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Formatting Note:

The text within this document is based on the 2024 Options Document. New text and sections are added shaded in blue

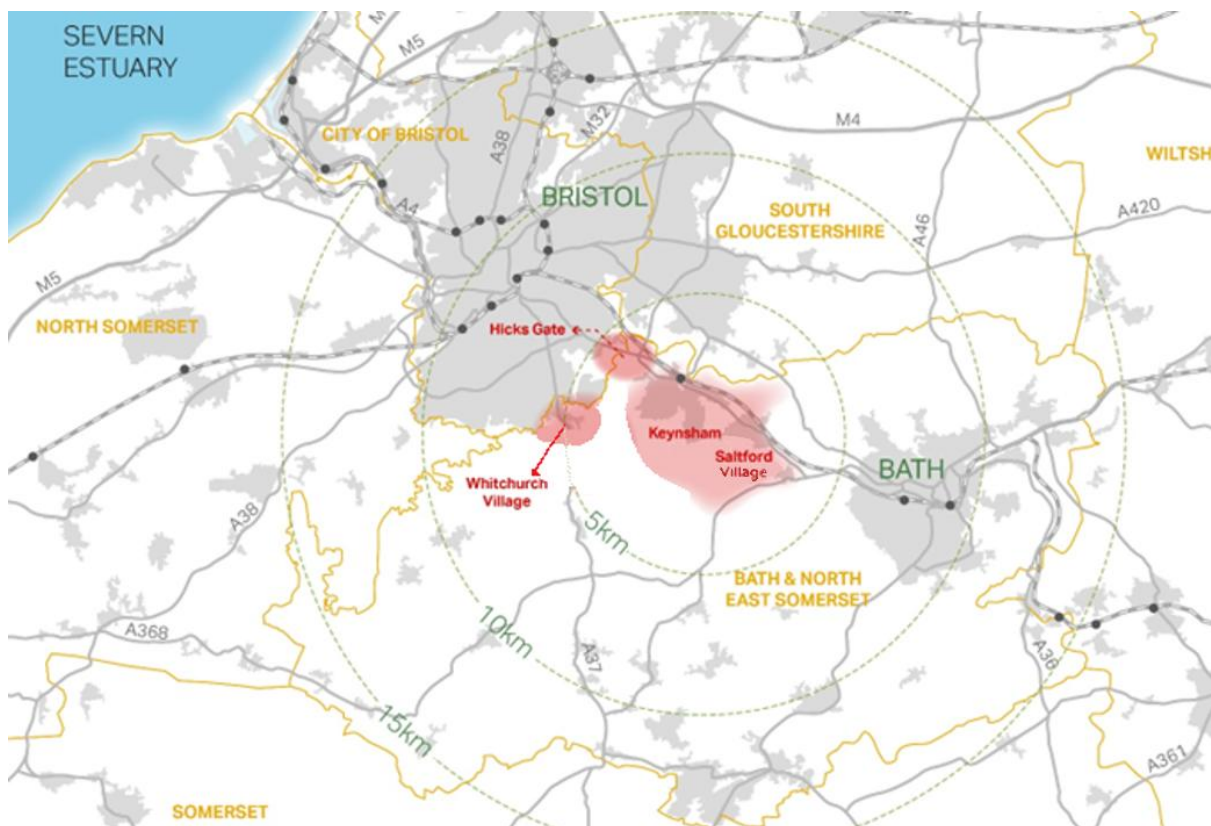
6. Bristol to Bath Corridor

Strategy Overview

6.1 The area described in this Options Document as the Bristol to Bath corridor comprises areas located along or close to the Bristol to Bath A4 corridor, and areas adjoining the south east edge of Bristol including:

- Keynsham
- Saltford Village
- Hicks Gate
- Whitchurch Village

6.2 These areas have been selected for review in terms of potential growth due to their relative sustainability in relation to access to sustainable transport modes and access to services and facilities, when compared to other areas of the district.



Map 12: Map showing location of area described as Bath to Bristol Corridor and south east edge of Bristol

West of England Growth Strategy

6.3 Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council has worked with the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA) to prepare a Growth Strategy for the West of England. This document sets out the overarching context for investment and development to support economic prosperity for our region as a whole. The Strategy envisages growth driven by an interconnected set of regional Growth Zones, where investment will bring new businesses, jobs, homes, culture, nature and opportunity. It identifies the two growth zones in B&NES as: Central Bristol and Bath (including the river corridor connecting them) and the Somer Valley. This will be enabled by ambitious plans to transform our transport network, set out in the regional Transport Vision.

6.4 Encompassing the urban core of our region, the Central Bristol and Bath Growth Zone has three distinct areas with strong investment potential:

- Central Bristol
- Bristol to Bath Corridor
- Bath City Centre

6.5 While each investment opportunity is distinct, cumulatively they will play a crucial role in transforming our region, delivering a significant proportion of the economic growth and development that will shape a bright future for our cities.

The Bristol to Bath Corridor Investment Opportunity

- 6.6 Bath and Bristol are currently two separate and distinct economic areas, yet they are only 15 minutes apart by rail. If these economies were combined, they would become the 7th largest in England. The corridor between these two thriving centres provides opportunities for us to better join the economies of our two cities. It will have exceptional connectivity by public transport and active travel (walking, cycling and wheeling) into Bath, Bristol and beyond, offering sustainable and affordable access to work, education and recreation for both new and existing communities.
- 6.7 The Bristol to Bath Corridor offers an opportunity to do things differently, building a network of connected communities within the valley landscape. The River Avon valley and its tributaries provide the environmental capital for a new way of living and can drive forward a thriving place that is both nature-positive and of optimum density.
- 6.8 Exemplary net zero and landscape-led sustainable housing developments and vibrant local businesses will create the standard for climate resilient placemaking and design. This will increase industrial and commercial capacity, job opportunities, and new homes of all types and tenures, including genuinely affordable homes. It will be unlocked through a well-connected, sustainable multi-modal transport corridor that offers a range of realistic transport choices and promotes active travel modes.
- 6.9 As a council, we are clear that growth and development need to deliver a better quality of life for our residents, now and in the future. The scale of development envisaged by the targets set for us to deliver new homes and employment space presents a challenge – but also an opportunity to tackle housing affordability and to bring new investment for local communities, supporting infrastructure, services and green spaces. Our local plan will set the spatial framework for development, whilst the proposed Movement Strategy will help ensure that a growing population is able to more easily get into and circulate around our principal City of Bath.

6.10 We will work with communities through our autumn programme of consultation and engagement to shape our shared vision for the district and for our individual communities – in Bath, Keynsham, Saltford Village, Whitchurch Village, the Somer Valley and our wider Rural Areas. These shared place-shaping visions will inform not only where development takes place, but how we will invest and deliver services to ensure that our communities thrive.

Transport

6.11 The A4 corridor between Bristol and Bath, and the A37 through Whitchurch Village, are characterised by persistent transport challenges. The most notable transport challenge is congestion at key junctions where peak-hour traffic volumes frequently exceed capacity, which leads to unreliable journey times and impacts air quality.

6.12 In Keynsham for example, the A4 acts as a barrier to north-south movement for pedestrians and cyclists, with limited safe crossing points and fragmented active travel infrastructure. Congestion on the main routes also results in through traffic diverting onto residential streets, impacting local communities. While bus services along both corridors are frequent, their reliability is undermined by the absence of bus priority measures, making them susceptible to delays. Additionally, clusters of road traffic collisions at major junctions highlight ongoing safety concerns for all road users.

Green Belt

6.13 The majority of the district located along the Bristol to Bath A4 Corridor, and at the south east edge of Bristol is located within the Bristol and Bath Green Belt.

6.14 Delivering future growth along the A4/rail corridor and to the south east of Bristol would require significant areas of land to be removed from the Green Belt. The impact of removing these parcels of land will need to be carefully considered both on an individual basis, including identification of potential areas of grey belt land reflecting updated national policy, and also cumulatively across the whole area, such that the five Green Belt purposes are not 'fundamentally undermined' when considered across the area of the plan.

6.15 As outlined in Chapter 4, the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA), with the constituent authorities, has commenced Stage 1 of a Strategic Green Belt Assessment that takes into account the updated NPPF 2024 and Green Belt Planning Practice Guidance published in 2025, including regarding the provisional identification of grey belt land. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. Following the Strategic Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1), it is likely that a more detailed assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt (Stage 2) will also be required, including consideration of whether the 'golden rules' are met and providing new or improved publicly accessible green space.

Green Infrastructure

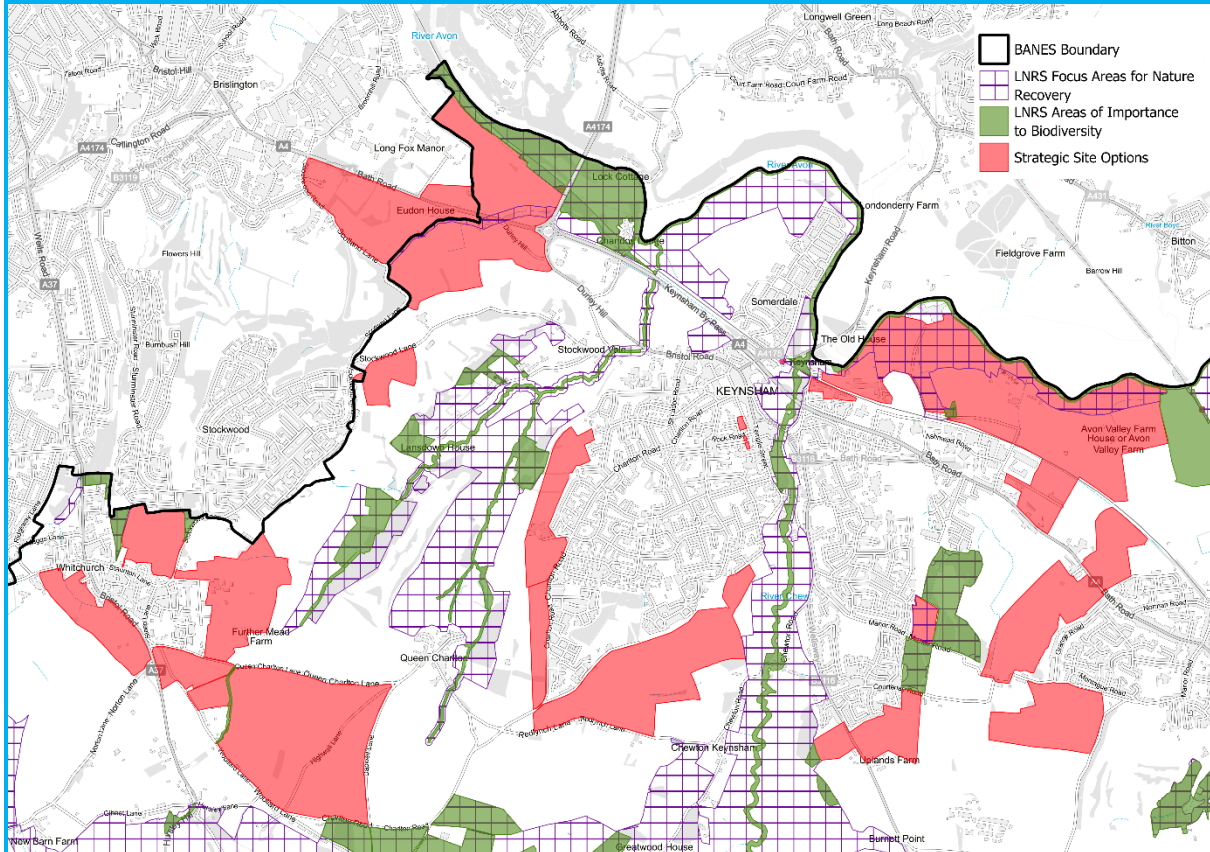
6.16 Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, and communities. Opportunities to enhance and extend the green infrastructure network should be central to the design of new developments, and development proposals should demonstrate strong links to the wider green infrastructure network.

6.17 Some of the site options set out in this chapter include reference to 'Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunities', which are located outside of the area shown for potential development. These are indicative areas where the council considers green infrastructure could be provided or improved to meet Natural England Green Infrastructure standards, and which may also offer nature-based solutions to address issues such as flooding and nature recovery. Work is ongoing to explore optimum locations. New and enhanced green infrastructure will either be funded by development in the area, or through other mechanisms to be explored as we prepare the Draft Local Plan.

6.18 The West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Toolkit (LNRS) was published in November 2024. The LNRS identifies the following areas:

- Areas that are already of importance to biodiversity. These are sites that are nationally designated for their value to nature, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). It also includes sites that are designated as Local Nature Reserves; sites that are locally designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), and/or are irreplaceable habitat including ancient woodland.
- Focus Areas for Nature Recovery. This is where action to recover nature will have the biggest impact and is most feasible. These have been mapped to reflect the priorities for nature recovery, and include all of the mapped measures for nature recovery. The focus areas for nature recovery are referred to as 'areas that could become of particular importance' in regulation.

6.19 Map 13 below shows where these areas are located in the Bristol to Bath Corridor, and the relationship between these areas and the Site Options under consideration in this Options Consultation. Constraints and opportunities are referenced for each Site Option where appropriate.



Map 13: Local Nature Recovery Strategy Areas and Strategic Site Options in the Bath to Bristol Corridor

Flood Risk

- 6.20 The River Avon flows between Bristol and Bath, in parallel with the A4 corridor. Areas of flood risk exist along parts of the River Avon, and Bristol City Council are currently preparing a Bristol Avon Flood Strategy to consider potential areas of mitigation required along the river.
- 6.21 B&NES Council and Bristol City Council are in regular correspondence to discuss any impact that flood defence works in the Bristol area might have cross-boundary in B&NES, particularly in the north Keynsham area.
- 6.22** There may also be scope across the whole river catchment for areas of flood risk to be considered for nature-based solutions, and to explore key areas where retrofitting of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) could be beneficial.

Duty to Co-operate

- 6.23 Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council administrative areas are located directly to the north and west of the Bath to Bristol corridor. Therefore, meetings with both of these authorities have been undertaken and will continue to take place to discuss strategic cross-boundary matters such as transport, flood risk, Green Belt, and housing provision.

Keynsham

Place Profile

- 6.24 Keynsham lies in a strategic location on the A4 corridor between Bath and Bristol. It is linked to the two cities by the A4 and the railway. Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 4 links east Bristol with Bath, passing reasonably close to the north of Keynsham.
- 6.25 Keynsham is a thriving market town, with a population of around 20,000 people. It plays an important role in supporting sustainable economic growth across B&NES, with its absolute employment numbers having increased over the period 2011 – 2021. Its town centre is characterised by variety of local independent retailers, many of which have evolved and set up on the High Street in more recent years, as well as a strong food and beverage offer.
- 6.26 Keynsham's settlement origins are demonstrated by the location of its historic core and conservation area fronting onto and within the River Chew Valley. Heritage assets are clustered throughout the conservation area in the town centre. During the latter part of the 20th century, Keynsham expanded rapidly to cater for development associated with the growth of Bristol. Expansion eastwards along Wellsway saw settlement growth on either side of the Chew Valley, presenting limitations in settlement connectivity between the east and west sides of the town.
- 6.27 The River Chew provides an important landscape, wildlife and recreational corridor running through the heart of the town. It provides the potential to connect residents with the wider countryside, particularly through the valley, down to Chew Valley Lake, and beyond. Keynsham sits within the Chew Valley Reconnected Green Infrastructure Project Area, which is made up of important networks of natural and semi-natural habitats, providing crucial habitats and wildlife corridors for priority species.
- 6.28 In Keynsham there is an imbalance of transport modes in the town centre with greater priority given to vehicles over active travel (walking, cycling and wheeling) modes. There are a series of walking and cycling routes within Keynsham, however, there are missing links within Keynsham, and between Whitchurch Village to the west and Saltford Village to the east. Keynsham has its own rail station and there is a good frequency of bus services operating from

Keynsham Town Centre offering services to destinations including the centres of Bath and Bristol. Services to other destinations not on the main bus routes to Bristol and Bath can be less frequent.

6.29 The principal roads that serve Keynsham and also Saltford Village, are the A4, A4175, B3116 and Charlton Road. The private car mode share for journeys to work are higher than the national and South West average. During the traditional weekday highway peak hours, there is congestion typically along the A4 and within Keynsham town centre on roads such as Bath Hill, Station Road and Mill Lane.

6.30 Keynsham is surrounded by the Bristol and Bath Green Belt, which separates the two settlements.

6.31 A local designation in the adopted B&NES Local Plan relating to the Landscape Setting of Settlements wraps around much of Keynsham. The designation as shown on the Policies Map and associated policy requires that development should only take place if it conserves and enhances this landscape setting.

6.32 In the 2024 Options Consultation the council sought comments on the extent of the existing designation and whether the boundaries of any existing landscape settings of settlements identified on the Policies Map should be amended. Since the 2024 Options consultation, the council has committed to undertaking a review of the landscape setting of towns and villages across the district where Policy NE2A applies (see Chapter 9 for further discussion). At the time of this Options Reset Consultation, the landscape setting review remains in progress and will be progressed in time to inform the Draft Plan Consultation in 2026.

Saltford Village

Place Profile

6.33 Saltford is a large village located to the east of Keynsham, with a population of around 4,000 people. Its historic core and conservation area front the River Avon to the north of the village, with numerous heritage assets located within this area. Over time, the village has grown to the south and west, with development predominantly residential in use, but with a small quantity of retail and commercial businesses located along the A4. Other village facilities such as the village hall and recreation ground are located to the north of the village, and Saltford Primary School is located off Claverton Road towards the south of the village.

6.34 Saltford Village occupies a strategic location on the A4 corridor between Bath and Bristol. Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 4 links east Bristol with Bath, passing closely to the north and east of Saltford Village. There is a good frequency of bus services operating along the A4 to the centres of Bath and Bristol.

6.35 The principal road that serves Saltford Village is the A4. During the traditional weekday highway peak hours, there is congestion typically along the A4.

