
Cressex Island Site

Concept Statement

Introduction

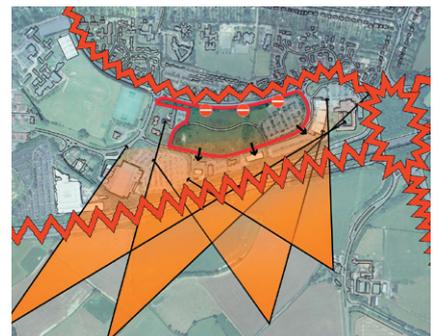
This concept statement deals with the Cressex Island site which is identified in the Wycombe Development Framework Site Allocations “preferred options” document as a mixed use development site.

The concept statement seeks to develop further the preferred options for this site. It provides a clear basis for future development of the site based on key constraints and assets, identifying key considerations for design solutions and in the context of broader redevelopment potential in the area.

It should be noted that this document has not been the subject of public consultation. The document is meant as a starting point for thinking and expresses the underlying principles, concepts and expectations that are relevant to the development of the site. It indicates design solutions, but recognises there may be alternative ways that issues can be resolved and principles delivered.

The policy framework is currently in a state of transition as the Council awaits the adoption of the South East Plan and also moves from the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan to the production of the Wycombe Development Framework.

Full reference must be made to the saved policies and standards set out in the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 and the adopted Core Strategy (2008), as well as any subsequently adopted Development Plan Documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework. For more information, contact Spatial Planning, Wycombe District Council, 01494 421 158, or spatial_planning@wycombe.gov.uk



Site and its Context



Context plan



The site lies close to the Handy Cross junction of the M40



The site currently appears as undeveloped scrubland



The site is the interim home of Park & Ride

The Cressex Island site is approximately 10 ha and is located on the southern edge of the High Wycombe urban area. The surrounding area to the north is predominantly residential with schools and playing fields, to the immediate south and east mixed commercial, leisure and retail uses and beyond these to the south, the Chilterns AONB and M40. The site is also located within an area of critical open space deficiency. The site is currently undeveloped and is not allocated for any type of use in the adopted local plan, although it does currently accommodate the interim Park & Ride facility serving the town centre. The approach to this site in the Council's Site Allocations "preferred options" document (site reference MU 18) is that it should be redeveloped for a mix of uses based upon on large format commercial, hotel and car showrooms (subject to certain restrictions relating to "town centre" uses).

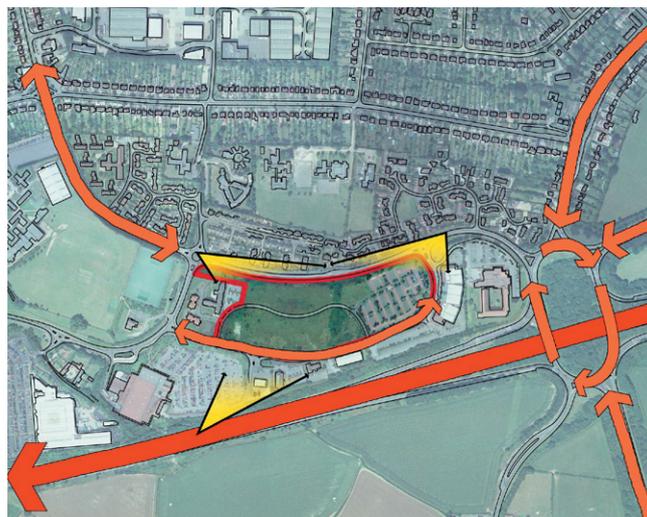
Redevelopment of this site will require that alternative provision for the interim park and ride is secured and (depending on the uses proposed) a contribution is made towards alleviating the open space deficiency that exists in this area.

Site Assets and Opportunities

Site location

Present value: The site is very prominent both visually, and in terms of the surrounding movement network.

Proposed value: Take full advantage of the site's prominence



The site is visually and physically prominent within the surrounding movement network

Significant attractors around the site

Present value: There are a number of attractors in the area which contribute to a commercial quarter

Proposed value: Benefit from and complement existing attractors around the site, including Asda, John Lewis and the Cinema, while not competing with existing or future town centre uses



