

# Moreton-in-Marsh Site Assessments

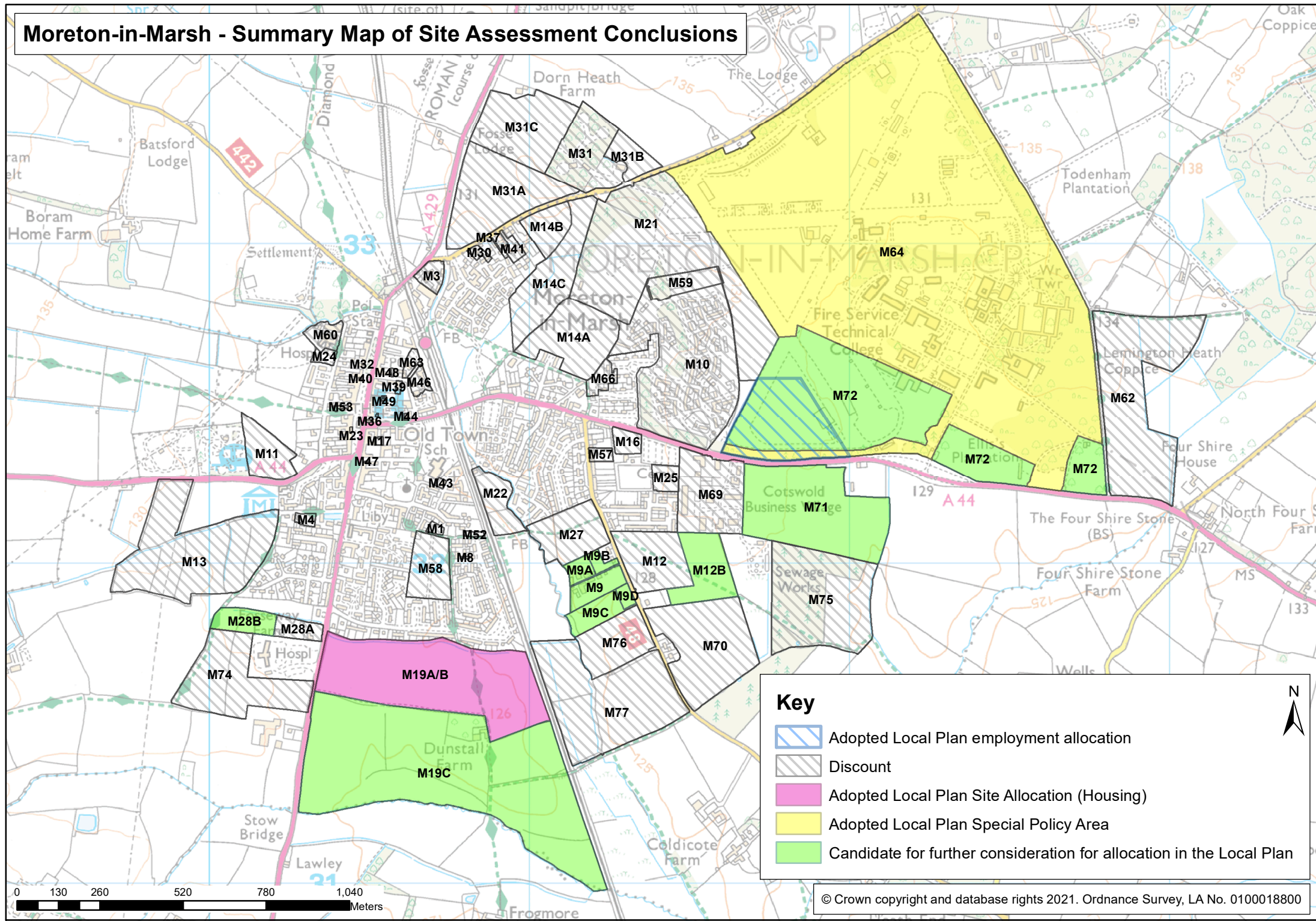
Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability  
Assessment (2021)








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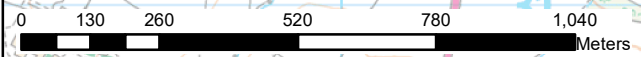
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# Moreton-in-Marsh - Summary Map of Site Assessment Conclusions



**Key**

-  Adopted Local Plan employment allocation
-  Discount
-  Adopted Local Plan Site Allocation (Housing)
-  Adopted Local Plan Special Policy Area
-  Candidate for further consideration for allocation in the Local Plan



## Site Assessments: Part 1

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M1	Land south of Warneford Place, rear gardens	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold - It is not seen how a development of 5 or more dwelling could realistically be achieved. Site was originally council houses, but they were sold to tenants pre-1997 with the 'Right to Buy'. Now in multiple ownership with little reasonable prospect of coming forward. No expression of interest from any of the owners.	Discount
M2	1 London Road	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold - site is also in multiple ownership with no expression of interest to develop the land from any of the landowners.	Discount
M3	Blenheim Farm	Housing	Unsuitable - The site is designate as an Established Employment Site in the Local Plan. The site is also fully developed with employment units.	Discount
M4	Coach depot, Fire and Ambulance Service, Parkers Lane	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M5	Croft Holm	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M6	Fire College Site	Housing	Duplicate of M22	Discount
M7A	Land accessed off London Road	N/A	Superseded by M73	Discount
M7B	Land accessed off London Road	N/A	Superseded by M73	Discount
M8	Land adjacent to 174 Fosseyway Avenue	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M9, M9A, M9B, M9C, M9D, M76	Land adjacent 'South Croft', Evenlode Road	Housing	M9, M9A, M9B, M9C, M9D and M76 have been assessed together to consider whether any strategic benefits could be gained by allocating one or more of the sites or whether any parts of the sites, which might otherwise be unsuitable for housing or commercial development, could deliver other elements of a scheme. Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2.	See Part 2
M9A	Land adjacent 'South Croft', Evenlode Road	Housing	See M9	See M9

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M9B	Land at Evenlode Road	Housing	See M9	See M9
M9C	Land at Evenlode Road	Housing	See M9	See M9
M9D	Land at Evenlode Road	Housing	See M9	See M9
M10	Land adjacent London Road and Mosedale Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M11	Land at Bourton Road	250 space car park and coach parking or up to 50 dwellings	Unsuitable - The development of this site would adversely impact the AONB and Moreton's setting. The site forms an important open space on the gateway into the town, acting as a landscape break, a buffer and a green wedge.	Discount
M12A	Land at Evenlode Road	c.100 dwellings plus employment land in combination with M12B	Extant planning permission. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
<b>M12B</b>	<b>Land at Evenlode Road</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2</b>	<b>See Part 2</b>
M13	Land at Parker's Lane	Housing	Unsuitable - The site is located in a highly sensitive part of the AONB on the approach to Moreton. Although on the edge of the town, the site breaks away from Development Boundary into open countryside.	Discount
M14A	Land behind Dulverton Place	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M14B	Field south of Todenham Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M14C	Field east of Beceshore Close	Housing	Unsuitable - Important community green space within Moreton-in-Marsh - this land was installed as a new park within an earlier planning application (ref: 14/00948/OUT)	Discount
M15	Land north of Dulverton Place	Housing	Duplicate of M18	Discount

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M16	Land north of Football Ground	Housing	Unsuitable - The site should be retained as an outdoor sports facility.	Discount
M17	Land to rear of White Hart Hotel	Housing	Extant planning permission. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
M18	Land to the rear of Dulverton Place	Housing	Duplicate of M14	Discount
M19A/B	Dunstall Farm, Fosseyway	650-700 dwellings in combination with M19B and M19C	The Council resolved to grant planning permission to 250 dwellings in November 2020 (ref: 19/02248/FUL). The site is also allocated for residential development in the Local Plan. The deliverability of this site will be further assessed in the Housing Land Supply Report. Should the site not gain full planning permission, it will be reassessed in the next SHELAA update.	Discount
M19C	Dunstall Farm, Fosseyway	360-400 homes and a primary school	Detailed site assessment in Part 2 finds this land to currently be unsuitable	Discount
M20	Land to the rear of Ivy Lodge, London Road	Housing	Removed at Part 1 of SHLAA Assessment	Discount
M21	Land west of 7th Avenue and south of 5th Avenue, Fire Service College Campus (Site 1)	Housing	Extant planning permission. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
M22	Land west of Croft Holm	Housing	Flood Zone 3b (SFRA Level 2)	Discount
M23	London House, High Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M24	Moreton Bowls Club, Hospital Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M25	Land north of Evenlode Gardens	Housing	Unachievable and unsuitable - land locked site with access issues. Possible further extension to cemetery, but not suitable for residential development.	Discount

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M26	Land north of Wellington Road	Housing	Unable to locate site submission	Discount
M27	Evenlode Road Allotments	Housing	Unavailable and unsuitable - allotments should be retained if needed unless a suitable alternative location can be found. There is also likely to be an access issue on Evenlode Road as well as biodiversity issues towards watercourse to the west.	Discount
M28A	Fosseway Farm	Housing	Extant planning permission. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
<b>M28B, M74</b>	<b>Land west of Aldi</b>	<b>M28B: 15-20 dwellings M74: Pre-school, primary school and housing</b>	<b>M28B and M74 have been assessed together to consider whether any strategic benefits could be gained by allocating one or more of the sites or whether any parts of the sites, which might otherwise be unsuitable for housing or commercial development, could deliver other elements of a scheme. Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2.</b>	<b>Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2</b>
M29	Social Club Car Park	Housing	Duplicate of M63	Discount
M30	Straun & The Beeches, Todenham Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M31	The Old Piggeries	90 dwellings	Unsuitable - for residential or employment uses. Although the site is brownfield land and is closer to the town centre than some other sites, it is in a Special Landscape Area. Development would break north of Todenham Road, which a historic boundary of the town, and would intrude into open countryside.	Discount
M31A	Land west of the Old Piggeries	95 dwellings	Unsuitable - for residential or employment uses. Although the site is closer to the town centre than some other sites, it is in a Special Landscape Area. Development would break north of Todenham Road, which a historic boundary of the town, and would intrude into open countryside.	Discount
M31B	Land west of the Old Piggeries	Housing	Unsuitable - for residential or employment uses. Although the site is closer to the town centre than some other sites, it is in a Special Landscape Area. Development would break north of Todenham Road, which a historic boundary of the town, and would intrude into open countryside.	Discount

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M31C	Land west of the Old Piggeries	Housing	Unsuitable - for residential or employment uses. Although the site is closer to the town centre than some other sites, it is in a Special Landscape Area. Development would break north of Todenham Road, which a historic boundary of the town, and would intrude into open countryside.	Discount
M32	Toy Cottage, High Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M33	16 Spring Hill Camp, Spring Hill Camp	Housing	No net gain	Discount
M34	18 Spring Hill Camp	Housing	No net gain	Discount
M35	Hut 16A Springhill Camp	Housing	No net gain	Discount
M36	1 The Curfew Oxford Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M37	Alliston, Todenham Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M38	Blockley Brickworks	Housing	Site included in error	Discount
M39	Delabere House, New Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M40	Gavel Cottage, High Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M41	Leeward & Shoreheat, Todenham Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M42	Leeward and Shoreheat	Housing	Duplicate of M41	Discount



Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M43	Old Town Workshop St Georges Close	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold - site is also within Flood Zone 3b (SFRA Level 2).	Discount
M44	Roseville Oxford Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M45	Station Garage and F Reynolds	Housing	Duplicate of M46	Discount
M46	Station Garage, Station Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M47	The Grey Cottage, East Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M48	The Laundercentre, New Road	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M49	Units 10,11,14 & 15 Old Market Way, High Street	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M50	3A Oxford Street	Housing	Below 5 dwelling threshold	Discount
M51	Land adjacent to British Legion Site	Housing	Duplicate pf M63	Discount
M52	Rear of no. 13-15 Warnford Place	Housing or any potential use	Below 5 dwelling threshold - site also has achievability issues as site is landlocked.	Discount
M53	The Old Slaughterhouse	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M54	Land at Bourton Road	Housing	Duplicate of M11	Discount
M55	Land south-east of Nursery Close, Blenheim Farm	Housing	Development complete	Discount
M56	Land at New Road	Housing	Duplicate pf M63	Discount

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M57	1-8 Charlton Terrace	Housing	Unavailable	Discount
M58	University Allotments, Old Town	Housing	Unsuitable and not promoted for development - site forms an important community amenity and green space within the built-up area, which is currently being used for allotments. Unless the need for allotments can be shown to have ceased, which is unlikely, or an appropriate suitable alternative location can be found, this site should not be developed. There are also concerns about where an alternative suitable allotment location can be found that would offer the same level of existing access to local people. There are also concerns about whether the local roads that provide access to the site are suitable for more intensified use and the loss of biodiversity value from the allotments. There are also trees and hedgerows within the site that would need to be retained.	Discount
M59	Land at Moreton Park, London Road	Housing	Development complete (Ref: 13/02936/FUL)	Discount
M60	Former Hospital Site	Housing	Extant planning permission. Deliverability assessed in Housing Land Supply Report	Discount
M61	Land north of Fosseway Garden Centre	–	Incorporated within M74	Discount
M62	Fourshires Farm, London Road	Housing (potential care village)	Not within or adjacent to Moreton's Development Boundary. Most of the site is also not within Cotswold District.	Discount

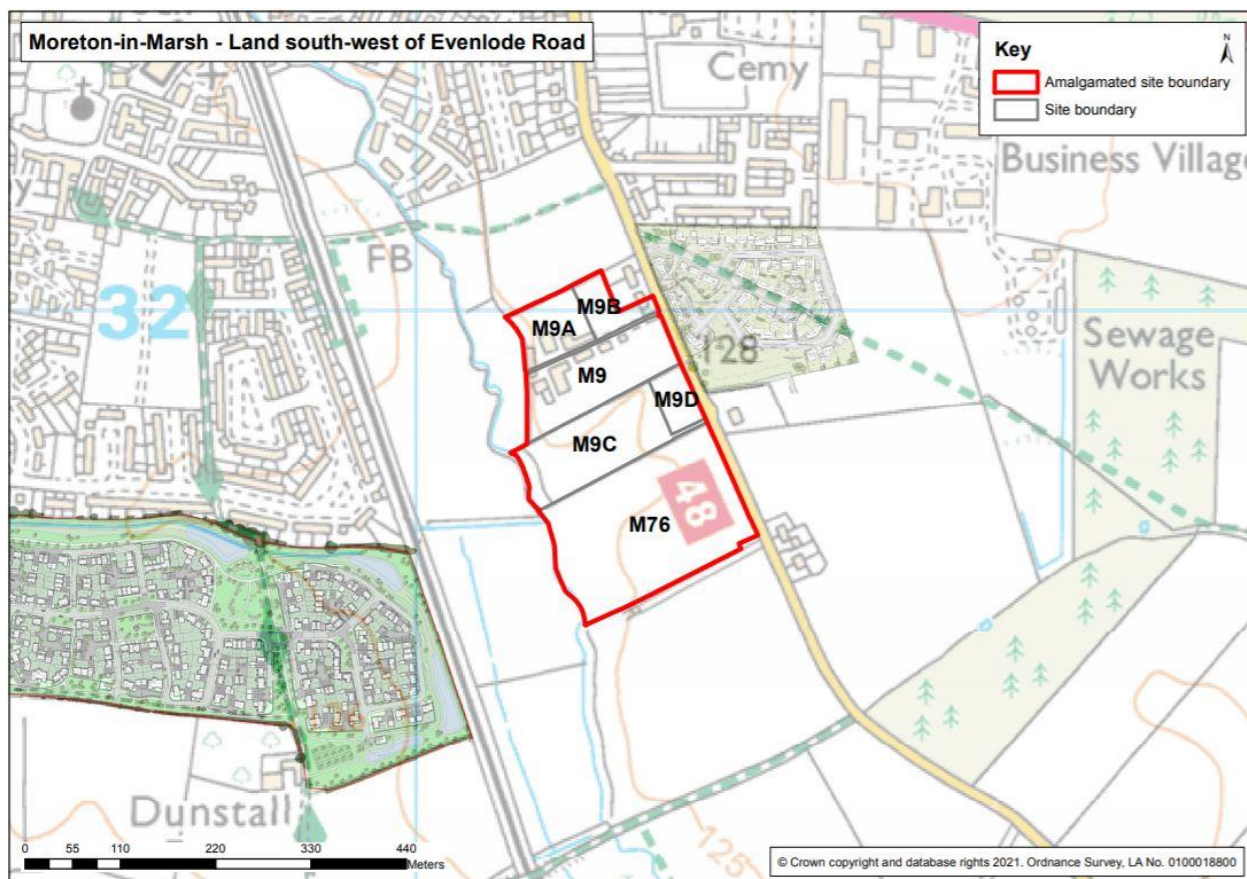
Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M63	British Legion Site	Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site for residential or care home or hotel uses with the possibility of some convenience retail/leisure use on ground floor, car parking	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2	See Part 2
M64, M72	Fire Service College (A)	Retention and further enhancement to the Fire Service College for emergency service training, combined with complementary employment, education, residential and leisure uses	M64 and M72 have been assessed together to consider whether any strategic benefits could be gained by allocating one or more of the sites or whether any parts of the sites, which might otherwise be unsuitable for housing or commercial development, could deliver other elements of a scheme. Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2.	See Part 2
M65	Land north-east of Cotswold Business Park	–	Incorporated within M73	Discount
M66	Land west of Davies Road, GL56 OHR	15 homes	Resolution to grant planning permission for 15 dwellings, subject to completing a S106 Agreement (ref: 19/04749/OUT)	Discount

Ref.	Address	Proposal	Assessment	Conclusion
M67	Land between Garden Centre & Moreton Hospital	Incorporated within M74	Incorporated within M74	Discount
M68	Land west of Moreton Community Hospital	Incorporated within M74	Incorporated within M74	Discount
M69	Cotswold Business Village	Employment - resubmitted for housing (retirement/care)	Development complete	Discount
M70	Land south of highway depot, Evenlode Road	Approx. 124 homes	<p>Unsuitable - The development of this site would be a significant southwards extension of the settlement into the Special Landscape Area. This would break away from settlement pattern and extend development into open countryside. It would also make surrounding land also within the Special Landscape Area susceptible to further development. The development would also result in the loss of a large area of arable farmland.</p> <p>The Transport Assessment that accompanies the site submission finds that there is sufficient highway capacity to accommodate cumulative additional housing development resulting from the 67 dwelling already with planning permission (ref: 19/00086/OUT), 60 further dwellings on M12B, and 124 dwellings on M70, albeit that the Highways Authority (GCC) would need to be satisfied that the evidence is robust that additional traffic movements on Evenlode Road and the Evenlode Road / A44 junction can be accommodated without causing significant adverse impacts.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, the concerns about development in this area make this site unsuitable for development at the present time.</p>	Discount
M71	Land south of London Road	400 homes	Detailed site assessment provided in Part 2	See Part 2
M72	Fire Service College (B)	See M64	See M64	See M64
M74	Land south of Moreton and west of Fosse Way	Pre-school, primary school and housing	See M28 (detailed site assessment in Part 2 finds this land to currently be unsuitable)	Discount

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
M75	Land south-east of sewage works	None	Not available	Discount
M76	Land west of Evenlode Road	85-100 homes	See M9 (detailed site assessment in Part 2 finds this land to currently be unsuitable)	Discount
M77	Land west of Evenlode Road	Housing	Unsuitable - The development of this site would be a significant southwards extension of the settlement into the Special Landscape Area. This would break away from settlement pattern and extend development into open countryside. It would also make surrounding land also within the Special Landscape Area susceptible to further development. The development would also result in the loss of a large area of arable farmland.	Discount

## Site Assessments: Part 2

### Land south-west of Evenlode Road (refs: M9; M9A; M9B; M9C; M9D; M76)



**Proposal:** Housing

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Site area:** Combined = 7.05ha (M9 = 1.23ha; M9A = 0.56ha; M9B = 0.34ha; M9C = 1.33ha; M9D = 0.29ha; M76 = 3.24ha)

**Land ownership:** the plots are in multiple ownerships, but all are interested in bringing forward a development proposal

#### Site description

The sites are all located at the south-eastern edge of Moreton-in-Marsh off Evenlode Road, which is a single track rural road. They all originate all small holdings with the exception being M76, which is substantially larger in size and is an agricultural field. Although generally flat, the topography to the west of the sites falls gently westwards towards the River Evenlode, which flows southwards along the western boundary of M9C and M76.