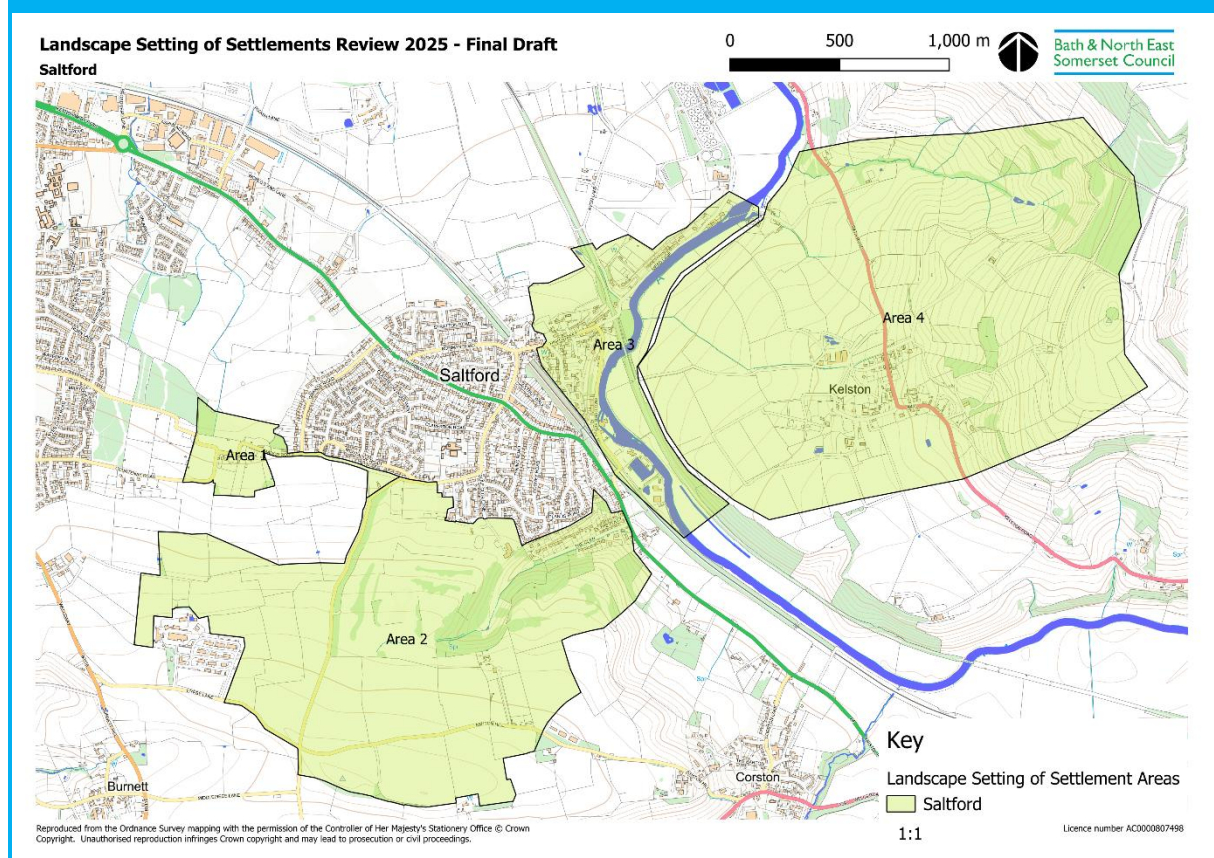
6.36 There is an aspiration amongst the local community and the council to reinstate a railway station at Saltford, and feasibility work is ongoing with WECA, Great Western Railway (GWR) and the Department for Transport (DfT) investigating location options for the station, costing and deliverability. At this stage two broad areas are being considered along the railway alignment: to the south east (near where the previous Saltford station was located before it closed in 1970), and to the north west of the village.

6.37 Saltford Village is surrounded by the Bristol and Bath Green Belt. The Cotswold National Landscape is located directly to the east of Saltford, with impressive sweeping views across the two settlements visible from across the designated area.

- 6.38 A local designation in the adopted B&NES Local Plan relating to the Landscape Setting of Settlements wraps around much of Keynsham and to the north, east, and south of Saltford Village. The designation, as shown on the Policies Map, and associated policy requires that development should only take place if it conserves and enhances this landscape setting. In the 2024 Options Consultation, the council sought comments on the extent of the existing designation and whether the boundaries of any existing landscape settings of settlements identified on the Policies Map should be amended. Since the 2024 Options Consultation, the council has committed to undertaking a review of the landscape setting of towns and villages across the district where Policy NE2A applies (see Chapter 9 for further discussion).
- 6.39 Settlements often have landscape settings which not only contribute to their distinctive character and quality, but are also highly valued, reflecting their significance as places where people live and work. There is on-going need for further development; in particular for housing, which is primarily focused on the larger settlements, but also in the more sustainable villages throughout B&NES. The purpose of Policy NE2A and the Landscape Setting Areas is to ensure the protection of key landscapes and landform, landmarks and views/viewpoints, which have a particularly positive contribution to the form of the settlement, to its distinctive character and identity, and which are considered to influence the creation of a strong sense of place.
- 6.40 The policy and its associated methodology was first adopted in 2015 as part of the Place Making Plan. The council has progressed a review of the policy and its associated methodology to inform the new B&NES Local Plan (2025-43) in preparation. The review was triggered by a request from Saltford Parish Council for the surroundings of Saltford Village to be designated as an AGLV Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and also responds to background evidence carried out by an independent expert consultant in December 2024.
- 6.41 The review includes the addition of a landscape setting for six new settlements (see Chapter 9 for further discussion). In addition, it includes a review of the Saltford Landscape Setting Area, which was previously assessed in 2015 (see map below indicating the proposed reviewed and revised setting). The supporting evidence which has informed this review can be found on the council's website.

6.42 In this Options Document, the council presents options to retain or strengthen Policy NE2A (see Chapter 9 for further discussion), and to include the Landscape Setting Area amendments reflecting the Saltford Village review (see Figure 3 overleaf) and defined setting for the six new settlements added.

6.43 At the time of this Options Reset Consultation, the landscape setting review remains in progress and will be progressed further in preparation for the Draft Plan Consultation in 2026. Therefore, it is anticipated that more landscape settings of existing settlements will be reviewed in line with the revised methodology in preparation for the Draft Plan Consultation.



Map 14: Landscape setting of settlements review 2025: Saltford map

Keynsham and Saltford Village area

6.44 Given the strong physical and functional relationship between Keynsham and Saltford Village, the following 'Key Issues and Opportunities', 'Emerging Vision and Priorities' and 'Transport Opportunities' sections are presented for Keynsham and Saltford Village together as a whole, with specific references to matters that are of relevance to Keynsham or Saltford Village made where necessary. This is then followed by discussion of all of the site options at Keynsham and then Saltford Village respectively.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- The Bristol and Bath Growth Zone is a key element of the WECA Local Growth Strategy. The zone will recognise the planned infrastructure improvements and housing developments along the Bristol to Bath Corridor, exploring the potential to partner with WECA to deliver key employment and housing sites as well as transport projects, especially mass transit and Saltford rail station.
- Whilst Bath and Bristol centres are readily accessible by public transport, the new communities created in the locality are likely to look towards Keynsham Town Centre meeting their day-to-day needs, and for a certain scale of leisure and cultural activities. There are likely to be significant opportunities for Keynsham Town Centre to enhance its current role and to increase its offer. The local plan will provide a proactive policy framework to enable this to happen and to ensure that town centre sites are developed in a way that supports increased demands.

- Evidence from the Future Economic Needs Assessment Update (May 2025) suggests net employment land requirements over the Plan period in the Keynsham area comprise around:
 - 12,000 – 13,000 sqm office space (2 ha land requirement)
 - 8,000 sqm industrial floorspace (2 ha land requirement)
 - 16,000 – 17,000 sqm warehousing / logistics floorspace (3 ha land requirement)

Some of this employment land requirement can be provided through existing commitments i.e. sites with planning permission or allocated in the adopted B&NES Local Plan for employment development. These existing commitments will need to be reviewed in preparing the Draft Local Plan.
- The need to protect existing and provide new employment space within Bath is significant and land availability is limited. The strategy and priority is to meet Bath's full need for employment premises within and potentially on the edge of the city. However, if this is not possible, the Bristol to Bath Corridor area, and specifically locations along the A4 at Keynsham, Saltford Village and Hicks Gate, could play a more strategic role in contributing to meeting Bath's needs. This will need to be explored in working towards the Draft Local Plan and may require a change in residential capacity at the site options to accommodate additional employment land.
- Land surrounding Keynsham and Saltford Village is designated as Green Belt. Any new allocations adjoining the settlements would require the removal of land from the Green Belt, and removal would require exceptional circumstances to be fully evidenced and justified. Measures to improve the quality of the remaining Green Belt should be explored, including accessible green spaces and nature recovery, with funding to deliver such improvements identified. Exploring opportunities for nature recovery will be informed by the West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Flood risk from the River Avon to the north of Keynsham and the east of Saltford Village restricts potential development in these areas.

- The Bath to Bristol Strategic A4 Corridor experiences significant congestion in both directions during peak times, including through the centre of Saltford Village. Congestion on the A4 also causes delays in Keynsham town centre and worsens air quality.
- Whilst Keynsham and Saltford Village have had their designated Air Quality Management Areas revoked in recent years, as a result of improvements to air quality, there is the potential for additional development and transport in the Bristol to Bath Corridor to cumulatively worsen air quality in the area. Developments could affect air quality in both B&NES and Bristol and an air quality assessment that considers the cross boundary and cumulative impact effects will be required.
- Unreliable public transport provision and easy and cheap parking within Keynsham results in an over-dependence on travelling by car within Keynsham and Saltford Village. WECA has recently consulted on public transport improvements along the A4, which includes mobility hubs along the A4 providing better sustainable transport links along the corridor.
- Keynsham's car parks are reasonably well utilised with a peak occupancy of 75%. However, this is over a relatively short time period with a 7-day mean occupancy of 55%, indicating a surplus of car parking in the town.
- Public space is more balanced towards vehicles over people, causing issues with congestion and severance.
- Many areas along the corridor lack effective walking and cycling connections to the wider network, with routes often fragmented and poorly integrated with strategic corridors. There is currently no direct, continuous walking or cycling route into Bristol, which significantly restricts accessibility and limits active travel options for residents. There is poor access to Keynsham Railway Station on foot, bicycle, and bus, particularly from the A4 corridor.
- Keynsham and Saltford Village are located in an area of landscape sensitivity. The Cotswolds National Landscape is located to the east with views across, and a local designation relating to the Landscape Setting of Settlements is to the north, east and south of Saltford Village, and wraps around much of Keynsham.

- Keynsham is bisected by the River Chew, which provides an important landscape, wildlife and recreational corridor through the town, but also creates movement severance for people due to limited crossings over the river. Weirs along the river currently provide barriers to fish passage for migratory fish.
- Keynsham and Saltford Village contain numerous important heritage assets which require protection.
- Keynsham lacks a cultural space/venue such as a hall with theatre for use by community.
- Keynsham and Saltford Village have health and wellbeing needs that the built and natural environment can play a role in addressing, including food insecurity, cardiovascular, respiratory and healthy weight needs.

Emerging Vision and Priorities

6.45 The council is working on an emerging vision and set of priorities for the area.

These priorities reflect and seek to address the issues identified above which have been informed by engagement with community representative groups, including parish and town councils. The priorities outlined below are broader than those that can be addressed through the local plan. However, the location and form of new development does need to be shaped and influenced to ensure it does address these priorities as best as possible. Other priorities won't be addressed through new development but may be addressed through other policies in the local plan or initiatives outside the scope of the local plan undertaken by the council or by other stakeholders.

- Capitalise on Keynsham's strategic location within one of WECA's four priority economic growth zones to create opportunities to enable Keynsham to attract new and innovative employers, including in established and emerging sectors.
- Generate a range of jobs that will mean local residents have access to and can thrive in good work, by providing land to meet employment requirements of the area.
- Provide homes to meet the needs of the district, including provision of homes that are affordable, and a mix of homes to meet the need of a variety of demographics, including homes for older people.
- Create opportunities to enhance the role of Keynsham Town Centre, including a new purpose-built community centre, strengthening the vibrancy of the local High Street to increase amenity for existing and new residents.
- Retain a sufficient green gap between Keynsham, Saltford Village and other nearby settlements, in order to retain the identity of settlements, and seek to improve the quality of the gap, making it more accessible and useable to all.
- Create opportunities to enhance the role of Saltford Village Local Centre strengthening its vibrancy, increasing amenity for existing and new residents.
- Create opportunities to become carbon neutral and nature positive by 2030 and work towards a climate resilient district.

- Ensure provision of community and social infrastructure and sustainable transport initiatives that serve existing residents as well as new, and across all life stages.
- Improve accessibility and connectivity by sustainable modes within Keynsham and Saltford Village, and also between the two settlements.
- Explore options to alleviate congestion within Keynsham Town Centre, and along the A4 corridor at peak times.
- Protect the key aspects of the landscape setting of the two settlements, and views to and from the Cotswold National Landscape.
- Provision of good quality green and blue infrastructure that is accessible and usable to all, placing nature at the heart of any development opportunities, and addressing strategic needs and opportunities.
- Maximise ecological mitigation and biodiversity net gain.
- Restore the natural connectivity and functioning of the river and flood plain for key species.
- Enhance access to the river for leisure and explore the potential to provide more space for boat dwellings.
- Explore the green infrastructure opportunities provided by the River Chew Valley through Keynsham, the River Avon corridor, and Stockwood Vale, for nature recovery, human health and well-being, and climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Seek opportunities to encourage community food growing and edible landscapes, and provide space for allotments.
- Ensure policy supports the delivery of built and natural environments that promote health and wellbeing for all.

Transport Opportunities

6.46 Some of the key issues in Keynsham relate to transport and highways, as listed above. A number of transport opportunities and potential interventions have been identified for Keynsham as contained within the Creating Sustainable Communities in North East Somerset Transport Strategy to address these issues. As the local plan progresses, these interventions will need more detailed consideration whilst preparing the Draft Local Plan, including mechanisms for funding them.

6.47 The Bath to Bristol A4 Corridor provides a strategic transport link with frequent bus services between the two cities. The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA) undertook a consultation on potential options for upgrades to the A4 Bath to Bristol Corridor, which set out a range of proposed improvements for active travel modes and bus services. Amongst others, the proposed improvements included continuous and designated walking and cycling routes along the A4, shared between active travel modes in locations where space is limited, bus lanes on both sides of the bypass for much of the corridor, and mobility hubs located along the corridor providing facilities to easily transfer between different modes of transport. A new cycling and walking route was also proposed along Station Road in Keynsham, providing improved connectivity between the A4, Keynsham Railway Station and Keynsham Town Centre. A revised scheme is due to be consulted upon in autumn 2025 in parallel with the Local Plan Options Consultation. This consultation aims to consider the feedback received during the initial phase and provides an opportunity for further engagement with the community. The intention is to gain a clearer understanding of local needs and preferences, helping to shape designs that more closely align with the community's aspirations.

6.48 Regular train services exist between Bath Spa and Bristol Temple Meads railway stations, with regular services also stopping at Keynsham Railway Station. WECA is developing a 'New Stations Feasibility Study' which is reviewing the potential to deliver a new railway station in Saltford Village. This could be a catalyst in helping to transform how both existing and new communities can travel, freeing up road capacity for those that need it.

6.49 The Bristol and Bath Cycle Path (Route 4) links east Bristol with Bath, passing reasonably close to the north of Keynsham and east Saltford. Although some local cycle routes connect into Route 4, there are opportunities to better utilise the proximity of these settlements to the route through provision of additional and dedicated cycle paths. Developments on the safeguarded land to the east of Keynsham have secured the delivery of improvements between Saltford Village and Keynsham, funding towards the provision of an active travel connection from Bath Hill East to Keynsham rail station (with the route still to be determined) and a new pedestrian and cycle connection to the Bristol and Bath Railway Path. Additional provision could include new segregated cycle lanes, as well as changes to country lanes where appropriate, providing a clear network of attractive primary and secondary routes connecting key amenities and facilities. Locations for active travel improvements could include improvements for active travel between Keynsham and Saltford Village and improved routes between Whitchurch and Keynsham, including to Broadlands Academy.

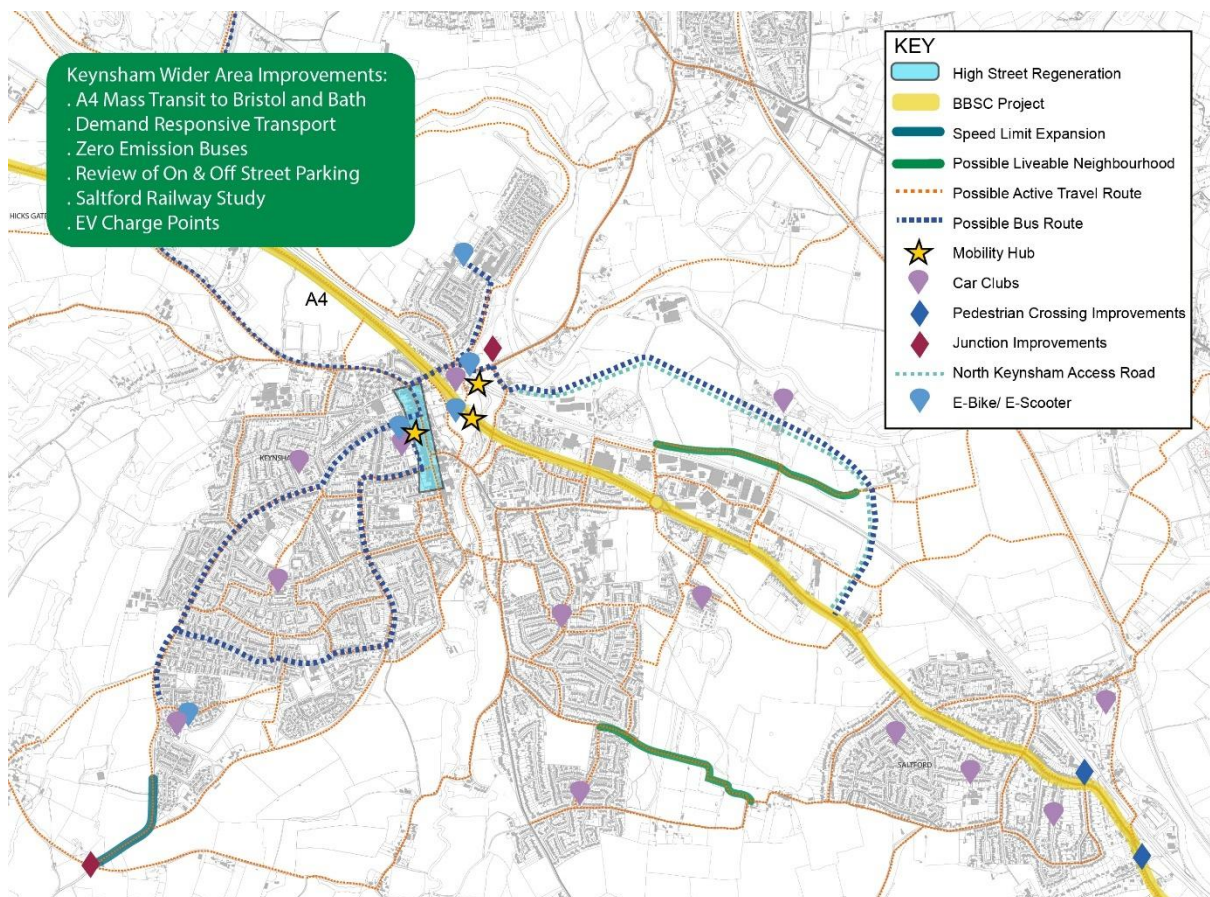
6.50 There is an opportunity within Keynsham Town Centre to investigate reallocating road space to prioritise those walking, wheeling, cycling and bus users, to achieve mode shift and create better places. Targeted filters, as part of traffic calming style interventions, support active travel on key routes and reduce the level and speed of traffic on inappropriate local routes, helping to link residential areas with local centres and town centres.

6.51 Micromobility – including a range of small, lightweight vehicles and devices such as bicycles, e-bikes, cargo bikes, electric scooters and electric skateboards – represents a significant opportunity in terms of increasing the distances that people can travel without a car, overcoming hilly terrain that would make pedal cycles unfeasible for many people. The provision of micro-mobility rental therefore increases choice. Measures should be implemented to keep traffic on appropriate routes and away from more sensitive areas, supporting opportunities to deliver sustainable transport and public realm benefits. This includes reallocating space from private vehicles to people by widening footways, improving crossings, and creating new public spaces. Enhancing the public realm in town centres in this way will help create a more attractive and welcoming local environment. Provision of new mobility hubs on the A4, within

Keynsham Town Centre and in proximity to Keynsham rail station. Provision of additional mobility facilities at existing car parks.

6.52 Public transport interventions should focus on providing bus journey time benefits by prioritising buses over private vehicles, helping to ensure more reliable and efficient services. Enhancements to the bus user experience can also be achieved through the installation of new, modern shelters equipped with digital real-time passenger information systems.