There are a number of attractors close to the site

Countryside and the AONB

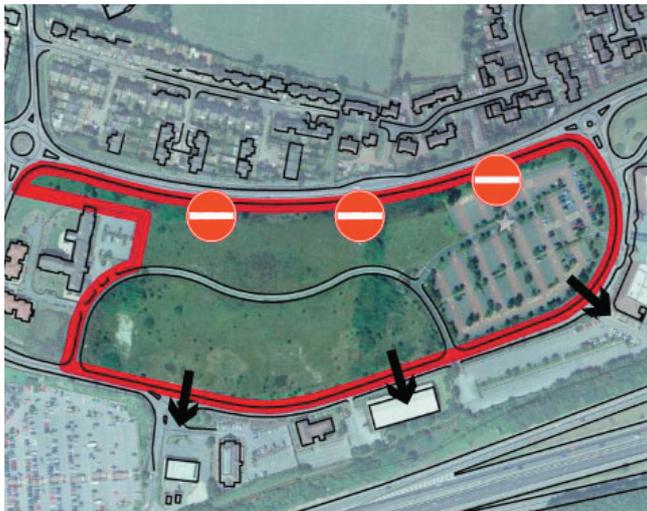
Present value: Site benefits from views into the Chilterns AONB, and has little impact on views from the AONB as it is predominantly undeveloped scrubland and is well separated from it.

Proposed value: Elevated position of the site means there is potential to provide views into the surrounding countryside especially the Chilterns AONB, as well as potential to screen any negative impacts of the development through strategic structural landscape planting.

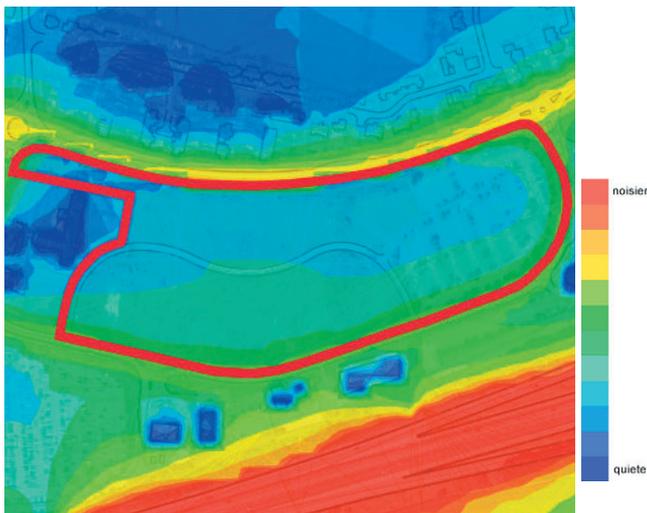


The site benefits from good views into the Chilterns AONB

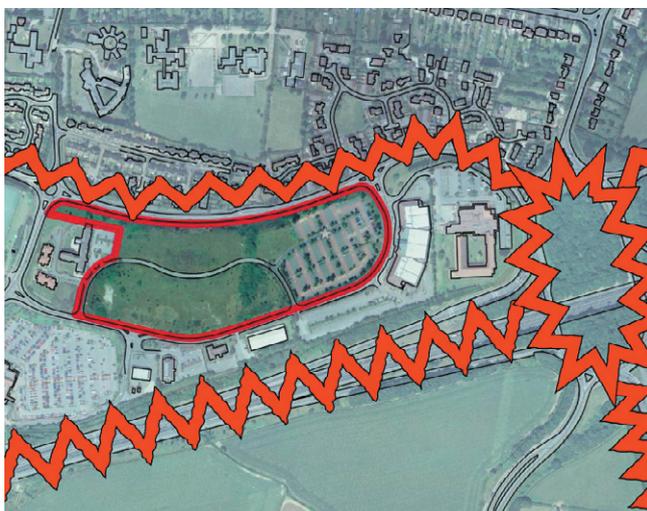
Site Constraints



No new accesses are possible onto John Hall Way



The site suffers noise and pollution from the surrounding transportation network



The site suffers from a poor relationship with the surrounding area

Uses and movement corridors

Present constraint: Site fronts onto John Hall Way (A4010) and carries a great deal of traffic to and from the Handy Cross junction, which has recently been improved but remains sensitive to increases in traffic. New access points onto the site from John Hall Way are not feasible

Proposed response: Vehicular access to the site gained from Crest Road, locations to be agreed with the local highways authority and local planning authority. Use of travel plans to accompany developments and measures to mitigate impact of additional traffic

Noise and air pollution

Present constraint: Site is subject to noise and air pollution from the M40

Proposed response: For this reason no residential or other sensitive uses are proposed on this site. (For further information and details on sound levels, see *Cressex Island and Wycombe Sports Centre: noise assessment report (Atkins, Sept 2003)*)

Poor links to surrounding area

Present constraint: Volume of traffic on John Hall Way, the lower level of the road compared to the site, and the lack of active frontages overlooking routes results in a poor relationship with the surrounding area.

Proposed response: Development on the site should respond to the surrounding area through placement of active frontages overlooking Crest Way, and creation of good quality pedestrian routes.

Countryside and the AONB

Present constraint: The site is visible from the Chilterns AONB, which is sensitive to the impacts of new development.

Proposed response: Development on this site should minimise impact on the AONB through responsive scale and massing careful choice of materials, and incorporation of strong structural landscape planting.