M9 is mostly a field still used as a small holding. An access track runs along the northern boundary and there are numerous small buildings alongside the track and in the western part of the site associated with the small holding, some of which are now used for storage whilst others have fallen into disrepair.

M9A appeared to be disused when visited. This site also contains several small buildings in various states of disrepair.

M9B mostly remains a field used as a small holding. However, the eastern part of the site contains a bungalow (Southcroft).

M9C comprises three fields used as horse paddocks. The Old Stables in the south-eastern corner have been recently converted into a dwelling (ref: 16/04753/FUL).

M9D is no longer used as a small holding and now is only used to store materials, as well as two shipping containers.

M76 comprises several small fields used as horse paddocks, which are separated by post and rail fencing. There is an access track along the southern boundary and stables located towards the west of the site.

Evenlode Road forms the eastern boundary of the combined site area with a recently permitted 67 dwelling housing development and the Gloucestershire Highways Depot opposite. To the north is Croft Allotments. M9B is adjacent to four semi-detached bungalows, which front onto Evenlode Road. There is open countryside to the south and a wild grassland area and the River Evenlode to the west.

## Planning history

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

M9, M9A and M9B were all part of the same small holding in the 1960 Ordinance Survey – this area once contained more small holding buildings than present. M9C and M9D were also formerly part of the same field. M76 was part of a larger field, which extended southwards to Moreton Footpath 15.

The sites are all currently outside the Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary, as defined by the adopted Local Plan

M9C contains a recently completed dwelling in the south-east corner (16/04753/FUL – “Conversion of stable building to form a 2 bed dwelling and conversion of open-fronted barn to form a car port”)

There is no other recent relevant planning history on any of the sites, although land to the north-east on the opposite site of Evenlode Road has outline planning permission for 67 homes (ref: 19/00086/OUT).

## 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.*

### Parcel specific features:

**M9:** The parcel comprises a pastoral field with several structures present in the north and west of its site area. Storage of vehicles and other materials are also apparent. Hedgerow boundary vegetation is present on the southern, eastern and western boundaries. The northern boundary is open and leads onto further parcels (M9A and M9B) and residential development with allotments and the Moreton-in-Marsh settlement beyond. To the east is Evenlode Road with a permitted residential scheme beyond. To the south are several structures and a continuation of the pastoral aesthetic with the wider rural landscape beyond. To the west is a watercourse and floodplain with the railway line and residential development within Moreton-in-Marsh beyond.

**M9A:** The parcel comprises a grassed area with several structures present. The storage of vehicles and other materials is apparent in the east half of the parcel. Hedgerow boundary vegetation is present on the northern and western boundaries. The southern and eastern boundaries are generally open and lead onto further parcels (M9 and M9B). To the west is a watercourse and floodplain with the railway line and residential development within Moreton-in-Marsh beyond. To the north are allotments with the Moreton-in-Marsh settlement beyond.

**M9B:** The context of this parcel generally reads as that of M9A. However, within the parcel the area is grassed and a residential dwelling is present within the east alongside Evenlode Road.

**M9C:** The context of this parcel generally reads as that of M9. However, the parcel is tidier than its neighbour and is used for the keeping of horses with the parcel divided up for paddocks and a stable is present. Being located to the south of M9 this parcel is located further into the rural landscape around the settlement.

**M9D:** The context of this parcel generally reads as that of M9. Some structures are present and maintenance within the parcel appears to be limited. Like M9C this parcel is located further into the rural landscape than its northern neighbour.

**M76:** The parcel is characterised as a pastoral field that has been subdivided into a series of paddocks for the keeping of animals. Some agricultural structures are present within the south-west of the parcel. These are accessed by a farm track along the southern boundary of the parcel. Hedgerow boundary vegetation is present on the northern, eastern and western boundaries. The southern boundary is open and provides a continuation into the wider agricultural landscape around the Moreton-in-Marsh settlement. Beyond the northern boundary are the neighbouring M9 parcels with the allotments and settlement beyond. This detaches the parcel from the settlement and positions it within the undeveloped countryside. To the eastern boundary is Evenlode Road with further agricultural fields and

scattered dwellings beyond. To the western boundary is a watercourse and floodplain with the railway line and residential development within Moreton-in-Marsh beyond.

#### Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

#### Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcels are not located within the Cotswolds AONB. However, they are located within the Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds Special Landscape Area.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on the boundary of the parcels.

Other (floodplain, PRow): No TPO located within the parcels. No PRow present within the parcels.

#### Landscape sensitivity:

The parcels are all located within the locally designated Special Landscape Area (SLA) and generally conform with the identified characteristics of the SLA. Additional features include vegetative field boundaries, a pastoral field network, hydrological features, built form, settlement edge and gently sloping topography. The built form within the parcel appears to be of residential, industrial, agricultural and equestrian in character. The storage of materials within some of the parcels has a detrimental effect on the quality of the landscape. However, this could be easily remedied and would not justify any redevelopment.

Justification:

**M9 Parcels:** The past and current use of these parcels has had an impact on the prevailing rural character. Influence from the settlement edge exists and the permission given to the site to the east has brought the neighbouring settlement edge further south. This means the development of the parcels would unlikely to be seen as a protrusion into the rural landscape given the existing context to the west. Much of the existing built form in the parcels is redundant or poorly maintained, which creates a detractor in what would historically have been characteristic pastoral fields on the edge of the settlement. Alongside these structures is associated detritus and access roads. Given the context of these parcels it is considered that they have **Medium** landscape sensitivity. This balances the detractors against the areas position on the edge of the rural landscape and its location within the Special Landscape Area.

**M76:** The parcel has susceptibility to change through housing development due to its position in open countryside. Development would represent encroachment into the characteristically rural landscape around the Moreton-in-Marsh settlement and would form a prominent addition to local views. The existing vegetated field boundaries form an important landscape feature around three sides of the parcel and filter views across the characteristic agricultural landscape. The exception to this is the southern boundary which is open to the neighbouring field. This open boundary accentuates the parcels connection to the wider landscape and the historic field pattern. Given the prominent position of the parcel to the south of the settlement, its susceptibility to change and its location within the SLA, the parcel is considered to have **High** landscape sensitivity.

#### **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 not located within an area covered by a formal wildlife conservation designation. However, they are within a B-line and are partly within a Great Crested Newt amber zone.

The sites look to mostly comprise improved grassland associated with the small holding uses, which is unlikely to have significant levels of biodiversity, although further assessment is required to determine this. The sites do, however, have several features of ecological interest. These are:

- The land to the west of M9A and M9 is Priority Habitat (good quality semi-improved grassland).
- There is an area of grassland and trees in the south-west corner of M76, which is of interest.
- There is a drainage ditch running along the western boundaries of M9 and M9A, which is naturally dammed in placed and has pond-like characteristics. There is a further drainage ditch along the boundary of M9C and M76.



- There are several mature trees and hedgerows within and around the site, which will be habitat for small mammals, nesting birds, etc.
- A badger sett was observed in the western corner of M9.
- The buildings in all of the sites may accommodate roosting bats or nesting birds, particularly the disused or infrequently used buildings.
- M9A and M9B are adjacent to an active allotment, which may have biodiversity value (e.g. reptile and insect species).
- There are parts of the site which have fallen out of use or have had minimal human disturbance for some time, namely M9A and M9D, which will be of interest.

The trees and hedgerows should be retained, which could be achieved within a well-designed scheme. There may be opportunities for additional tree planting and the reinstatement of the hedgerow along the northern boundary of M9A, and M9B, which would link gaps in the hedgerow network. There would be a further opportunity to provide SuDS, particularly in the west of the site, which should form an integral part of the Green Infrastructure of the site providing additional benefits such as habitats.

## 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.*



There are no trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) present within the site. However, there are three Oak trees on the eastern side of Evenlode Road with TPOs.

There are several hedgerows within the site, which 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. These are located:

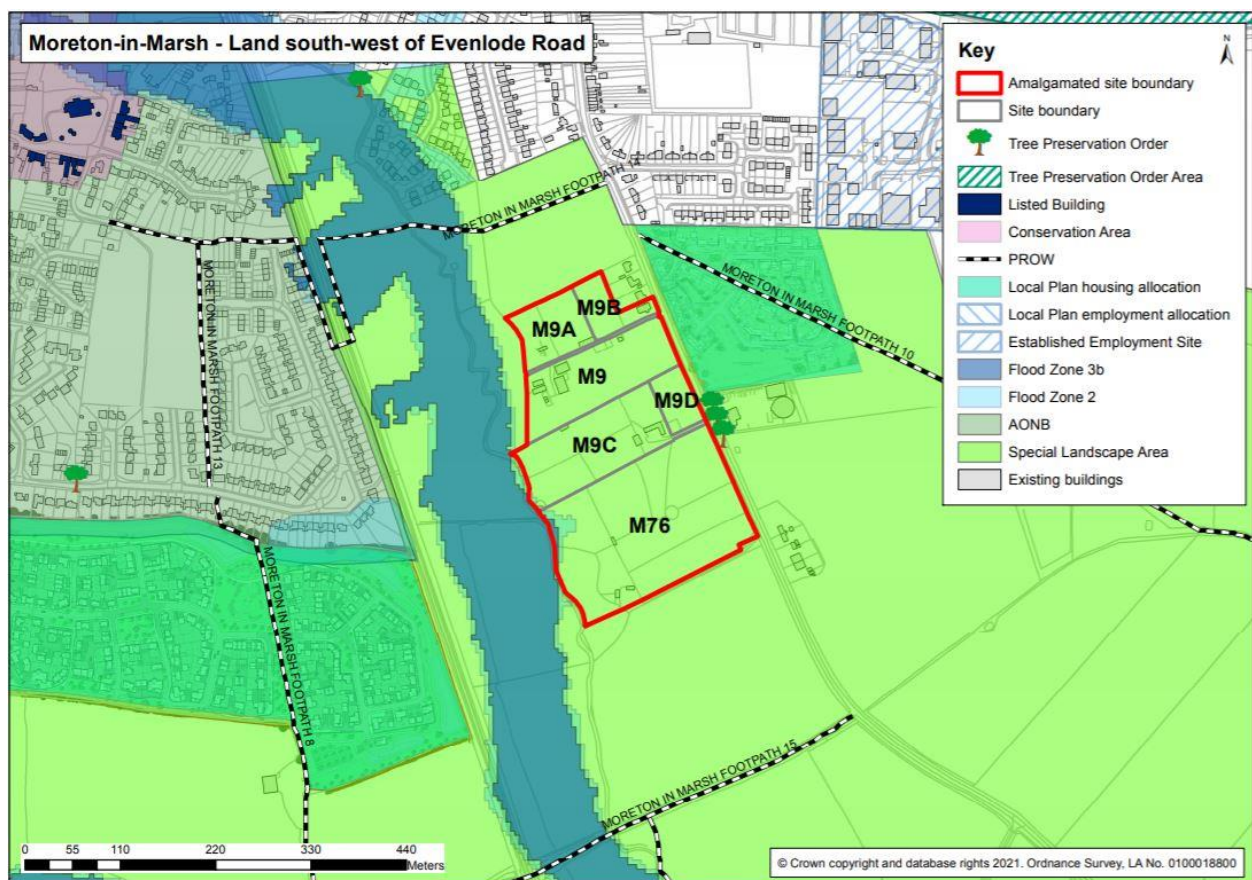
- along the eastern boundary of M9, M9D and M76 adjacent to Evenlode Road;

- along the southern boundaries of M9C/M9D;
- along the southern boundary of M9;
- along the western boundary of M9, M9A, M9C and M76; and
- along the northern boundary of M9A and M9B (this hedgerow is broken by gaps but there is an opportunity to reinstate this hedgerow).
- There are also several trees of interest within the sites, including:
  - a large Oak tree in the eastern part of M9D, which may be worthy of a TPO;
  - several trees along the western boundary of M9 and M9C;
  - an Oak tree adjacent to the Old Stables house; and
  - a copse of trees in the south-west corner of M76.

There may be an opportunity for some tree planting within the site, particularly within an area of landscape buffering. This may be along the southern boundaries of M9C and M9D. The part of M76 used as a horse paddock might also accommodate some tree planting, which would not lose any agricultural land. Tree planting on M76 would offer the ability to screen land to the north, although the planting would need to be integral to the development and not provided all in one area. It would also offer some local carbon sequestration and an opportunity to enhance local biodiversity. Cumulatively this land could offer multiple benefits beyond the existing equestrian use.

### 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.*



### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

**Context:** The site is part of a complex of former small-holdings. These contain various buildings in states of disrepair. None of the buildings within the site appear to have any particular value as non-designated heritage assets.

**Designated heritage assets:** None - although Moreton-in-Marsh has a Conservation Area, the sites are located 475m to the south-east and are not in view of the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the sites are not in view of any listed buildings.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** None identified

### **Other issues / constraints**

- Limited highway width and capacity along Evenlode Road, particularly around the junction with London Road. This is likely to require upgrading if the site were developed;
- Adjacent to a highway depot (potential noise issue);
- Infrastructure in Moreton-in-Marsh, particularly highway capacity within and around the town centre, primary school place capacity, and sewage treatment capacity;
- The proposal would be another eastwards extension of the built up area of Moreton-in-Marsh – a substantial amount of growth in this area has already taken place since the beginning of the plan period;
- Demolition and clean-up of existing buildings on the site;
- The western extremity of M76 is in Flood Zone 3b – this area would be unsuitable for built development but may be suitable for green infrastructure;
- The sites are modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk) – further investigation would be required.
- An electricity line runs north to south through M9, M9B, M9D, and M76; and
- M76 could be reused as farmland. This may be best and most versatile agricultural land (a soil survey is needed to confirm this).

### **Summary**

Planning permission has been granted on the eastern side of Evenlode Road for 67 dwellings. Once completed, the line of continuous development will extend southwards along the eastern side of Evenlode road as far as the southern boundary of the Gloucestershire Highways depot. This is parallel with the southern boundaries of M9C and M9D.

All the sites are within the Special Landscape Area. However, M76 is significantly more sensitive to development than the other sites due to the exposed views from the south, the greater size of the site, its different character and historic context, and because the development of this site would be a significant southwards extension that would break past the current development line.

In contrast, a hedge provides a defined southern boundary along M9C and M9D and some degree of screening. M9 and M9A have already had numerous small holding buildings, many of which have fallen out of use or into disrepair. There is an opportunity to improve the gateway to the town heading north along Evenlode Road.

### Recommendation

**M9, M9A, M9B, M9C and M9D** are candidates for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan.

**M76** is unsuitable for any development, although may be suitable for fairly extensive tree planting and to provide landscape provision which would filter views into any new residential area. If this was not provided on M76, a similar amount of provision would be required on M9C / M9D.

### Indicative capacity

72 homes (based on density multiplier assumption for the combination of M9, M9A, M9B, M9C and M9D), although a higher or lower number of homes may be possible subject to detailed design and a more detailed understanding of constraints such as highways and flooding.

