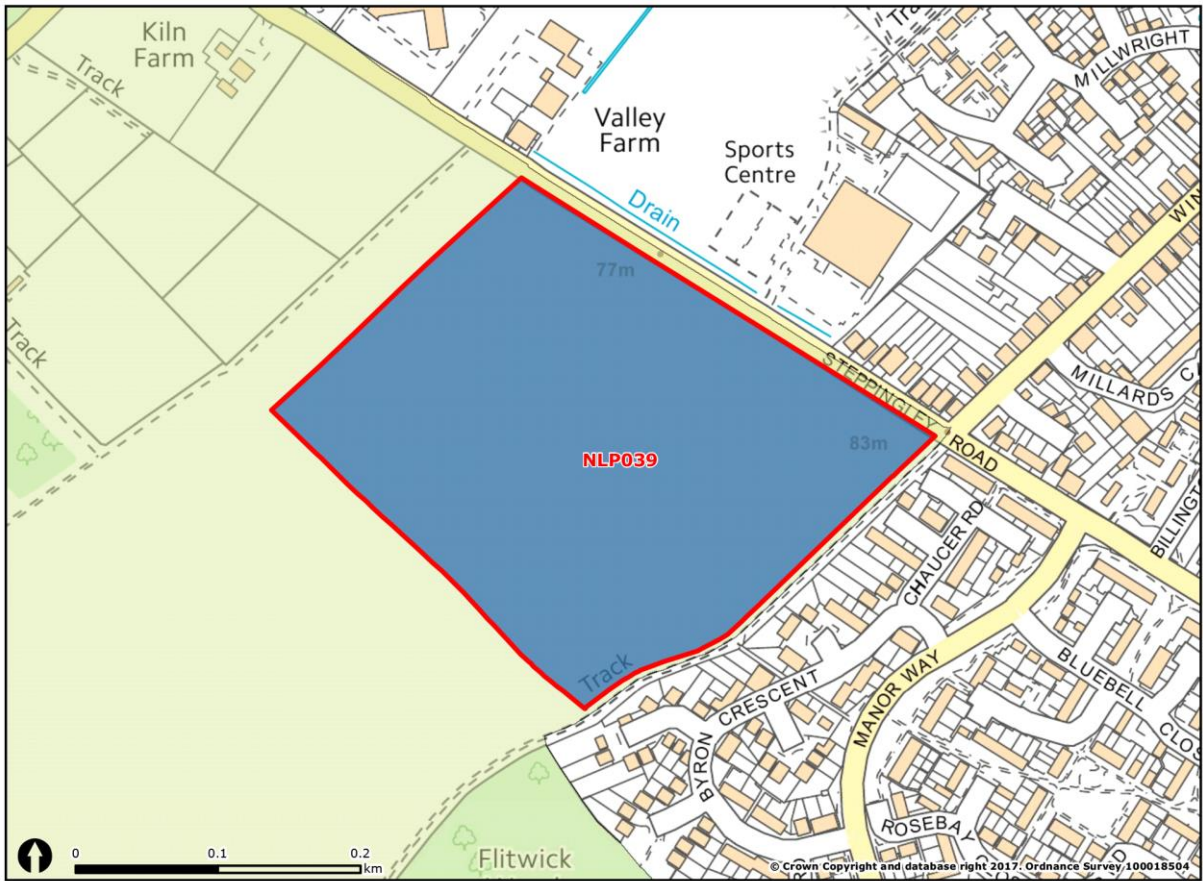


Flitwick



Committed development Harm rating from release of whole site - High Moderate high Moderate Low moderate Low