6.53 Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) could be used to connect rural residents to key corridors and proposed mobility hubs within Keynsham Town Centre, where passengers can gain access to a connecting bus or rail service to complete their journey.



Map 15: Keynsham and Saltford Village area transport opportunities map

Options Consultation 2024

- 6.54 Comments on the previous Options Consultation (Spring 2024) are still relevant. These comments will be reviewed and taken into account, together with additional comments received, when the Draft Plan is being prepared. Below is a short summary of some of the main issues raised in the previous consultation.
- 6.55 Respondents mentioned the importance of protecting the green belt, highlighting the value of open landscapes and the risks to wildlife, community spaces, and rural identity from development.
- 6.56 Respondents mentioned concerns about building on green belt land, noting its importance for wildlife and public wellbeing. Some respondents are open to development if environmental considerations are met.
- 6.57 Respondents raised issues about increased traffic and congestion due to development, suggesting solutions such as new transport options and infrastructure improvements.
- 6.58 There was an emphasis on the need for more reliable and accessible public transport; services and schedules do not always cater to the diverse needs of users, including those with mobility issues or living far from stations.
- 6.59 In Saltford Village concerns included loss of agricultural land, impacts on biodiversity and the rural character of south Saltford Village. Loss of recreational space and wildlife habitats was noted, alongside recognition of the need for more housing, including affordable housing.
- 6.60 At Saltford Village there was anxiety about increased traffic on the A4 due to new housing and criticisms of current road capacity and safety for non-motorised users, with suggestions for improved infrastructure and alternative transport solutions such as re-opening a railway station.
- 6.61 Concerns were raised that development may erode the rural and cultural identity of Saltford Village, transforming it into a suburban area. There was an emphasis on maintaining individuality and the social fabric of the community.

Strategy

6.62 The emerging strategy set out below relates to the wider Bristol to Bath Corridor, incorporating Keynsham, Saltford Village and other places. The strategy has been set out for this wider area because of the close functional and physical relationships between different places, that is they do not sit in isolation from nearby places.

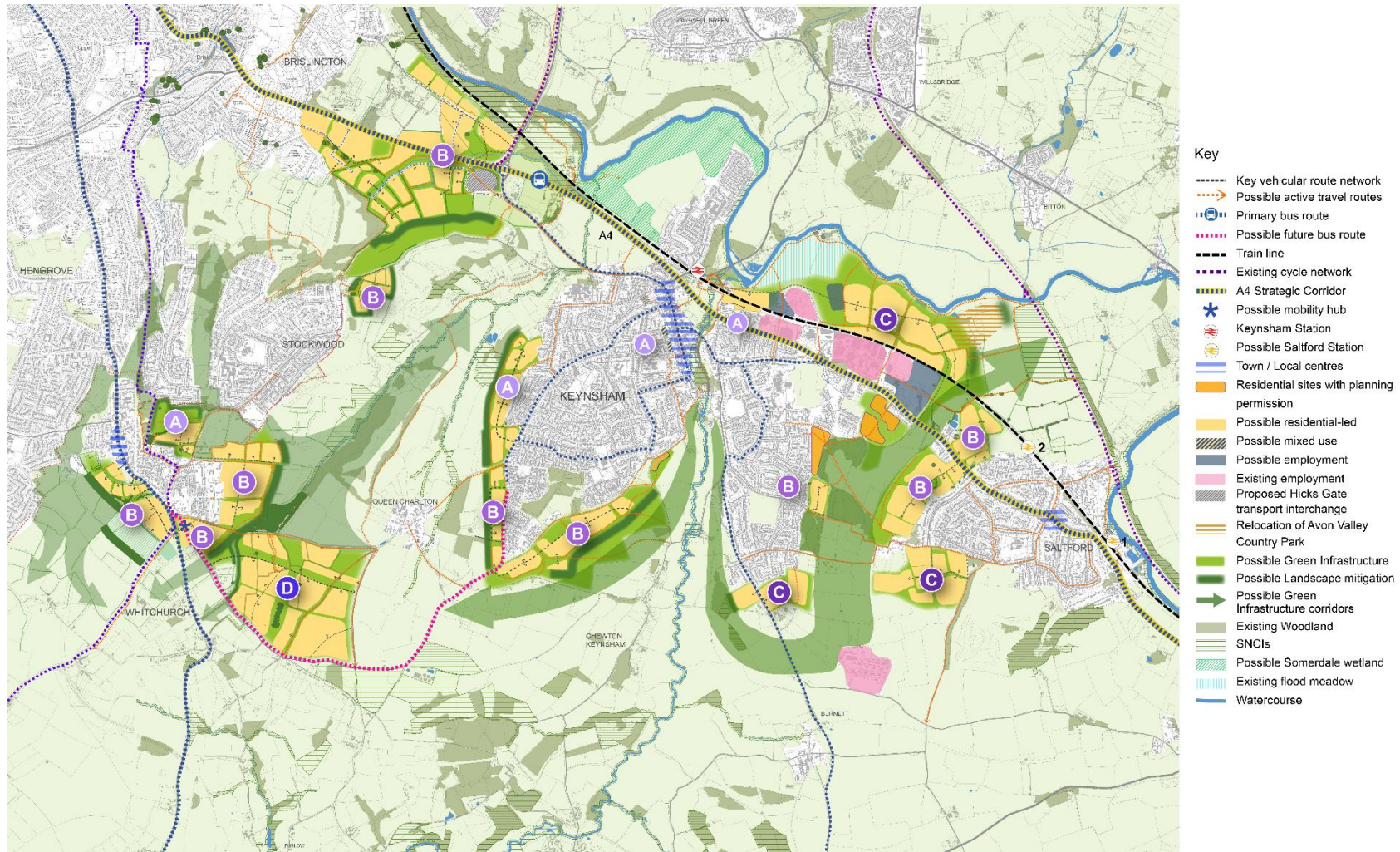
6.63 The strategy for the Bristol to Bath Corridor seeks to deliver sustainable growth capitalising on the strategic location between Bath and Bristol. It seeks to take advantage of existing, and significantly enhance improvements to, sustainable transport links in the area.

6.64 Economic growth will build on the area's strengths and links to Bristol and Bath with employment focused at Keynsham and Saltford Village along the A4 corridor, with a proportionate level of complementary employment at Whitchurch. Additional residential and employment growth will support the role and function of high streets and local centres in Keynsham, Saltford Village and Whitchurch Village. A review of car parking in Keynsham will inform development and public realm projects to revitalise the town centre and encourage modal shift. Development at North Keynsham will assist in removing through traffic from Keynsham High Street to support placemaking.

6.65 Additional housing will meet the needs of existing and future residents, including the delivery of affordable housing, which will be facilitated by the 'golden rules' where this takes place on land released from the Green Belt. The plan will retain the identity of existing communities by avoiding coalescence and integrating new development with strategic green infrastructure corridors that improve access to nature and enhance biodiversity, delivering the Chew Valley Reconnected project ambitions. Opportunities for nature recovery in the area will be informed by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

6.66 At Saltford Village, options to deliver a train station will be explored to improve the sustainability of the village, with new development delivering the necessary infrastructure to sustain growth, supporting the village centre.

Map 16: OPTIONS MAP – showing all land parcels in Hicks Gate, Keynsham and Saltford Village



Current Site Connectivity - Possible residential-led development

A A-rated B B-rated C C-rated D D-rated E E-rated F F-rated

The grading within the map illustrates the current transport connectivity by sustainable means based on the existing network, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity. They are intended for reference only. They do not account for future infrastructure improvements, which are expected to enhance connectivity in line with the emerging transport vision.



Keynsham Site Options

6.67 A variety of site options for development are set out below, which have been prepared in response to the key issues, priorities and objectives set out above. Not all of the site options presented will necessarily be taken forward for allocation for development in the Draft Local Plan. Explanation as to how each of the site options responds to the key issues, priorities and objectives is set out within the opportunities and constraints tables for each site option. Where mitigation or additional evidence work is required to achieve priorities and objectives, this is referenced within the table. Conflicts with priorities and objectives are also referenced.

6.68 The land parcels which make up the site options below have been assessed in more detail in various supporting documents, including the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), the Future Economic Needs Assessment Update (May 2025) the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Keynsham and Saltford Area of Search Assessment, and the Strategic Planning Options Document (SPO). Further information is available in the Site Selection Topic Paper.

6.69 Within these documents, a number of additional sites have also been assessed, and discounted for various reasons. These sites are not included in the site options below for the reasons set out in the evidence base. However, this Options Document Consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders and communities to provide comments on these discounted sites, by answering the question: Are there any other sites that have not been identified, that need to be considered?

Location Option	New sites - approximate housing capacity
North Keynsham*	1,900 – 2,400 dwellings
East of Avon Mill Lane	80-100 dwellings
Central Keynsham* (Ashton Way and the Labbott car parks)	20-30 dwellings
West Keynsham (North)	300-400 dwellings
West Keynsham (South)	300-400 dwellings
South West Keynsham	400-500 dwellings
East Keynsham	130-170 dwellings
South East Keynsham	350-550 dwellings

Table 3: Site Options table

6.70 Following consultation on these site options, a detailed assessment of the transport impact of each site will be undertaken, to inform selection of sites to be included in the Draft Plan. The cumulative impact of all sites included in the Draft Plan will also be assessed. Any site allocations in the Draft Plan will define site specific interventions required.

6.71 The Department for Transport has developed a Connectivity Tool that integrates transport and land use data to produce a national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. This tool allows users to filter connectivity scores by local authority, assigning each location a grade from A to J, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity within its local authority area.

6.72 Each site option has been evaluated with the Connectivity Tool, and an average grade reflecting its connectivity relative to the Bath and North East Somerset area has been assigned. It is important to note that this assessment is based on the current sustainable transport network and existing land uses such as schools and shops, and does not take into account planned or future developments. The grading from A to J is not an overall ranking of site options and other sustainability criteria and deliverability factors will also be considered when deciding which sites are allocated in the Draft Local Plan.

6.73 It should be noted that the sustainability of development in certain locations is dependent on the continued provision of supported public transport services. Given the uncertainty of future funding for these services, is a risk when assessing the suitability of sites for allocation.

North Keynsham

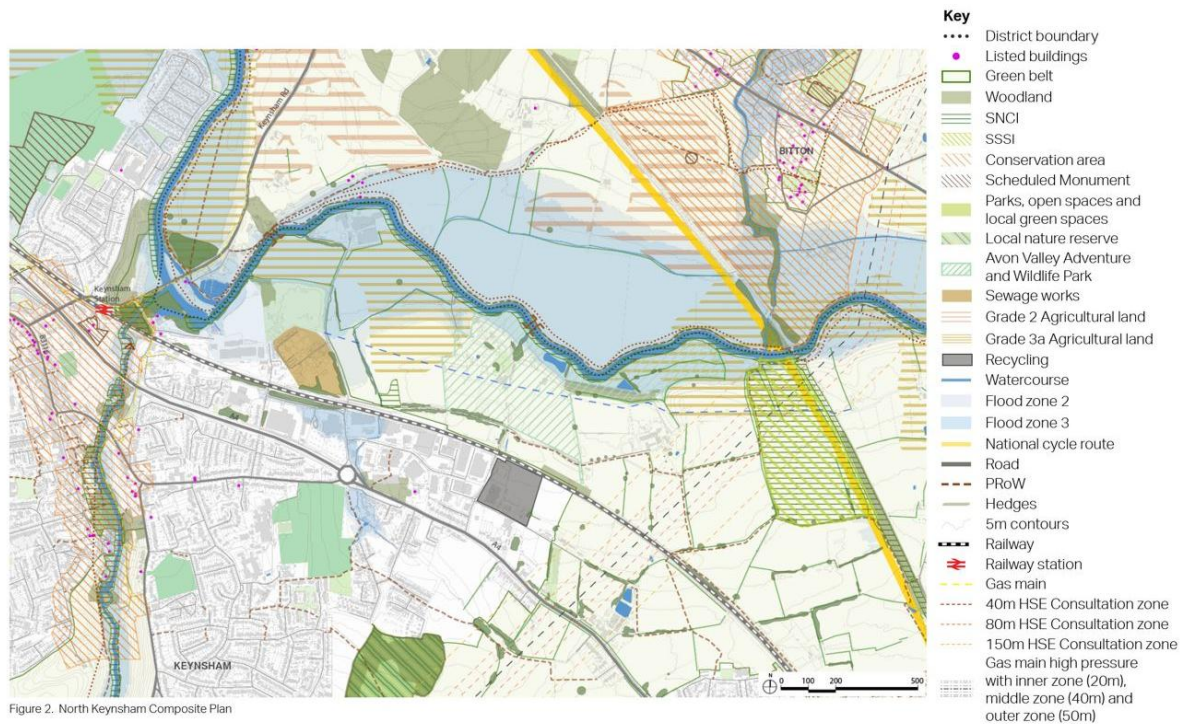
Context

- 6.74 North Keynsham is located to the east of Keynsham Town Centre, and south of the River Avon, separated from the town by the railway line running between Bristol and Bath. Narrow access points via various bridges and tunnels connect the site to Keynsham.
- 6.75 The site is located in close proximity to the A4, the Bristol and Bath Cycle Path and Keynsham Train Station, all of which provide direct access to Bath and Bristol by bus, train and bicycle.
- 6.76 Some constraints exist across the site due to its location, existing land uses, and poor connections to its surroundings (see constraints in table below). However, through careful masterplanning and provision of mitigation where required, the site is considered to be a good option for development due to its highly sustainable location.
- 6.77 Due to its highly sustainable location, if this area is allocated for development in the local plan, its deliverable capacity should be optimised. With this in mind, further evidence base work is being undertaken to determine whether a higher quantum of development than set out below could be provided through mitigation of on-site constraints imposed by the water recycling plant and gas pipeline.
- 6.78 Additional landscape evidence work is also being undertaken to assess the impact of development on the Cotswold National Landscape and its setting, both from individual site options and cumulatively considering wider development along the A4. In addition, work is underway to assess needs and opportunities for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery.
- 6.79 The option for potential development at West Saltford, will need to be considered in conjunction with this North Keynsham option, with regards to maintaining a sufficient green gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village to avoid coalescence and provide high quality accessible open space, which are priorities for both settlements.

6.80 A road will be required to access the development site and it is envisaged that it will also play a more strategic role as a relief route, removing through traffic from Keynsham Town Centre, to the wider benefit of the town and enabling a greater focus on sustainable modes of transport on the town centre area network.

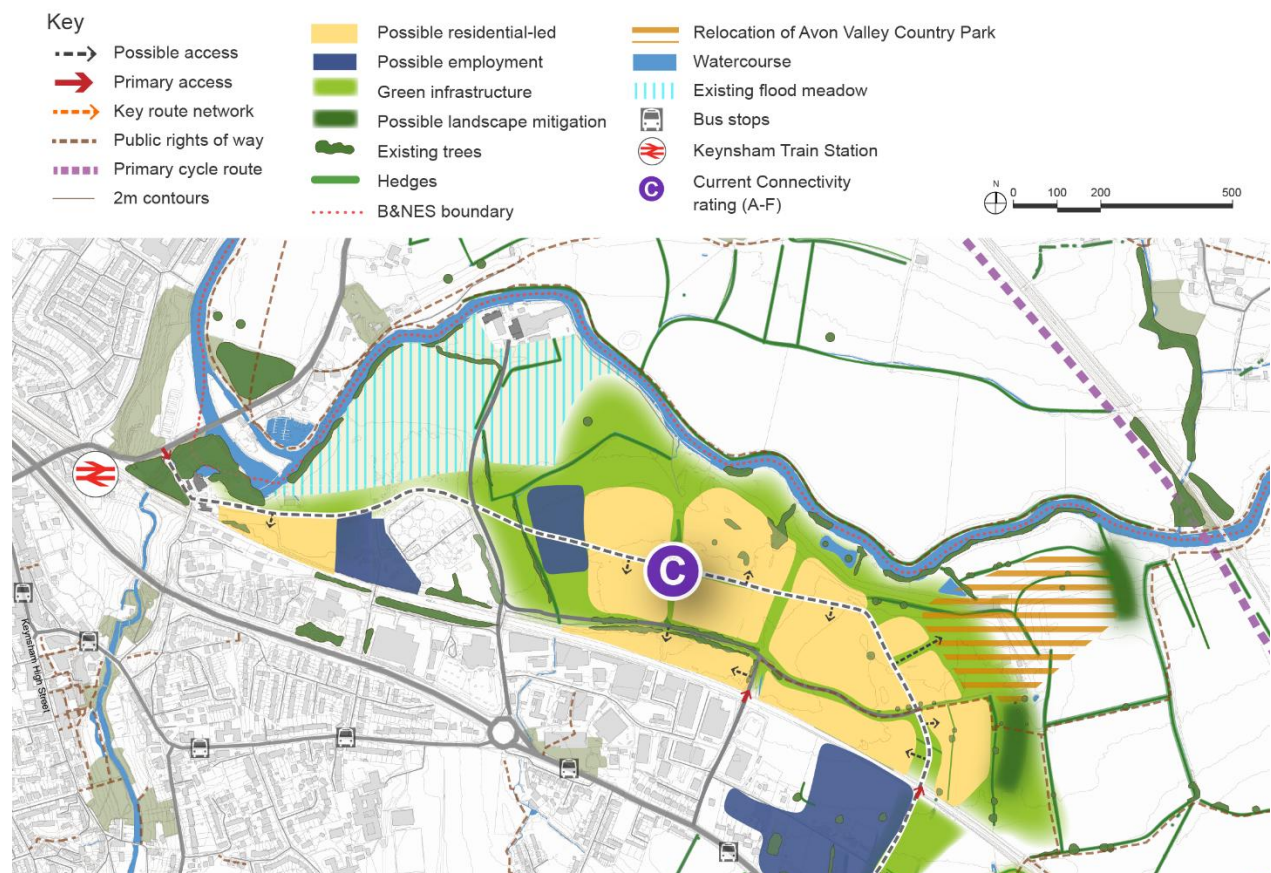
6.81 The site requires provision of significant infrastructure, not only from a transport perspective, but also to provide services and facilities for future residents. Optimising residential development at the site is considered to be important to both financially support provision of this infrastructure, and to secure its long-term use.

6.82 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release of land from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA and the constituent authorities will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to developing greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.



Map 17: Context Plan - North Keynsham

Site Option



North Keynsham	Description
Opportunities	Provision of a sustainably located mixed-use development, comprising: • Around 1,900-2,400 new homes, with potential to include an element of Purpose Built Student Accommodation within the wider mix of housing. This figure would be reduced if other non-residential development were to be delivered at the site. • Employment uses – the type and scale of employment uses on this site will be assessed and identified in the Draft Local Plan. • Provision of a local centre including convenience floorspace (scale to be determined by overall quantum of development at Keynsham). A range of community and leisure facilities at the centre of the development, including a primary school, retail provision, community facilities, and the opportunity to provide a cultural facility, such as a hall with theatre, for use by local communities. Located in close proximity to the A4, the Bristol and Bath Cycle Path and Keynsham Train Station, providing direct access to Bath and Bristol by public transport and active travel modes. Potential to provide high quality active travel routes into town centre and also to Bristol and Bath cycle route. Opportunity to provide low car development due to sustainable location. Potential to provide a strategic link on the highway network using the access road required by the site to remove traffic from Keynsham Town Centre, to the wider benefit of the town. Potential to explore the use of the riverfront for moorings and other water-related uses. Location within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Focus Area of Nature Recovery provides significant opportunities for nature recovery and wetland habitat within areas located in Flood Zone 3. Potential to explore the creation of woodland habitats linking Keynsham community woodland to the River Avon.

Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Potential for loss of green gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village, particularly when considered in addition to option at West Saltford. Significant landscape sensitivity considerations relating to the impact of development on the Cotswold National Landscape. The relocation of Avon Valley Wildlife Park to the east will also need to be considered in relation to potential landscape impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape and its setting. Stidham Farm SSSI and SNCI located to the east of the site. Broadmead Field SNCI and River Avon SNCI located within the site boundary. Access is currently restricted due to the site's location between the railway line and the River Avon. Narrow access points exist via bridges and tunnels connecting the site to Keynsham. Poor access to the site exists from Keynsham Train Station. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option. The north-western side of the site is located in Flood Zone 3. Part of the site is also located in Flood Zone 2. Relocation of Avon Valley Wildlife Park would be required. The odour zone from the water recycling centre restricts some land uses in its immediate surroundings. High-pressure gas main running along the eastern side of the site restricts most land uses within HSE explosive standoff areas.
Mitigation required	Requires significant improvement to walking and cycling routes between the site, Keynsham Train Station and the wider town, including Wellsway Secondary School. Significant green infrastructure buffer likely to be required to the east of any development to reduce impact on the Cotswold National Landscape and to buffer the river, as well as interspersing significant tree planting and green space within development to help soften and break up any perceived mass of built forms, strengthen green infrastructure, and enhance the integration of built form within the landscape. Ecological mitigation required to ensure safeguarding of SSSI and SNCI, and to deliver fish recovery. The cumulative impact of development of sites in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity.

Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Landscape assessment required to assess impact of development on Cotswold National Landscape. Evidence to consider whether mitigation at water recycling centre could allow for development closer to the works. Evidence to consider whether mitigation along gas pipeline could allow for development within HSE explosive standoff areas. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery. Air Quality Assessment (including all sites along A4 corridor). Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to consider appropriate quantum and mix of uses in the local centre, which is dependent on the scale of other developments in the area.
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East of Avon Mill Lane

Context

6.83 East of Avon Mill Lane is a narrow parcel of land located to the south of the railway line, accessed via Avon Mill Lane and Vandyck Avenue. It currently accommodates a number of medium sized industrial employment units.

6.84 The site is bordered directly to the south by residential homes. The close proximity of the existing industrial units to the residential dwellings currently causes localised issues relating to noise and pollution. This option therefore explores the potential to redevelop the industrial uses for residential use, in order to improve the well-being of residents living to the south.

6.85 It should be noted that no discussion has taken place with the landowner or existing business occupying the site.

Site Option

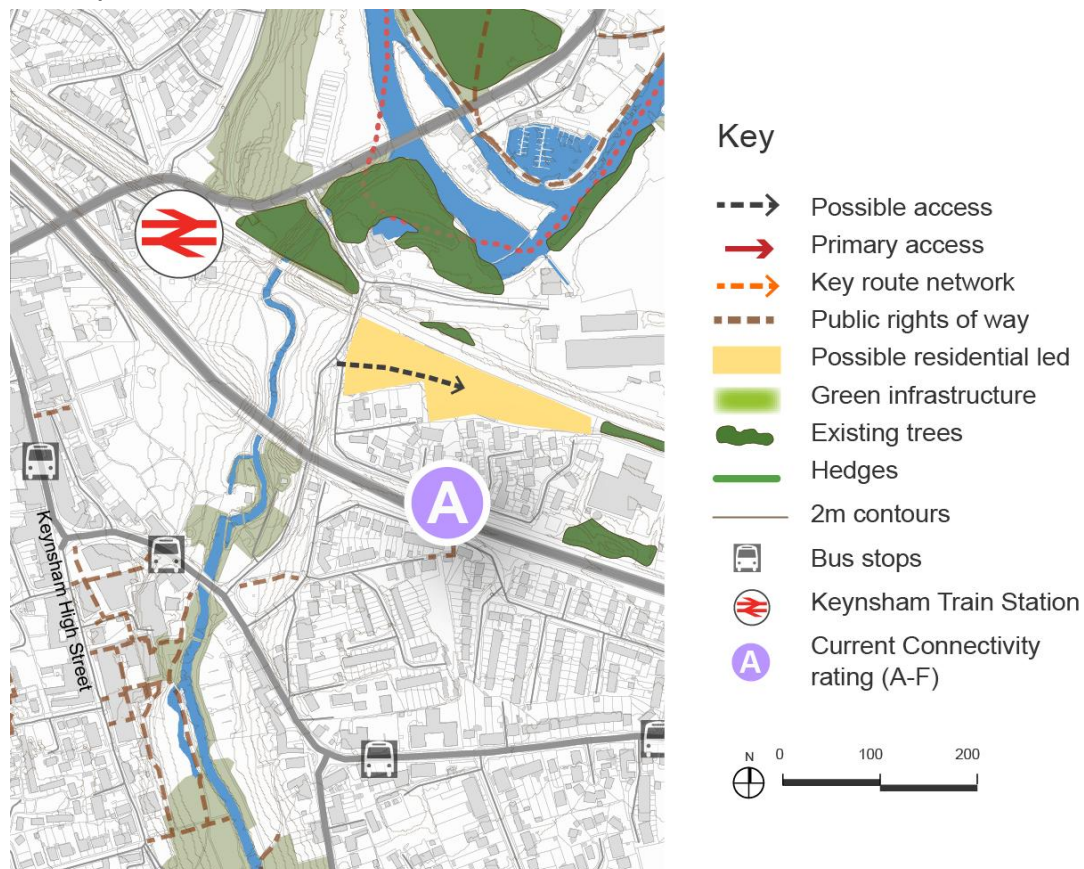


Figure 13: Indicative concept plan - East of Avon Mill Lane

East of Avon Mill Lane	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 80-100 homes, plus a playground for use by existing and new residents, on brownfield site. Opportunity to improve the well-being of existing residents living directly south of the existing industrial units, through replacement with more compatible neighbouring residential use. Potential to explore local food growing opportunities, such as provision of a small orchard. Opportunity to provide car free development in a sustainable location close to Keynsham railway station.
Constraints	Loss of existing industrial employment land. Site located directly adjacent to the railway line. Active travel routes into town centre require improvement. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	Significant planting to the north of the site required to provide a visual and noise buffer to the existing rail lines. Consideration of active travel routes into town centre required.
Further evidence required	Holistic review of employment space across the district required, including the impact of the loss of this industrial site. Contamination assessment required due to current industrial land use.

Central Keynsham

Context

- 6.86 The Sustainable Transport Plan for Keynsham Town Centre includes the provision of improved public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, with the aim to encourage people to use sustainable modes of transport to get to Keynsham Town Centre. This aims to lead to a reduction in the need for car parking spaces in the centre of the town over the 20-year Plan period.
- 6.87 As such, and depending on further analysis of car parking provision within the town centre, the options below explore the potential to redevelop some of the existing car parks close to Keynsham High Street to provide mixed-use, residential-led development.
- 6.88 The sites are located in highly sustainable locations, within easy walking distance of the facilities and amenities of Keynsham's main commercial and retail centre, and with excellent access to key public transport links.
- 6.89 Ashton Way Car Park and Labbott North and South car parks are located just behind Keynsham High Street and Temple Street. Both car parks serve town centre visitors and those working in the town. The option explores the opportunity to redevelop half of Ashton Way car park (retaining the other half as car parking), and both of the Labbott car parks to provide residential apartments. In the Options Document (Spring 2024) we consulted on options to explore the potential to redevelop a site primarily occupied by Tesco supermarket and car parking. This site is not available for redevelopment and the part of the site adjoining Danes Lane now has planning permission for the development of flats. Therefore, these options are no longer being pursued.

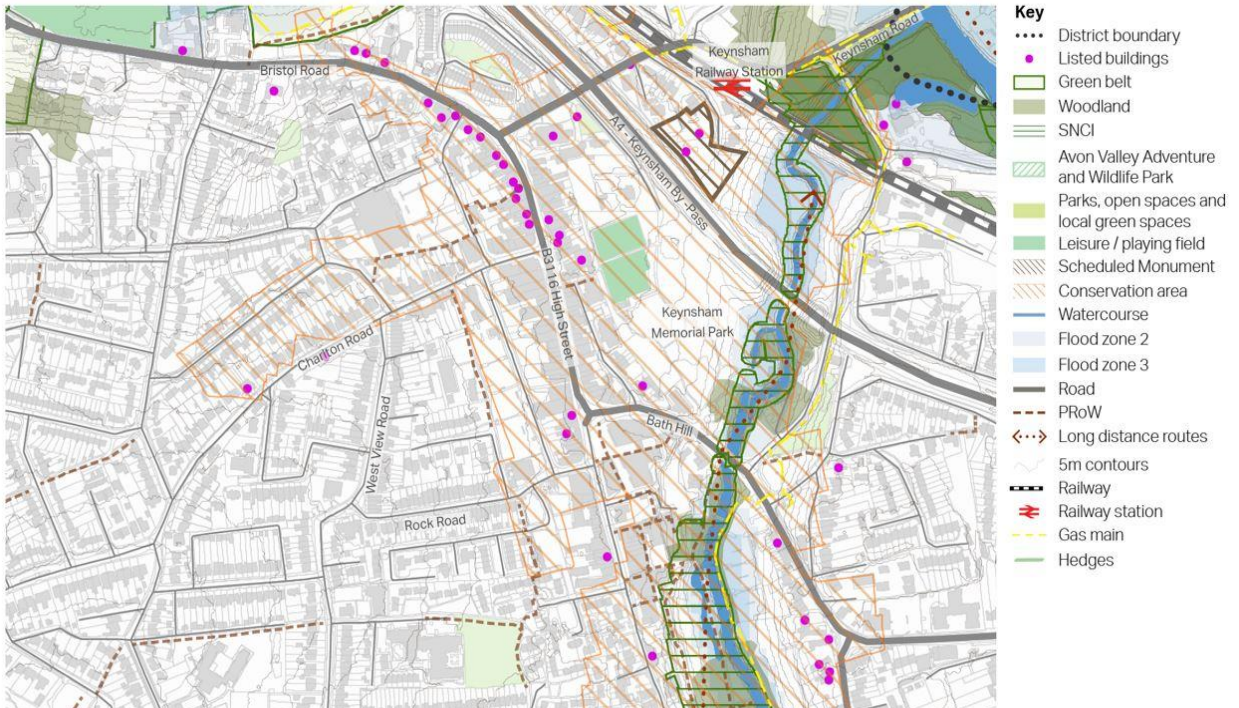


Figure 14: Context plan - Central Keynsham

Site Options

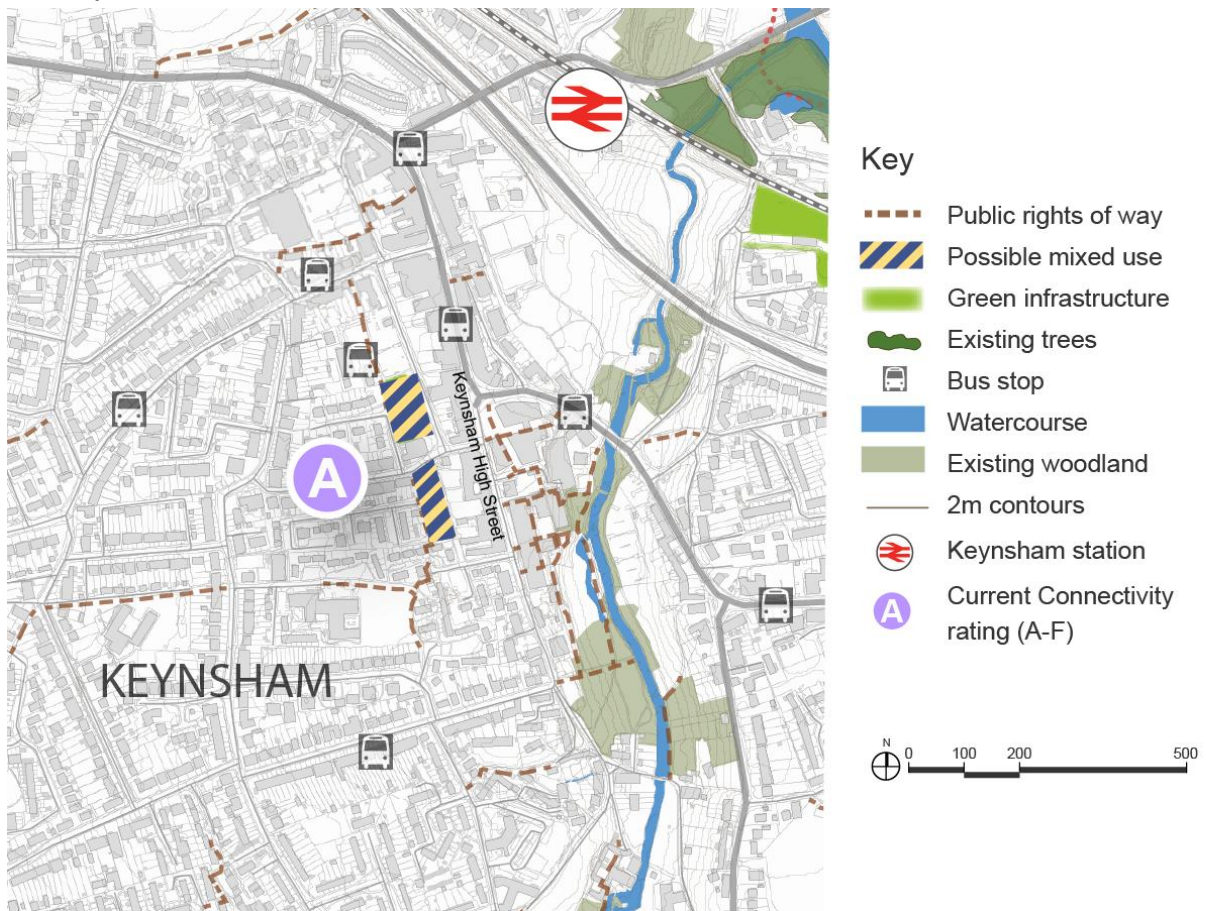


Figure 15: Indicative concept plan - Central Keynsham

Central Keynsham	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 20-30 homes and office development. If these sites were developed solely for residential use, a greater number of homes could be provided. Optimise development on brownfield land, located in highly sustainable town centre location. Creates active frontage on Ashton Way. Opportunity to explore urban greening through planting of street trees and provision of green infrastructure.
Constraints	Requires redevelopment of car parking spaces in town centre location - dependant on further analysis of car parking provision within the town centre over 20-year Plan period. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option. Embodied carbon considerations relating to redevelopment of existing building. Located adjacent to Keynsham Conservation Area, and multiple listed buildings. Constrained brownfield sites with little opportunity for green space provision.
Mitigation required	Linked to sustainable transport plan for the town, which seeks to improve infrastructure to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel, therefore reducing the need for car parking spaces in the town centre.
Further evidence required	Further analysis of car parking use in Keynsham Town Centre. Embodied carbon analysis relating to redevelopment of existing building. Commercial demand for office development in Keynsham Town Centre Air quality assessment

West Keynsham

Context

6.90 West Keynsham is located to the west of Charlton Road. In light of the increased housing need for the district and the amended national planning policy context for Green Belt, the two West Keynsham sites consulted on in the Options consultation (2024) have now been expanded further in this Options Reset Consultation. The previous two options have been expanded northwards and southwards respectively, such that the entire western edge of Keynsham is now covered by an option.

6.91 The southern end of the site directly fronts Charlton Road, whereas the northern side neighbours the back gardens of the houses on Lays Drive.

6.92 The land is mainly used as arable fields with Lays Farm Trading Estate located in the centre. The site is fragmented by well-maintained hedgerows and mature trees creating enclosed areas. To the west of the site, the land slopes steeply towards Stockwood Vale.

6.93 Two options for West Keynsham are set out below. It is important that local employment uses are retained in this area. The first option optimises housing development, but would potentially require the relocation of businesses at Lays Farm Trading Estate within the site, retaining the overall quantum of employment floorspace. The second option reduces the number of homes proposed significantly, retaining Lays Farm Trading Estate in situ.

6.94 The sites are located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt, an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment, being carried out by WECA, will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also provide a provisional indication as to whether it has potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. Following the Strategic Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1), it is likely that a more detailed

assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt (Stage 2) will also be required.

6.95 Strategic development on the west and south western edges of Keynsham could provide significant benefits. This part of the town (especially the south western extremity) is not well served by either community facilities or walking, cycling or wheeling access to the town centre. Planned and co-ordinated development could provide opportunities to substantially improve sustainable transport links northwards along Charlton Road and eastwards from the Parkhouse Lane area into the town centre, as well as opportunities to provide improved community facilities in this part of Keynsham. Recent housing development has meant Keynsham has grown significantly without supporting infrastructure. Additional development can help improve this part of the town as a community well linked into the rest of the town and town centre.