### 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.*

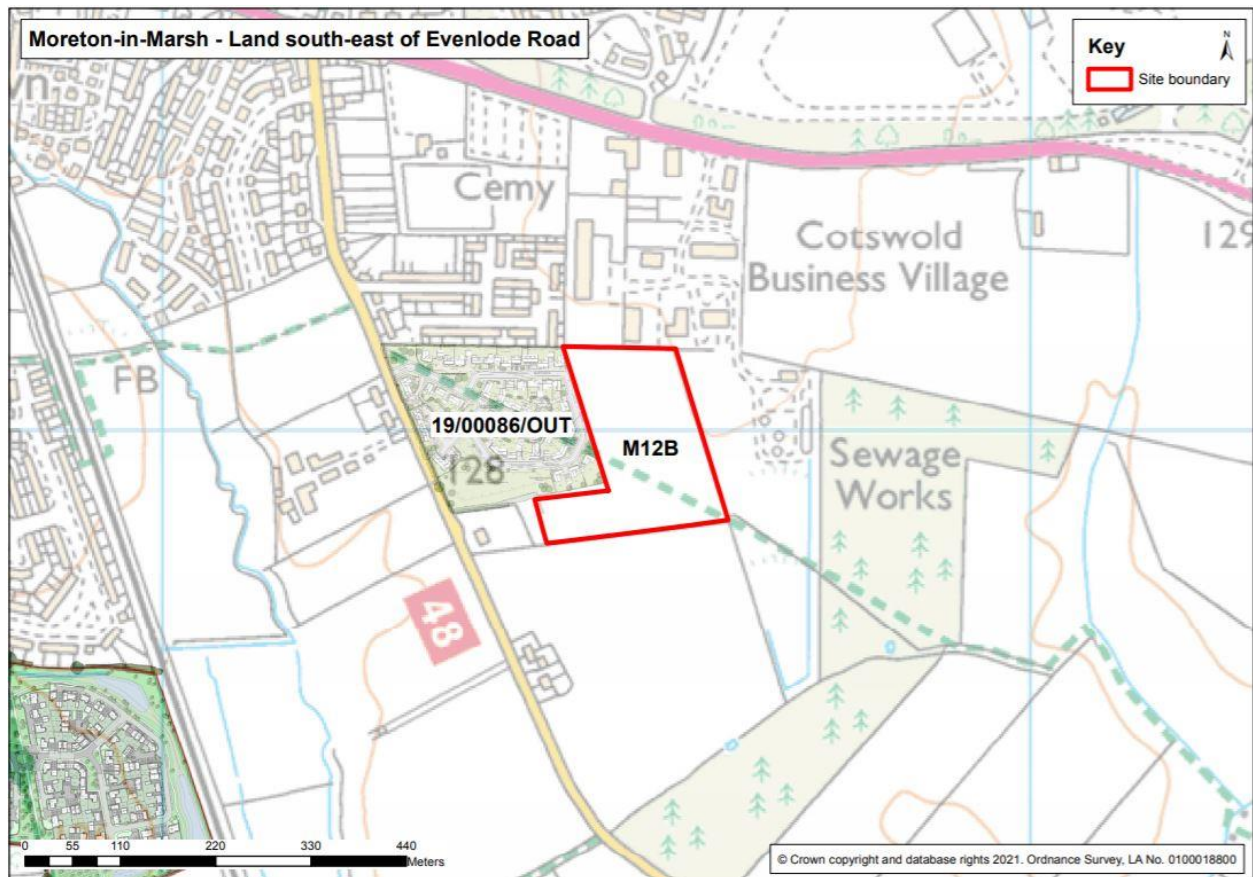
If M9, M9A, M9B, M9C and M9D were to be developed, the sites should be brought forward as one development parcel. The development of individual sites or their collective development should deliver the following:

- An improved gateway into Moreton-in-Marsh from Evenlode Road. This should include a substantial landscape provision within M76 or along the southern edge of M9C and M9D. The buffer should be publically accessible space and should not be located in the garden areas of new housing. The buffer should also include new native species tree and hedgerow planting;
- An access road which links the four sites. No ransom strip should be left between the sites;
- SuDS should ideally be located within the west of the site;
- The hedgerows should be retained within the development proposal. Where hedgerows are lost, replacement hedgerows will be required.

### **Key actions required**

- Preliminary Ecological Assessment of the sites and the completion of any subsequent surveys that are required;
- A Transport Statement which assesses the cumulative impact of committed and proposed schemes on the local highway network, as well as the traffic generated by the proposed scheme;
- Resolution of primary school place capacity, sewage infrastructure capacity, and town centre highway capacity issues in Moreton-in-Marsh;
- Soil survey of M76 to identify whether the site is best and most versatile agricultural land.

## Land south-east of Evenlode Road (ref: M12B)



**Proposal:** Housing

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Site area:** 3.1ha

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located at the south-eastern edge of Moreton-in-Marsh. It is part of a larger field, which has been allowed to go fallow. Planning permission was granted in February 2020 for 67 dwellings on the western part of this field (ref: 19/00086/OUT). M12B is a remnant part of the same field which does not have planning permission.

The field has flat topography and has a public right of way (Moreton-in-Marsh Footpath 10) cutting through it from the north-west corner to the south-east corner.

The site is adjacent to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century housing to the north-west; large relatively modern industrial units to the north (Cotswold Business Village); a sewage treatment works to the east; open countryside to the south; a Gloucestershire Highways depot to the south-west; and land within the same field to the west, which will be the 67 dwelling housing development.

The site would be accessed via the 67 dwelling housing development onto Evenlode Road.

### Planning history

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

The site is part of a larger field which, other than the development of the highways depot in the south-west corner, has changed little since the 1840 Ordnance Survey. This includes the public right of way which crosses the site. However, the adjacent land within the same field was allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan and is now within the Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary, as defined by the adopted Local Plan. The site was subsequently granted Outline planning permission in 2020 for the "Erection of up to 67 dwellings, open space, and landscaping" (ref: 19/00086/OUT).

M12B is located outside the Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary and 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.*

Most of the parcel was assessed as part of the 'Study of Land Surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014). The description provided is reproduced below and is considered to be an appropriate description of the context within the parcel. Permission has been granted for residential development to the west/north-west and, once completed, this will change the local context to this orientation:

*'The site comprises the eastern part of a single flat improved pasture field on the south eastern side of the settlement. The Cotswold Business Park lies to the north and though not screened has units clad in dark green, which is a visually recessive colour and assists in reducing the development's impact. Housing lies to the north west, providing a straight and virtually unmitigated edge to the built form. To the east, there is an outgrown hedge with the sewage works beyond. To the south further pastoral fields beyond a low cut hedge and to the south west is a highways depot with a domed salt store set within trees. Evenlode Road lies to the west across the field. Beyond this are rural houses, smallholdings in small hedged fields and allotments. A public footpath crosses the site diagonally and appears well used, linking the settlement with the countryside. Views are possible from the footpath to the treed skyline to the south/south east across the very gently rolling landscape and intervening hedges and trees. The site's tranquillity is limited by the presence of adjacent development'*

The approach to the town from the south-east via the PRoW is first met by the boundary of the sewage treatment works (note: although the land to the south-east of the M12B and to the north of the footpath is in the Special Landscape Area and looks to be separate from the sewage treatment works on a map, it is part of the same site). The boundary of the sewage treatment works has a tall barbed-wire fence and the works have a distinctly developed feel, which is quite different from the character to the farmland and woods further to the south-east. The change in context is therefore already introduced before people arrive at M12B.

## LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

## CONSTRAINTS/DESIGNATIONS

Landscape: The parcel is not located within the Cotswolds AONB. But it is located within the Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds SLA.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on boundary of parcel.

Other (floodplain, PROW): No TPO located within the parcel. Moreton-in-Marsh Footpath is present within the parcel and crosses it along a north-west / south-east axis.

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY:

Evaluation: **Low/Medium**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the previously assessed 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 was made on the basis of delivering economic development. Changes to the neighbouring context have changed elements of the assessment:

*'The site has susceptibility to economic development in respect of being located in open countryside on the quiet southern approaches to the town with the PRoW crossing the field and a low hedge for part of the southern boundary. Its value is for local recreation. However, the improved pasture is of limited intrinsic value and is screened from the wider landscape to an extent through trees, hedges and new woodland planting further south. There is potential for development provided that further woodland screening is located to the south east to help integrate any development into the landscape'*

Given the new baseline context within the area, development now encloses the parcel on three sides. It is considered that the landscape sensitivity of the parcel is now **Low/Medium**. Any development should respect the route of the PRoW within the parcel. Generous vegetative boundaries should be implemented alongside any development to filter views and soften the edge of the settlement, which would aid in the assimilation of any development into the landscape. The presence of the sewage treatment plant to the east constitutes a perceptual detractor in the area that should be addressed and mitigated within any proposal.

## **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 not located within an area covered by a formal wildlife conservation designation. However, it is located within a B-line. It is also partly located within a Great Crested Newt (GCN) amber zone and partly within a GCN red zone.

An Ecological Appraisal was undertaken on the other part of the same field, which was granted planning permission for 67 dwellings. Further ecological assessment would be required for this site, but the Ecological Appraisal is indicative of the types of issues that may be present. The main findings of the Ecological Appraisal are summarised below:

- All existing field boundary hedgerows qualify as priority habitat, but they are species-poor and unlikely to qualify as important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Potential for hedgehogs, nesting birds and foraging/commuting bats;
- Ground-nesting birds found to be absent from the site and immediate surroundings (regular use of footpath by walkers and dog walkers likely to discourage ground nesting species);
- Negligible potential for reptiles; and
- e-DNA survey of nearby ponds resulted in negative results, meaning that Great Crested Newts are likely to be absent.

The Ecological Appraisal report recommends the following:

- Retained field margins (grassland) could be allowed to widen and be managed appropriately; alternatively, they could be re-seeded with wildflower meadow mix of local provenance and maintained with a suitable mowing regime (late summer hay cut and removal of arisings);
- Existing hedgerows are to be retained and new access through west boundary hedge to be created instead of using current access in south-western corner of site;
- Consideration needs to be given as to how hedgerows that would form domestic curtilage of new residential properties can be protected (against possible future removal and replacement with timber panel fencing);
- Tree and hedgerow protection during construction;
- Enhancement of existing hedgerows through appropriate management and infill/reinforcement planting using native species; hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, holly, dog-rose, spindle, wild privet and wych elm;
- New native hedgerow, tree and shrub planting or wildlife-friendly ornamental species;
- Inclusion of bat roosting features within new buildings;
- External lighting strategy to minimise impact on retained hedgerows and trees for bats;
- Precautionary measures during construction for hedgehogs and badgers;
- Potential for nesting birds – timing of vegetation removal works;
- Inclusion of bird nesting features within new buildings and on trees; and
- Installation of deadwood piles or invertebrate houses within hedgerows.

The Council also recommended that the planning application should incorporate specific measures for biodiversity enhancement, such as wildflower meadows (e.g. alongside hedgerows in the buffer zone) and other habitat creation measures (e.g. hedgerow enhancement, a wildlife pond, native tree and shrub planting, wetland meadow mixture and wet woodland within an attenuation basin).

## 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.*



Three Oak trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) are located to the south-west of the site alongside Evenlode Road, although away from the site boundary. There is, however, a similar reasonably large Oak tree and a smaller Oak tree on the south-western boundary near the highways depot, which are not protected by a TPO. There is also an Oak tree in the south-east corner.

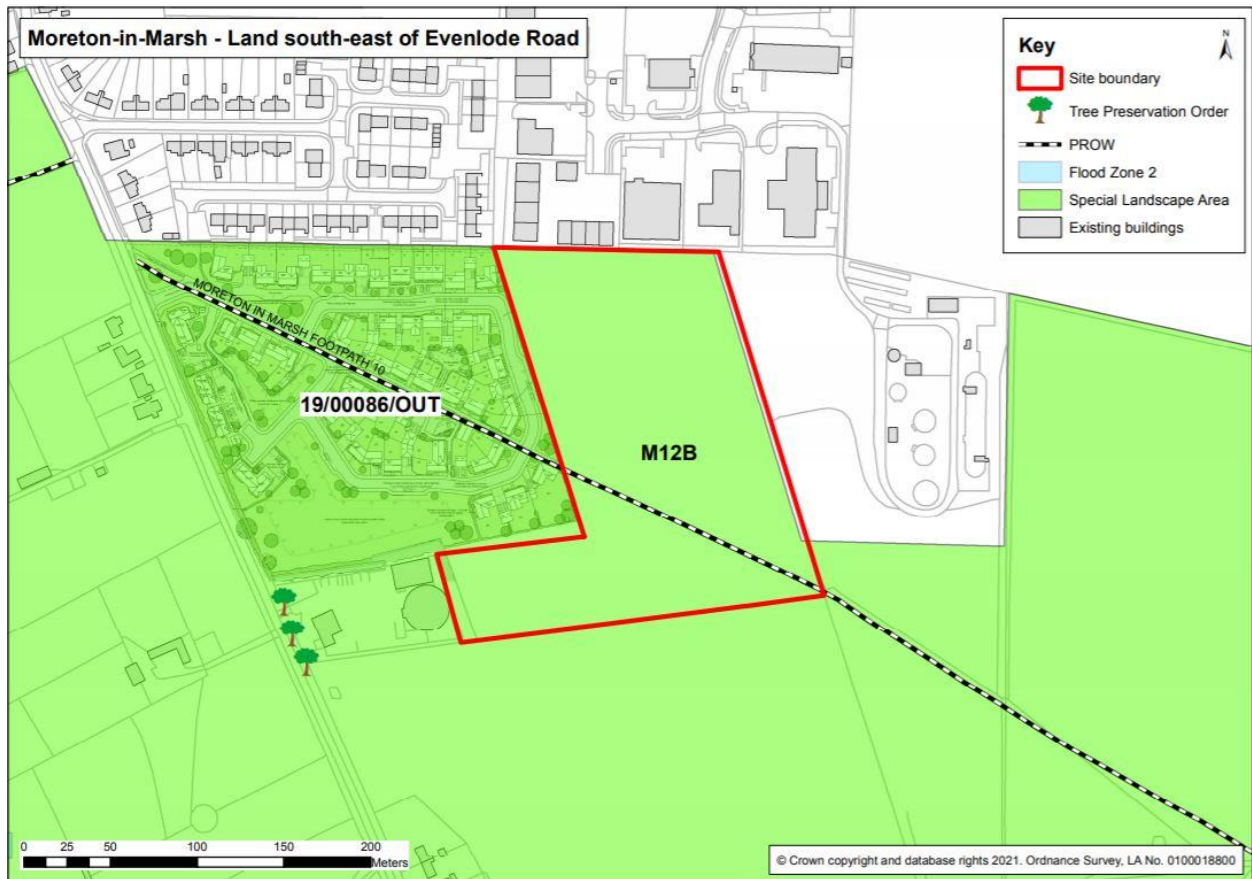
The site is bound by well-established hedgerows to the north, east and south. Some medium-sized Birch trees and overgrown hedge in the south-west corner screen the highways depot. Similarly, an overgrown hedge containing some medium-sized trees forms the eastern boundary and screens the adjacent sewage treatment works.

The hedgerows in this location have an important role with screening the site from adjacent uses and the wider landscape. There is an opportunity to increase the diversity of species within the hedgerows. Further tree planting in the south-west corner and along the eastern and north-eastern boundaries would help to further screen the highway depot, sewage treatment work and adjacent industrial estate, as well as helping to filter any noise generated by those uses. There is also an opportunity to provide tree planting in the area which is unsuitable for residential development due to the odour impact of the adjacent sewage treatment works.

## 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.*





### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

**Context:** The site is part of an agricultural field on the edge of the settlement,

**Designated heritage assets:** Although Moreton-in-Marsh has a Conservation Area, the site is located approximately 800m to the south-east of the Conservation Area and is not visible from it. The site also does not form part of the setting of any listed buildings.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** None known

### **Other issues / constraints**

- An Odour Constraints Assessment (SLR, June 2017) for Cotswold District Council for the Local Plan examination found that the eastern edge of the site is likely to be unsuitable for housing development due to the air quality resulting from the adjacent sewage treatment works;
- The site is modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk) – further investigation would be required;
- Infrastructure in Moreton – particularly primary school place capacity, highway capacity within and around the town centre, and sewage treatment capacity;
- The proposal would be another eastwards extension of the built up area of Moreton-in-Marsh – a substantial amount of growth in this area has already taken place since the beginning of the plan period;
- Although fallow, the development of this site would lose a large area of agricultural land (a detailed soil survey is required) which could easily become farmland once more;
- A noise impact assessment was undertaken for 19/00086/OUT which found that the main source of noise affecting the site is road traffic along Evenlode Road and some commercial plant noise from Cotswold Seed to the north-east. It found there was also the potential for occasional noise from the Highway Depot as this is a

salt store and will be used at night when gritting takes place on roads in the county. There was no observed noise from the water treatment plant. The noise impacts could be mitigated; and

- Highway width and capacity along Evenlode Road, which would likely require upgrading.

## Summary

Planning permission has been granted for 67 dwellings on adjoining land, which is part of the same field as this site. The site is in the Special Landscape Area but has Medium/low sensitivity. It would make best use of available land to develop the whole of this field, rather than just the part of it that has planning permission for 67 dwellings. In so doing, there would be an opportunity to improve the southern edge of the settlement and deliver biodiversity enhancements and tree planting.

## Recommendation

This site is a candidate for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan, subject to overcoming highway issues on Evenlode Road and that necessary infrastructure that is needed to support the development can be delivered.

## Indicative capacity

59 homes (based on density multiplier assumption – a higher or lower density development may be suitable subject to a further detailed design proposal).

