

Buckover

Garden Village

Concept Document



THE
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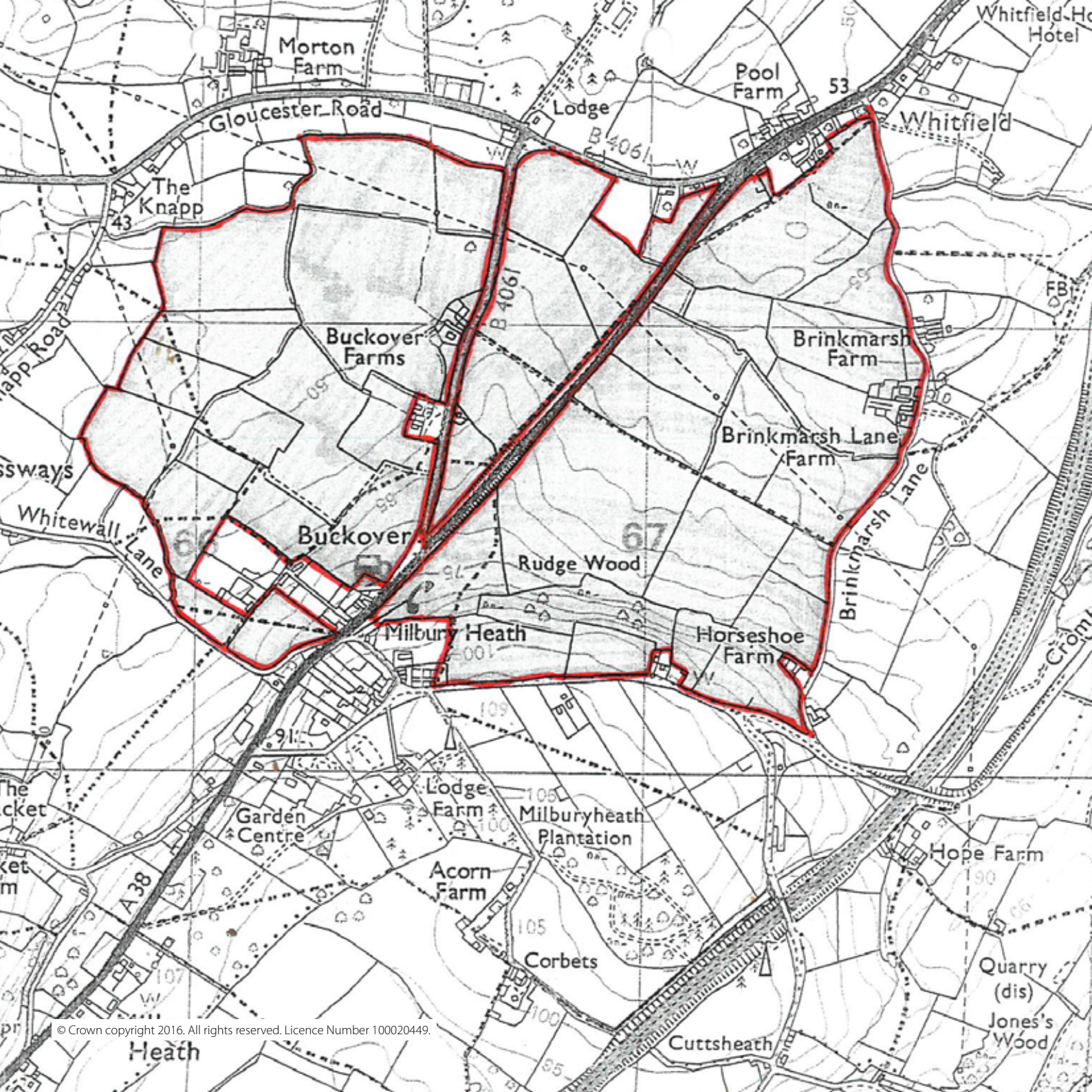


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1.0 Introduction

This Concept Document has been prepared by Hunter Page Planning on behalf of Tortworth Estate Company. It establishes an expression of interest and sets out the background, rationale and vision for a new garden village at Buckover, South Gloucestershire comprising up to 3,000 dwellings, employment facilities, health facilities, education facilities, transportation infrastructure, communication infrastructure, retail provision, community facilities and open space.

In addition, this Concept Document sets out a brief overview of land at Buckover, Garden Settlement principles, government support for new Garden Settlements and outlines the unique opportunity to deliver sustainable development at this locality which has increasing development needs.

The study area measures approximately 170 hectares* of predominantly agricultural land under the sole ownership of Tortworth Estate Company. Tortworth Estate Company is promoting the total study area through the West of England (WoE) Joint Spatial Plan (JSP).

There has recently been a renaissance in planning philosophy, with regard to Garden Settlement principles. This proposed new settlement at Buckover would be based on those principles and as such, would align with current planning thinking on how best to meet our growth needs. The concept of Garden Cities arose in the late nineteenth century and transformed Town and Country Planning in the UK. Garden City principles fuelled the modern town planning movement and is seen as one of the great British ideas that has positively influenced Town and Country Planning globally.