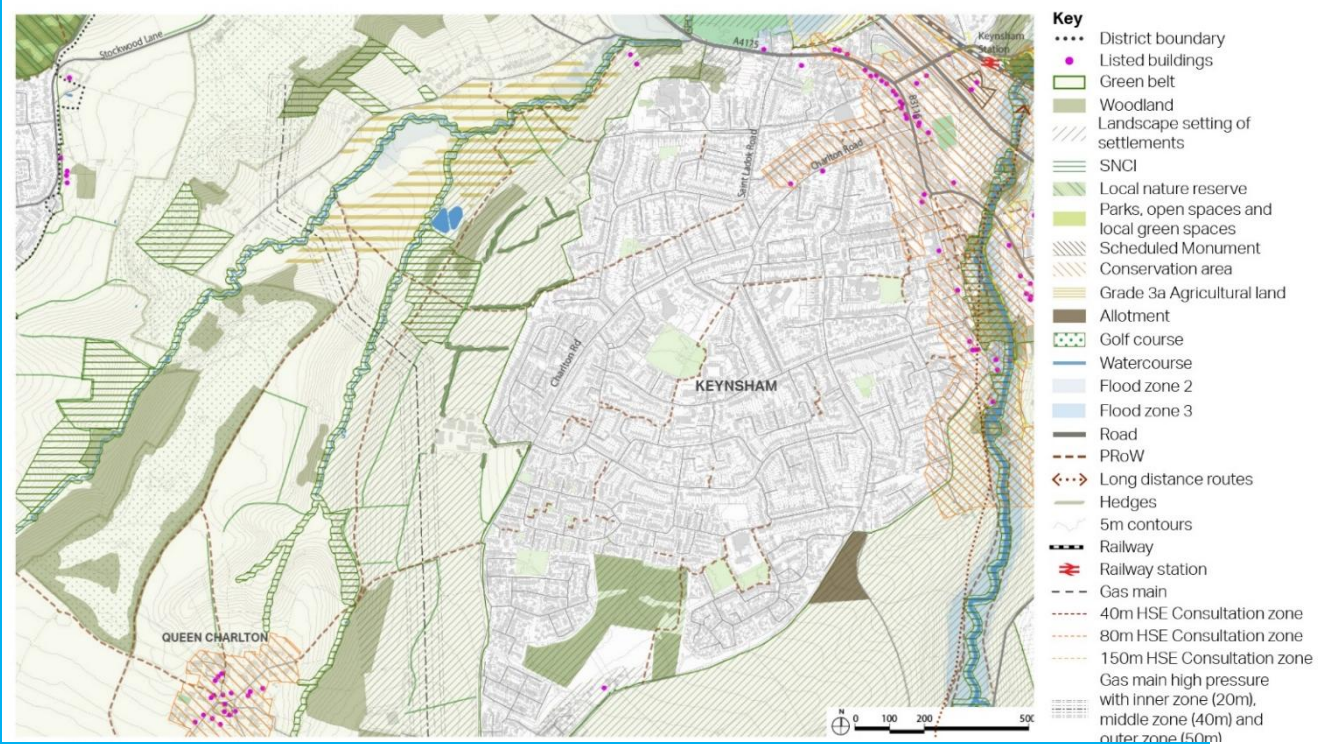


Figure 16: Context plan - West Keynsham

Site Options

West Keynsham Option 1 (northern half of western edge below)

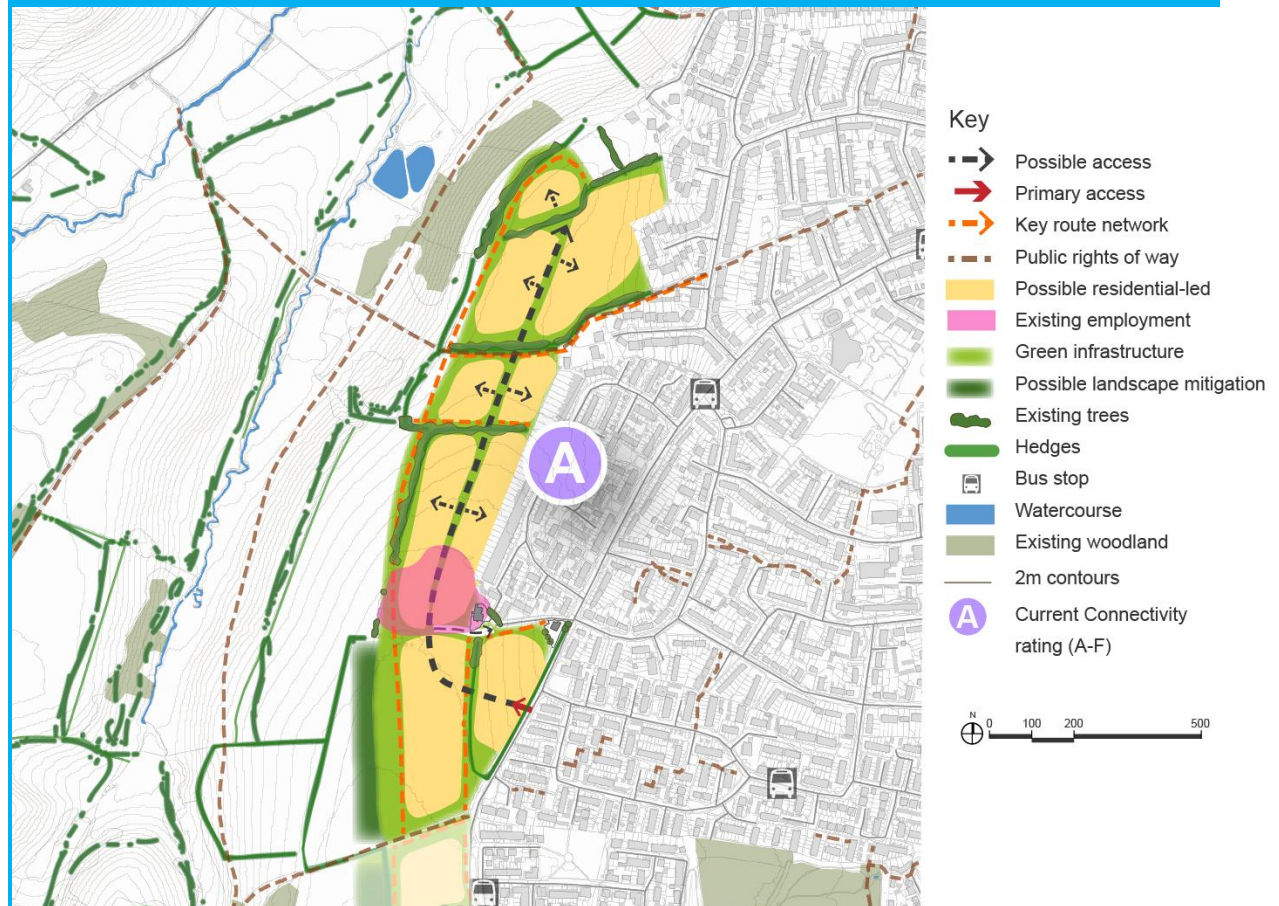


Figure 17: Indicative concept plan - West Keynsham (Option 1)

West Keynsham Option 1	Description
Opportunities	Provision of 300-400 homes. Opportunity to enhance and/or relocate the existing employment at Lays Farm Industrial Estate to improve access Opportunity to increase permeability of the existing street network should be explored. Adjacent to a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Focus Area of Nature Recovery
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Existing employment land at Lays Farm Industrial Estate to be retained or re-provided. Loss of agricultural land. Single vehicular access only from Charlton Road. Pedestrian access to the north of the site linking to town centre currently very narrow – improved access required. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option. Site lies within area designated as part of the Landscape Setting of Settlement, therefore development must consider conservation and enhancement of landscape character and landscape setting of Keynsham. Site lies adjacent to a grassland Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
Mitigation required	50m minimum Green Infrastructure (GI) buffer along western edge of site to mitigate harm to views from west. Tree-lined streets, and tree-line avenue to run north to south at highest point to enhance screening. SNCI to be retained and protected. The cumulative impact of development of sites allocated in the Draft Local Plan in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed to ensure there is sufficient capacity.

Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district, and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Landscape assessment required to consider impact of development on Landscape Setting of Settlement. Consideration of potential risk to watercourse due to elevated position of site. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure. Air Quality Assessment. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area.
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West Keynsham Option 2 (southern half of western edge below)

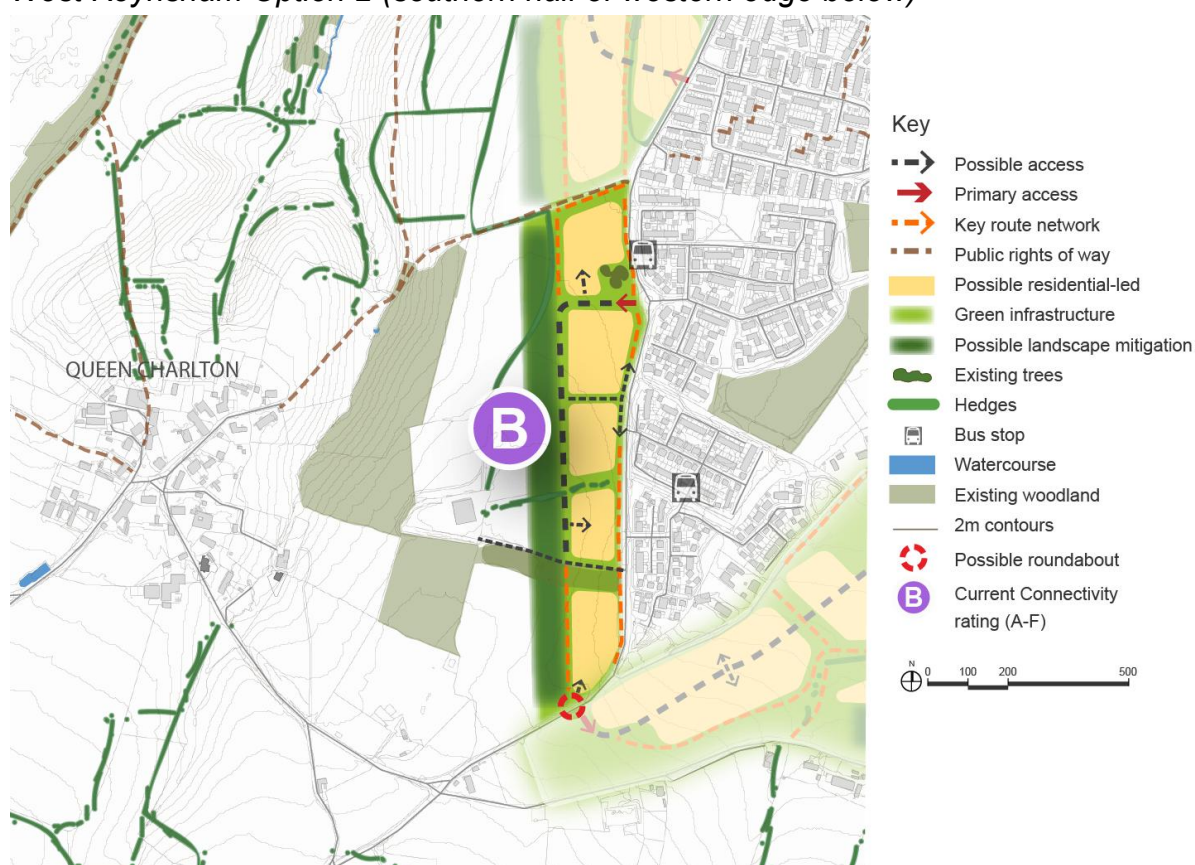


Figure 18: Indicative concept plan - Option 2

West Keynsham Option 2	Description
Opportunities	Provision of 300-400 homes. Opportunity to increase permeability of the existing street network for walking, cycling and wheeling should be explored .
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Site lies within area designated as Landscape Setting of Settlement, therefore development must consider conservation and enhancement of landscape character and landscape setting of Keynsham. Limited access to green space and local food growing provision. Green space would need to be accommodated on site.
Mitigation required	50m GI buffer along western edge of site to mitigate harm to views from west. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option. The cumulative impact of development of sites to be allocated in the Draft Local Plan in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity.
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Landscape assessment required to consider impact of development on Landscape Setting of Settlement. Consideration of potential risk to watercourse due to elevated position of site. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Air quality assessment. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area.

South Keynsham



Figure 19: Indicative concept plan - South Keynsham

South Keynsham	Description
Opportunities	Provision of 400-500 homes. Opportunity to increase permeability of the existing street network for walking, cycling and wheeling should be explored
Constraints	Landscape setting of the Chew Valley. Parkhouse Lane unsuitable for vehicular access. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	The cumulative impact of development of sites to be allocated in the Draft Local Plan in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity. Landscape mitigation along eastern boundary to retain the landscape setting of the Chew Valley
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location).

East Keynsham

Context

- 6.96 East Keynsham is located towards the south of the area to the east of Keynsham, comprising a parcel of pasture land which is bordered to the north east, east and south by woodland at the Manor Road Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The site is bordered to the west by residential development along Hurn Lane and planning permission has been granted for 70 dwellings directly to the north of the site, east of Minsmere Road.
- 6.97 The site forms a small part of a gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village along the single lane Manor Road which has the potential to become a 'Quiet Lane'.
- 6.98 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt, an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also provide a provisional indication as to whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. Following the Strategic Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1), it is likely that a more detailed assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt (Stage 2) will also be required.

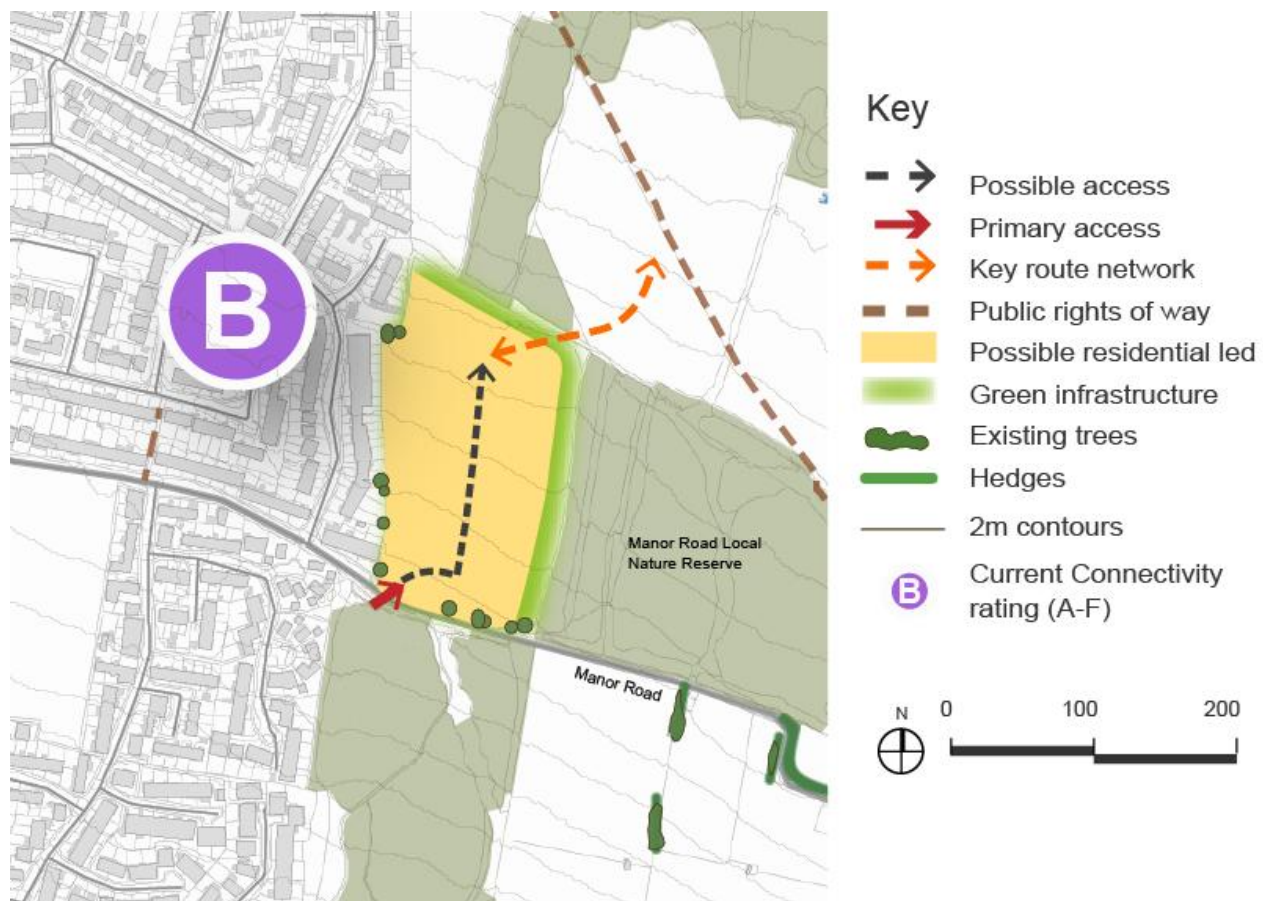


Figure 20: Indicative concept plan: East Keynsham

East Keynsham	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 130-170 homes. Improved access to adjacent Manor Road Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Location within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Focus Area of Nature Recovery provides an opportunity to enhance the Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Opportunity to explore and fund Manor Road becoming a “Quiet Lane” between Keynsham and Saltford Village, through introduction of a modal filter, or other traffic restrictions, to ensure traffic flows and speeds are low enough to enable active travel between the two settlements.
Constraints	The site is located within the Green Belt. Single lane access along Manor Road. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	The cumulative impact of development of sites allocated in the Draft Local Plan in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed to ensure there is sufficient capacity. Road widening to accommodate a suitable access at the south west of the site.
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location).

South East Keynsham

Context

6.99 South East Keynsham is located to the south of the east side of Keynsham, comprising two parcels of land located to the east and west of Wellsway (the B3116). Wellsway connects the town to the A39 to the south.

6.100 The parcel located to the west of Wellsway is used as arable land and is bounded by residential homes to the south and north, and woodland to the west.

6.101 The parcel located to the east of Wellsway is also used as arable land and options to provide a walking and cycling route up into Keynsham would need to be explored due to a lack of permeability between the land parcel and the residential development adjoining it to the north.

6.102 A bus stop providing a twice hourly bus service into Bristol to the north, and the Somer Valley to the south, is located on Wellsway close to the site. However, improvements to walking infrastructure to reach the bus stops from the site would be required as limited pavement currently exists.

6.103 The nearest existing convenience shop is located on Chandag Road, approximately 1 mile away from the site.

6.104 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt, an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment, being carried out by WECA, will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. Following the Strategic Green Belt Assessment (Stage 1), it is likely that a more detailed assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt (Stage 2) will also be required.