## 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.*

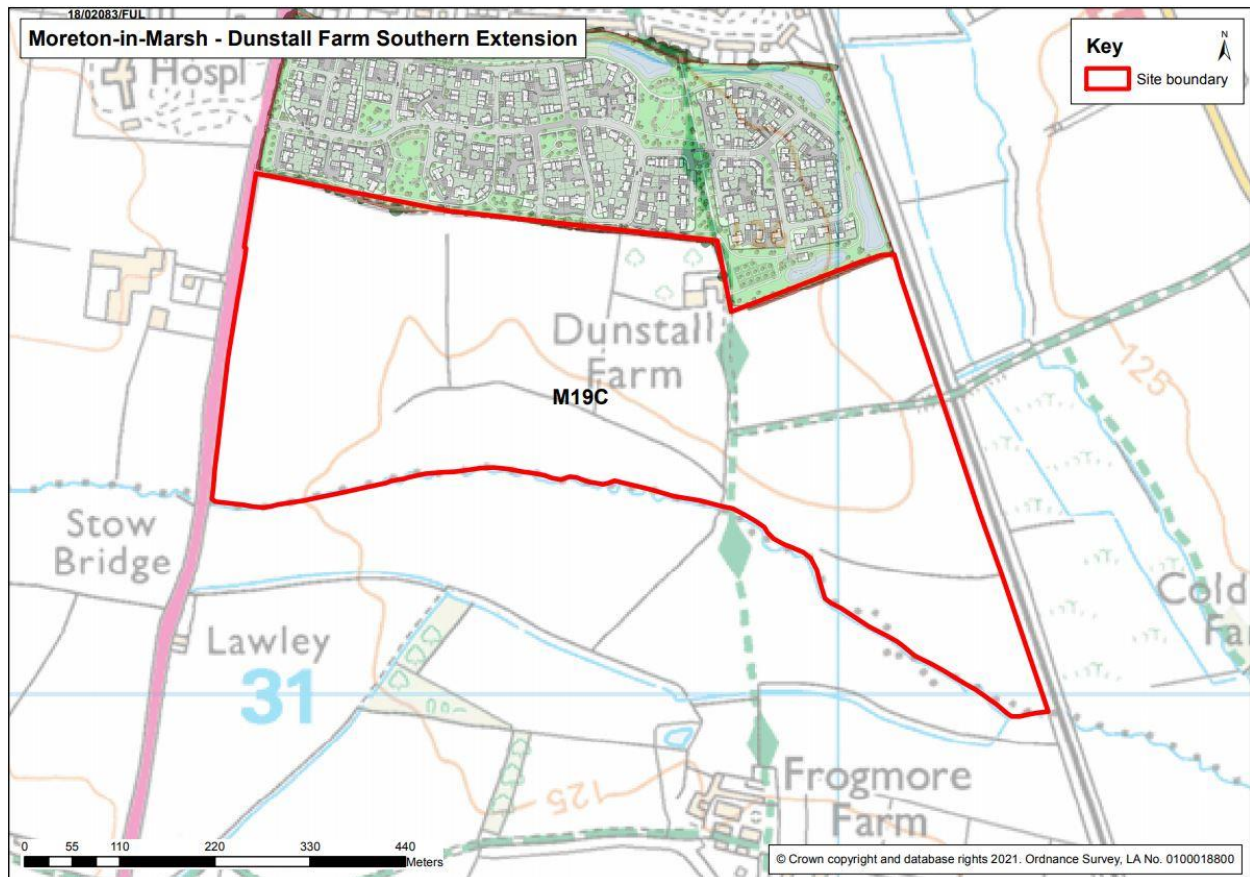
If M12B were to be developed:

- no housing development should be located within the area which has higher than accepted levels of odour from the adjacent sewage treatment works;
- the design should include a substantial amount of additional tree planting to screen the adjacent highways depot, the sewage treatment works, and the industrial estate;
- the proposal should retain and enhance the existing hedgerows with a more diverse range of native species; and
- the proposal should deliver the ecological enhancements identified in the Biodiversity section above.

## Key actions required

- A Transport Statement which assesses the cumulative impact of committed and proposed schemes on the local highway network as well as the traffic generated by the proposed scheme;
- Resolution of primary school place capacity, sewage infrastructure capacity, and town centre highway capacity issues in Moreton-in-Marsh; and
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment of the site and the completion of any subsequent surveys that are required.

## Dunstall Farm Southern Extension (ref: M19C)



**Proposal:** 360-400 homes and a primary school, primary vehicular access via a new junction with the A429 and secondary vehicular links through the development to the north

**Site area:** 28.73ha

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site is located to the south of Moreton-in-Marsh and comprises a series of arable fields in active cultivation that are bound by characteristic hedgerows and trees. An agricultural building identified as Dunstall Farm is present within the north of the parcel. This is accessed by farm tracks that enter the parcel from the south, east and west. The parcel is relatively flat with a gently sloping topography that falls in a south-easterly direction towards Stow Brook, which is located along the length of the southern boundary. Infrastructure corridors flank the parcel to the east (North Cotswold Railway Line) and west (A429 Fosse Way).

Beyond the northern boundary of the parcel is a permitted scheme for 250 dwellings (this is illustrated on the OS 1:25,000 plan above). The permitted site is located within the Moreton development boundary. Beyond this permitted scheme are existing 20<sup>th</sup> Century dwellings within the settlement. To the south and east is a continuation of the field network found within the parcel. These fields are also bound with hedgerows and scattered farms and dwellings are also present. Beyond the Fosse Way to the west is the Fosseway Garden Centre with a continuation of the characteristic agricultural field pattern beyond.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are present within the eastern half of the parcel (Moreton-in-Marsh Footpaths 8 and 15). Footpath 8 forms part of the promoted long distance footpath known as The Diamond Way. These PRoW continue into the surrounding landscape to the north, south and east and connect with the wider footpath network. Views from these public vantage points vary in quality and duration due to intervening features such as vegetation, built form and changes in topography.

## Planning history

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

The site is outside the development boundary, as defined by the adopted Local Plan

17/01964/FUL – “Flood relief channel and culvert (amendment to alignment of western culvert approved under permission 15/04454/FUL (retrospective))”. Permitted

16/05258/FUL – “Erection of 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, associated access, public open space, landscaping and other infrastructure” – Withdrawn (this application incorporated part of the north-west of the site)

15/04454/FUL – “Flood relief channels and culverts”. Permitted

### Land to the north

19/02248/FUL – “Erection of 250 dwellings (to include 150 Market Housing and 100 Affordable Housing) with associated vehicular access, landscaping, drainage and public open space (phased development of 146 dwellings in phase 1, 92 dwellings in phase 2 and 12 dwellings in separate phases thereafter)”. Resolution to permit, subject to signing a S106 agreement

18/01859/SCR – “Request for Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion : Proposed residential development for up to 250 dwellings”. EIA not required

13/02296/FUL – “Erection of new foodstore, service yard, petrol filling station, landscaping, new access arrangements and associated development”. Refused

13/00861/SCR – “Request Screening Opinion to determine whether there is a requirement for an EIA to accompany a planning application for development”. EIA not required

## 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.*

### Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

### Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcel is not located within the Cotswolds AONB, although the AONB boundary is located to the west of the Fosseway and the site forms part of the setting of the AONB. The parcel is located within a Special Landscape Area (SLA).

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on boundary of parcel.

Other (floodplain, PROWs): TPO present on northern parcel boundary (Oak tree). Moreton-in-Marsh Footpath 8 (forms part of the Diamond Way long distance footpath) and 15 present within parcel.

### Landscape Sensitivity

Notable landscape features include the parcel’s location within a locally designated SLA and position adjacent to the Cotswolds AONB thus siting it within the setting of the AONB where regard to its special qualities should be given. Additional features include the field boundary vegetation that encloses and divides the characteristic field network that defines the parcel. Infrastructure corridors are present to the east and west. The permitted scheme and development boundary to the north place the parcel on the settlement edge. A water course is present along the southern boundary which the topography of the parcel gently slopes towards. Dunstall Farm is present within the parcel and is represented by a single agricultural structure. Access roads through the parcel are present to service the structure.

Evaluation: **Medium/high**

Justification: The parcel has susceptibility to change through housing development due to its position upon undeveloped farmland on the edge of the settlement. Development would represent encroachment into the characteristically rural landscape around Moreton-in-March and would form a prominent addition to the local visual context. The Diamond Way long distance footpath and another footpath cross the parcel; these provide public access and enjoyment to the countryside from the edge of the settlement. It is located within a SLA which includes the countryside to the south and east. Its location on the edge of the AONB places it within its setting, an assessment of any developments impact on the special qualities of the AONB would be required. The impact on the special qualities of the Cotswolds would be an important consideration of any proposed development. Given the level of change that would be likely to occur and the context that the parcel is located within, the landscape sensitivity of this parcel is **Medium/high**.

Green Infrastructure enhancement within the parcel could be provided through additional planting to reinforce the characteristic field boundaries. This would also provide layers of filtering to views and soften the appearance of the settlement edge. The public footpaths within the parcel could receive greater maintenance and be set within enhanced open space and planting to enhance the experience of users. Rural SuDs principles could be utilised along the watercourse to better manage the flow of water through the parcel and create better habitat.

## 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 does not contain any formal nature conservation designations. However, the site is located within a B-line.

The 250 dwelling planning application on land to the north included an Update Ecological Appraisal<sup>1</sup> and several Phase II surveys to determine the extent of biodiversity on that land. Whilst further survey work would be required to establish the extent of biodiversity on M19C, the survey results for the 250 dwelling development are indicative.

The key ecological issues raised on the site to the north included several important hedgerows; potential bat habitat and roosts; good breeding bird populations; and habitat for hedgehogs. That survey also highlighted the presence of hare on M19C and the potential presence of otter.

The 250 dwelling development includes a variety of ecological enhancements and mitigation measures. Although M19C is expected to have similar biodiversity issues to the land to the north, and potentially some additional issues, it is likely that the parts of the site with the highest biodiversity value can be either retained or enhanced within a development proposal and that necessary mitigation could be incorporated within the design. However, it would be difficult to mitigate the loss of habitat for hares and otters. There would be opportunities to create new habitats within the development provided that sufficient space is retained unbuilt as part of an extensive Green Infrastructure network provision, which would be needed to deliver biodiversity net gain.

## 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 contains one tree that is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This is a large Oak tree, which is located along the northern boundary adjacent to the farm track.

The trees and hedgerows are confined to the field boundaries. They are extremely important in this location, which is an otherwise open landscape. The trees and hedgerows could be retained within a well-designed scheme and the indicative design proposal provided within the site submission looks to achieve this.

An arboricultural assessment is needed to confirm the locations and quality of trees and hedgerows within the site and the necessary measures to ensure that they could be retained within the development of this site.

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<sup>1</sup> [Update Ecological Appraisal \(Five Valleys Ecology, March 2020\)](#)



### **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*

#### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

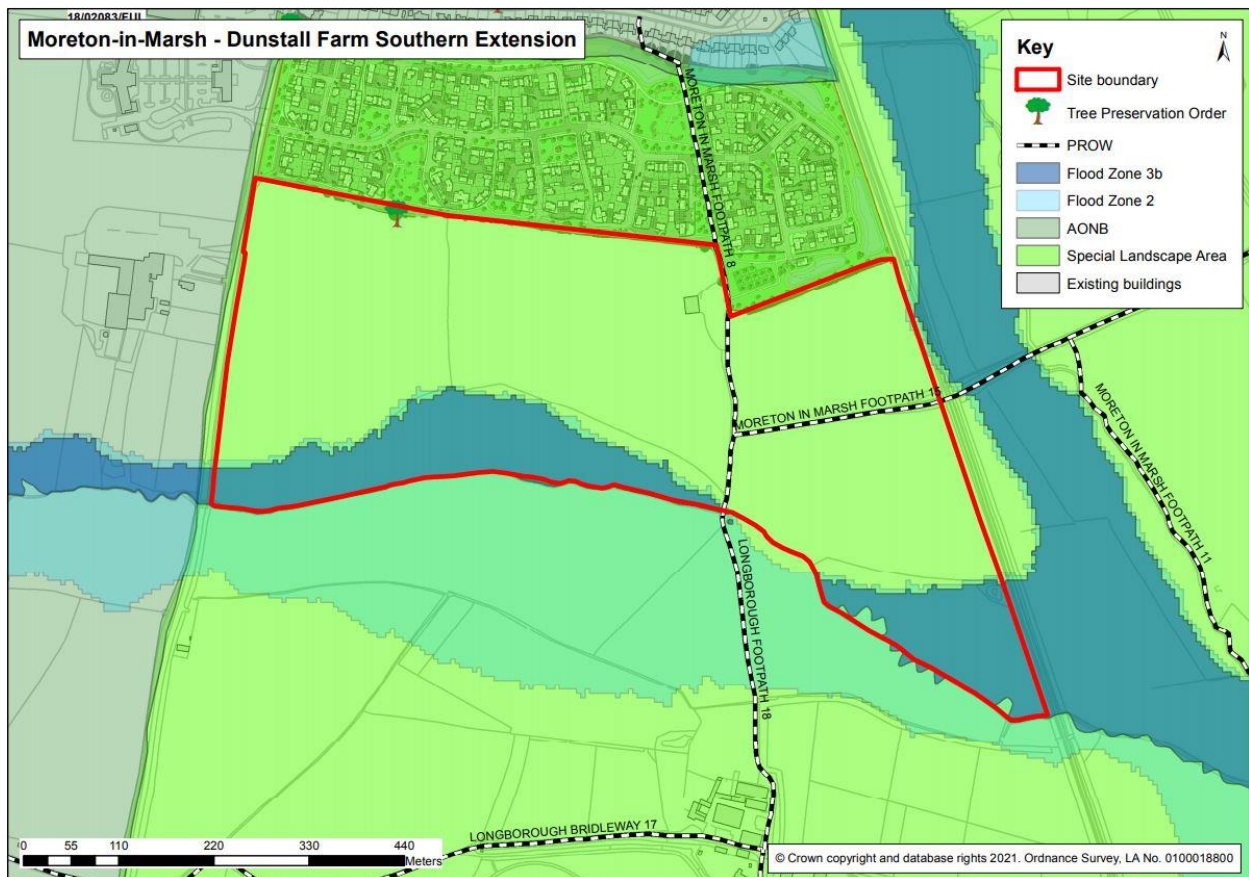
**Context:** The 1840 Ordinance Survey shows the site to be mostly agricultural fields, which remain largely unchanged today. There are a few minor differences, such as that the Dunstall Farm buildings in the north of the site once incorporated a larger complex of agricultural buildings. There was also an agricultural barn on the southern side of the track which runs along the northern boundary, which no longer exists today. Historic mapping furthermore shows that several field boundaries / hedgerows have been removed over the years to merge fields together.

**Designated heritage assets:** The site is located over 500m to the south of the Moreton-in-Marsh Conservation Area and is not visible from it. The nearest listed buildings are located in Moreton-in-Marsh town centre and are also not visible from the site. However, the site is visible from the Grade II listed Upperfields Farm House 1km to the west and the Grade II listed Wells Folly 1.4km to the east.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** An indicative masterplan has been provided within the site submission and looks to restore the outline of the historic field pattern through the development of the site, which is a positive feature of the design (see next page).



### Other issues / constraints

- Scale of development – a significant southwards expansion of Moreton-in-Marsh on greenfield land;
- The southern sections of the site are within Flood Zone 3b and Flood Zone 2 – this part of the site would be unsuitable for housing development but may be suitable for green infrastructure;
- The site is modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk) – further investigation would be required.
- The eastern extremity of the site is within the Network Rail land ownership buffer zone;
- Loss of a large area of agricultural land (a detailed soil survey is required);
- Infrastructure in Moreton, particularly highway capacity within and around the town centre and sewage treatment capacity. Although the water infrastructure provider has a duty to upgrade the wastewater infrastructure and in a timely manner, doing so may still have an impact on the delivery schedule for the site;
- Moreton-in-Marsh requires a new primary school. This site could provide a new primary school. However, although 250 homes have got planning permission on adjacent land, the school would be located away from where most growth in Moreton-in-Marsh has occurred since the beginning of the plan period. It is not a preferred location for a new primary school.

### Summary

The proposed development would be a significant encroachment of built development into open countryside. It would be located on undeveloped agricultural land outside the urban edge of Moreton-in-Marsh and within Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds Special Landscape Area and adjacent to the AONB. The proposed development by virtue of its size and associated highway works will urbanise the approach into the town and would have a High/medium landscape impact.

### Recommendation

The development of this site would be undesirable. Only if there is a shortfall of deliverable sites should this site be considered for allocation in the Local Plan.

#### Indicative capacity

The site submission includes an Illustrative Masterplan, which sets out how and where 360-400 houses could be built on the site. This is lower than the estimated density multiplier assumption capacity and there is a reasonable prospect that this could be delivered if the site was allocated.



#### 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 M19C were to be developed, the proposal must:

- provide around 2ha of land must be provided on the site for a two-form primary school if there is still a need for this facility.
- conserve trees and hedges and provide improvements that better link the hedgerow network;
- provide a large amount of tree planting, particularly within the southern landscape buffer;
- not locate housing development within the part of the site located within Flood Zones 2 or 3b;
- create a southern landscape edge to Moreton, including significant new and retained planting within the public realm; and
- demonstrate, monitor and deliver a modal shift towards public transport and more active forms of travel within Moreton-in-Marsh.