* Amended July 2016



Buckover is a truly unique and exceptional location for sustainable development. Several factors establish why this site is specifically suitable for development over and above alternate locations. These relate to;

- Single ownership of site; eliminates complications and delays in bringing it forward;
- The unconstrained nature of the area and its lack of environmental designations;
- Tortworth Estate’s core values symmetrically align with Garden Settlement principles. There is a genuine ethos and motivation to deliver a lasting positive legacy to be proud of;
- Study area’s topography is one that is discreet and can accommodate a garden village without resulting in ‘sprawl’ or ‘coalescence’;
- Study area’s proximity with major employers;
- A commitment by the landowner to undertake technical work to demonstrate site’s suitability – work led-by an organisation with a proven track record in good land stewardship;
- Ideal location for phased organic development; Thornbury’s higher order services and facilities can initially support an embryonic Garden Village but as development evolves, Buckover can be self-containment;

- Existing transport links provide a sound base for improved public transport infrastructure; A38, M4 and M5 in close proximity;
- Transportation infrastructure improvements can be delivered to coincide with the priorities of the emerging WoE TP;
- Emerging WoE JSP requires SGC to deliver at least 24,045 dwellings up to 2036;
- Development of stand-alone Garden Village represents intelligent use of land; and
- Finally, there is overwhelming Government support for new Garden Settlements.

This Concept Document demonstrates how the proposed new settlement at Buckover will contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

2.0 Study Area

Land Ownership

The study area is exclusively owned by Tortworth Estate Company and forms a small part of the wider Tortworth Estate, which covers an area of circa 2,000 hectares (ha) set across both South Gloucestershire and Stroud District Council’s administrative areas.

Location

South Gloucestershire lies to the north and east of Bristol within the West of England area (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire). This sub-region has a population of around 1.1 million, with a working population of 510,000. South Gloucestershire has close links, particularly transport and economic, with Bristol City.

South Gloucestershire’s settlement pattern is characterised by urban development within the North and East Fringes of Bristol and a large rural area containing the towns of Yate/Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury along with over 30

villages. 60% of the population live within the urban area, 19% within the two towns and 21% within the rural areas. South Gloucestershire’s immediate growth requirements amount to at least 28,355 new homes up to 2027. In addition, the emerging WoE JSP requires South Gloucestershire to deliver at least 24,045 dwellings up to 2036.

Buckover, lying in the north of the District, is approximately 0.5 miles east of Thornbury, approximately 1.0 mile south-west of Falfield, approximately 1.0 mile west of Cromhall and approximately 10 miles north of the wider Bristol Area.

Description

The proposed Garden Village will cover an area of circa 191 hectares (ha) and is within the Civil Parishes of Falfield and Thornbury. The area is accessible in both local and sub-regional terms. The A38 and Old Gloucester Road (B4061) divide the study area north to south. The M4 (6.5 miles) and M5 (2.8 miles) motorways are in close proximity to the study area.

Designations

The majority of the study area comprises of low grade agricultural land.

There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the study area, namely; Brinkmarsh Quarry and Buckover Road Cutting whilst two areas of woodland are to the north and centre of the study area. These important SSSIs are small in geographical terms and will be protected and enhanced as part of the Garden Village landscape design led approach.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) cross the site and an on-road National Cycle Network route runs along the southern boundary of the site. These will help provide connections from the Garden Village to the wider countryside beyond; they will provide the basis for green arteries.