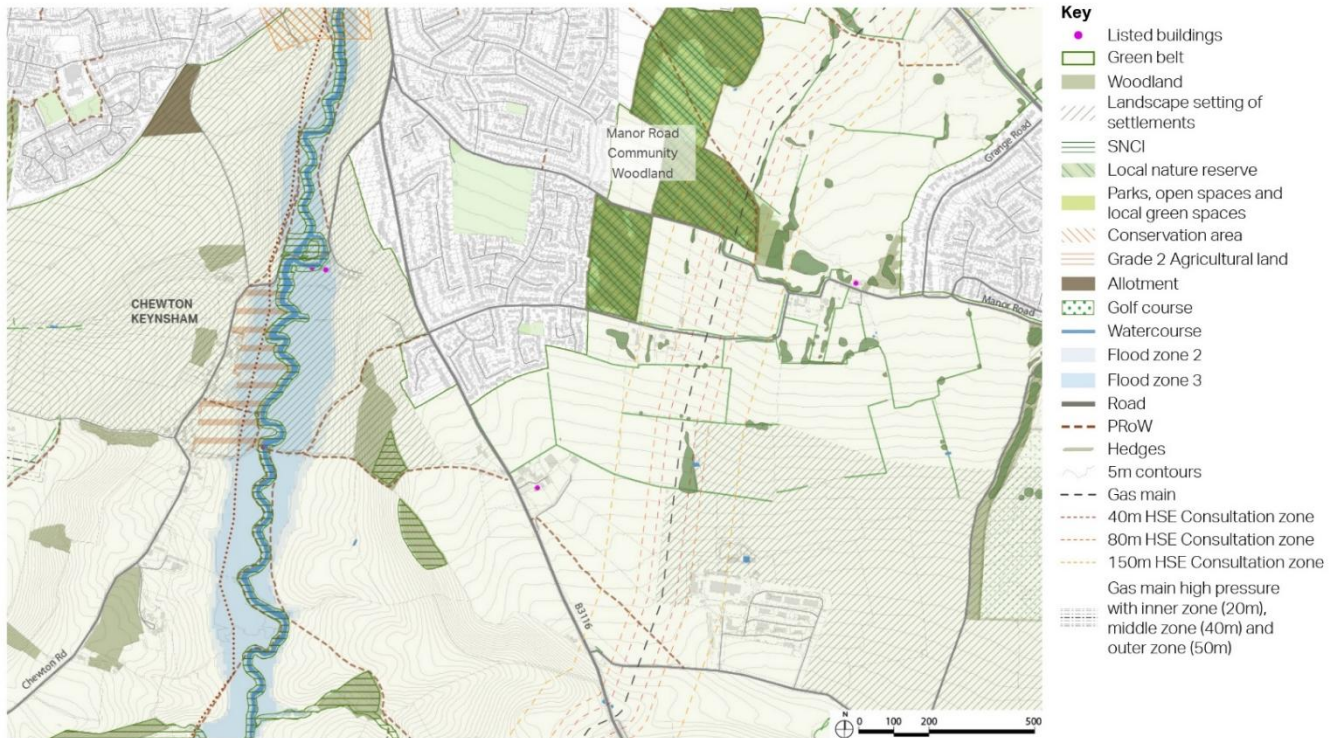


Figure 21: Context plan - South East Keynsham

Site Option

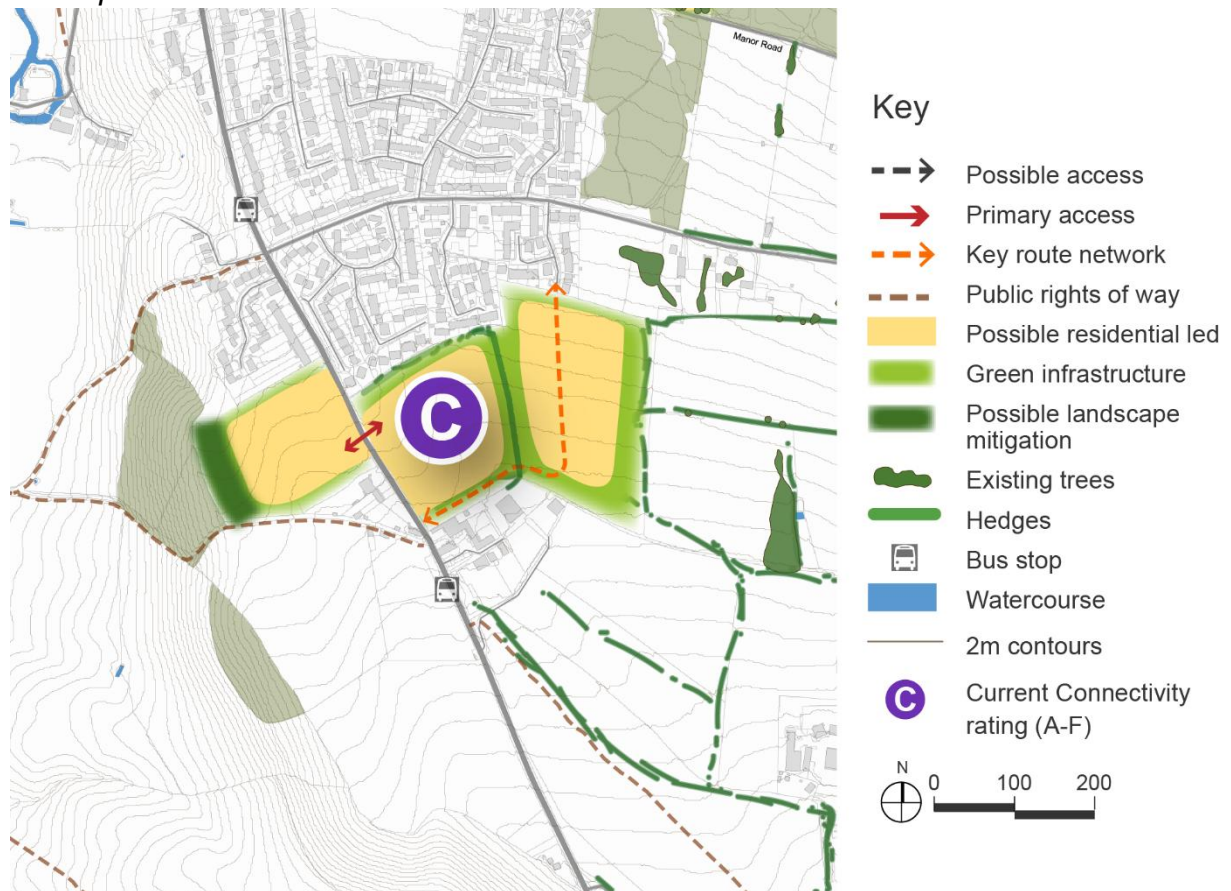


Figure 22: Indicative concept plan - South East Keynsham (bottom left)

South East Keynsham	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 350-500 homes. Potential to provide a convenience shop on Wellsway, to serve existing and new residents. Adjacent to a Local Nature Recovery Strategy Focus Area of Nature Recovery. Opportunities to link development into Manor Road Community Woodland Improvement Project work, including potential for expansion of the existing woodland to the east of the development parcel (noting potential constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Opportunity for provision of local food growing.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Poor active travel route availability into Keynsham town centre. Significant walking times to nearest convenience shop on Chandag Road and to Chandag Primary School. No current permeability between the site and the existing housing to the north, with potential impact being the creation of an isolated development, severed from the existing town. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option Gas pipeline between Keynsham and Saltford Village may restrict the types of green infrastructure that could be provided between the two settlements. The site is next to woodland Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which would require an adequate buffer to boundary trees and measures to protect and enhance the woodland.
Mitigation required	Significant improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure required, both into Keynsham and across to Saltford Village. Significant tree buffer required along eastern boundary of the site to reduce impact of built development in views from the Cotswold National Landscape. Significant street tree planting required throughout development parcels to reduce impact of development in views from the Cotswold National Landscape. The cumulative impact of development of sites allocated in the Draft Local Plan in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary and secondary school places will need to be assessed to ensure there is sufficient capacity.

Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Air quality assessment
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Saltford Village Site Options

6.105 A variety of site options for development are set out below, which have been prepared in response to the key issues, priorities and objectives set out above. Not all of the site options presented will necessarily be taken forward for allocation for development in the Draft Local Plan. Explanation as to how each of the site options respond to the key issues, priorities and objectives is set out within the opportunities and constraints tables for each site option. Where mitigation or additional evidence work is required to achieve priorities and objectives, this is referenced within the table. Conflicts with priorities and objectives are also referenced.

6.106 The land parcels which make up the site options below have been assessed in more detail in various supporting documents, including the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), the Future Economic Needs Assessment Update (May 2025) the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Keynsham and Saltford Area of Search Assessment, and the Strategic Planning Options Document (SPO). Further information is available in the Site Selection Topic Paper.

6.107 Within these documents, a number of additional sites have also been assessed, and discounted, for various reasons. These sites are not included in the site options below, for the reasons set out in the evidence base. However, this Options Document Consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders and communities to provide comments on these discounted sites, by answering the question: Are there any other sites that have not been identified, that need to be considered?

Location Option	New sites - approximate housing capacity
West Saltford (south of A4)*	650-850 dwellings
West Saltford (north of A4)*	300-350 dwellings
South Saltford	350-450 dwellings

6.108 Following consultation on these site options, a detailed assessment of the transport impact of each site will be undertaken to inform selection of sites to be included in the Draft Plan. The cumulative impact of all sites included in the Draft Plan will also be assessed. Any site allocations in the Draft Plan will define site specific interventions required.

6.109 The Department for Transport has developed a Connectivity Tool that integrates transport and land use data to produce a national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. This tool allows users to filter connectivity scores by local authority, assigning each location a grade from A to J, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity within its local authority area.

6.110 Each site option has been evaluated with the Connectivity Tool, and an average grade reflecting its connectivity relative to the Bath and North East Somerset area has been assigned. It is important to note that this assessment is based on the current sustainable transport network and existing land uses such as schools and shops, and does not take into account planned or future developments. The grading from A to J is not an overall ranking of site options and other sustainability criteria and deliverability factors will also be considered when deciding which sites are allocated in the Draft Local Plan..

6.111 It should be noted that the sustainability of development in certain locations is dependent on the continued provision of supported public transport services. The uncertainty of future funding for these services is a risk when assessing the suitability of sites for allocation.

West Saltford

Context

6.112 West Saltford is located on the western edge of Saltford Village. The area is mostly flat arable fields with some hedgerows containing hedgerow trees.

6.113 Two site options for development are under consideration at West Saltford, one to the south of the A4 and one to the north. The sites both connect directly onto the A4 corridor, providing good access to frequent bus stops providing services into Bath and Bristol. The site to the north of the A4 is a new site in this Options Consultation and was not previously presented in the Options Consultation (Spring 2024). It is potentially in proximity to a new train station at Saltford Village, with land to the north west of Saltford Village one of two locations being considered for a potential rail station through feasibility work being undertaken by WECA and Network Rail.

6.114 The land parcel south of the A4 is located to the west of Grange Road in Saltford Village. However, no permeability currently exists between Grange Road and the parcels, due to the continuous configuration of dwelling plots along the road. As such, walking and cycling routes into the village would need to be provided from the south side of the site, connecting to Manor Road, and to the north along the A4. However there may be scope, through discussions with local landowners, to provide a walking route through an existing residential plot which would provide a link into the village.

6.115 A key priority for the Keynsham and Saltford Village area of the district is to retain a significant green gap between the two settlements. As such, any development located to the west of Saltford Village will need to be carefully assessed in conjunction with the options at North Keynsham (see page 94) and South East Keynsham (see page 113), as well as in relation to land already allocated to the east of Keynsham. Development will need to include requirements to strengthen and enhance the remaining green infrastructure between Keynsham and Saltford, seeking to make it more accessible and useable.

6.116 The sites are located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.

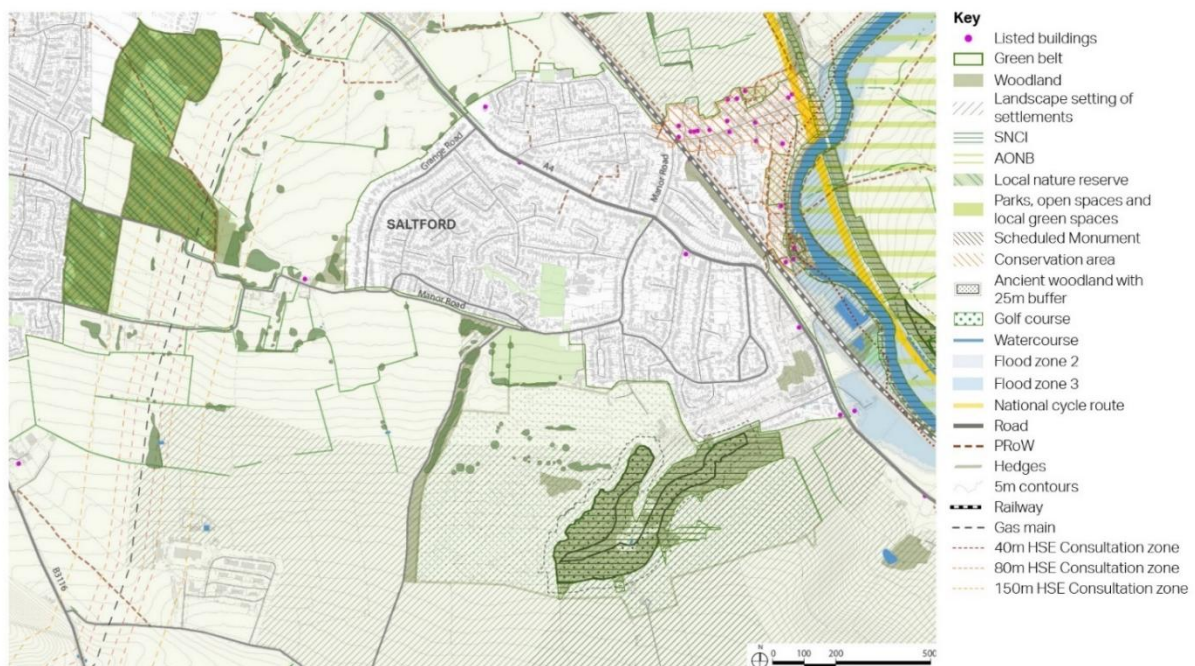


Figure 23 Context plan - West Saltford

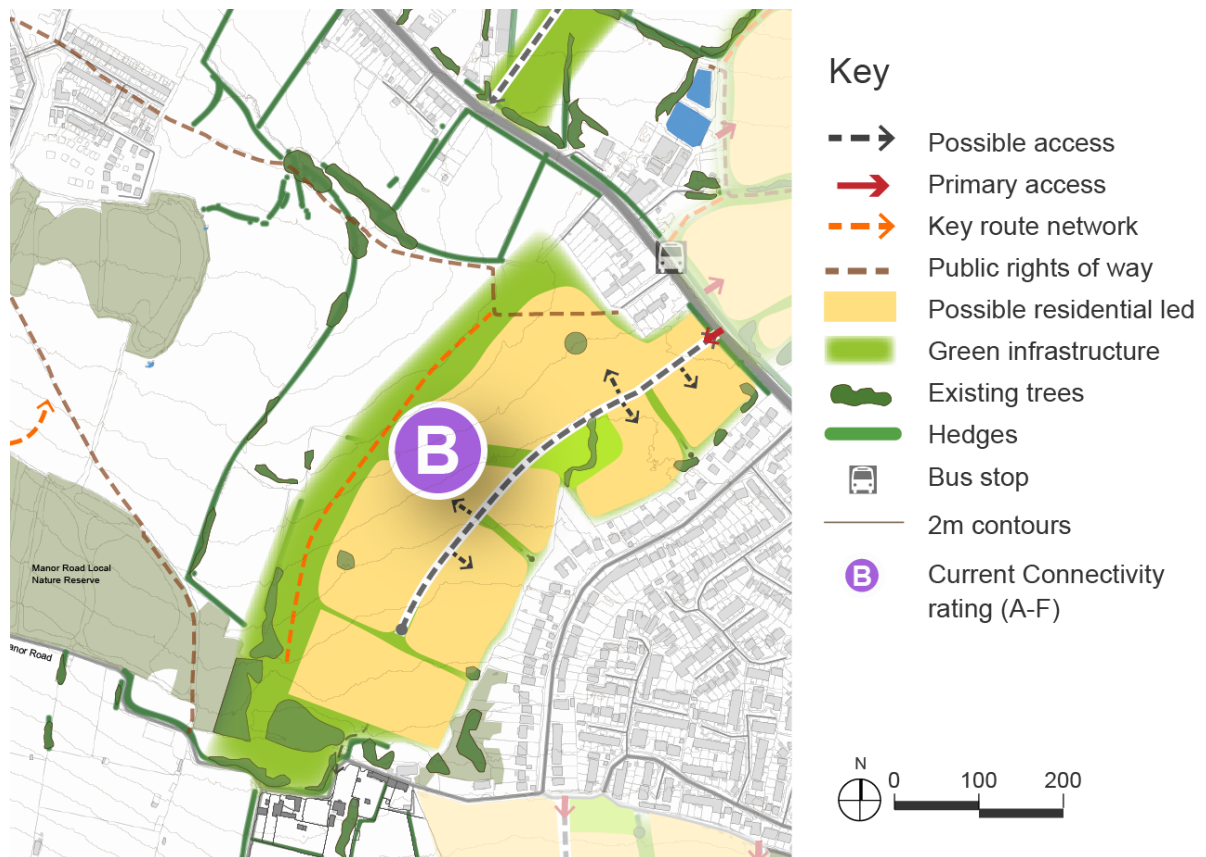


Figure 24 Indicative concept plan - West Saltford (south of A4)

West Saltford (south of the A4)	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 650-850 homes, a new primary school (if delivered in combination with South Saltford and/or West Saltford north of the A4), and a public green space. Opportunity for provision of local food growing. Direct access to A4, providing easy access to sustainable travel options, with potential for employment land development. Opportunity to strengthen and enhance the remaining green infrastructure gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village, seeking to make it more accessible and useable. Further evidence is required to understand the extent of possible enhancements. Opportunity to explore and fund Manor Road becoming a “Quiet Lane” between Keynsham and Saltford Village, through introduction of a modal filter, or other traffic restrictions, to ensure traffic flows and speeds are low enough to enable active travel between the two settlements.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Reduces green gap between Saltford Village and Keynsham, particularly when considered in addition to option at North Keynsham. The defined landscape setting of settlement designation is proposed to be amended and would be directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the potential development parcels. In order to ensure no impact on setting, building heights must not exceed 2-storeys in height. Gas pipeline between Keynsham and Saltford may restrict the types of Green Infrastructure that could be provided between the two settlements. Grade II listed Keynsham Manor house located on Manor Road. Impact on setting to be considered, particularly impact of new primary school building. No permeability between site and existing housing to the east on Grange Road. Walking and cycling links would be from the north and south only.
Mitigation required	Strengthening and enhancement of the remaining green infrastructure gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village required. The cumulative impact of development of sites in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity.

Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district, and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Consideration in conjunction with extent of options at North Keynsham and South East Keynsham, to ensure significant green gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village remains. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Discussion with landowners on Grange Road to understand if walking route between plot and village could be created. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Air quality assessment.
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West Saltford (North of the A4)



Figure 25: Indicative concept plan – West Saltford (North of the A4)

West Saltford (North of the A4)	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 300-350 homes Direct access to A4, providing easy access to sustainable travel options, with potential for employment development. Opportunity to strengthen and enhance the remaining green infrastructure gap between Keynsham and Saltford Village, seeking to make it more accessible and useable. Further evidence is required to understand the extent of possible enhancements. If a new train station is opened at North West Saltford, there is the potential for a greater mix of uses, and higher density development, to reflect the increased accessibility.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Reduces green gap between Saltford Village and Keynsham, particularly when considered in addition to option at North Keynsham. Gas pipeline between Keynsham and Saltford may restrict the types of Green Infrastructure that could be provided between the two settlements.
Mitigation required	Strengthening and enhancement of the remaining green infrastructure gap between Keynsham and Saltford required. The cumulative impact of development of sites in Keynsham and Saltford on primary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity.
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district, and considering opportunities for enhancements to retained Green Belt land. Consideration in conjunction with extent of options at North Keynsham and South East Keynsham, to ensure significant green gap between Keynsham and Saltford remains. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford Village required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area.

South Saltford

Context

6.117 South Saltford is located to the south of the village, accessed from Manor Road. The western part of the site is characterised by agricultural fields enclosed by hedgerows with relatively few trees. The eastern part of the site is currently occupied by paddocks with small woodland areas and tree belts to the north of the Saltford Golf Club. Since the 2024 Options Consultation amended landscape evidence (and associated proposed revision of the landscape setting of the settlement) and demonstration of the community value of the Golf Club mean that the site boundary has been reduced from that previously consulted on, excluding land occupied by the Golf Club from consideration.

6.118 Land parcels at South Saltford would be accessed from Manor Road via two junctions.

6.119 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.

