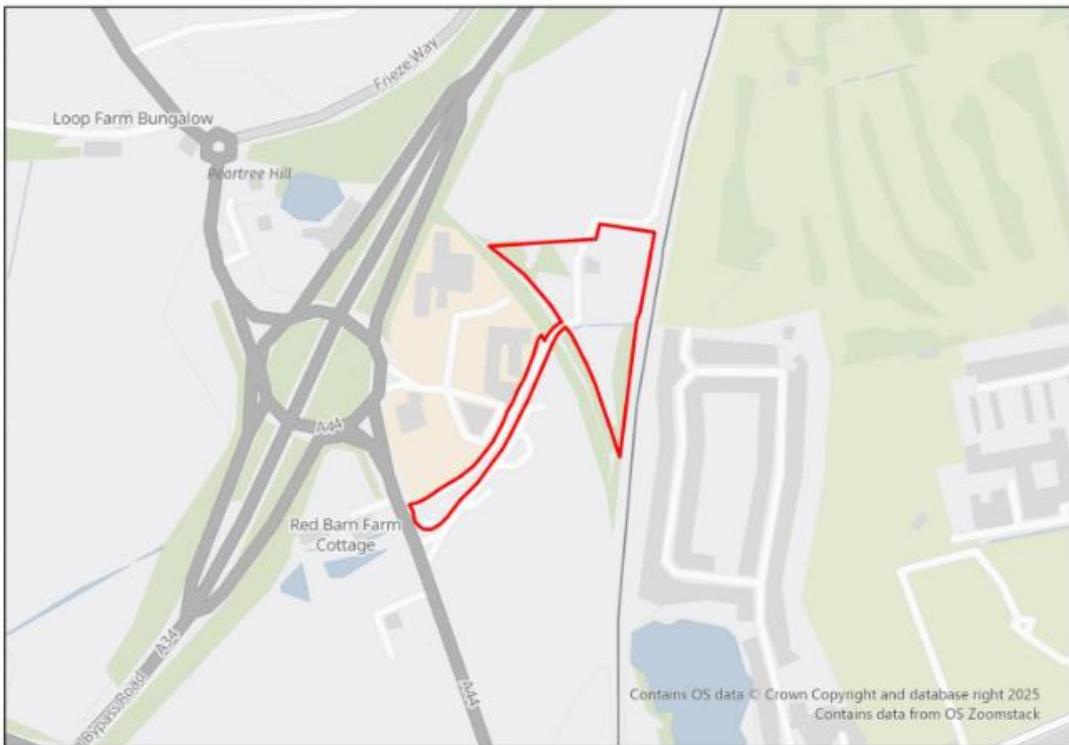


Site capacity assessment – Local Plan 2045

Site name	Pear Tree Farm
LP2045 Site Allocation	SPN5
Site size (ha)	2.54ha

Site location



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A) Site overview

Description of current context

- Site is currently mainly greenfield, with a few farm buildings.
- It was originally identified for development in the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan, which looked at the wider Northern Gateway area including adjoining parcels in the city for employment-led development including residential. The Farm was one of the parcels identified for residential development.
- Site adjoins the boundary with Cherwell district, and the landowner owns the remainder of the field to the north (in Cherwell), and while that parcel has been released from the Green Belt for future development, it is not currently identified for development in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
- A small part of the site may be impacted by the East West Rail Safeguarding Direction (November 2025)

Site photos



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B) Open space, nature and flood risk

Description of current context

Green infrastructure

- Greenfield site with substantial tree/hedge coverage on site
- UGF likely to be above the target for residential and non-residential development, so will need to be maintained.

Biodiversity and ecology

- Majority of site apart from the long strip running to southwest is identified within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as having the potential to be important for biodiversity.
- Site is proximate to Port Meadow SSSI but not so close that it triggers higher levels of open space provision on the site.

Blue Infrastructure

- Site is Flood Zone 1 and surrounding area Flood Zone 1. Some small patches of surface water flooding identified.

Land Quality

- No likely land contamination identified.

Analysis and urban design implications

- Whilst there are no designations on the site, there is opportunity to retain existing trees and enhance treelines to help with buffering site from noise from the railway, A34, and from the more transient uses to the south (Park and Ride, hotels and petrol station). This is likely to be necessary to achieve the target UGF score.
- Proposals should have regard for the LNRS, including demonstrating that they have explored ways to deliver onsite biodiversity improvements that align with the suggested measures set out for this area including managing existing habitats (managing woodland for bats, managing hedgerows), as well as creating new habitats (new ponds, new woodland).

- Retaining trees could also help to incorporate SuDS into the landscape and with the creation of wildlife corridors to the existing tree belt and hedgerows.

C) Historic environment, character and local context

Description of current context

Historic environment

- The site is not in a conservation area and has no listed buildings on site.
- The High Building TAN identifies the site as an Area of Greater Potential. However, it also identifies the potential for sky lining in views from St. Mary's at 24m, competition in views from Boars Hill at 15m and change of character in views from Elsfield at 18m in height.

Built environment

- There are farm buildings onsite, and a telephone mast which would constrain development if required to be retained.
- The site is in Landscape Character Zone 10B, Peartree Open River Terrace. Previously an open arable landscape known as Wolvercote Fields, the zone is now characterised by fragmented urban fringe development related to Pear Tree interchange.
- Close to the site is the petrol/services station, park & ride, and residential (severed by railway line). To the East, trees screen the site from the railway track with 20th Century semi-detached houses on the other side. To the North, the site is contiguous with open farmland outside the city boundary. The busy A34 is close to the western tip of the site.
- Potential for sky lining in views from St. Mary's at 24m, competition in views from Boars Hill at 15m and change of character in views from Elsfield at 18m in height but designated an area of greater change.