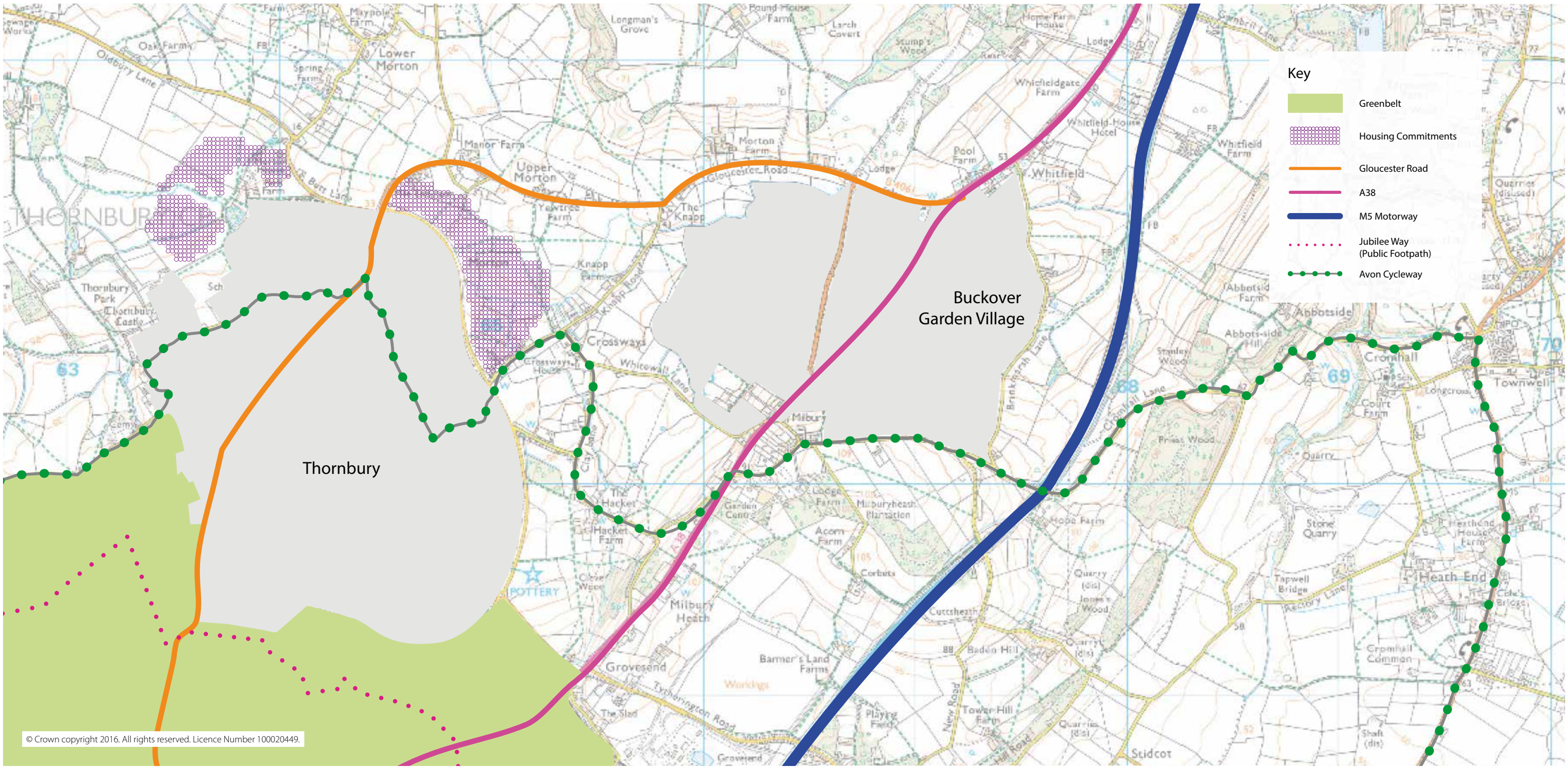
Four listed buildings are in close proximity to the study area, but the setting of those heritage assets will be protected as part of the Garden Village design principles.

The study area does not fall within an AONB, Green Belt, Conservation Area, Archaeological Priority Areas or any other significant town planning designation. The Environment Agency’s (EA) Flood Map indicates that the overwhelming majority of the site is in Flood Zone 1; limited areas, in close proximity to The Knapp, fall within both Flood Zones 2 and 3. Those areas can be retained as part of the settlement’s green infrastructure.

The study area is not affected by any other landscape, historical, cultural or environmental designations that might otherwise preclude development.

