Any proposals should respond to the **physical character of the site**, protect areas of heritage and ecological value and create value by incorporating natural features.

The plan below highlights the following characteristics that should inform the masterplanning of NSC’s land at Parklands Village.

### Topography
The site is very flat and relatively low lying. This reflects the Somerset Levels character of the site and differentiates it from the higher ground to the south. Although the flat nature means the site is relatively unconstrained from a topographical perspective, it does mean that the site has to work ‘harder’ to create a distinctive character and to respect the features that do exist such as the rhynes and the adjacent motte and bailey.

### Flood risk
The planned flood defence measures will have the effect of removing almost all of the NSC land from the 1:100 year fluvial floodplain. Those areas that remain relate to the network of rhynes that will generally be retained across the site. Where any compensatory flood plain storage is required as part of the detailed development proposals then this will be provided within the proposed ‘superpond’.

### Rhynes and ditches
The Grumblepill Rhyne and Cross Rhyne are important drainage elements and ecological corridors. Both rhynes need to be protected within the masterplan. A maintenance corridor needs to be retained to provide access for the IDB. The SPD also requires ‘10m wide dark vegetated corridors’ to be provided as part of the commuting paths and foraging areas for horseshoe bats.

The masterplan should also consider how the network of ditches within the site, and its high water table, could be used positively to add value to housing and office development.

### Trees and Hedges
There are relatively few trees and hedges within the NSC landownership. There is the opportunity to reinforce planting along Locking Head Drive and along the rhyne network to enhance the rural edges to the development.

### Heritage
Adjacent to the south west corner of the site is Locking Head Farm which includes a Grade II listed building. This is owned by NSC and the existing drive access to the farm buildings is retained within the illustrative masterplan. Further south is the Motte and Bailey, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The masterplan will need to have regard to the settings of the listed farmhouse and the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The south western edge of the site will therefore need to be designed sensitively with an appropriate rural character. The network of green links throughout the site should promote increased public access to the motte and bailey.

### Helicopter flight path
No buildings have been placed within the helicopter flight path. It has been assumed that playing fields are acceptable within this area.

### Site features & constraints
- Primary rhynes
- Ditches
- Listed building
- Motte & Bailey (scheduled ancient monument)
- Noise issues
- Approximate locations of overhead power cables
- Existing foul water
- Min 8m land drainage board easement and ecology corridor
- Approximate locations of medium pressure gas (Wales & West)

### Utilities
The key features for the NSC land comprise the overhead power cables and the Wales and West gas main. It has been assumed that the low voltage power lines would be placed underground in order to enhance the quality of the physical environment and the value of the housing in this part of the site.

For the purposes of the masterplan a residential street has been shown along the indicated route of the gas main which can be refined once the detailed alignment is determined.

### Noise
Noise measurements have been undertaken to assess the implications for residential development of traffic on the A370. The distance of the traffic from the SPD boundary means that proposed housing areas fall within PPG24 Noise Exposure Category A, the lowest category. Noise need not therefore be considered a constraint in granting planning permission for residential development on NSC land within the SPD boundary.