Analysis and urban design implications

- There is an opportunity to develop a roofscape which is richer and more diverse than its neighbours and the potential to reference agricultural building typologies or materials. Pitched roofscape that celebrates its rural, edge setting.
- Parking should be incorporated in the public realm where possible in well surveyed locations. Rear parking courts should be avoided.
- A mixture of houses and small flatted blocks would give sufficient flexibility to negotiate the triangular site geometry and change in scale between the hotels on the adjoining services area and the adjoining housing on the east of the site.
- Block structure should help shield the development from the noise of the railway and make the most of views over open landscape.
- Existing buildings onsite are farm-related and offer little chance for re-use.
- Open space should be preserved as part of proposals to create a community focus and allow space for play and amenity.
- High quality natural materials such as brick and stone would raise the quality of the area. Boundaries should be of high-quality materials also and be appropriate to the landscape setting. High quality materials such as brick or stone for facades and boundaries that celebrate the rural edge setting.

D) Access, movement and layout

Description of current context

Access into the site

- The main access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is a long single-width track between Pear Tree services and Pear Tree Park and Ride with no differentiation between pedestrian, cycle and vehicle access. While appropriate for a farm, the track would need to be upgraded, and an appropriate junction designed on Woodstock Road to accommodate use for a residential development. The track would also need further work to segregate pedestrian, cycle and vehicle use to avoid conflicts, and access will need to be maintained should the remainder of the farm (outside the city boundary) continue in operation.

Layout of the site

- n/a - site is currently farmland / green open space other than a few farm buildings.

Connectivity to wider area

- The site is located next to Pear Tree Park and ride with buses into the city centre (300) and towards Yarnton and Begbroke (S2). Good sustainable transport links from buses running from the Park and Ride
- The site is also not far from Oxford Parkway rail station but currently pedestrian and cycle access is extremely constrained: there is a track across the farmland to a footbridge, crossing the railway to North Oxford Golf Course (outside the city boundary) which then also has to be crossed to reach the station. There is opportunity to improve this connection to the train station.
- Severance from neighbouring residential on the other side of the railway tracks.
- Tree belt along the South of the site buffers it from the services and Park and Ride but also increases isolation.

Analysis and urban design implications

- Site will need upgraded access off A44 to provide a safe access and facilitate sustainable modes of transport. While appropriate for a farm, the current access track would need to be upgraded, and an appropriate junction designed on Woodstock Road to accommodate use for a residential development. The track would also need further work to segregate pedestrian, cycle and vehicle use to avoid conflicts, and access will need to be maintained should the remainder of the farm (outside the city boundary) continue in operation. Appropriate lighting should balance the need for safe access with local ecology. An opportunity also potentially exists to create an access through the adjoining Pear Tree service area.
- Existing trees around the site should be retained to buffer the noise from the railway and separate the development from the more transient uses to the south (Park and Ride, hotels and petrol station).
- Block arrangement which prevents noise penetrating into the site as per AAP.
- There is an opportunity to include well surveyed open space as part of the development, incorporating SuDs, play spaces and landscaping.
- Well surveyed public open space within the development to facilitate safe play spaces and sport in line with the AAP.
- There should be a clear delineation between communal open space and private space associated with individual plots.
- Respond to the design principles and design code of the Northern Gateway AAP. Architectural design and character similar to CA03 Bindwell from AAP, primarily of two storeys and quieter than the centre of the AAP.
- May be opportunities to connect with residential development to the south, on a reconfigured park & ride, and the remainder of the Oxford North site (mixed use).
- The land to the north lies in Cherwell district and is a site allocation for Oxford's unmet need in the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review for 1,360 homes (PR6a and PR6b). Development should therefore consider future connectivity with development of the sites in Cherwell and onwards to Oxford Parkway Rail Station, with potential for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links.

E) Other considerations

Other considerations to include in allocations?

Amenity

- Noise from railway line and A34 likely to need buffers and screening for noise

Infrastructure needs

- Pylon/mast onsite may constrain development.

F) Landowner aspirations

Landowner confirmed intention (confirmed 2025) to develop the site for residential-led development, as part of wider scheme with the parcel of land to the north (in Cherwell district).

G) Any extra work needed to inform allocation?

HRA undertaken for previous Northern Gateway AAP, which included Pear Tree Farm site.

A recreational survey has also been undertaken as part of the HRA for LP2045. This site was screened into the recreational impact assessment as it is within 1,900m of the Oxford Meadows SAC. Although this site proposes residential development there are alternative opportunities for dog walking, including an increased provision of green space as part of the Oxford North development. There are also several other nearby sites where dogs can be walked that are equally, or more accessible (including Cuttleslowe Park). Given the distance of the site from the Oxford Meadows SAC (1,300m), trips to the Oxford Meadows SAC would most likely be by car. As there are no proposals to increase the number of parking spaces at the at the Oxford Meadows SAC, there would not be an increase in visitors to the SAC by car. This, in addition to the availability of alternative public space for dog-walking purposes in the locality, policy compliant open space provision should be made onsite for the residential development.

No further work needed.

H) Key considerations informing the minimum number of homes for the allocation policy

Minimum capacity for the site has been calculated with the following assumptions:

- Allowance for some retention of existing established trees/hedgerow for biodiversity and buffering of noise from railway line, A34 and service station area.
- Buffer for pylon/substation
- 10% open space provision for residential
- Gateway typology (80dph) applied to remaining area

Results in minimum requirement of 111 dwellings.