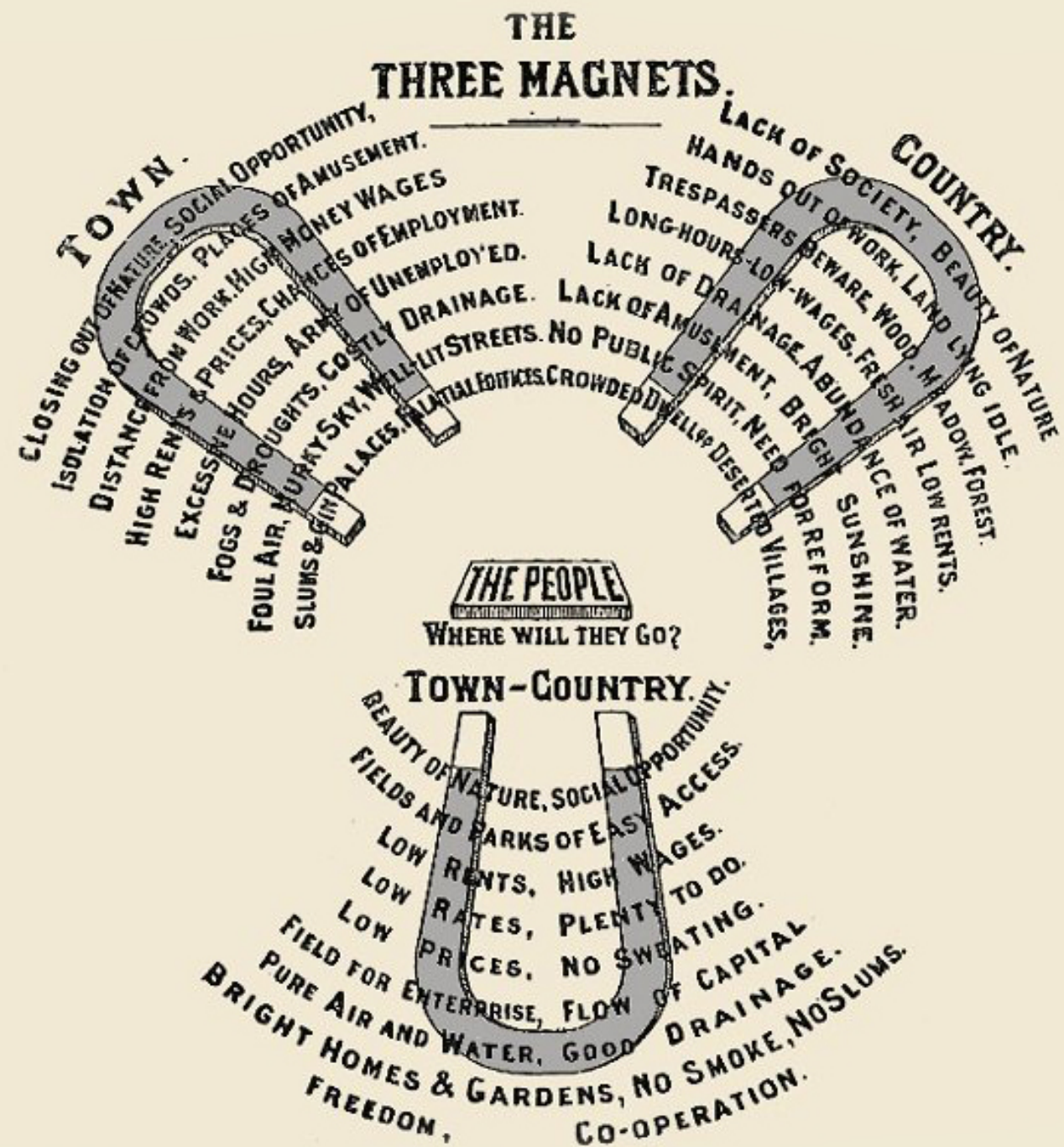
Surrounding Area

An existing bus rota adjoins the study area to the north. A pub, several local businesses, namely; Countrywide Farmers, Cotswolds Eco Fuels, Rainbow Zebra, Randall’s Office Furniture Morton Timber and the major employers Eastwood Park and Leyhill are all in close proximity to the study area.



Key

- Greenbelt
- Housing Commitments
- Gloucester Road
- A38
- M5 Motorway
- Jubilee Way (Public Footpath)
- Avon Cycleway



3.0 Garden Village Principles

The notion of a Garden Cities was established by Sir Ebenezer Howard in 1898, through the publishing of his book 'To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform', which was republished as 'Garden Cities of To-morrow' in 1902. At its core, it upheld that "the advantage of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination" through Garden Cities. That town planning philosophy is as important today as it was then.

Howard's vision gave rise to the Garden City Movement (founded in 1899) and fundamentally changed the terms of debate in urban planning, which then gave rise to both the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and New Towns Movement.

The Garden City Movement saw the development of over 30 Garden Cities in England, with the construction of Letchworth commencing in 1903, followed by Welwyn in 1920 and culminating in the Milton Keynes, the largest of them all, in 1967.

Ebenezer Howard illustrated ideas through the diagram of the 'Three Magnets', in which the "chief advantages

of the Town and of the Country are set forth with their corresponding drawbacks, while the advantages of the Town and Country are seen to be free from the disadvantages of either."

Howard argued that "there should be an earnest attempt made to organise a migratory movement of population from our overcrowded centres to sparsely-settled rural districts" through Garden Cities, as they form complete sustained urban economies, comprising of industry, orchards, offices, shops and housing, which complements the landscape and agricultural land surrounding.

This unique merger of Town and Country characteristics are the underlying principal features of a Garden City. As the Garden City grows, "the free gifts of Nature - fresh air, sunlight, breathing room and playing room - shall be still retained in all needed abundance... and life may become an abiding joy and delight."

All those principles are all whole heartedly shared by Tortworth Estate and echoed in many of the decisions made by the Estate and the projects it manages.



4.0 The Revival of Garden Settlements

Over the past decade there has been a resurgence within the Town Planning and Development sectors with regard to the creation of new places based on Garden Settlement principles as a solution to the housing crisis in Britain.

In June 2011, the TCPA published 'Re-imagining Garden Cities for the 21st Century', which argued that the Garden City principles could help overcome the stigma of building new communities that have too many poor developments and inadequate infrastructure provision. The document sets out that "we must find a way to move forward into a new era of building attractive, resilient and sustainable places. Where better to start this journey than to rediscover and re-imagine the high-quality, collaborative and pioneering spirit of the Garden Cities for the 21st century."

Chief executive of the TCPA, Kate Henderson said "the TCPA wants to bring together the pragmatic lessons of the garden cities in taking forward new, comprehensively planned new communities."

Prime Minister David Cameron, speaking at the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) in March 2012 argued that "some people feel we've lost the art of creating great places

with the right social and environmental infrastructure... But in the last century, private and social enterprise also created places like Hampstead Garden Suburb, Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City - not perfect, but popular - green, planned, secure, with gardens, places to play and characterful houses; not just car-dominated concrete grids."

Following the Prime Minister's speech, the National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012, which at Paragraph 52 states that:

"The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities."