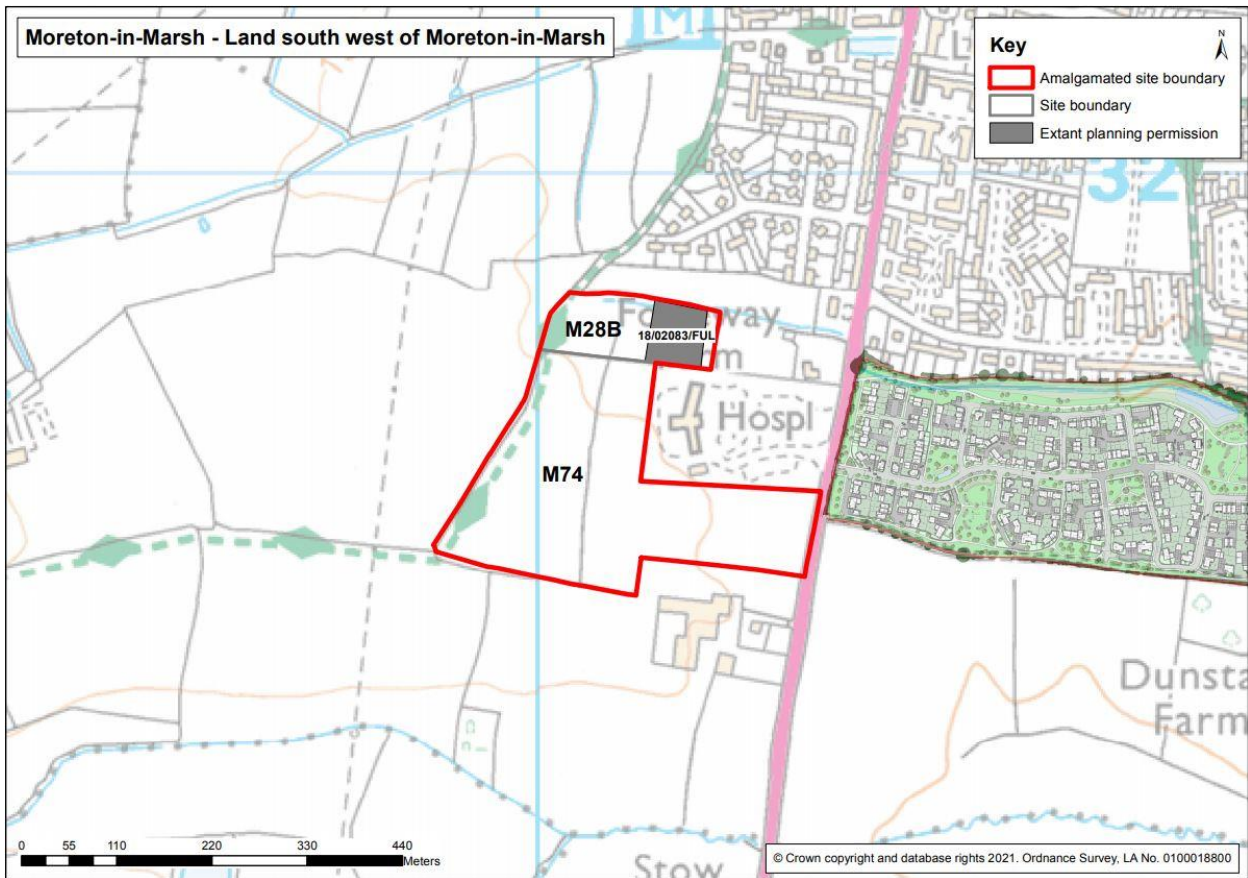
#### **Key actions required**

- Preliminary Ecological Assessment of the sites and the completion of any subsequent surveys that are required;



- A Transport Statement which assesses the cumulative impact of committed and proposed schemes on the local highway network as well as the traffic generated by the proposed scheme and demonstrates measures to deliver a modal shift in travel habits;
- Resolution of the sewage infrastructure capacity and town centre highway capacity issues in Moreton-in-Marsh; and
- A detailed survey to establish whether the site contains any best and most versatile agricultural land.

## Land south west of Moreton-in-Marsh (refs: M28B, M74)



**Proposal:** M28B: 15-20 dwellings;

**Site area:** 7.38ha (M28B = 0.8ha; M74 = 6.58ha)

M74: Pre-school, primary school and housing

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Land ownership:** Believed to be in two separate ownerships

### Site description

The sites are located at the south-western edge of Moreton-in-Marsh to the west of the Fosse Way (A429). The sites wrap around the back of the recently completed Aldi supermarket and North Cotswold Hospital, although part of M74 sits between the Hospital and Fosse Way Garden Centre further to the south.

Both sites have reasonably flat topography. M28B is fallow agricultural land and includes the area to the west of a permitted 60-bed care home development (ref: 18/02083/FUL). M74 is an arable field which has been used for wheat production.

The sites are neighboured by Moreton-in-Marsh Bowling Club and Aldi Supermarket to the north-east; North Cotswold Hospital to the east and an approved development for 250 dwellings further to the east; Fosse Way Garden Centre is located to the south-west of M74 and there is open countryside in all other directions.

### Planning history

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

#### M28B

13/01971/OUT – “Demolition of existing buildings and erection of food store with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works”. Permitted

13/01573/FUL – “Development of a continuing care retirement community comprising the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a 48 bed care home and 51 assisted living units (use class C2) with associated car parking, landscaping and ancillary works”. Refused

14/04879/REM – “Demolition of existing buildings and erection of food store with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works (Reserved Matters details relating to Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale and Compliance with Conditions 16 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) and 18 (surface water drainage scheme) of development granted under permission 13/01971/OUT)”. Permitted

18/02083/FUL – “Construction of a 60-bed care home (Class C2) with associated car parking and landscaping”. Permitted

20/03865/FUL – “Variation of Condition 2 (drawing numbers) of permission 18/02083/FUL (Construction of a 60-bed care home (Class C2) with associated car parking and landscaping) involving alterations to design of approved scheme and parking layout”. Permitted

#### **M74**

*Note: only the land between the Fosse Way Garden Centre and North Cotswold Hospital has any planning history*

15/03099/FUL – “Erection of 64 bed care home (use class C2) together with associated vehicular access, parking and landscaping (revised scheme)”. Refused

18/03585/FUL – “Construction of care community, including provision of 52-bedroom care home and 40 no. extra care units (Use Class C2); 10 units of key worker accommodation (Use Class Sui Generis) and day nursery (Use Class D1), with associated works including access, parking, services and landscaping”. Withdrawn

#### **Initial Assessment**

Following a site visit and a review of the planning application history and supporting evidence, it became apparent from the outset that M74 is an unsuitable location for a pre-school, primary school and housing development. Although there is a need for a primary school in Moreton-in-Marsh, the proposed development on this site would appear visually incongruous and prominent in the landscape and would result in the loss of a greenfield site within the AONB that makes a positive contribution to its character and natural/scenic beauty and the setting of Moreton-in-Marsh. The proposal would cause significant and unacceptable harm with significant and irreversible adverse impacts on the character and visual amenity of the area and the setting of Moreton-in-Marsh.

The remainder of this assessment focusses on whether M28B is suitable 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.*

##### Parcel Specific Description:

**M28B:** The parcel is formed by a pastoral field. The east of the parcel is the subject of a permitted application for a 60-bed care home (18/02083/FUL). Hedgerow is present to the northern, southern and western boundaries. The eastern boundary is relatively open to the rear of the neighbouring supermarket. Beyond the northern boundary is the existing Moreton in Marsh settlement and its development boundary. To the east is the aforementioned supermarket development. South of the parcel is the North Cotswolds Hospital and an open arable field (parcel M74). Beyond the western boundary is a large network of agricultural fields that continues to the elevated Cotswolds AONB escarpment in the distance. The topography of the parcel is flat. A public footpath (MORETON IN MARSH FOOTPATH 7) is present along the length of the western boundary and connects the parcel to the wider footpath network.

**M74:** A portion of M74 (the land between the hospital and the garden centre) was assessed as part of the ‘Study of Land Surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update’ (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, November 2015). The description provided is reproduced below and is considered to be an appropriate description of the context within the parcel. However, boundary differences and the difference in size between the two have altered some details:

*“The site is an arable field lying between the recent North Cotswold Hospital and a garden centre in relatively discreet dark green cladding on the A429 Fosse Way southern approaches to the settlement. The hospital is currently quite visible from*

the south and from the rising ground to the west as mitigation has not fully established but the garden centre looks like agricultural buildings, which is helpful. A low hedge separates the field from the road which is busy and, with the adjacent development, reduces the tranquillity of the site. There is no field boundary on the southern, eastern or western edges of the site although a low cut hedge lies further to the west and there is substantial planting to the north in the hospital site. A public footpath runs along the hedge to the west hedge linking the settlement with the landscape to the south. The site lies within the Cotswolds AONB and an SLA lies to the east. The wooded hill slopes within the AONB lie a little way to the west and form the backcloth to the site.

## LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

## CONSTRAINTS/DESIGNATIONS

Landscape: The parcel is located within the Cotswolds AONB. The Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds SLA boundary is located to the east of the parcel.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on boundary of parcel.

Other (floodplain, PROWs): No TPO present within the parcel. Moreton-in-Marsh Footpath 7 is present along the length of the parcel's western boundary. This footpath forms part of the promoted long distance footpath known as The Monarchs Way.

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY:

M28B evaluation: **Medium**

Justification: The parcel is susceptible to development for housing due to its settlement edge location and the change to the agricultural character that would be brought about by development. Views from the footpath within the parcel and the AONB to the west would be changed to a degree; this would be manifested by an intensification of built form on the edge of the settlement. The supermarket and hospital would be present in the backdrop of these views. The existing permission within the east of the parcel has altered the planning baseline for this part of the parcel and altered the baseline character context. Residential development within the remainder of the parcel is unlikely to appear as incongruent given the neighbouring context. The creation of a robust Green Infrastructure corridor on the western and southern boundaries would be required with any development.

M74 evaluation: **Medium/High**

Justification: The landscape sensitivity given to the previously assessed parcel as part of its inclusion within the 'Study of Land Surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District: Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, November 2015) report was **Medium/High**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and is considered to be an appropriate justification for the current parcel's landscape sensitivity:

*'The site is susceptible to development for housing in respect of it being open to views within the AONB from the west including a footpath. Though set back from the A429 it clearly marks an extension of the residential settlement southwards contrasting with the uses either side. The garden centre has the appearance of an agricultural building complex and so fits in reasonably well into the countryside. The hospital has potential for significant screening as a building surrounded by grounds. This site is isolated from other residential development and lies in open countryside. Overall, it appears to be unsuitable for housing'*

M74 is a larger parcel than the previously assessed parcel. This current parcel also ventures further west into the more rural AONB landscape and closer towards a promoted public footpath that is characterised by a rural approach to the settlement from the south. These factors would be altered by any 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.*

M28B is not located within an area covered by a formal wildlife conservation designation. However, it is located within a B-line. It is also partly located within a Great Crested Newt (GCN) amber zone and partly within a GCN red zone.

The site is largely set to grass and is bordered by trees, hedges and a drainage ditch. The aforementioned features all represent habitats which can have ecological value and the site has the potential to provide a suitable habitat for a variety of protected species.

The permitted care home development (ref: 18/02083/FUL) included an [Ecological Survey and Appraisal](#)<sup>2</sup>. This was considered through the planning application process and the development proposal was able to accommodate the necessary mitigation measures. The western part of the site is similar in character to the east and is likely to have similar biodiversity issues. It is expected that similar mitigation measures could be incorporated within a development proposal on this part of the site, although unlike with the already permitted development, the development of this site will now need to deliver biodiversity net gain. A further Ecological Survey and Appraisal would be required to establish the exact ecological issues within 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.*

M28B is not located within the Conservation Area, where trees are protected. However, the northern boundary of the site contains nine Oak, two Field Maple, and two Ash trees, which are all protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

There are hedgerows along the northern, western and southern boundaries. A native species hedgerow has also been recently planted along the eastern boundary.

The trees and hedgerows are all located at the periphery of the site. They could be retained within a well-designed development proposal. Furthermore, the development of this site provides an opportunity for additional tree planting.



## Historic Environment (excluding archaeology)

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<sup>2</sup> Updated Ecological Survey Results and Appraisal for Proposed Care Home Development, Former Fossey Farm, Stow Road, Moreton-in-Marsh (Aspect Ecology, 4 June 2018)

*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.*

#### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

**Context:** The site is located adjacent to modern contemporary supermarket development and will be located next to a modern care home development. Development to the north is also post war in date. The site is therefore seen in context with modern development rather than traditional, vernacular building forms.

**Designated heritage assets:** Although Moreton-in-Marsh has a Conservation Area, this is located 330m to the north of the site and is not visible from it. The nearest listed buildings are located within the Conservation Area.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** None known.

#### **Other issues / constraints**

- Access – the development of M28B would be accessed via the supermarket car park and care home site. This would require the intensification of use of a junction designed for retail / care home purposes. Further investigation is required to establish if this is an issue;
- The sites are modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk) – further investigation would be required.
- The adjacent foodstore has the potential to generate noise and disturbance, which could have implications for the amenity of future residents of the site;
- Infrastructure in Moreton, particularly primary school place capacity, highway capacity within and around the town centre, and sewage treatment capacity. This site could help to overcome part of this issue by providing a new primary school. However, although 250 homes have recently gained planning permission on land to east, the school would be located away from where most growth in Moreton-in-Marsh has occurred in recent years. M74 is not a preferred location for a new primary school.

#### **Summary**

Both sites are located within the AONB.

**M28B:** The land to the east of M28B recently gained planning permission for a care home, which has yet to commence construction. The western part of the site is similar in character to the east. The site is reasonably well contained and the potential impact of development on the wider landscape is considered to be less than the adjacent land to the south. It is expected that a well-designed housing development could be delivered on the site which maintains the existing trees and hedgerows and which could provide ecological enhancements to deliver biodiversity net gain.

**M74:** There is a need for a primary school in Moreton-in-Marsh. However, a housing development and a school in this location would appear visually incongruous and prominent in the landscape and would result in the loss of a greenfield site within the AONB that makes a positive contribution to its character and natural/scenic beauty and the setting of Moreton-in-Marsh. The proposal would be a significant and unacceptable development that would cause significant and irreversible adverse impacts on the character and visual amenity of the area and the setting of Moreton-in-Marsh.

#### Recommendation

The western part of M28B (excluding the land which has planning permission for a care home development) is a candidate for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan.

M74 is unsuitable for development.

#### Indicative capacity

If M28B were to be developed completely as a housing development, then 15-20 dwellings is likely to be feasible (this is in accordance with the density multiplier assumption capacity).

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

*This following is not an exhaustive list and further guidance on design requirements will be provided through the pre-application process.*

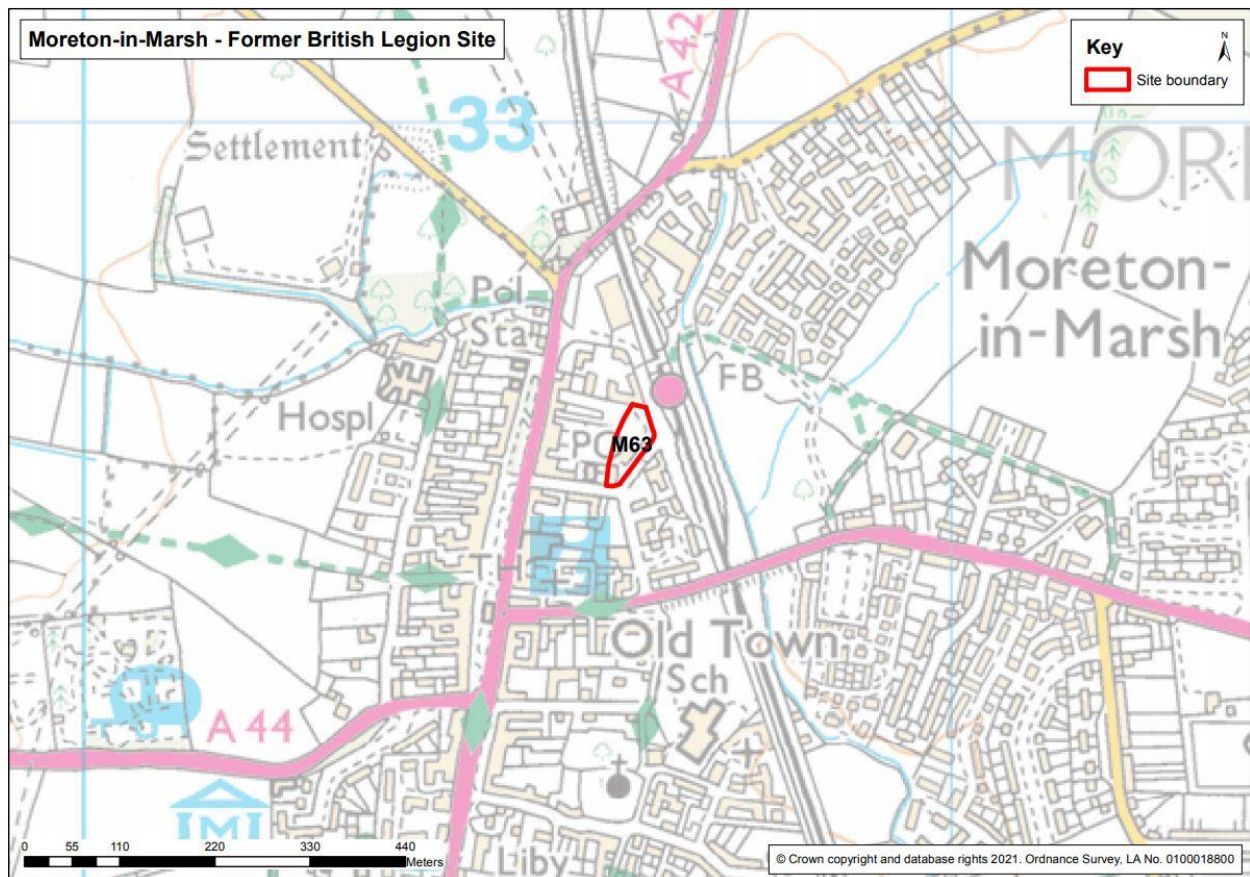
If the western part of M28B were to be developed:

- The trees and hedgerows surrounding the site would need to be retained;
- A an appropriately designed area of green infrastructure should be provided along the western edge of the development, which provides a high quality transition between the countryside and the built-up area when approaching Moreton from the Heart of England Way; and
- It must demonstrate, monitor and deliver a modal shift towards public transport and more active forms of travel within Moreton-in-Marsh.

#### **Key actions required**

- Resolution of primary school place capacity, sewage infrastructure capacity, and town centre highway capacity issues in Moreton-in-Marsh;
- Ecological Assessment of the site and the completion of any subsequent surveys that are required;
- Noise impact assessment of adjacent supermarket; and
- Confirmation that the intensification of use of the supermarket junction onto the A429 would be OK.

