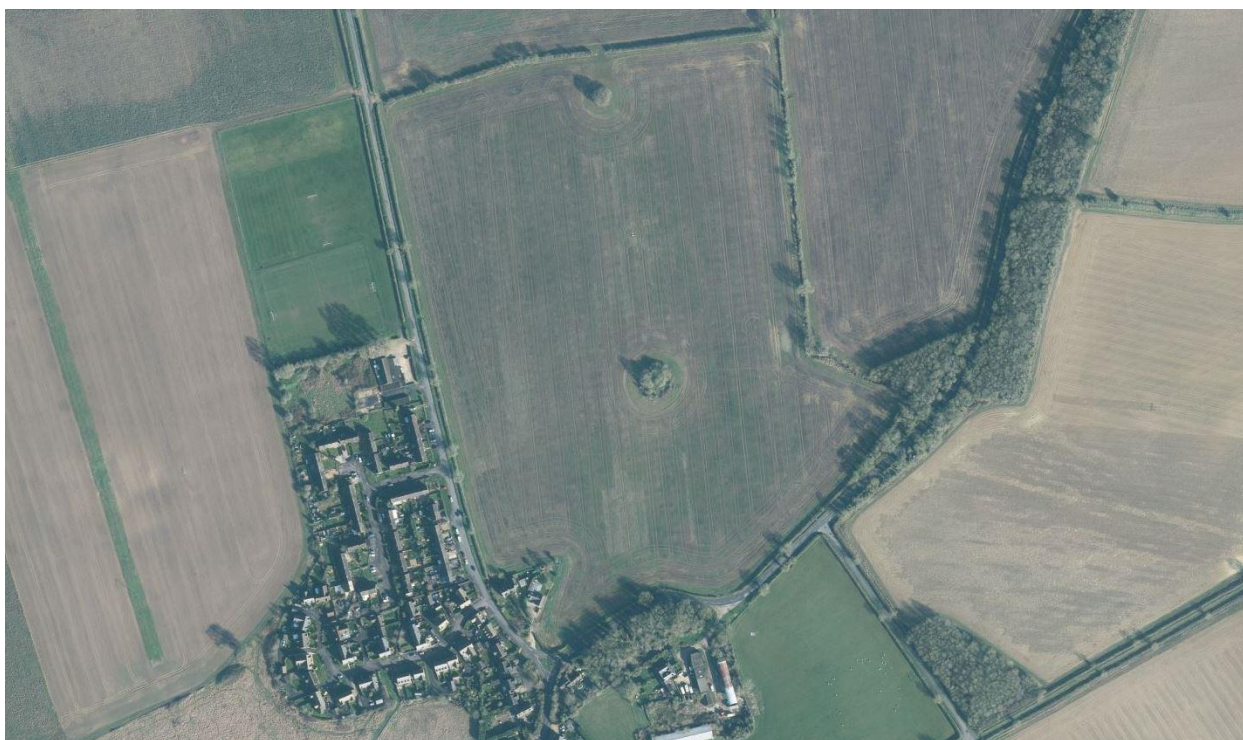
The site is located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Improvement Area. It is also located within the Cotswold Water Park Nature Recovery Plan area, and it is within a Great Crested Newt Amber Zone.

The site comprises ploughed arable farmland, which is likely to have low wildlife conservation potential, although a survey is required to confirm this. There is well-established hedgerows with ditches along the western and southern boundaries, which also contain several standalone Ash trees and are likely to provide a wildlife corridor and may provide habitat for protected species.

The development of this site has substantial opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain, particularly the enhancement of the existing wildlife corridors and the reinstatement of the former hedgerow network. There is also an opportunity to link in with the network of ponds and ditches in the locality. The site could also incorporate SuDs, bird and bat boxes and bat access tiles and additional tree planting. There would also be an opportunity for native species planting within the landscaped part of the site. A holistic approach to Green Infrastructure would be required.

### **Trees**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer in winter. An Arboricultural Report that accords with BS 5837:2012 would be required of any development proposal.*



The site does not contain any trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). There is a low hedge along the boundary with Poulton Road and the road to the south, which contains several medium sized self-seeded Ash trees, although none of particular quality.

If this site were to be developed, there may be opportunities to provide a substantial amount of additional tree planting, particularly within the north-east of the site which may be needed to screen development.

### **Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)**

*These comments are made on the basis of a desktop and site survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer. A full historic environment or heritage assessment would be required of any development proposal.*

**Context:** The site is part of a larger field and has no defined north-eastern boundary. The large field that the site now forms part of was once four smaller fields, which have been amalgamated together, two of which spanned into DA13. However, the curved north-eastern boundary of the proposed site departs further from the historic field pattern.

To the west is early-mid 20 Century two-storey brick-built housing development of Broadleaze, which is not of a traditional Cotswold vernacular. Further to the south-west, Linden Lea was built in the early 2000s. These are Cotswold stone buildings with dry stone walls defining the garden boundaries. The three houses to south west of the site, opposite the junction into Linden Lea, are two-storey buildings, which are also not of a traditional Cotswold design.

The development of this site would not be in keeping with the village's building pattern and its development would be harmful to the village's character. A linear development adjacent to the roads would have the same detrimental impact in terms of breaking new ground on the opposite side of the road than if the whole site were developed.