In February 2015, Lord Matthew Taylor, who advises the Government and has advised a number of successive UK Governments on planning policy, published 'Garden Villages: Empowering Localism to Solve the Housing Crisis'. This Report sets out "many small new 'garden communities' are needed (as well as some larger ones) if we are to scratch the surface of the housing problem in a locally responsive way reflecting the principles of localism."

“a single new garden village in each rural English local authority would create around a million extra homes – the homes we need, with the space and gardens, infrastructure, services and employment that people want, all without destroying the places we know and love.” - Lord Taylor

In response to Lord Taylor’s Report the Chancellor, George Osborne, has given a green light to a wave of new “garden villages” across the country.

“the government supports the construction of a new wave of garden towns and cities across the country, with the potential to deliver more than 100,000 homes.” - Chancellor George Osborne March 2016

The Chancellor also announced that the government will legislate to make it easier for local authorities to work together to create new garden towns, as well as consult on a second wave of Compulsory Purchase Order reforms with the objective of making the process clearer, fairer and quicker. “For areas that want to establish smaller settlements, the government will provide technical and financial support to areas that want to establish garden villages and market towns of between 1,500 to 10,000 homes.”

It is clear that a crucial aspect of addressing our housing crisis with a practical town planning solution is the renaissance of Garden Settlements. That solution can be delivered at Buckover.

Tortworth Estate, who has a proven track record of making sustainable and environmentally-led decisions, is committed to establishing a positive legacy for the Estate and sees the proposed Garden Village at Buckover as a unique, practical and exciting opportunity to deliver housing and growth needs using Garden Settlement principles in South Gloucestershire. This is a sound solution to meeting our identified social and economic needs and addressing the housing and development delivery problems we face.

In March 2016 the UK Government published a policy paper: ‘Locally-led garden villages, towns and cities’. This sets out how the Government, Local Planning Authorities and Locals can support local areas who want to create new garden villages, towns and cities. It offers tailored government support to local areas with ambitious and innovative proposals to deliver 1,500 homes and above.

Specifically, it highlights that “...*new settlements have a key role to play, not only in meeting this country’s housing needs in the short-term, but also in providing a stable pipeline of housing well into the future.*”

“The garden village must be a new discrete settlement, and not an extension of an existing town or village. This does not exclude proposals where there are already a few existing homes.”

re-imagining garden cities for the 21st century

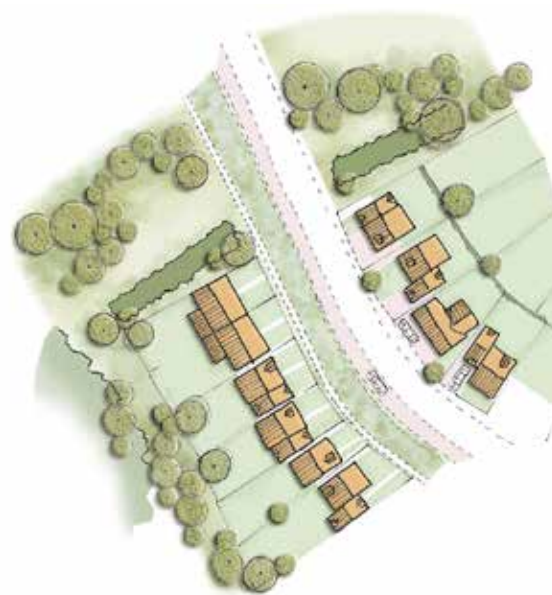
**benefits and lessons in bringing forward
comprehensively planned new communities**



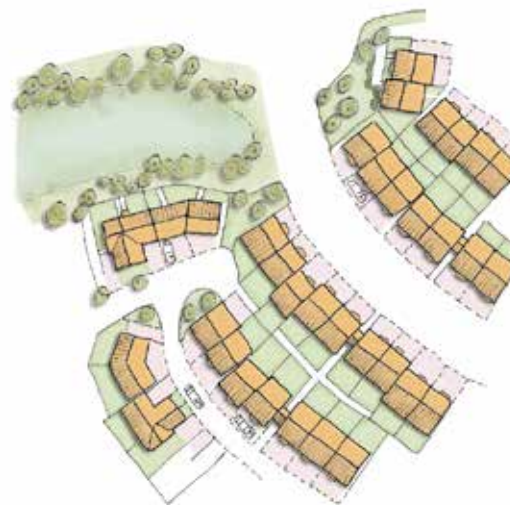
TCPA June 2011



Representative of rural edge dwellings



Representative of village margin dwellings



Representative of village street dwellings

5.0 Buckover – A Unique Opportunity

Opportunity

Britain is currently suffering a massive housing crisis, with some reports estimating that at least 300,000 homes need to be built annually for the next 20 years just to match population growth.

In particular, South Gloucestershire struggles to demonstrate 5 years' worth of land for housing development. Long term planning decisions need to be made now that avoid those difficulties arising in the future.

The WoE Authorities are currently planning on how best to deliver its development needs up to 2036 through the JSP, which, at this initial stage, seeks to provide at least 85,000 new homes, of which SGC is required to deliver at least 24,045.

Supply/Delivery

More often than not, the promotion of new settlements and / or large urban extensions to existing settlements are complicated by multiple landownerships where a range of promotional agreements and option agreements negotiated with various developers and housebuilders can complicate land assembly and value equalisation required to deliver infrastructure.