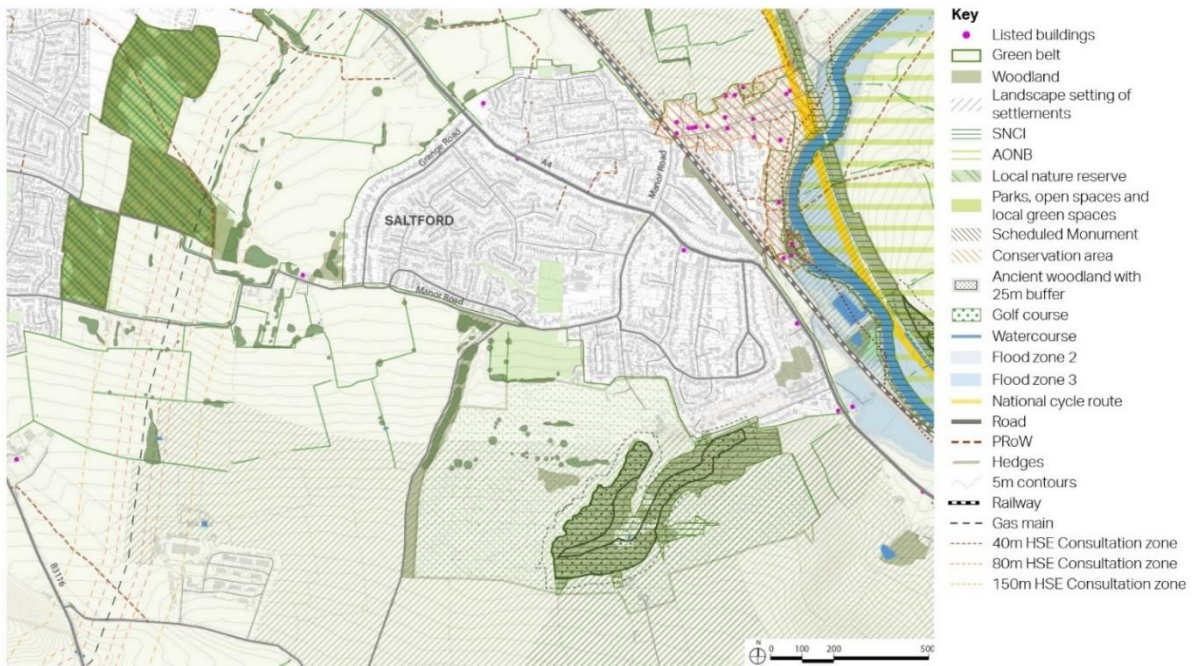


Figure 26: Context plan - South Saltford

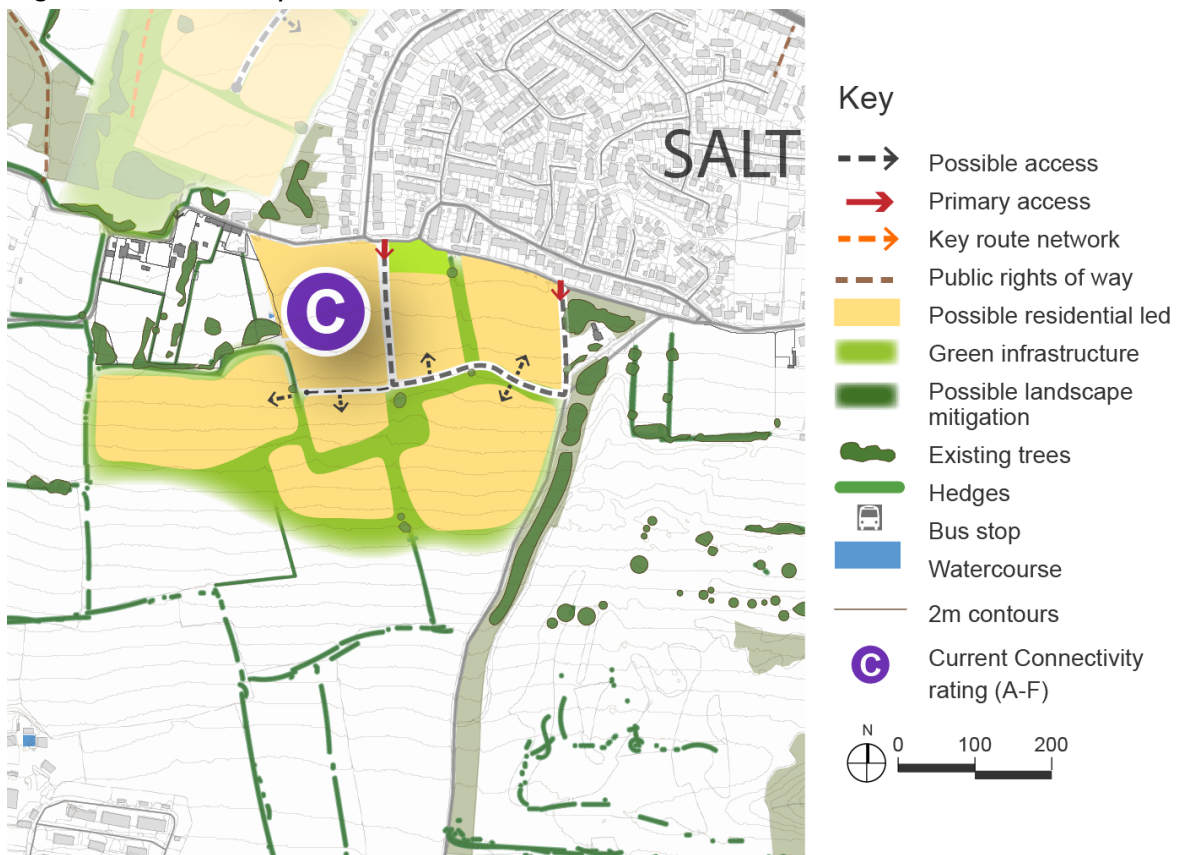


Figure 27: Indicative concept plan - South Saltford

South Saltford	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 350-450 homes, a new primary school (if delivered in combination with West Saltford south of the A4 and north of the A4), a village green, and a small local centre, with facilities such as a village shop to serve residents to the south of the village. Opportunity to explore and fund 'Quiet Road' along Manor Road between Keynsham and Saltford Village, through introduction of a modal filter, or other traffic restrictions, to ensure traffic flows and speeds are low enough to enable active travel between the two settlements. Opportunity to explore Modal filter along Manor Road to the north of the development, to prioritise active modes along the route closest to the new community facilities and primary school.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Relationship with the Golf Club and the floodlit driving range needs to be considered. Grade II listed Keynsham Manor house located on Manor Road. Impact on setting to be considered, particularly impact of new primary school building. The defined landscape setting of settlement designation is proposed to be amended and would be directly adjacent to the western boundary of the potential development parcels. In order to ensure no impact on setting, building heights must not exceed 2-storeys in height.
Mitigation required	Requirement for a woodland belt at least 50m wide along the southern edge of the development area to provide a soft backdrop to the housing on shallow slopes. The cumulative impact of development of sites in Keynsham and Saltford Village on primary school places will need to be assessed, to ensure there is sufficient capacity.
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Exploration of extent of possible green infrastructure enhancements between Keynsham and Saltford required (noting constraint of gas pipeline in this location). Air quality assessment Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area.

Hicks Gate

Place Profile

- 6.120 The Hicks Gate area is in the Green Belt and stretches west from the Hicks Gate roundabout to the local authority boundary with Bristol, including land to the north and the south of the A4. The wider area, which includes land within Bath and North East Somerset as well as Bristol City Council, largely comprises agricultural fields typically used for grazing, with a network of public rights of way. This wider area includes a range of sports pitches, Brislington House, St Brendan's Sixth Form College, allotments and the Brislington Park and Ride Site.
- 6.121 The centre of Bristol is within 4km and Keynsham Town Centre is within 2km.
- 6.122 The A4 is a strategic transport corridor between Bath and Bristol. It experiences significant congestion in both directions during peak times.

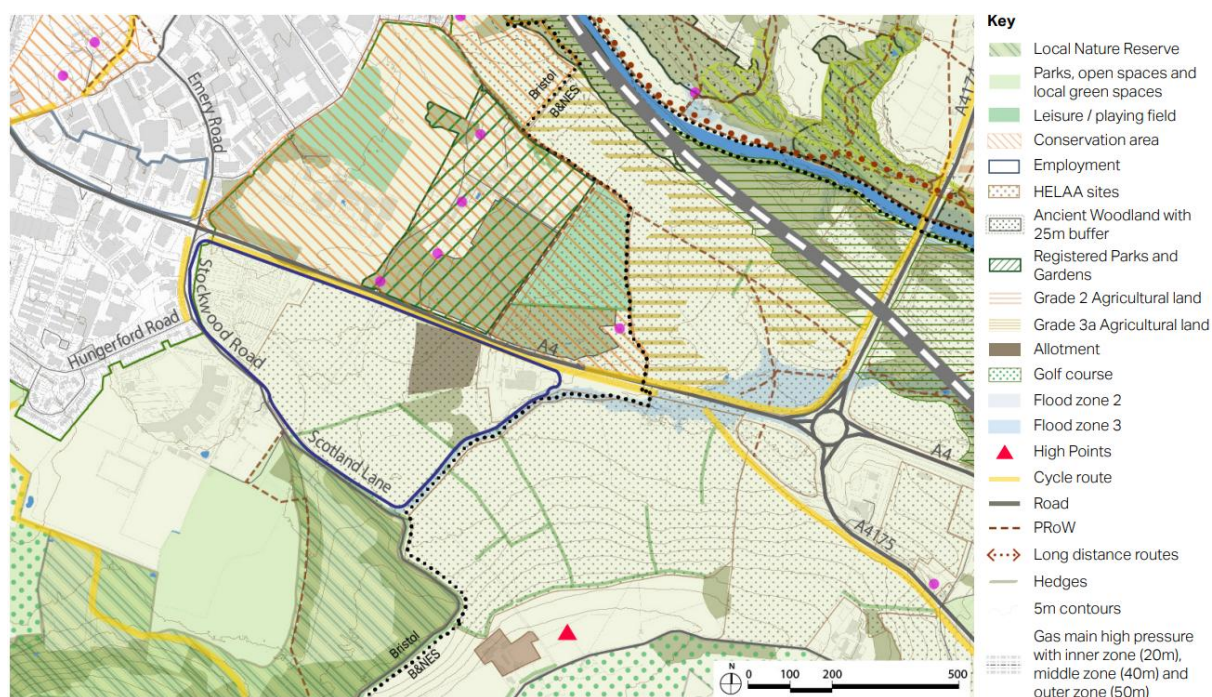


Figure 28: Context plan - Hicks Gate

- 6.123 Bristol City Council submitted the [Bristol Local Plan Publication Version \(November 2023\)](#) for independent examination in April 2024. The examination hearings have concluded and the Inspectors have published an Interim Post Hearing Advice note. The council is currently working on outstanding actions from the examination hearings.

6.124 'Policy DS12: New neighbourhood – Bath Road, Brislington' proposes removing land from the Green Belt to the south of the A4 as identified on the aerial photograph below, for the development of 500-750 dwellings. The published Bristol Local Plan also states that if appropriate proposals adjacent to this location come forward, Bristol City Council will work with Bath and North East Somerset Council to consider the impacts and opportunities, to assess infrastructure requirements and to ensure integrated and well-planned communities are created.



Figure 29: Extract from Bristol City Council Draft Local Plan showing area proposed to be removed from the Green Belt

Key Issues and Opportunities

- The Bristol and Bath Growth Zone is a key element of WECA Local Growth Strategy. The zone will recognise the planned infrastructure improvements and housing developments along the Bristol to Bath Corridor, exploring the potential to partner with WECA to deliver key employment and housing sites as well as transport projects, especially mass transit.
- Whilst Bath and Bristol centres are readily accessible by public transport, the new communities created in the locality are likely to look towards Keynsham Town Centre meeting their day to needs, and for a certain scale of leisure and cultural activities. There are likely to be significant opportunities for Keynsham Town Centre to enhance its current role and to increase its offer. The local plan will provide a proactive policy framework to enable this to happen and to ensure that town centre sites are developed in a way that supports the increased demands.
- Land at Hicks Gate is designated as Green Belt. Any new site allocations would require the removal of land from the Green Belt, and removal would require exceptional circumstances to be fully evidenced and justified in the context of revised national policy. Measures to improve the quality of the remaining Green Belt should be explored, including accessible green spaces and nature recovery, with funding to deliver such improvements identified.
- The wider area lies within Bristol City Council and B&NES Council. The local authorities would need to collaborate to enable the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan to deliver a high quality place to live and work.
- This area has primarily been considered for its potential as a residential led development, with the opportunity for employment led regeneration within the existing and adjacent areas of Bristol. One of the issues to be considered as part of this consultation is whether there should be a section of the development area within Bath and North East Somerset that is more focused on the provision of employment floorspace.
- The A4 is a strategic route for movement. The introduction of segregated facilities for walking, cycling, public transport, plus green infrastructure and crossing points would be expected to ensure mobility for residents and mitigate the severance effect of the strategic road.

- As part of comprehensive development there is potential for the Brislington Park and Ride facility in Bristol to be relocated to land within Bath and North East Somerset closer to the Hicks Gate roundabout and in so doing becoming a transport interchange. This would mean that in-bound traffic using the Park and Ride would not pass through the proposed development area.
- The delivery of a transport interchange at Hicks Gate offers the potential to provide a broader range of sustainable connections with surrounding communities, including Keynsham and Bristol's East Fringe. This could include additional bus services, active travel connections, and shared mobility facilities such as car clubs, hire bikes and e-scooters. It also would provide access to bus services on the Bristol Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC), which will benefit from journey time improvements provided by the BBSC project. Whilst there are many footpaths south of the Hicks Gate site there are no footpaths in the Hicks Gate site allocation, reducing connectivity within and through the area. The A4 severs movement across the area and cycling is restricted along this busy route. Cycle routes could be relocated away from the A4 to provide active travel links and improve the air quality.
- In terms of access to natural spaces, there is no connection to the River Avon and Stockwood Vale Golf Course restricts access to the wider countryside to the south.
- The landscape setting within the Hicks Gate area is sensitive, particularly in relation to the land immediately to the south of the A4 before the land slopes upwards. This area has a coherent landscape with small to medium late or post medieval permanent pasture (mostly) fields and excellent original, tall hedgerows.
- Existing hedgerows within the area are an important resource for associated wildlife. They need to be substantively integrated in the new development and any unavoidable hedgerow loss must be compensated at some other areas in line with the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and nature recovery requirements and strategies.
- The issue of the potential adverse impact on the water quality of the stream within the site should taken into account and mitigations should be applied.

- There are very few residents currently in the Hicks Gate area. One of the challenges will be to create a community with appropriate infrastructure and mix of uses.

Emerging Vision and Priorities

6.125 The priorities for the Hicks Gate Area are set out below and these will inform a vision for the area should it be allocated for development in the Draft Local Plan. Many of the priorities can be addressed by new development, and the site options have been selected in response to the key issues, priorities and objectives. However, there are some priorities that won't be addressed through new development but will be addressed through other policies in the local plan or initiatives undertaken by the council or by other stakeholders.

6.126 The options proposed have been informed by a suite of evidence base material covering transport, landscape character, ecology and many other subjects. Following a comprehensive analysis of the constraints and opportunities, partly formulated through a series of design workshops, the following emerging priorities are proposed to help shape the placemaking aspirations and provide substance to the opportunity for strategic development at Hicks Gate. These are:

- Maximise the delivery of housing that is affordable in response to social and economic needs, and local demographics.
- Deliver zero-carbon homes and a built environment that seeks to meet the challenge of climate change by delivering a development that is both resilient and enduring.
- Consider the opportunities to deliver a greater proportion of employment led development within the Bath and North East Somerset area.
- The development will be compact, with an efficient use of the available land predicated on a well-balanced housing density, and a mix of house sizes, typologies and tenures. It will be important to seek to optimise the density of development proposed in this area.

- Development at Hicks Gate will seek to complement existing provision of services and amenities providing for the needs of both new and existing communities.
- The land use mixes across the site should be flexible, balanced and complementary with residential, community and leisure facilities, local services, retail, employment, offices and studios, all woven together to create a place that is truly designed for a healthy work-life balance.
- Reduce the need to travel, particularly by retaining and providing jobs, services and community facilities at suitable locations close to residential areas.
- Safeguard existing habitats and seek opportunities to deliver significant biodiversity net gain with a strong network of hedgerows and flower rich verges throughout.
- Promote strategic green infrastructure and compensatory improvements in the remaining Green Belt gap between Bristol and Keynsham.
- Provide a range of sports, recreational facilities, parks and open spaces incorporating existing landscape assets to enable new residents to have easy access to nature and promote active modes of travel.
- Provide tree-lined streets and public spaces to promote a sense of well-being as well as providing shading and cooling in the summer months and contributing towards the development's climate change resilience capabilities.
- Integrate natural water management solutions to achieve resilient places to respond to the challenge of water stress by integrating sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), rain gardens, permeable pavers and rooftop gardens.

- The diagram below represents these conceptual themes:

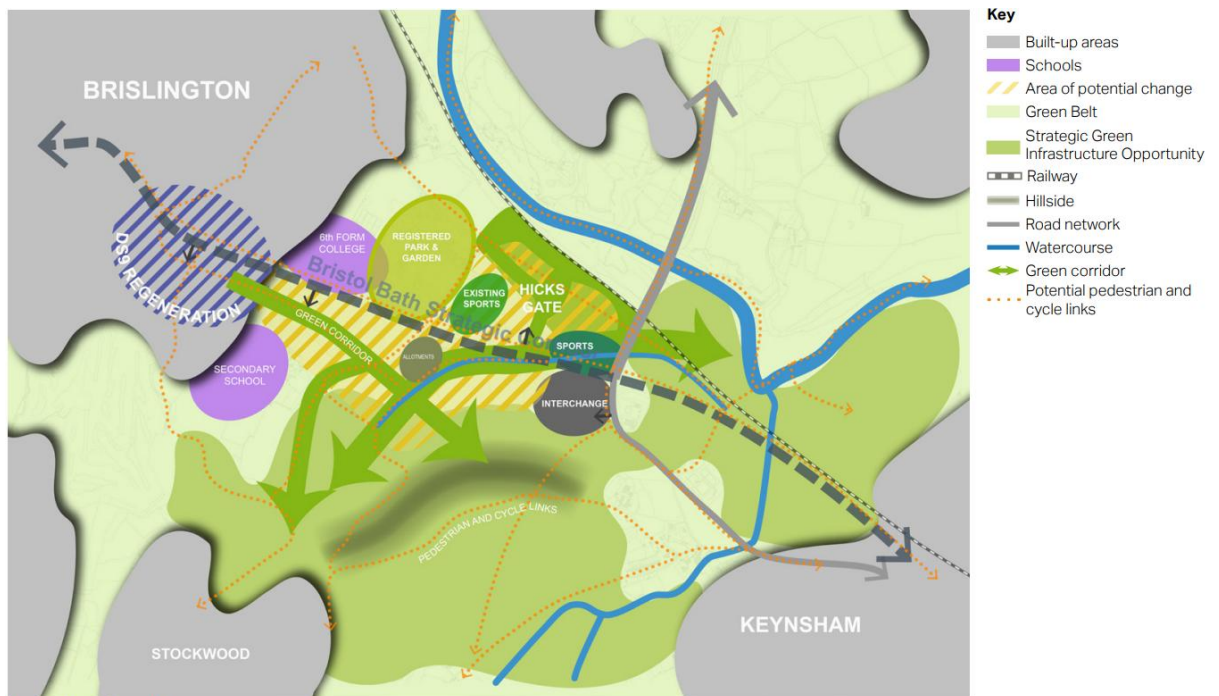


Figure 30: Indicative concept plan - Hicks Gate

Transport Opportunities

6.127 Some of the key issues in the Hicks Gate area relate to transport and highways and a number of opportunities and potential interventions have been identified. These interventions will need more detailed consideration whilst working up the Draft Local Plan, including mechanisms for funding them:

- As part of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement, the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC) project is being led by WECA and delivered in partnership with B&NES Council and Bristol City Council. It aims to improve travel between Bath and Bristol through better bus services and enabling more cycling and walking, through the delivery of a Mass Transit corridor which will pass along the A4 through Hicks Gate. The current scope of the project includes bus priority measures, road space reallocation, enhancement to bus stops, improved walking and cycling facilities and improvements to the public realm. The project intends to improve sustainable movement along the corridor.

