

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The site is part of an intermediate hillside, currently laid to pasture, at the edge of Midleton town. It is framed by the Broomfield estate to the south and The Steeples estate to the northwest. A cluster of non-native trees frames the Water Treatment facility and provides a strong visual screen. The remainder of the site is bounded by low scrub hedgerows. The degree of biodiversity is limited and no flora or fauna sensitivities have been identified.

The site is characterised by a moderately sloping face with a southerly aspect and a gently sloping top. The steepest gradients along the southern portion (1:8) reflect previous existing gradients at Blossomhill (1:8). The gradients along the northern portion (1:15 average) are similar to The Steeples, but then flatten out (1:50) to form a level crown.

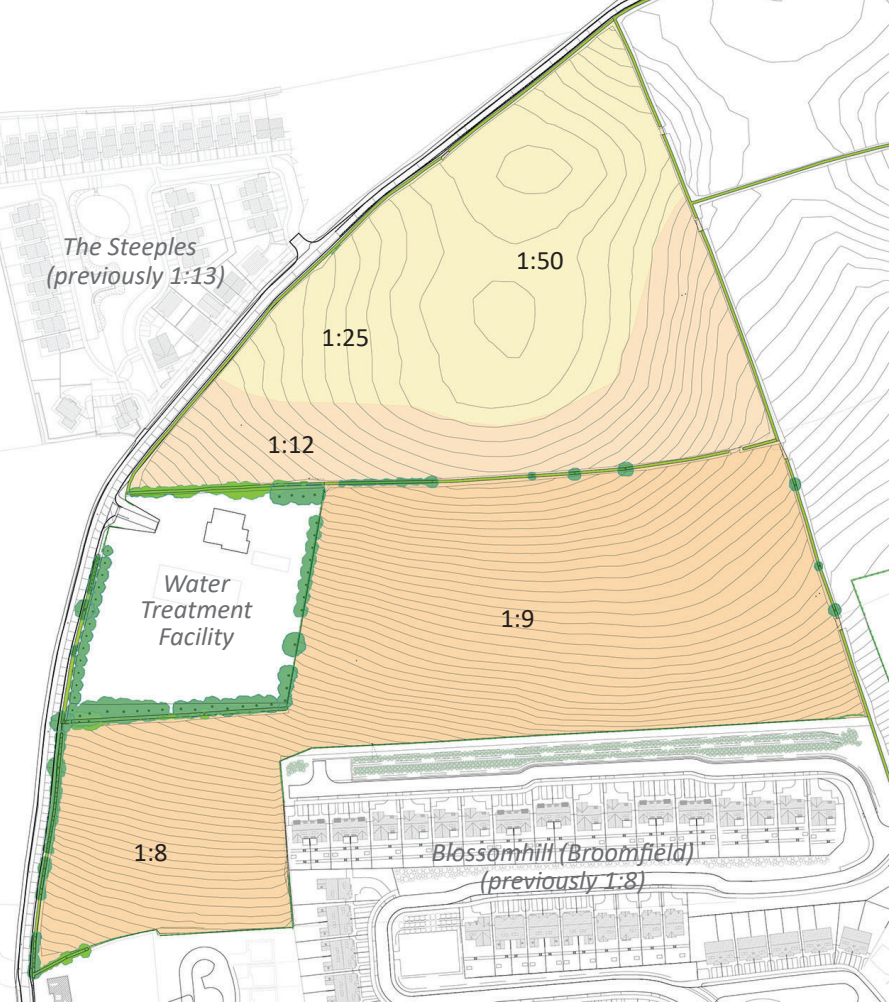


Diagram illustrating the gradients on site (orange to yellow) and tree canopy sizes (green).

The aim of the landscape design is to identify a clear strategy as to how biodiversity and amenity can be accommodated into these parameters, while providing a high standard of visual integration.

BIODIVERSITY - As managed agricultural lands with limited habitats, the aim is to create a net biodiversity gain. Within a residential estate, this is best achieved by providing interconnected bands of urban woodland using native species. In reasonable proximity to these would be habitats pockets designed as pollinator focal points for greater species support and diversity. With these features, net biodiversity gain is achievable in a developed environment.



Diagram illustrating the intended biodiversity links and retained features.

- A) Retain Existing Tree Ring - Despite being primarily non-native trees, they provide good coverage and rest areas for birds.
- B) Retain Existing Scrub Hedge - Limited, but provides an existing north/south link; no reason to remove as it can be incorporated into the proposed development.
- C) Boundary to Boundary Links - Results in full perimeter habitat link, plus a link to mature trees.
- D) Habitat Pockets - Local environments designed specifically to increase pollinator offering and habitat diversity, including meadows and SuDS features.

AMENITY - The existing terrain naturally lends itself to providing multiple layers of open spaces for amenity diversity and inclusivity. With an anticipated broad spectrum of residents, ramped access is provided across the site. This ensures that someone with a buggy or difficulties with steps can access the open spaces unencumbered.

To provide clarity, the estate is designed around a central amenity spine. This puts amenity in close proximity to houses and the open spaces feel as though they belong to the entire estate, not just a particular street. The spine also forms a visual break.

We have included spaces specific to certain ages (i.e. a play area or a pitch), but most areas are community oriented and aimed at integrating all ages. The spaces provide topics of conversation (apple orchards, foraging corridor, flora and fauna) with the aim of encouraging neighbourhood socialising. The spaces are alive, not just static lawns with ornamental trees.

The scheme provides 9 no. designated open spaces and 5 no. ancillary grass kickabout zones. There are 19 different places to take a seat. The varying experiences are described on drawing L201.



Diagram illustrating the intended amenity spine.