The study area is under single ownership and is deliverable, developable and viable in that:

- the landowner is willing to develop site;
- the landowner is willing to undertake technical work to demonstrate site is suitable; and,
- land is available following the grant of planning permission.

Site can deliver up to 3,000 dwellings which will –

- Create a wide choice of high quality homes;
- Widen opportunities for home ownership;
- Deliver affordable housing;
- Significantly contribute to SGC WoE housing requirement (24,045); and
- Incorporate a comprehensive landscape led approach to design environmental and design approach, delivered in a manner that is green, secure, characterful and popular.

- The study area identifies sufficient land area in order to provide a holistic approach to delivering housing, employment, country area retention, whilst incorporating the following principles of Garden Settlements:
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
 - Land value capture for the benefit of the community;
 - Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets;
 - Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for ordinary people;
 - Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country lifestyles to create healthy and vibrant communities (including opportunities to grow food);
 - A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes;
 - Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;
 - Strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods;
 - Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport; and
 - Contributing to strategic housing needs.

In addition, a key feature of Buckover Garden Village will be high speed internet. As a 21st century Garden Village, it is essential that all future residents, employees and visitors to the settlement can access high speed broadband for work and leisure.

The location of Buckover facilitates phased organic development of study area, as Thornbury’s higher order services and facilities can initially support Buckover Garden Village but as development evolves Buckover Garden Village will be a self-sufficient stand-alone sustainable settlement.

The size and scale of Buckover Garden Village will ensure greater self-containment and improve the separate but inter-related roles and functions of settlements; it will also focus on investment along the new high street and improve the range and type of jobs in the locality.

Development of the study area for a new stand-alone Garden Village represents an intelligent use of land. The social and economic benefits of establishing a Garden Village here are immense, with the delivery of up to 3,000 dwellings including affordable housing, employment facilities, new school, medical facility, improved transportation and utility infrastructure, open space, leisure facilities and designed within an environmental landscape led approach. All developed will incorporate the principles of a Garden City.

Legacy

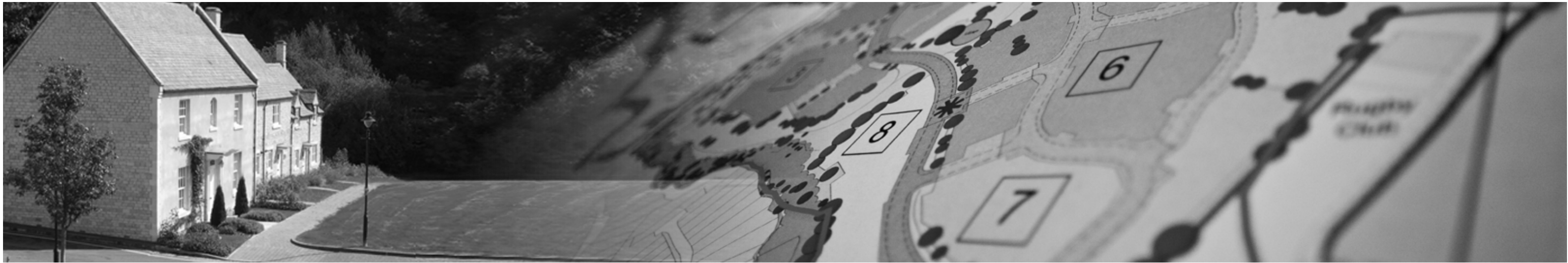
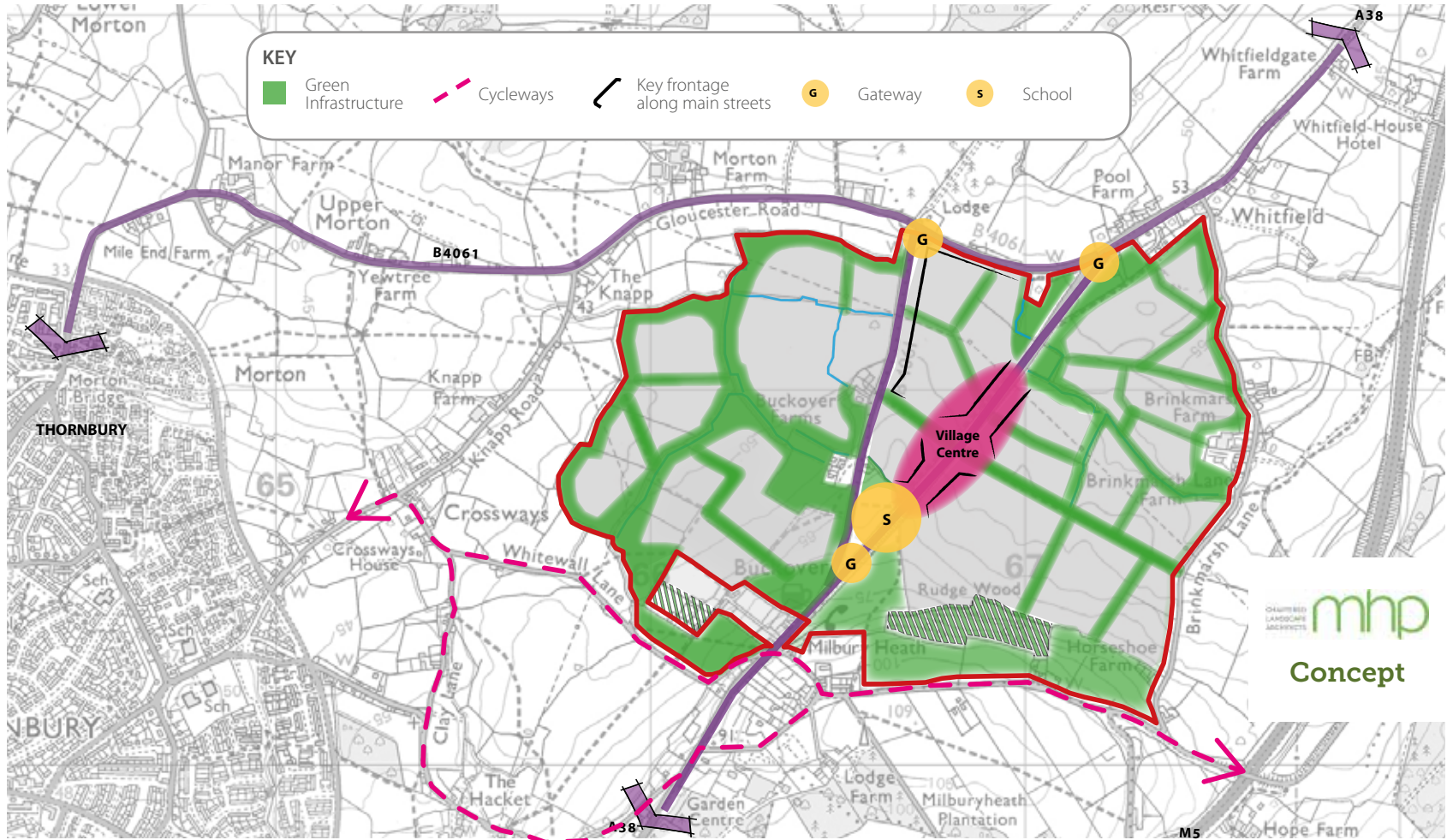
The ambition is to create a community strongly rooted in its heritage and landscape that offers ample green spaces for leisure, wildlife and sport; a place where it is practical and pleasurable to use public transport, cycle or walk.