## Former British Legion Site (ref: M63)



**Proposal:** Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site for additional station car parking and / or some residential use, a care home or hotel uses, or some convenience retail/leisure use on ground floor

**Site area:** 0.29ha

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site comprises an area of previously developed land located within the centre of Moreton-in-Marsh. It contains the former British Legion Social Club and its car park, which is now vacant, and therefore has an established D2 (Assembly and Leisure) Use. The southern part of the site is a vacant plot of land, which once accommodated a building.

The site is located off the access road to Moreton-in-Marsh railway station. It is bordered on all sides by existing development and has an urban character and appearance.

### Planning history

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

#### Existing Building

CD.1270 Storage building. Granted 1953

CD.1270/A Addition to existing clubhouse to form a skittle alley. Granted 1958

CD.1270/B Extension to club premises to provide bottle store and cellar. Granted 1967

CD.1270/C Alterations and extensions to social club. Granted 1968

CD.1270/D Addition of stage, new toilets and bar, store and extension to skittle alley. Granted 1969

CD.1270/E Extension of club to house stage, new boiler room and store room (amended scheme). Granted 1972



CD.1270/F Single storey extension at side of club to provide skittle alley, lobby and toilets. Alterations to use existing skittle alley as a lounge, two new offices and a bar, provision of an open storage area. Granted 1980

CD.1270/G Replacing existing white metal windows with white UPVC windows of same design. Granted 2001

#### Land to south of existing building

CD.5790 Use of land for the display of new and second hand agricultural machinery. Erection of chain link fence. Granted 1976

CD.5790/A Outline planning permission for the erection of 2 dwellings with parking facilities. Alterations to existing vehicular and pedestrian access. Granted 1990

CD.5790/B Four town houses with parking and gardens. Refused 1996 Allowed at appeal 1996

CD.5790/C Renewal of planning permission ref CD.5790/B. Granted 2001

CD.5790/D Temporary change of use from 3 years from date of approval for the sale and storage of motor vehicles. Granted 2002

CD.5790/E 06/02119/FUL Erection of two town houses and two 1 bedroom flats. Granted 2006

### **Landscape**

*These comments are made on the basis of a short survey conducted by a Principal Planning Policy Officer.*

The site is located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). However, the site is located within the centre of Moreton-in-Marsh. It is bordered on all sides by existing development. The site is previously developed land and is occupied by a building. It therefore has an urban character and appearance.

The re-development of the site would not result in an encroachment of development into the open countryside or have a material impact on the setting of the town within the AONB landscape. The site could be re-developed without having an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the wider landscape or the AONB.

### **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 not located within an area covered by any formal nature conservation designations. However, it is located within a Great Crested Newt amber zone and also within a B-line.

The site is bordered by an established hedgerow which has the potential to provide a valuable habitat for a range of species. The buildings within the site may be occupied by bats or nesting birds. A Preliminary Ecological Survey would be required to confirm the species and habitats that are present.

There are likely to be opportunities for ecological enhancements and biodiversity net gain would be required. Some ways to achieve this might include native species planting, bird and bat boxes, and bat access tiles.

### **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.*

There are two small Sycamore trees on the north-eastern boundary, although none are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The development of this site provides an opportunity for additional tree planting.



### **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.*

#### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

**Context:** The existing buildings date from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. Notwithstanding the previous social use of the building, they are not of any particular historic or architectural significance. The rendered, hipped roof form of the building is not reflective of traditional building forms seen in the centre of the settlement. The design of the building is also not a particularly outstanding example of the architectural period in which it was erected. The existing building does not constitute a non-designated heritage asset and is likely to be suitable for demolition.

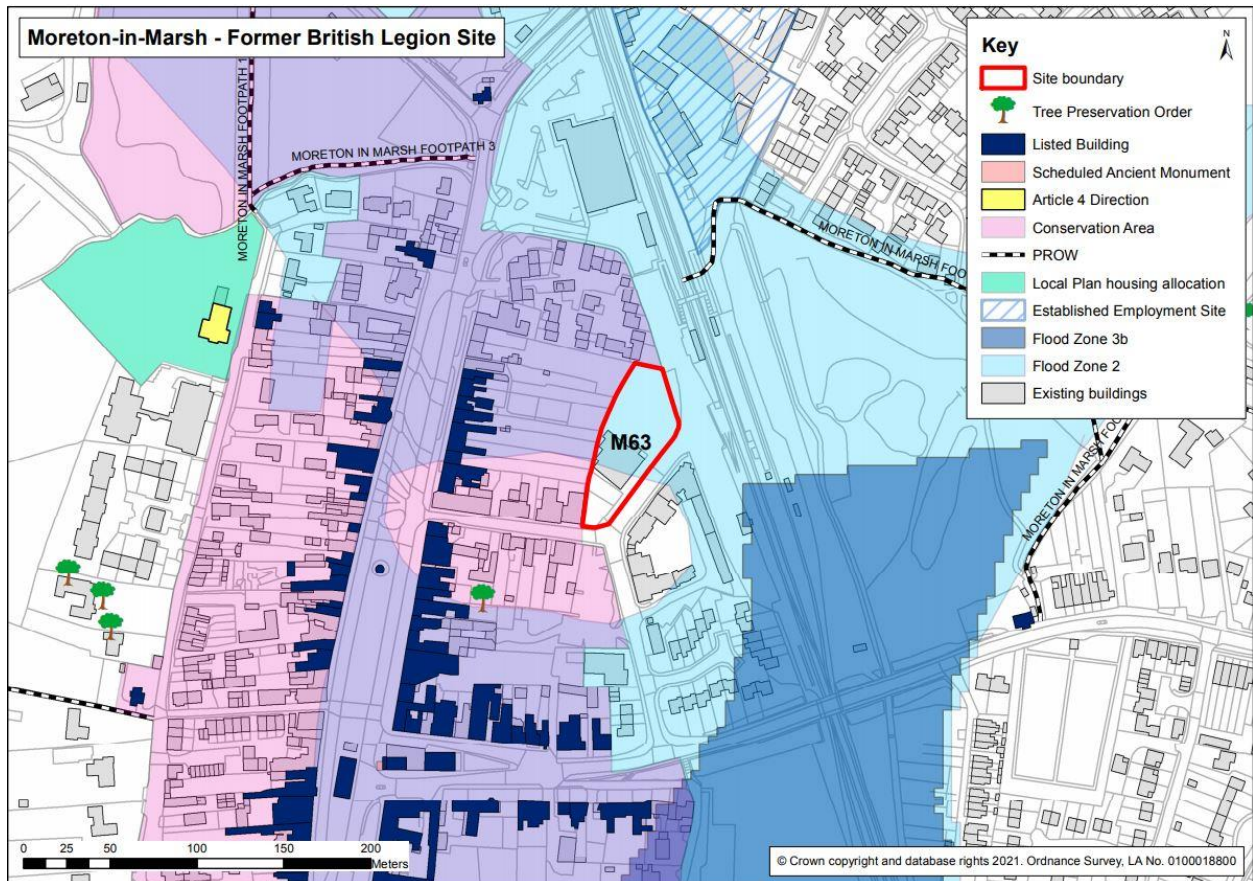
**Designated heritage assets:** The western boundary of the site adjoins the rear gardens of a number of listed buildings (Harvey House, Clochran, Stoneleigh, The Malt House, Coomeville, Lyndale, 'Premises of Tony Dyer'). The aforementioned buildings are all Grade II listed and front onto the town's High Street. The boundary of the site is approximately 60m from the rear elevations of the listed buildings.

The site lies outside, but adjacent to, Moreton-in-Marsh Conservation Area. The western and northern boundaries of the site adjoin the Conservation Area.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** A redevelopment of this site could occur without having an adverse impact on the setting of the Conservation Area or listed buildings. Indeed, there is an opportunity to improve their setting through some high quality development.



### Other issues / constraints

- The central and northern sections of the site are within Flood Zone 2 – a flood risk sequential test would be required for any housing development in this area;
- The site is modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk) – further investigation would be required.
- Brownfield land clean-up – this will incur costs and also potential contamination issues, which will require a Ground Investigation Desktop Study to assess previous uses of the site and the potential for contamination;
- The site is served by relatively narrow roads and is located in an area where there is parking congestion, especially during the day;
- The site lies outside, but adjacent to, Moreton-in-Marsh Key Centre which is the designated town centre area. Rail and hotels are main town centre uses and should be located in the town centre, unless there are no suitable, available and viable alternative sites within the town centre;
- Within the Network Rail land ownership buffer zone;
- The access to the railway station, which also serves the site, is owned by Network Rail; and
- Infrastructure in Moreton, particularly primary school place capacity, highway capacity within and around the town centre, and sewage treatment capacity.

### Summary

#### Recommendation

The site is suitable for demolition and rebuild, subject to careful design which takes consideration of the sensitivities of this part the town and a flood risk sequential test. Convenience retail, leisure and hotel uses are main town centre uses, which should be located within the town centre. If any such development proposal were to come forward, it would therefore need to be accompanied by a retail sequential test.

The site is also suitable for a car park. Residential uses may be acceptable, although any development on land within the Flood Zone would need to undertake a flood risk sequential test.

#### Indicative capacity

A higher density development would be suitable in this location. A proposal for a terrace of 18 dwellings is considered to be achievable, subject to detailed design and a flood risk assessment.

#### 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 Guide and to deliver high quality built and green infrastructure design.*

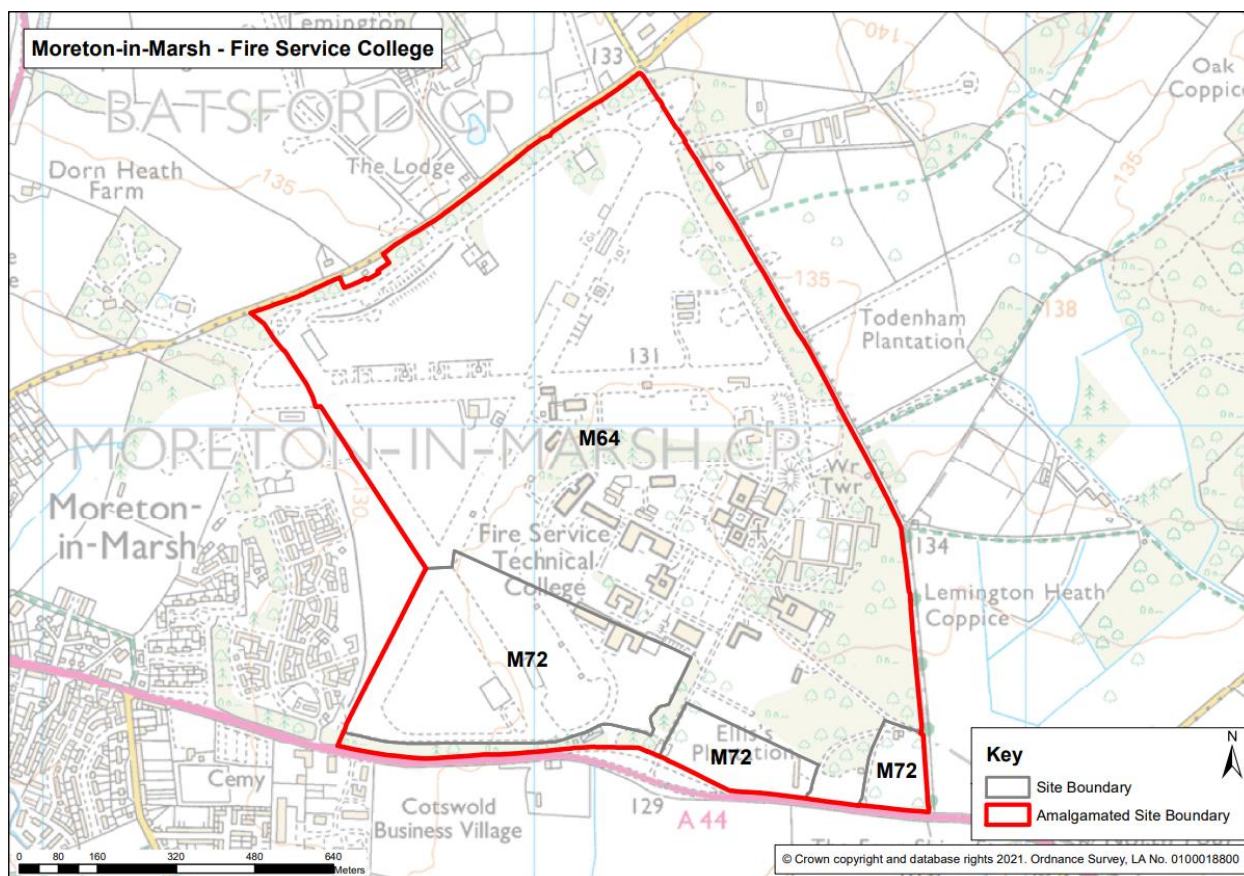
If this site were to be developed:

- it must demonstrate, monitor and deliver a modal shift towards public transport and more active forms of travel within Moreton-in-Marsh.

#### **Key actions required**

- A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for the non-car park aspects of the development proposal;
- A retail sequential test for any main town centre uses demonstrating that there are no suitable alternative sites available within Moreton-in-Marsh Key Centre;
- A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) to identify any ecological issues and potential to make biodiversity net gain; and
- Ground Investigation Desktop Study to assess previous uses of the site and the potential for contamination.

## Fire Service College (refs: M64, M72)



**Proposal:** Retention and further enhancement to the Fire Service College for emergency service training. Relocation of existing Local Plan employment site allocation to adjacent land to the east and broadening of the types of employment use allocated (6.9ha to 7.7ha of employment land / 27,600sq.m to 30,800sq.m floorspace). Provision of a school (1.95ha) and housing (130 to 151 dwellings) on land currently allocated for employment uses. Leisure uses on south-eastern part of the site, including a hotel (4.1 ha / 2,400sq.m floorspace) and holiday lets / lodges in the far south-eastern part of

the site. Public open space. Potential link road along western boundary of Fire Service College site, connecting the A44 and Todenham Road.

**Site area:** Combined = 124.53ha (M64 = 67.88ha; M72 = 48.38ha;)

**Assessment date:** January 2021 and updated in September 2021

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The Fire Service College is located on flat land to the east of Moreton-in-Marsh. The site was formerly an RAF airfield but is now the main location for emergency service training in the country. Since the College was established in the 1970s, it has grown to become one of the District's largest employers and now incorporates a wide range of facilities, including conferencing, accommodation blocks and leisure.

The wider site area is bound by the A44 to the south; Todenham Road to the north; and a farm track to the east. The southern, eastern and northern boundaries have a dense outgrown hedgerow running within the perimeter, which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Open countryside extends beyond these boundaries.

To the west is recently completed housing built on former Fire Service College land. Between the Fire Service College and the housing is a newly installed bund with young hedgerow and tree planting. There is also a recently created Great Crested Newt nature area adjacent to the western boundary.

Moreton Business Village is located to the south-west and the town centre and railway station are located further to the west and can be accessed via an existing footpath alongside the A44.

- M64 contains a nucleus of buildings surrounded by grassland and former airfield runways, which now act as circulatory roads and training areas. There is also a wooded area in the south-east corner.
- The western part of M72 contains former airfield runways, circulatory roads and grassland areas, as well as a modular building. The eastern parts of M72 contain sports pitches and a grassland area in the south-east corner, which is surrounded by woodland and has trees interspersed throughout this part of the site.

## Planning history

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

The site is a former RAF airfield but since the 1970s has become the main location for emergency service training in the country.

- The western part of M72 is allocated in the adopted Local Plan for office development (ref: MOR\_E6). This part of the site is located inside the Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary, as defined by the Local Plan proposals map.
- The remaining parts of M64 and M72 are designated in the Local Plan as a Special Policy Area where proposals are supported for the development of operational fire, rescue and emergency responders' training facilities, ancillary development, and associated infrastructure. These parts of the site are located outside the Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary.
- Planning applications on the wider site have been consistent with the current Fire College use. However, several plots of redundant Fire Service College land have already been disposed of for residential development to the west of the site:
  - 300 dwellings on Fire Service College land to the south-west (ref: 09/04440/OUT and 11/00940/REM);
  - 36 further dwellings on Fire Service College land to the west (ref: 13/02936/FUL); and
  - 250 further dwellings on Fire Service College land to the north-west (refs: 14/01483/OUT and 16/00858/REM).
- Part of southern area within the Fire Service College site also had outline planning permission for "Employment development comprising up to 9,500 sqm of B1, B2 or B8 floorspace and associated ancillary development" (ref: 14/01484/OUT). This permission has now lapsed.