The site can be viewed from a number of locations within the AONB

Rationale

What

Integrated approach

Why

- To minimise impact on the surrounding environment and, views from the AONB

How

- The landscape approach should respond to views from the AONB through strong structural landscape planting around the perimeter and within the site;
- Buildings should be set back at least 10m from John Hall Way to allow for a Tree Lined Boulevard to be established along this boundary;
- The layout and design should take advantage of views into AONB, while minimising impact on this sensitive landscape, through development which steps up the sloping topography and careful selection of materials;
- Development on the site should be accompanied by a Visual Impact Assessment, which should be completed prior to any design work in order to inform the scale, massing, and orientation of buildings across the site.
- The potential to set development into the slope to minimise the impact of height should be explored;
- The lighting scheme should be designed to minimise light spillage into surrounding areas

What

Cluster of uses

Why

- Ensure cluster of uses reinforce rather than compete with the Town Centre

How

- The site should accommodate a mixed-use development, and include those uses for which there is a demonstrated need and cannot be accommodated in the town centre or edge of town centre sites.

What

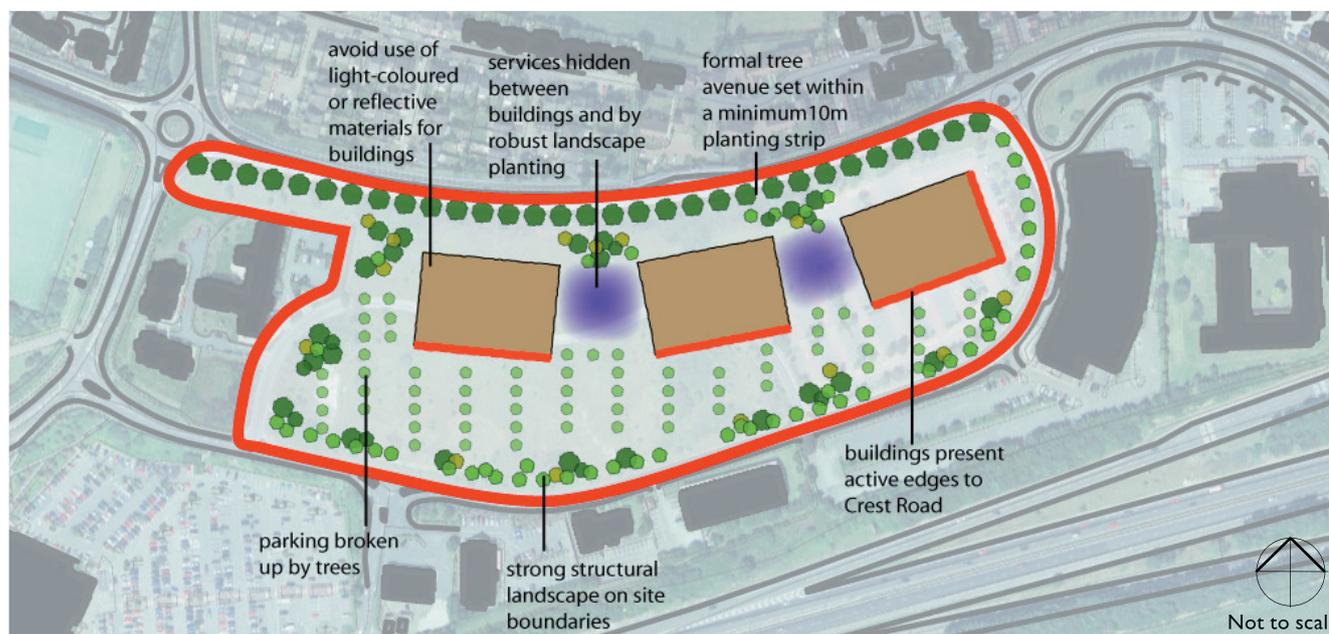
Ensure good relationships between different uses on site, and with surrounding uses

Why

- In particular, the site occupies a prominent location with large amount of passing traffic on John Hall Way. This location will maximise commercial value of new development.

How

- The junction of John Hall Way and Crest Road is particularly prominent, and requires a use which can respond to both busy roads, as well as deliver active frontages onto key pedestrian movement routes ;
- Creative solutions to servicing requirements should be sought to minimise negative impacts on the public realm. This may include courtyard-type developments which position servicing between or behind buildings, or possibly taking advantage of changes in levels and provide servicing under buildings.
- Respond to redevelopment potential of adjacent sites to allow comprehensive redevelopment of the wider area around Crest Way



Illustrative layout. This plan is not intended to show definitive site boundaries or configurations, instead it illustrates the main development principles. It is entirely possible that a different layout could deliver the same objectives.