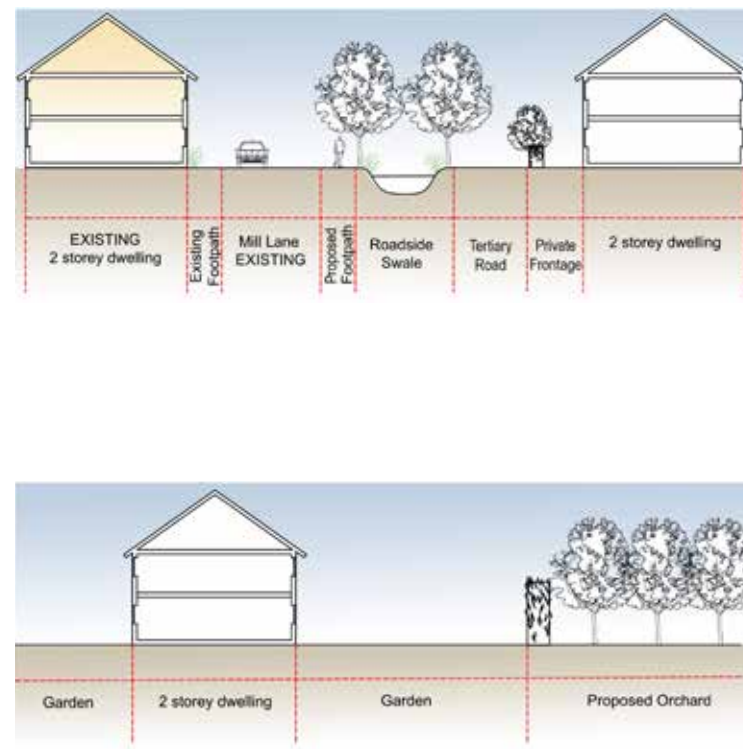
The settlement will have unique characteristics and act as the catalyst for change and renewal. One such characteristic will be to incorporate features of a ‘Healthy New Town’ based on the NHS proposals; this will shape the health of the community and provide an opportunity to rethink how health and care services can be delivered.

The proposal at Buckover comprises the opportunity for the creation of a new sustainable growth point for the District. The new growth around Buckover will help provide for the regeneration of the wider rural area and provide a mixed use development that will accommodate the immediate growth requirements of the District and sub-region.

Overall, the concept is to provide a thriving wholly sustainable community which is seen as a positive legacy by future generations.







6.0 Planning Policy Context

Development Plan

The adopted development plan for South Gloucestershire consists of saved policies from the South Gloucestershire Local Plan (SGLP), adopted in January 2006, and the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted December 2013.