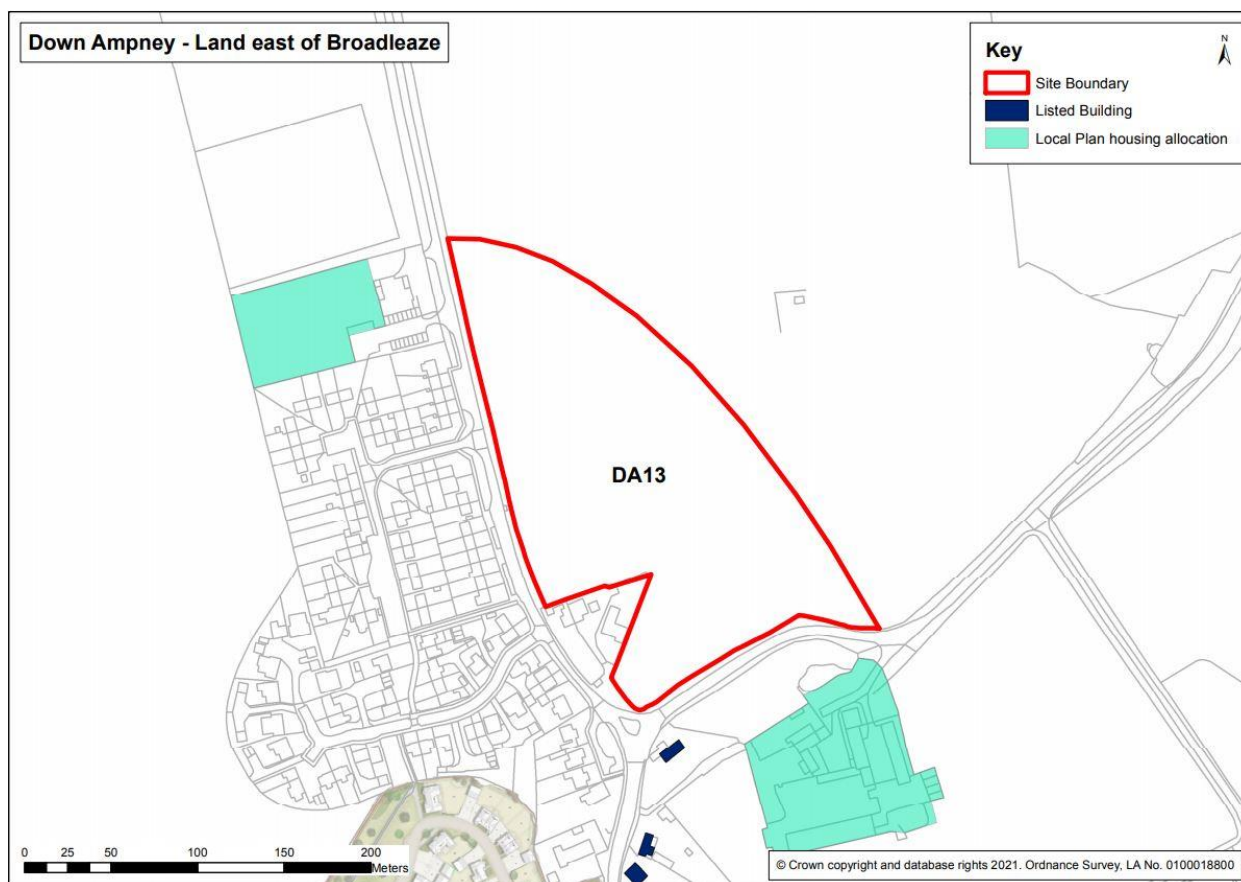
**Designated heritage assets:** The site is located 25m to the north of a Grade ii listed building (Pear Tree Cottage) and forms part of its setting. Pear Tree Cottage is partly screened by tall outgrown vegetation (note: this the vegetation could disappear at any time), although DA13 forms part of the rural setting of this building. The development of DA13 would likely harm the setting of this building. The extent of this harm requires further specialist assessment within a Historic Environment Assessment.

The Down Ampney Conservation Area is located over 810m to the south and is screened by existing development.

**Non-Designated Heritage Assets:** None known

**Heritage at risk issues:** None known

**Opportunities:** Reference would need to be made to the Down Ampney Village Design Statement in any development proposals, which is being updated as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.



### Other issues / constraints

- The site is modelled to have higher ground water flood risk (between 50-75%) – further investigation is required;
- Any development is likely to encounter sewage infrastructure capacity issues, which would impact on the timescale of the development;
- Loss of agricultural land - Grade 2 best and most versatile quality - contrary to NPPF (2019) para 174(b);
- Within Cotswold Water Park;
- Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan consultation area;
- Source Protection Zone; and
- Within Fairford Airport Safeguarding Area.

### Summary

The site is part of a larger field with no defined north-eastern boundary. This would be a significant scale of development in relation to the size of Down Ampney. It would also break away from the historic field pattern and would be harmful to the character of the village. Development here would breach the road and introduce development into the open countryside. The site is assessed to have 'High' landscape impact, which is the highest grading.

Development in this location would also harm the rural setting of a listed building. The site is also best and most versatile agricultural land.

### Recommendation

The site is unsuitable for development.