Site description

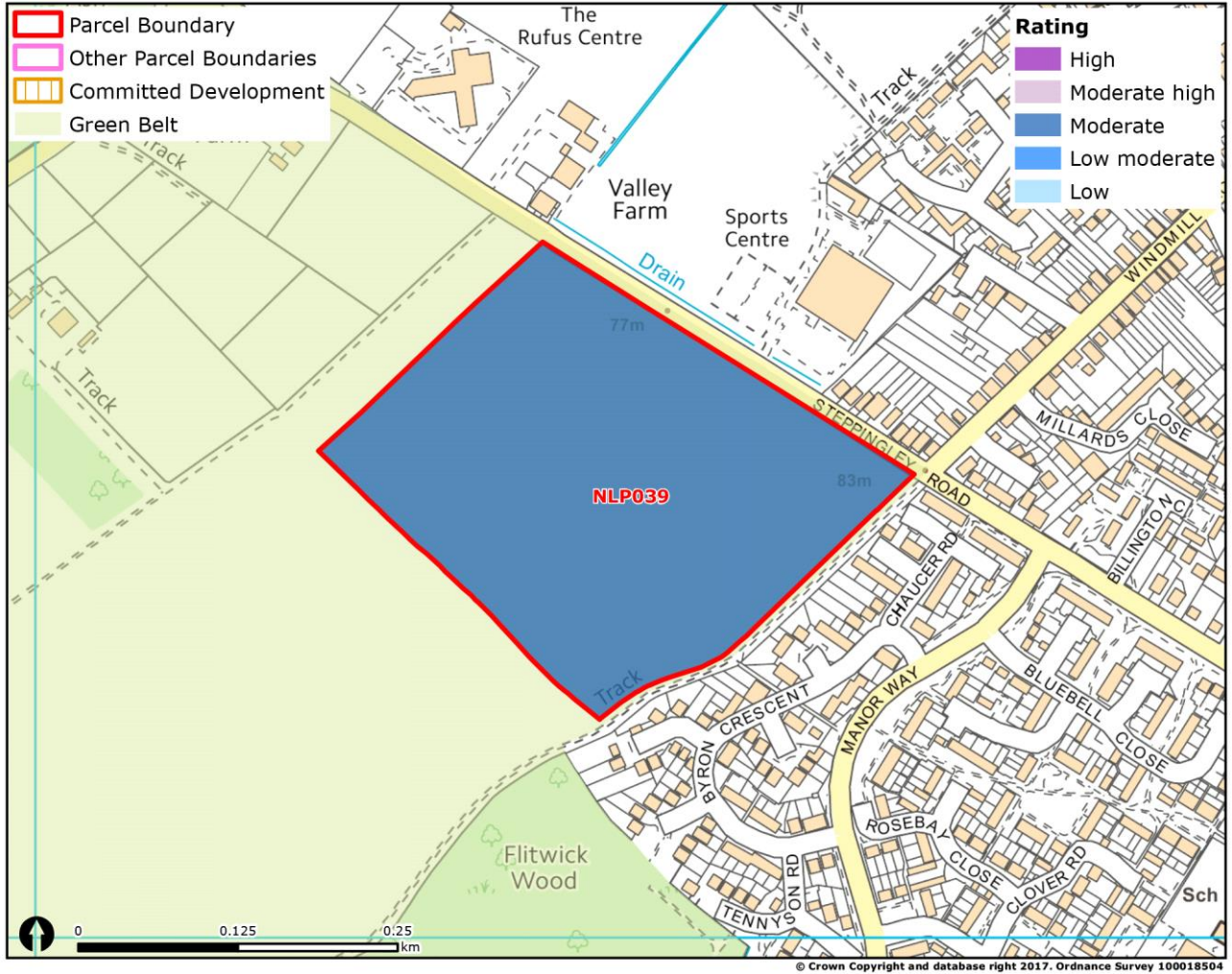
The site abuts the edge of the inset settlement of Flitwick and comprises single moderately-sized rectangular field of arable land that slopes gently westwards. The site is bound to the north-east by Steppingley Road which is lined with trees and backed by the settlement edge of Flitwick, which includes a large leisure complex. The south-eastern boundary is formed of a robust shelterbelt of mature trees backed by houses; the south-western boundary is defined by a rough farm track that marks the field boundary; and to north-western boundary is defined by a drainage ditch lined with occasional trees and shrubs.

Relationship between site, settlement and countryside

The north-western and south-western boundaries are open, with the site forming part of a homogenous area of very gently undulating arable land which stretches west and south from the settlement edge of Flitwick. The absence of development within the site, and the separation from the urban edge provided by Steppingley Road and the tree line to the south-east, create distinction from the settlement, but the containment by urban development on two sides means that there is a relatively strong relationship in terms of settlement form.

Parcels

This site has been assessed as a single parcel.



Looking south towards the settlement edge Flitwick, from Steppingley Road

Parcel: NLP039 Parcel area (ha): 9.00

Stage 1 assessment

Stage 2 assessment

Parcel: FW4
Highest contribution: Purpose 3 - Strong contribution

Parcel: n/a
Contribution:

Contribution to Green Belt purposes

Purpose	Comments
Purpose 1: Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large, built-up areas	The parcel is not adjacent to a large built-up area and development here would be associated with Flitwick.
Purpose 2: Preventing the merger of neighbouring towns	This parcel lies adjacent to Flitwick but development in this parcel would result in little or no perception of the narrowing of the gap between towns.
Purpose 3: Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The parcel relates to the wider countryside, forming part of a homogenous rural landscape which stretches west and south from the settlement edge of Flitwick. The parcel's contained by development on two sides has some urban influence, but any new development within this parcel would be perceived as encroachment into the countryside.
Purpose 4: Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns	The parcel forms a minor element in the wider historic setting of Ampthill.
Purpose 5: Assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

Spatial options

Three spatial options for development are identified for Potential Growth Location L5, of which the site forms part: growth in a transport corridor, urban expansion, and urban intensification around public transport hubs. The site's location adjacent to the urban edge of Flitwick, means that urban extension is likely to be the more viable development scenario.

Potential alternative Green Belt boundaries

The Green Belt boundaries are defined by Steppingley Road and the shelterbelt of mature trees to the south-east which mark a clear distinction between the settlement and the open countryside. Flitwick Road, which runs along the boundaries of adjacent fields to the north-west, would constitute a stronger boundary than the parcel's north-western edge. There is only a weak field edge to define the south-western edge of the parcel, but Flitwick Wood, parallel to the southern end of this boundary, helps to contain the settlement form. Steppingley Road forms a stronger boundary, but it does not mark the settlement edge to the east.

Site: NLP039 - Steppingley Road, Flitwick

Site size (ha): 9.00

Parcel: NLP039 Parcel area (ha): 9.00

Harm to Green Belt resulting from release

Scenario	Comments	Rating
Release of NLP039 in isolation, with woodland planting to strengthen the field boundary to the south-west.	Development in this parcel would constitute significant encroachment on the countryside, and its release would weaken the contribution of the adjacent area of Green Belt to the north-west, leaving a smaller area of open land between the new inset settlement edge and Flitwick Road. However in terms of settlement form the parcel is contained on two sides, so an extension of the inset edge framed by a belt of new woodland planting parallel to the existing settlement edge alongside Flitwick Woods would not have more than a moderate impact on the strength of the Green Belt around the town.	Moderate
Release of NLP039, without mitigating woodland planting.	In the absence of woodland containment development would have a greater impact on the wider Green Belt.	Moderate high

Cumulative release scenarios

There are no other sites with which the potential for cumulative harm would be greater than harm resulting from their release in isolation. The nearest sites are adjacent to Westoning, and are too distant and too small to have any significant combined impact on the Green Belt.

Harm to Green Belt resulting from release of site

Scenario	Comments	Rating