## 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.*

### Parcel specific features:

**M64:** A significant portion of the parcel was assessed as parcel MOR\_E5 as part of the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report. The description provided for this parcel is reproduced below and is still considered to be an appropriate description of the context within the parcel, although boundary changes between the two have altered some details:

*'The site forms the bulk of the Fire Service College on very gently sloping land falling to the south west. The college building complex forms the core of the site to the south east with structures mostly around 2 storeys high and a low stack. There are three runways (now two within the revised boundary) and associated with these there are a variety of spaced out buildings, structures and mock ups for fire training. These include isolated concrete buildings/towers upto 6 storeys high, a concrete ship and railway carriages. There are also various vehicles and storage containers. Between the runways is mown grass. The site is contained from wider view by deciduous woodland belts to the north, north east and south, where the A44 runs. There is also a substantial deciduous woodland to the south east – Eli's Plantation and Lemington Heath Coppice which are also Key Wildlife Sites (KWS). To the west, there is new housing set behind 3m high earth bunds. The top storeys of the housing do look over the site. The use of the site is semi-industrial in character with little apparent visual coherence and a degraded quality – although some organisation is apparent and the site is very interesting due to the strange juxtapositions of structures and their use. The SLA extends to the north and south of the site in open countryside with low cut hedges and occasional trees to the site's woodland edges are apparent in the wider landscape. To the east there are a series of fields with outgrown hedges on level land in Warwickshire'*

**M72:** These parcels have previously been assessed within the ‘Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update’ (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014) report. The current parcel area is divided between three previously assessed parcels of land. The western parcel is assessed within MOR\_E5, the description of which has been set out above and MOR\_E6. The description for MOR\_E6 is set out below:

*‘The site forms the south western corner of the Fire Service College on very gently sloping land falling to the south west. The site comprises part of the runway, mown grass and a deciduous tree belt to the south, beyond which the A44 runs. To the west, there is new housing set behind a 3m high earth bund. The top storeys of the housing look over the site. The use of the site is semi-industrial in character and the sound of traffic on the road reduces tranquillity. The site’s trees are apparent in the wider landscape to the south’*

The central and eastern parcels are located within MOR\_E7. The description provided for these parcels is reproduced below and is still considered to be an appropriate description of the context within the parcel to which it relates:

*‘The site forms the south eastern edge of the Fire Service College on very gently sloping land falling to the south. It provides the main edge along the A44 road approaches. The entrance to the college and the southern portion of the college building complex forms the western part of the site with structures around one or two storeys high. To the west of the entrance avenue there is a tree belt which also extends along the A44 frontage. There is also mown grass. To the east of the avenue there is a larger mown grass area with some trees with a low hedge abutting the road allowing glimpsed views into the site with heavily filtered views of the buildings. Further east, the southern part of Lemington Heath Coppice which is a KWS reaches the A44. The far eastern corner of the site comprises a mown grass area with free standing trees and a low cut hedge and tree boundary to the south along the road and to the east. This area appears to form part of the wider countryside to the east with no indication of the college buildings apparent. Substantial parts of the site are open to views on the A44 approaches which also has more distant glimpsed views of a roof in the Cotswolds Business Park to the south west. The road reduces tranquillity. The site appears very well maintained and dominated by the woodland backcloth which is a positive feature. The SLA extends to the south of the site in open countryside with low cut hedges and occasional trees so the site’s woodland edges are apparent in the wider landscape’*

#### Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

#### Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcel is not located within the Cotswolds AONB. The parcel is also not located within a Special Landscape Area (SLA).

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on boundary of parcel.

Other (floodplain, PROW): A substantial number of individual and grouped TPO are present within the college grounds. No PROW present within the parcel. Two footpaths are present to the eastern boundary (TODENHAM FOOTPATH 15 and 17).

#### Landscape sensitivity:

The trees and vegetation present within the parcels are a notable landscape feature – large amounts of this vegetation is subject to TPO. A large amount of existing built form and infrastructure is also present and has an urbanising effect on the context of the parcel. The topography of the parcels is flat with a gentle sloping character present, this is characteristic of a former airfield.

Justification:

**M64:** The landscape sensitivity given to MOR\_E5 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 **Low/Medium**. The justification provided for this rating is reproduced below and is still considered to be an appropriate justification for the parcel’s landscape sensitivity:

*‘The site’s susceptibility to change through economic development mainly relates to the woodland copses and belts to the north, south and east. These are very important landscape features and enclose and screen the site, acting also as a backcloth to views from the south from the A44 approaches and PROW, and from the minor roads and*

other PRoW to the north and east. They also include a KWS. Providing these are retained and reinforced/widened to the north and south, employment on the rest of this site would be likely to be acceptable provided it ensured that it was not apparent from the wider landscape and there was substantial screening between it and housing to the west. It is important that if the Fire Service College site is developed that a coherent and connected masterplan is developed to accommodate housing and employment uses as well as the Fire Service College'

**M72:** This parcel has amalgamated three areas that were previously assessed within the 'Study of land surrounding Key Settlements in Cotswold District Update' (Cotswold District Council and White Consultants, October 2014). The parcel is now present within MOR\_E5, MOR\_E6 and MOR\_E7 of that assessment. The landscape sensitivity given to MOR\_E5 and MOR\_E6 was **Low/Medium**. The landscape sensitivity given to MOR\_E7 was **Medium/High**. Having given consideration to the context of the parcel and the previous assessment it is considered that the central and eastern parts of the parcel demonstrate the higher landscape sensitivity described within MOR\_E7. This is due to the presence of valued vegetation, KWS and the prevalence of views from the A44 and wider landscape in the SLA to the south. The western part of the parcel is considered to more closely demonstrate the lower sensitivity assessed within MOR\_E5 (reproduced above) and MOR\_E6 (reproduced below):

*'The site's susceptibility to change through economic development mainly relates to the woodland belt to the south, proximity to the A44 and proximity to housing to the west. The woodland belt encloses and screens the site, acting also as a backcloth to views from the south from the A44 approaches and PRoW. Providing this is retained and reinforced/widened, employment on this site would be likely to be acceptable provided it ensured that it was not apparent from the wider landscape and there was substantial screening between it and housing to the west. It is suggested that no storage areas should be located on the A44 frontage and units should face this aspect and not exceed 10m high. It is important that if the Fire Service College site is developed that a coherent and connected masterplan is developed to accommodate housing and employment uses as well as the Fire Service College'*

## 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 south-east of the Fire Service College site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (Lemington Heath Coppice). This is adjacent to the proposed leisure uses.

Substantial parts of the wider site are identified as Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland). These areas are mainly on the periphery of the site, within the south-east corner, and a strip of deciduous woodland within the centre of the site. The trees are likely to be a habitat for protected species.

All three sites are located within a B-line. Parts of both sites are also identified as being Great Crested Newt amber and red zones.

The site is known to have areas of unimproved grassland, particularly in the west of the site, which have higher potential ecological value. Great Crested Newt populations are known to use water bodies within the site. Previous developments have successfully mitigated the loss of habitat through the creation of suitable alternative new habitat, although these were before the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

Most of M64 and the eastern part of M72 are in a Site of Special Scientific Impact Risk Zone, where there would be a need to consult further with a development proposal.

The site contains various buildings, which may also be a habitat for protected species.

## 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 contains numerous trees, most of which have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). There is an area-wide Tree Preservation Order, which spans the entire length of the northern boundary with Todenham Road; the entire length of the eastern boundary; and the western part of the southern boundary. There are also 136 individual trees with TPOs, which are located in the south-eastern quarter of the site, and comprise a mixture of Apple, Ash, Birch, Field Maple, Lime, Norwegian Spruce, Oak, Sweet Chestnut, Sycamore and Willow. The trees in the south-east of the site have historic origins and were once known as Lemington Heath Coppice and Ellis's Plantation.

Further assessment is also needed to understand whether the proposed development, particularly the leisure uses in the south-east corner of the site, would harm the root protection areas of TPO trees;



The north, west and south-west of the site are largely open in nature and devoid of trees, retaining the similar characteristic of the former airfield use. There is an opportunity to provide a substantial amount of new tree planting within and surrounding any new developments in this location.



### **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.*

#### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

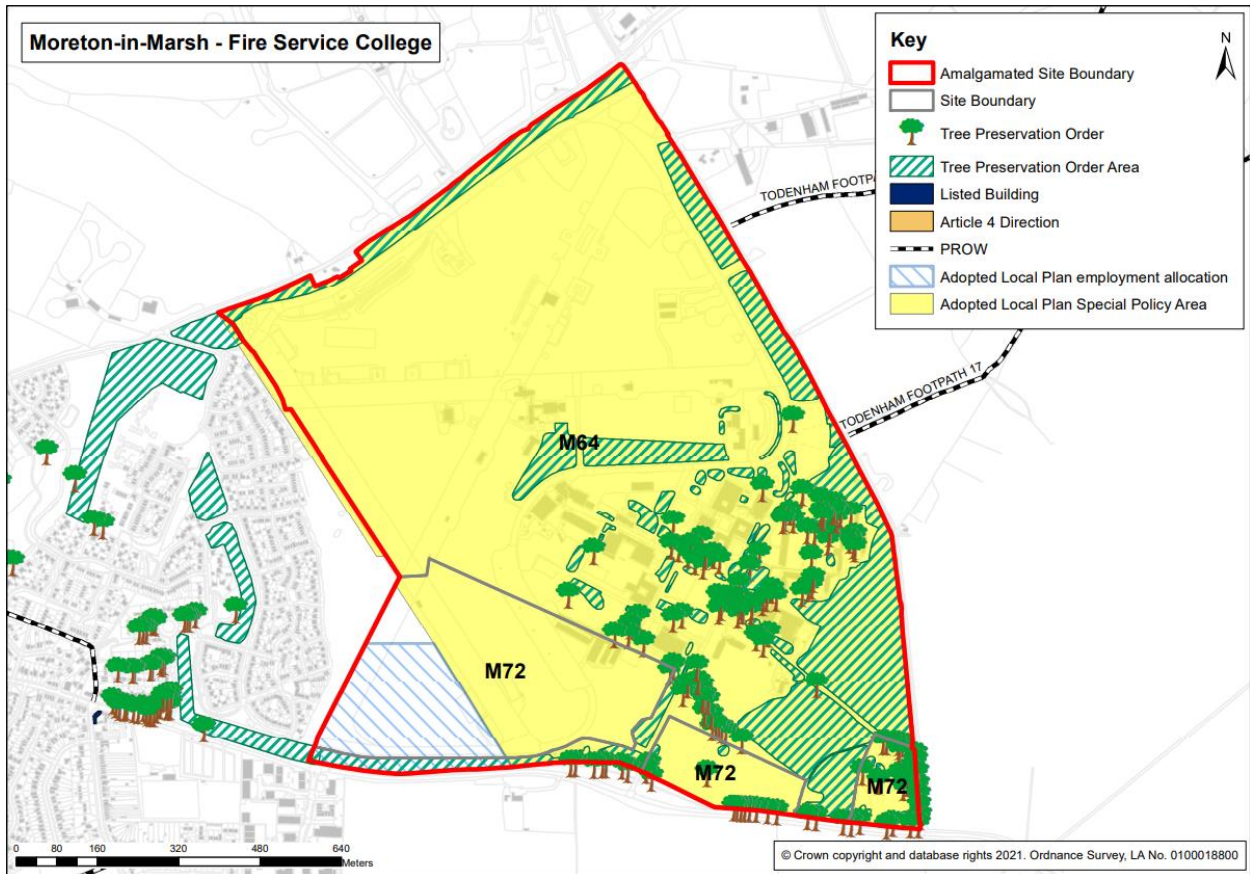
**Context:** The buildings within the site are believed to be predominantly functional in design with no particular architectural significance and are therefore unlikely to be non-designated heritage assets, although further historic asset appraisal is required to confirm this.

**Designated heritage assets:** The site is located nearly 1km to the east of the Moreton-in-Marsh Conservation Area. The nearest listed buildings are the Four Shires Stone and Four Shires Stone Farm, although the site is reasonably well screened from these by woodland.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

**Heritage at risk issues:** None

**Opportunities:** The airfield history of the site is of historic interest (e.g. locations of runways). This could potentially be used as the basis for any future urban design considerations.



### Other issues / constraints

- Infrastructure in Moreton – particularly highway capacity within and around the town centre and sewage treatment capacity.
  - The water infrastructure provider has a duty to upgrade the wastewater infrastructure and in a timely manner but the delivery of the upgrade may affect the timing of delivery for this site.
  - The proposal includes an a new link road, which could help alleviate (or not make worse) the highway capacity issue in and around the town centre. This requires further specialist assessment to understand the benefits and dis-benefits of this part of the proposal.
  - Moreton-in-Marsh requires a new primary school. This site also provides an opportunity to resolve this issue. Furthermore, the site is close to where the majority of growth has occurred in the town since the beginning of the plan period so is well placed to serve where need for additional primary school places originates.
- The proposal would be another eastwards extension of the built up area of Moreton-in-Marsh – a substantial amount of growth in this area has already taken place since the beginning of the plan period. The Fire Service College has already disposed of land to provide nearly 500 dwellings.
- The site owner considers the existing Local Plan site allocation for office uses to be unviable. The proposal includes relocating the employment land to an equivalent parcel and expanding the types of uses on the allocation to include additional uses that are complementary to the FSC and emergency service training, which would make the site deliverable. It is envisaged the types of use may include research and development, cyber / security uses and some office, education and training uses.

In terms of the deliverability of the employment allocation, the site has good strategic accessibility – it has a nearby direct rail connection to London and is also well-connected to the A44 and A429 (Fosse Way) corridors. There are no competing employment developments in the town – Morton Business Village was recently completed close to the site and was deliverable.

The delivery of the employment allocation is an essential part of the justification for the development proposal. There are economic and environmental benefits in terms of providing new jobs, cross-subsidising the renewal and refurbishment of Fire Service College infrastructure to ensure this facility continues to be a top national facility and local employer, and the potential gains to the employment self-containment of Moreton-in-Marsh and the associated reduction in commuting. It would therefore be essential that the employment development was delivered at the same time as other parts of the development proposal.

- Noise from Fire Service College activities, especially if the line of residential development is brought closer to these activities.
- Hotels are a main town centre use. A sequential site assessment would be required to determine whether there are any alternative sequentially preferable sites within Moreton-in-Marsh town centre or in a location that is more accessible to the town centre. In addition, the Local Plan does not identify a need for hotel or leisure uses and it does not seek to allocate sites for these uses. Subject to passing the sequential test, the most appropriate way to bring forward hotel and leisure uses in this location would be via a change to the Local Plan Special Policy Area policy for the Fire Service College site and through the provision of an accompanying masterplan, as opposed to allocating a site.
- The hotel development would build on a sports pitch. No alternative provision is currently given in the development proposal.
- The site of the proposed holiday lets is detached from the built up part of Moreton-in-Marsh and is quite far from the town centre, where people would access most services. It also contains various trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and the access road would go through a local wildlife site. These would be significant issues to work around and overcome.
- The western part of M72 is modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (greater than 75% risk). The eastern part of M72 and the southern part of M64 are also modelled to be within an area with higher ground water flood risk (between 50% and 75%) – further investigation would be required.
- Existing buildings and hardstanding within the site – demolition and clean-up costs.
- Potential contamination issues due to former airfield use and fire training uses.
- The A44 London Road is 40mph at the north-west boundary of the site and 50mph further to the east. Visibility splays are likely to be long enough but the 30mph speed limit may need to be extended further out of Moreton-in-Marsh.

## Summary

The Fire Service College is a nationally important facility and is one the District's top employers. The adopted Local Plan is already permissive of proposals for development of operational fire, rescue and emergency responders' training facilities, ancillary development, and associated infrastructure on M64 and parts of M72, as well as allocating the western part of M72 for office uses. However, there is said to be a significant area of surplus land that is available for mixed use development, including a school, residential uses, leisure and a wider variety of employment uses that complement the Fire Service College.

The site is brownfield land and the western part of the site has lower landscape sensitivity. This area is potentially a good opportunity to provide a primary school in the right area of Moreton-in-Marsh where a school is needed. The delivery of a new school could be linked to some additional new housing in this location.

A sequential assessment is needed to understand whether there are any more sequentially preferable locations for a hotel in Moreton-in-Marsh. Further assessment is also needed to understand whether the proposed leisure uses in the south-east corner of the site would harm tree protection areas of Tree Preservation Area trees. In addition, the locations of these parts of the development proposal have higher landscape sensitivity than the other areas.

Highway capacity in Moreton-in-Marsh is reportedly a constraint to further development. The proposed development offers an opportunity to resolve this issue by providing a new link road between the A44 and Todenham Road. This requires further specialist work to understand the benefits and dis-benefits of this part of the development proposal.

## Recommendation

The western part of M72 is a candidate for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan. The eastern parts of M72 are candidates for further consideration for a change to the Local Plan Special Area Policy for the Fire Service College, although further information is needed to understand whether the proposed development in this location is suitable. The proposed new link road requires further consideration.

#### Indicative capacity

- 6.9 to 7.7ha of employment land.
- 70 to 77 dwellings (according to the density multiplier calculation). The proposal for 130-151 dwellings on the area of land proposed for housing appears to be too high, as it does not factor in the land required for public open space, roads, etc. and is set at 35 dwellings per hectare, rather than 30 dwellings per hectare. A detailed proposal may prove that a higher or lower density development would be more suitable.
- Potential for some hotel and leisure uses.
- Potential for a new link road.