As a member authority of the ‘West of England’, SGC is party to the emerging Joint Spatial Plan (JSP). This document provides the context for future strategic development requirements and potential development opportunities in the WoE Region; it focuses on the overall strategic requirements for housing, employment and related infrastructure to 2036.

One emerging idea from the Issues and Options consultation was for a new stand-alone location or a significant expansion to an existing settlement.

National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) March 2012

The Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable Councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development and as such the Framework identifies three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental which are explained as follows:

- **An economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type of development and employment opportunities are available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

- **A social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

The Framework holds a presumption in favour of sustainable development (as set out in paragraph 14) which for plan making means local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.

With regard to Plan making, the Framework requires all new Local Plans to be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development trying to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Plans should be aspirational but realistic and should set out opportunities for development and clear policies on what will be permitted and where.

Local Plans should set out the strategic priorities for the area which should include; the homes and jobs needed in the area; the provision for infrastructure and transport and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment amongst other things.

Part of the role of the Local Plan will be to allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land bringing forward new land where necessary and providing detail on the form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate.

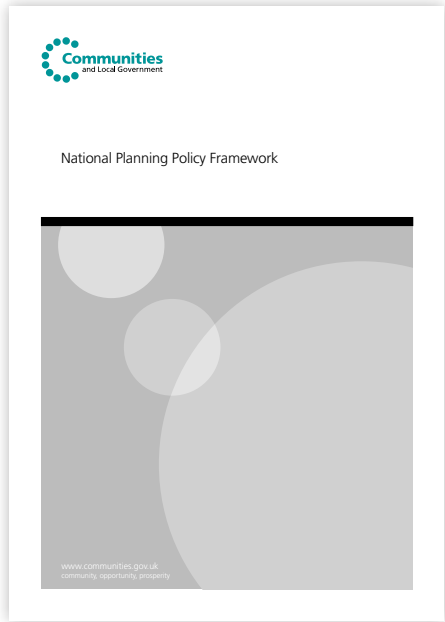
Crucially Local Plans should plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area, which should include meeting household and population projections and addressing the need for all types of housing and having a clear understanding of the business needs of the area.

Paragraph 28 of the Framework - Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy – contends that “planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.”

With regard to the location of new housing development, Paragraph 52 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes – makes clear that “the supply of new homes can

sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities. Working with the support of their communities, local planning authorities should consider whether such opportunities provide the best way of achieving sustainable development.”

Paragraph 55 - Sustainable development in rural areas – outlines that in order “to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.”



National Planning Practice Guidance (Planning Practice Guidance)

On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the Planning Practice Guidance, which is on an online resource providing more detail on how policies in the Framework should be applied. This most relevant sections in relation to Buckover Garden Village are outlined below:

- Rural Housing;
- Natural Environment;
- Design; and
- Housing (various)

7.0 Sustainability Objectives

Economic Dimension

Development at Buckover contributes to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth innovation and the provision of infrastructure in accordance with the Framework.

Development of additional high value employment would further enhance the District and sub-regional economies in a key growth sector, helping to maximise the potential of the existing cluster.

Clustering draws on the embedded knowledge held by existing employees and their networks to develop new ideas and companies which capture these ideas to develop new businesses or take advantage of downstream and upstream supply chain opportunities.

Social Dimension

Development at Buckover supports a strong, vibrant and healthy community by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations. Further, it creates a high quality built

environment, with accessible local services that reflect the wider community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

The Buckover Village settlement would also deliver a wide range of new high quality health, social and educational facilities. By achieving a critical threshold of around 3,000 homes the settlement would be of sufficient size to deliver a wide range of facilities including a new high street, primary school, transportation infrastructure and health facility.

It would also re-distribute some existing retailing and travel patterns and providing greater choice for residents.

Environmental Dimension

Development at Buckover will contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment of the District and can enhance biodiversity through integrated open space, landscape and surface water drainage strategies.

The site is not constrained by any landscape designation that renders it undevelopable. All proposed development will conserve the existing designations and improve the area.



8.0 Conclusion

The proposed development aims to create a thriving community in Buckover which will deliver a wide range of modern innovative housing of all tenures to support the social and economic needs of the area. The development of the garden village will be guided by a design philosophy which will primarily focus on green infrastructure; including open spaces, recreation and leisure and formal and informal landscaping. This will facilitate social well-being and be funded and managed by a community trust made up of residents and employers who live, work and recreate in the community.

Buckover Garden Village will have a community heart supported by a new high street with a range of shops, places to eat and drink and local services to support the day to day needs of the community. It will also deliver new employment opportunities to provide the catalyst for further economic growth and investment in the area supported by the already established employment base and the excellence of the educational establishments at Bristol. Educational, health and transportation infrastructure will be significantly upgraded to ensure the site is fully sustainable.

With the utilisation of Garden Settlement principles, the protection and enhancement of the environment and a shift in government policy and rhetoric that supports new Garden Settlements. This proposal presents an exciting prospect to plan and secure a sustainable solution to meet our social and economic needs but – importantly – to deliver a truly long lasting positive legacy for our future generations.

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