#### 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.*

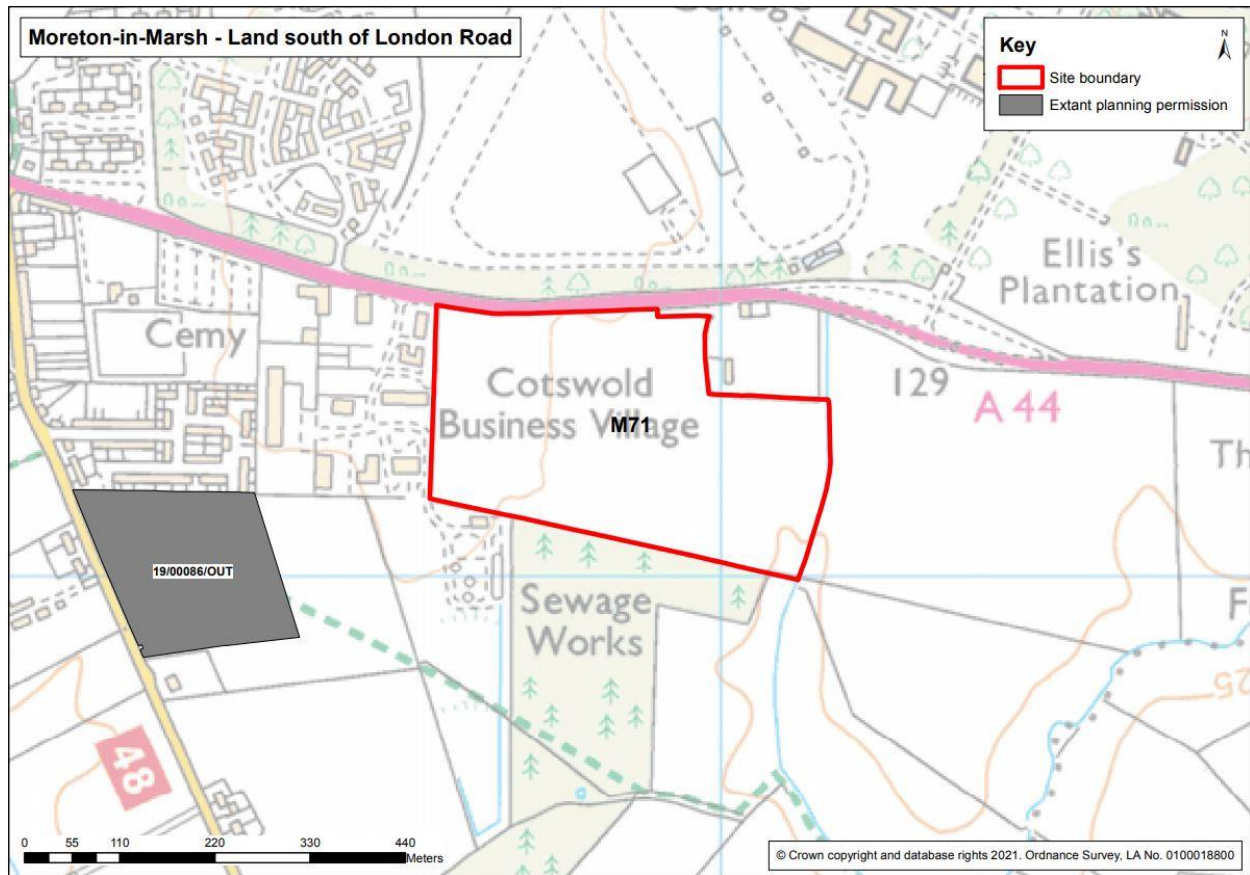
If further development were to take place on this site:

- Around 2ha of land must be provided on the site for a two-form primary school if there is still a need for this facility.
- The employment and residential aspects of the development must be delivered simultaneously. For example, a clause in a S106 agreement that specifies that the first dwelling would not be occupied until construction has commenced on the employment units. No more than 50% of the dwellings will be completed before 50% of the employment units are completed. No more than 75% of the dwellings will be completed before 75% of the employment units are completed. The final dwelling must not be occupied before the final employment unit is completed.
- The development proposal must cross-subsidise the renewal and / or refurbishment of existing Fire Service College buildings or infrastructure.
- Opportunities should be taken to retain and provide planting that will support pollinators to support the B-line as part of an overall Green Infrastructure strategy for the site.
- The masterplan for the site should be guided by the site's history as an airfield.

#### **Key actions required**

- A sequential test for the proposed hotel development.
- Further assessment is also needed to understand whether the proposed development, particularly the leisure uses in the south-east corner of the site, would harm the root protection areas of TPO trees.
- Further assessment from the County Council's Transport Planning team on the proposed link road.
- Investigation of the ground water flood risk issue.

## Land south of London Road (ref: M71)



**Proposal:** 200 homes with access from the existing field gate location + a school on 2ha of the site

**Site area:** 10.59ha

**Assessment date:** January 2021

**Land ownership:** Single ownership

### Site description

The site comprises an arable field located to the east of Moreton-in-Marsh. The topography is generally flat, although the land towards the east of the site falls towards a stream, which flows southwards along the eastern boundary of the site.

The majority of the northern boundary abuts the A44 and has an outgrown hedgerow separating the site from the road. The Fire Service College is located opposite the northern boundary, part of which is allocated for employment use in the adopted Local Plan. Once completed, the employment development would extend the built up area of Moreton-in-Marsh further to the east and level with part of the northern boundary of M71, which abuts the A44.

At the north-east corner of the site there is a large isolated dwelling (The Hatchings), which sits within extensive grounds. To the east is arable farmland. The southern boundary abuts a semi-mature woodland plantation, with a sewage treatment works located to the south-west. Cotswold Business Village is located adjacent to the western boundary and is separated by an outgrown hedgerow and a track.

### 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. It is located outside Moreton-in-Marsh development boundary, as defined by the Local Plan Policies Map, although the development boundary is adjacent to the western boundary and the majority of the northern boundary.

The site has only one notable planning application, which was a "Request for screening opinion for a solar PV development" (ref: 14/01782/SCR). An EIA was not required.

### The Hatchings – land to the north-east

The land in the north-east corner was once part of the same field as M71. An agricultural dwelling and some poultry hatching barns were built on that land in the 1960s. These were subsequently demolished and the replaced with The Hatchery in the late 1990s (refs: CD.1010/E and CD.1010/F).

### Cotswold Business Village – land to the east

Cotswold Business Village was granted planning permission in 2006 for B1, B2 and B8 business units (ref: 06/01235/OUT). The site was fully built out in 2017.

### Fire Service College – land to the north

Land to the north is designated in the adopted Local Plan as a Special Policy Area (Policy EC4). The Local Plan also allocates 7ha of Fire Service College land for B1 employment uses (Policy S18 ref. MOR\_E6).

## **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.*

### Landscape Context

National Character Area 107: Cotswolds

Landscape Character Type: Pastoral Lowland Vale

Landscape Character Area VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

### Constraints/Designations

Landscape: The parcel is not located within the Cotswolds AONB. The parcel is also not located within a Special Landscape Area (SLA), but does abut the SLA on its southern and eastern boundaries.

Historic: Not within a Conservation Area and no listed buildings present within or on boundary of parcel.

Other (floodplain, PROW): No TPO are present within the parcel. No PRow present within the parcel. One footpath present to the south (Moreton-in-Marsh Footpath 10).

### Landscape sensitivity:

Notable landscape features within the parcel are the pastoral character, vegetative boundaries of varying quality and the flat but gently sloping topography. Beyond the parcel boundary is a combination of built form and development within Moreton-in-Marsh (north and west) and a continuation of the undeveloped hedgerow bound pastoral context present within the parcel (east). A small semi-mature woodland is also present to the south alongside a sewage treatment plant.

Evaluation: **Medium**

Justification: The parcel has some susceptibility to landscape change through development. This is due to its settlement edge location and position within the undeveloped agricultural surroundings of Moreton-in-Marsh. The neighbouring industrial development to the west provides some built context to the local landscape, as does the Fire Service College to the north. Furthermore, the residential dwelling (The Hatchings) to the east and the sewage works to the south provide further developed context. Activity within these developed areas has an effect on the tranquillity of the parcel. Additionally, the A44 and sewage works have an effect on the perceptual qualities of the local area. No public access is provided to the parcel. Views from the public vantage points within the local landscape are generally filtered by intervening features such as vegetative buffers and built form. The eastern side of the parcel is the most susceptible to visual change due to its level of openness and landscape change due to its neighbouring open rural context. The landscape sensitivity of the parcel is considered to be **Medium**. This is due to the undeveloped and open nature of the parcel which is characteristic of the farmland around the settlement. The presence of adjacent development and existing perceptual detractors in the vicinity has been taken into consideration.

## **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 not located within an area covered by a formal nature conservation designation. However, it is located within a B-line and is also partly in a Great Crested Newt amber zone and partly within a Great Crested Newt red zone.

Being a large arable field, there is unlikely to be significant levels of biodiversity, although further assessment is required, particularly for ground nesting birds. There are some features, however, likely to have higher biodiversity value:

- There is an active badger sett along the eastern side of the southern boundary;
- The stream running along the eastern boundary. This has only limited marginal planting and there is an opportunity to improve this as a wildlife corridor. There is also an opportunity for additional tree planting in this area, which would likely be needed to screen new development, as well as providing additional Green Infrastructure and urban drainage;
- The site is surrounded by trees and hedgerows, which will have higher biodiversity value; and
- The site is adjacent to woodland to the south and the eastern section of the southern boundary has a drainage ditch. There is an opportunity to link the site into the woodland ecosystem.

## 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 or hedgerows protected by a Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). However, there is an area-wide TPO running along the opposite side of the A44 to the north.

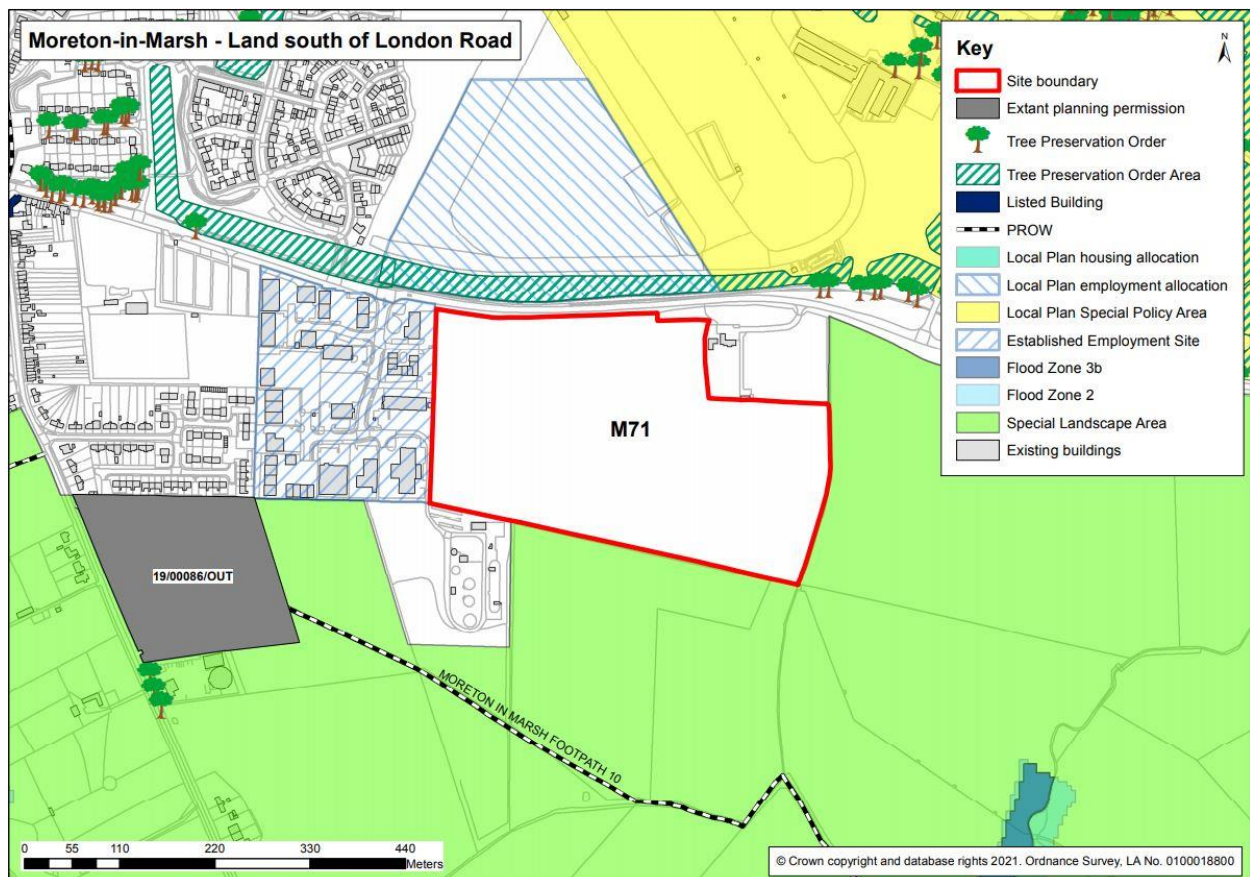
The site is bound by an outgrown hedgerow to the north, west and south. These hedgerows appeared on the 1840 Ordinance Survey and are therefore likely to be pre-enclosure hedges and would be considered to be important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.

The trees within the site are located on the northern, western and southern boundaries, which incorporate various semi-mature Oak, Ash and Beech trees. There is a particularly fine Oak tree on the southern boundary, which may be worthy of a TPO. The trees and hedgerows surrounding this site screen views and their loss would make the site less developable.

The eastern section of the southern boundary has a drainage ditch and incorporates some wetland tree species, including Alder. There may be an opportunity to expand wetland tree planting in this area. There is also an opportunity for tree planting in the south-western corner in the area of land which suffers from odour impact. There is a further opportunity for additional tree planting along the eastern boundary to screen views and filter noise resulting from the industrial estate.

### 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.



### Historic Environment Context/Constraints and Opportunities

**Context:** The site has a predominantly rural context on the edge of Moreton-in-Marsh and is part of the wider agricultural landscape. However, although somewhat screened by boundary vegetation, there is industrial development to the west; a wastewater treatment works to the south-west; the Fire Service College, an employment site allocation and A44 to the north; and a large detached dwelling to the north-east. The site is therefore surrounded by development on several sides.

**Designated heritage assets:** Moreton-in-Marsh Conservation Area is located nearly 1km to the east but is not visible from the site. The nearest listed buildings are all located to the east of the site. These are all Grade II listed and are Wells Folly (700m to the south-east); Four Shire Stone Farm (880m to the east); and The Four Shire Stone (900m to the east). The site is visible within the wider landscape but Wells Folly and The Four Shire Stone are both screened by trees and / or buildings. However, the site is visible from Four Shire Stone Farm and forms part of the rural setting of this building.

**Non-Designated heritage assets:** None

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

**Opportunities:** Historic mapping indicates that the site was once two fields. A central field boundary once extended southwards from the western boundary of The Hatchery (the house adjacent to the north-east corner of the site). This hedgerow was removed pre-1960s. There was also once a hedgerow along the eastern boundary. If the site was developed, there would be an opportunity to restore the historic hedgerow network and field pattern.



## Other issues / constraints

- Moreton-in-Marsh requires a new primary school. This site provides an opportunity to resolve this issue. Furthermore, the site is close to where the majority of growth has occurred in the town since the beginning of the plan period so is well placed to serve where need for additional primary school places originates;
- The site is separated from the residential part of Moreton-in-Marsh by an employment estate, the A44 and a recreation ground. The site would therefore be a standalone residential development. This would also require school children to walk further and also, in some instances, along streets that do not have an active frontage;
- The proposal would be another eastwards extension of the built up area of Moreton-in-Marsh – a substantial amount of growth in this area has already taken place since the beginning of the plan period;
- An Odour Constraints Assessment undertaken by SLR in June 2017 on behalf of Cotswold District Council for the Local Plan examination found that south-western part of the site would be unsuitable for housing development due to air quality issues from the adjacent sewage treatment works (STW). However, it has been confirmed that any upgrade to the STW will not worsen the odour constraint on M71;
- Adjacent to a business park to the west (a noise issue from one unit in particular was noted when the site was visited and requires further specialist assessment). Noise from the Fire Service College may also be a further issue, although the BI employment site allocation would help to screen noise once completed;
- Infrastructure in Moreton – particularly highway capacity within and around the town centre and sewage treatment capacity. Although the water infrastructure provider has a duty to upgrade the wastewater infrastructure and in a timely manner, doing so may still have an impact on the timing of delivery for this site;
- The eastern part of the site is located in an area with higher flood risk, although no development is proposed here and the area would instead be retained as open space with tree and hedgerow planting;
- Loss of a large area of agricultural land – the site is modelled to be partly Grade 2 and partly Grade 3 agricultural land, although a detailed survey is required to confirm this.
- The western two-thirds of the site is within an area susceptible to >75% risk of Ground Water Flooding and the eastern third has between 50-75% risk – further investigation would be required.
- The A44 London Road is 40mph at the north-west boundary of the site and 50mph further to the east. Visibility splays are likely to be long enough but the 30mph speed limit may need to be extended further out of Moreton-in-Marsh;
- There is an existing footpath along London Road leading into the town centre, although this is on the opposite side of a 50mph section of the A44 and would likely require a crossing; and
- A stand-alone electric pylon in the north-east corner may indicate underground services through the site. There is also a rising main that crosses the site between the Fire Service College and the wastewater treatment works.

## Summary

This site presents an opportunity to provide a new primary school and resolve a long-running school place capacity issue in the Moreton-in-Marsh.

The scale of development in this location would be a significant eastwards extension to the residential area of Moreton-in-Marsh. Although the site is not located within the AONB or the Special Landscape Area, it forms part of the rural setting of Moreton-in-Marsh and a listed building. The site is exposed to views from the rising ground to the east.

Part of the site is unsuitable for housing due to the odour issue from the adjacent wastewater treatment works. There is also likely to be a noise constraint issue associated with the adjacent industrial estate, which may further reduce the potential developable area.

The main part of the site is likely to have limited biodiversity, although there may be more potential for biodiversity around the periphery of the site. The trees and hedgerows surrounding the site should be retained. There are also opportunities for the reinstatement of two hedgerows and further tree planting, as well as blue infrastructure improvements.

The development of this site is reliant on the delivery of off-site infrastructure, namely sewage infrastructure upgrading and improvements to the highway capacity through the town centre.

### Recommendation

The site is a candidate for further consideration for allocation within the Local Plan, subject to overcoming the infrastructure capacity issues and the outcome of further assessment work.

### Indicative capacity

200 homes (35 dwellings per hectare) is likely to be too high a density for this rural edge of settlement location. A development of around 162 homes (based on the density multiplier assumption) would be more appropriate, although a detailed proposal may prove that a higher or lower density development would be more suitable.

### 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 M71 were to be developed:

- Around 2ha of land must be provided on the site for a two-form primary school if there is still a need for this facility.
- No housing development should be located within the area, which has higher than accepted levels of odour from the adjacent sewage treatment works.
- The proposal should include a comprehensive GI strategy, which includes improvements to habitats along the watercourse, screening and filtering of views front the wider countryside; hedgerow creation; recreational provision, etc.
- The masterplanning of the site should reference the historic field pattern.
- It must demonstrate, monitor and deliver a modal shift towards public transport and more active forms of travel within Moreton-in-Marsh.

### **Key actions required**

- Resolution of wastewater infrastructure capacity and town centre highway capacity issues.
- A more detailed ecological assessment.
- Noise impact assessment of adjacent industrial estate.
- Soil survey to establish whether the site is best and most versatile agricultural land.
- Sustainable transport plan to demonstrate how modal shift will be delivered