- The Hicks Gate Interchange (HGI) is proposed to be provided in the south west corner of the Hicks Gate roundabout and this will replace the existing Park and Ride facility at Brislington. The new Interchange will expand the existing functionality of the P&R to incorporate interchange for other modes of transport, including but not limited to walking/wheeling, cycling, micromobility options (such as public hire e-scooters and e-bikes), electric vehicle charging infrastructure, car club pick-up points, in addition to the potential co-location of community and leisure facilities.
- The Interchange provides an excellent and realistic opportunity to intercept vehicle trips and transfer these to sustainable modes of transport as well as serving the new residential-led, mixed-use neighbourhood. It is well situated to support connectivity by sustainable modes on the Bristol to Bath corridor, as well as linking communities such as Keynsham (including the railway station), Stockwood, Brislington and Bristol's East and North Fringe. The HGI is therefore an important link in providing a joined-up strategy towards achieving high uptake of sustainable transport within B&NES and the wider region. It is therefore essential that the HGI will need to be well integrated with and connected via high quality and attractive sustainable transport links to both the existing A4 and A4174 transport corridor and proposed improvement schemes including via the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC) project.
- The new community will integrate with existing communities via a network of sustainable, accessible and green movement corridors, allowing people to access amenities and services in the Hicks Gate area and across the wider Keynsham and southeast Bristol area. Hicks Gate will be a low-car settlement, promoting limited through routes within the development and focusing on walking and cycling, and accessible and competitive public transport opportunities.
- Improving public spaces and routes, including crossing facilities on the A4 to encourage people to use public transport and active modes of travel.
- Existing pedestrian and cycle connections can be enhanced and integrated with new proposals across the area to ensure wider commuter routes north-south and east-west. It can connect the Hicks Gate area to Bristol, Stockwood, and Keynsham.

- Extension of short-term e-scooter and e-Bike rental within the Hicks Gate area.
- Additional bus routes to link with a greater range of places such as Keynsham, Whitchurch Village and Bristol's East Fringe.
- WEST Link Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) zones in Bath and North East Somerset and Bristol shows zones are currently located immediately to the east and west of the Hicks Gate study area. DRT could be used to connect an Interchange Hub at Hicks Gate, where passengers can gain access to a connecting bus service to complete their journey.
- Work with bus operators and other key stakeholders to decarbonise the bus fleet in the Hicks Gate area.
- Introduce more Electric Vehicle charging points in the Hicks Gate area.

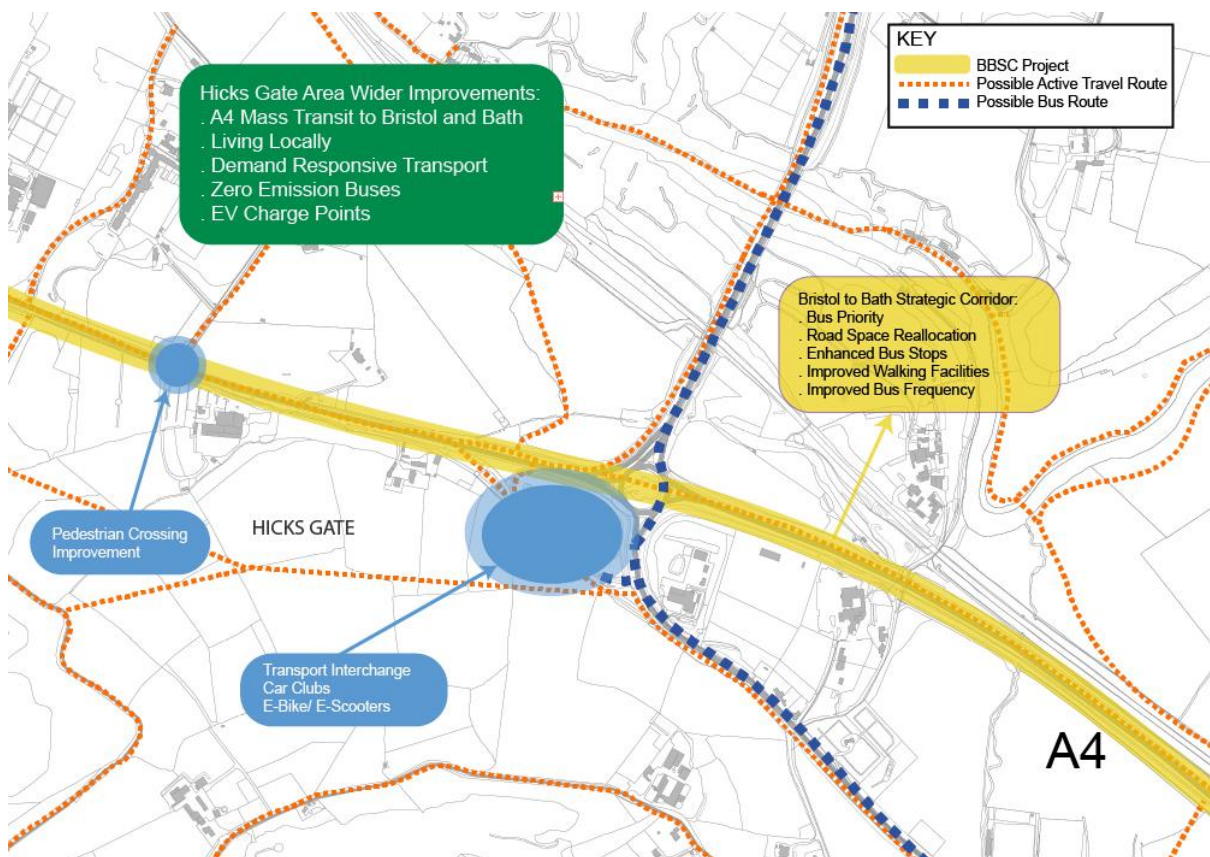


Figure 31: Transport opportunities in the Hicks Gate area

Options Consultation 2024

6.128 Comments on the previous options consultation in Spring 2024 are still relevant. These comments will be reviewed and taken into account, together with additional comments received, when the draft plan is being prepared. Below is a short summary of some of the main issues raised in the previous consultation about Hicks Gate.

- **Transport and Accessibility Considerations:** Proximity to A4 and mass transit potential at Hicks Gate is valued; sustainable travel options like park and ride, cycling, and walking paths are advocated, while concerns over A4 congestion and traffic safety are noted.
- **Housing Needs and Development Preferences:** The need for affordable housing at Hicks Gate is recognised; preferences are split between higher-density housing or mixed-use development and fears of urban sprawl, greenbelt encroachment, and under-utilisation of brownfield sites.
- **Socio-Economic Impacts and Community Infrastructure:** Potential for local employment and enhanced community facilities at Hicks Gate is acknowledged; concerns about community character erosion, anti-social behaviour risk, and pressure on services are also raised.
- **Strategic Planning and Regulatory Compliance:** Adherence to planning policy framework and alignment with local and regional frameworks at Hicks Gate are discussed, with calls for development priorities on brownfield sites and meeting conditions on sustainability and community benefit.
- **Environmental Sustainability and Green Infrastructure:** Support for carbon-neutral development at Hicks Gate is shown, suggesting renewable energy integration and high building insulation standards; importance is placed on retaining and enhancing green spaces.
- **Flood Risk and Environmental Protection:** Concerns about flooding risks in areas like Stockwood Lane at Hicks Gate are prominent; emphasis on comprehensive flood mitigation, greenbelt protection, and ecologically considerate development is evident.

Strategy

6.129 The emerging strategy set out below relates to the wider Bristol to Bath corridor, incorporating the Hicks Gate area and other places. The strategy has been set out for this wider area because of the close functional and physical relationships between different places, that is they do not sit in isolation from nearby places.

6.130 The strategy for the Bristol to Bath Corridor seeks to deliver sustainable growth that capitalises on the strategic location between Bath and Bristol to take advantage of existing, and significantly enhanced improvements to, sustainable transport links in the area.

6.131 Development at Hicks Gate will be exemplary and will redefine this key entrance into Bristol. It will be zero carbon and residential development will meet the needs of existing and future residents, including the delivery of affordable housing, which will be facilitated by the 'golden rules' as this is on land intended to be released from the Green Belt.

6.132 There is a significant opportunity for employment led regeneration within the existing and adjacent areas of Bristol, or the potential for a proportion of employment land to be provided within the B&NES area of Hicks Gate.

6.133 The proposed development area seeks to avoid the coalescence of Keynsham with Bristol and integrates new development with strategic green infrastructure corridors that improve access to nature and enhance biodiversity.

Location Option	New sites - appx. housing capacity range
Bristol to Bath Corridor	
Hicks Gate	1,200 – 1,550 (for Option 2, see below)

Note – Hicks Gate could be mixed use with an increased employment role. This would reduce the housing capacity anticipated.

6.134 The Department for Transport has developed a Connectivity Tool that integrates transport and land use data to produce a national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. This tool allows users to filter connectivity scores by local authority, assigning each location a grade from A to J, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity within its local authority area.

6.135 Each site option has been evaluated with the Connectivity Tool, and an average grade reflecting its connectivity relative to the Bath and North East Somerset area has been assigned. It's important to note that this assessment is based on the current transport network and existing land uses such as schools and shops, and does not take into account planned or future developments.

Hicks Gate Site Options

6.136 Two options are proposed which are broadly similar, but with one option providing more development to the south than the other. Option 1 contains the landscape mitigation required within the same landownership and Option 2 requires third party land to deliver the landscape mitigation.

6.137 Both options seek to optimise development capacity and densities in the area whilst ensuring that a sufficient Green Belt gap between the Hicks Gate area and Keynsham is retained and enhanced.

6.138 Subject to the completion of further evidence relating to the Green Belt, and to further evidence relating to the Hicks Gate Interchange, specifically the amount of land required for delivery, there may be the opportunity for further development to the south and south east of the proposed Transport Interchange shown on both options.

6.139 It should be noted this area has primarily been considered as a residential led development, with the opportunity for employment led regeneration within the Brislington Retail and Trade Parks. This area is within Bristol City Council's jurisdiction and any proposed changes will be in their own local plan or other regeneration initiatives. However, as set out in Chapter 3 above, there is a need to plan for additional employment space within Bath and North East Somerset in order to help facilitate a more prosperous, sustainable and fairer economy and this location may have the potential to accommodate employment uses.

Therefore, an issue to be considered for these options is whether there should be a section of the development area within Bath and North East Somerset that is focused on the provision of employment floorspace. This would rebalance some of these development parcels and provide a greater proportion of employment and less housing development. A logical location for an employment element could be adjacent to the proposed Hicks Gate Interchange.

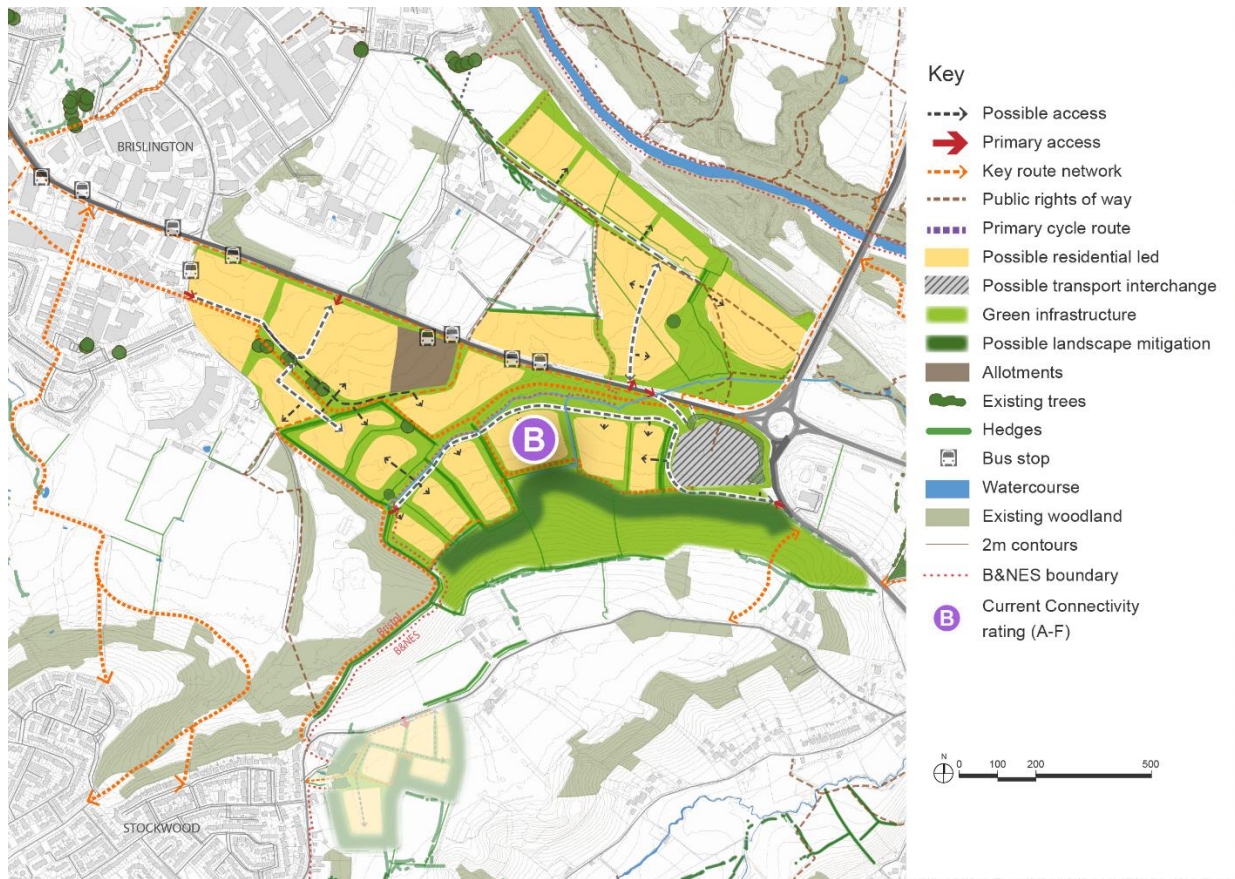


Figure 32: Indicative concept plan - Hicks Gate Option 1

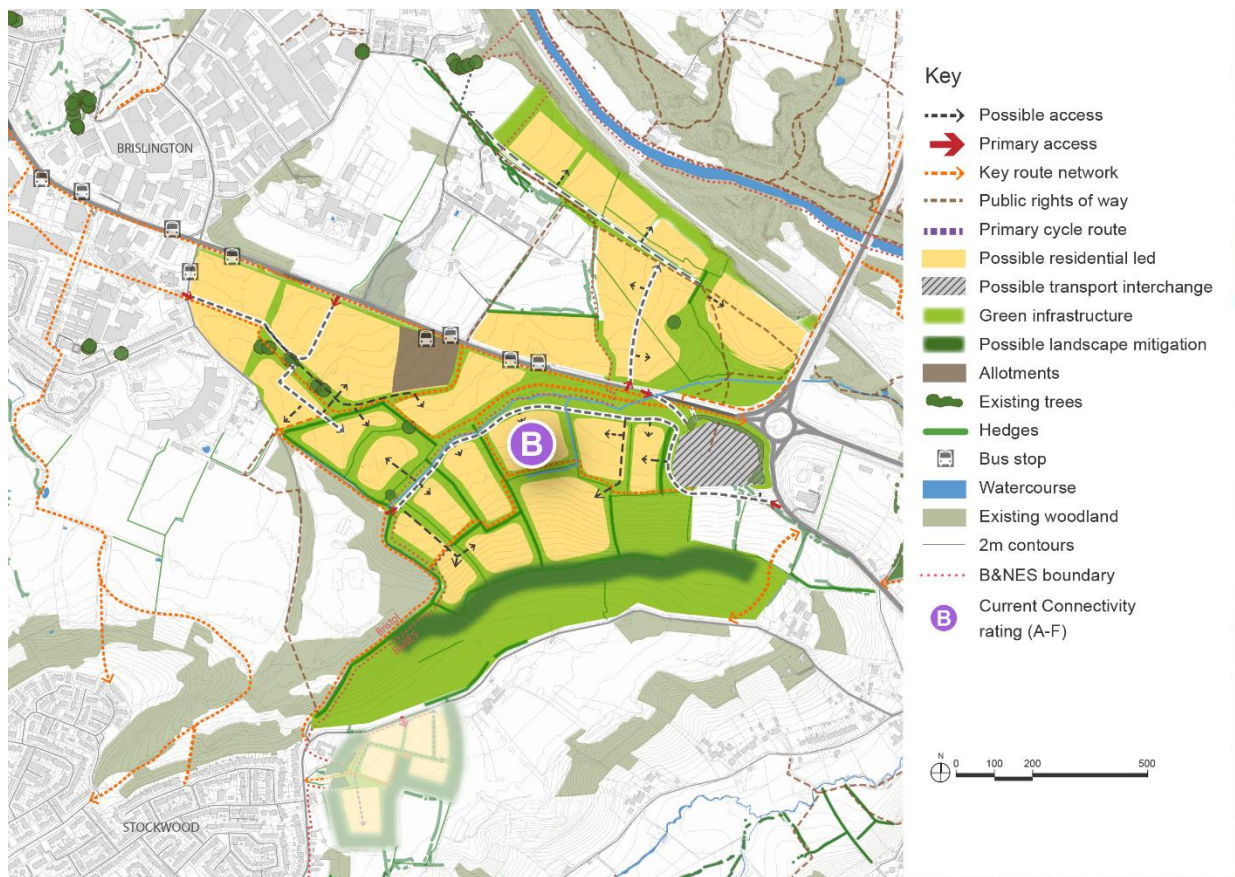


Figure 33: Indicative concept plan - Hicks Gate Option 2

Hicks Gate	Description
Opportunities	The delivery of a vibrant, well connected, higher density, low carbon community, within a high-quality, nature positive, urban environment that is in harmony with its attractive landscape setting. It will be an exemplar for sustainable living and working, providing new approaches to sustainable transport, with high levels of public transport and active travel use. It will have integrated green and blue infrastructure, rich in biodiversity, and unlock improvements to the quality and accessibility of the surrounding countryside.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. The A4 corridor is an important strategic transport corridor into Bristol and can get congested. Both options propose development in areas of landscape sensitivity. In Option 1, all land, including the area for landscape mitigation, is within the same ownership. Further assessment is required to ascertain whether the proposed landscape mitigation at the southern edge in Option 2 is deliverable, as this would be on land owned and controlled by a third party. Secondary school pupils within B&NES would need safe access to Broadlands in Keynsham. Delivery requires co-ordination between B&NES and Bristol City Council. It will be crucial for the local authorities to collaborate to enable the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan and the delivery of social infrastructure to deliver a high quality place to live and work.
Mitigation required	Careful consideration of the location, accessibility and integration of bus stops on the A4 to optimise public transport use by residents. Pedestrian and cycle crossings will be required over the A4 to alleviate severance issues and allow access to public transport. Significant green infrastructure and planting required throughout and along the edge of the development sites. An area to the south has been identified for landscape mitigation, but this area is in different ownership to the main area proposed for development and delivery of this landscape mitigation is uncertain and based wholly on the consent of the landowner. If this is not deliverable, then appropriate landscape mitigation must take place within the proposed development area and the overall quantum of development will be reduced. Seek to make improvements, including enhanced access, to the remaining Green Belt land, providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, retaining and enhancing landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity.

Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to further assess the impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Landscape sensitivity assessment and mitigation.
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Whitchurch Village

Place Profile

6.140 Whitchurch Village is located within the northern part of B&NES, with a population of around 2,000 people. It sits directly south of Stockwood and east of Hartcliffe in Bristol. The administrative area of Bristol City Council lies immediately to the north and east of the Village. The village of Queen Charlton lies to the east, and the town of Keynsham to the north east. More recent development has increased the number of houses in the village by around 250 homes, but did not bring with it any supporting facilities. The existing village lacks certain amenities such as a village shop, although the existing music shop sells some convenience goods.

6.141 Whitchurch Village is surrounded nearly entirely by Green Belt, separating it from Bristol to the north and west, and Keynsham to the east. Any new development adjoining the village would require the removal of land from the Green Belt, and removal would require exceptional circumstances to be fully evidenced and justified within the context of revised national policy, including consideration of whether any land meets the definition of the newly introduced concept of grey belt. This will be informed by Green Belt assessment which is being undertaken to inform the Draft Local Plan.

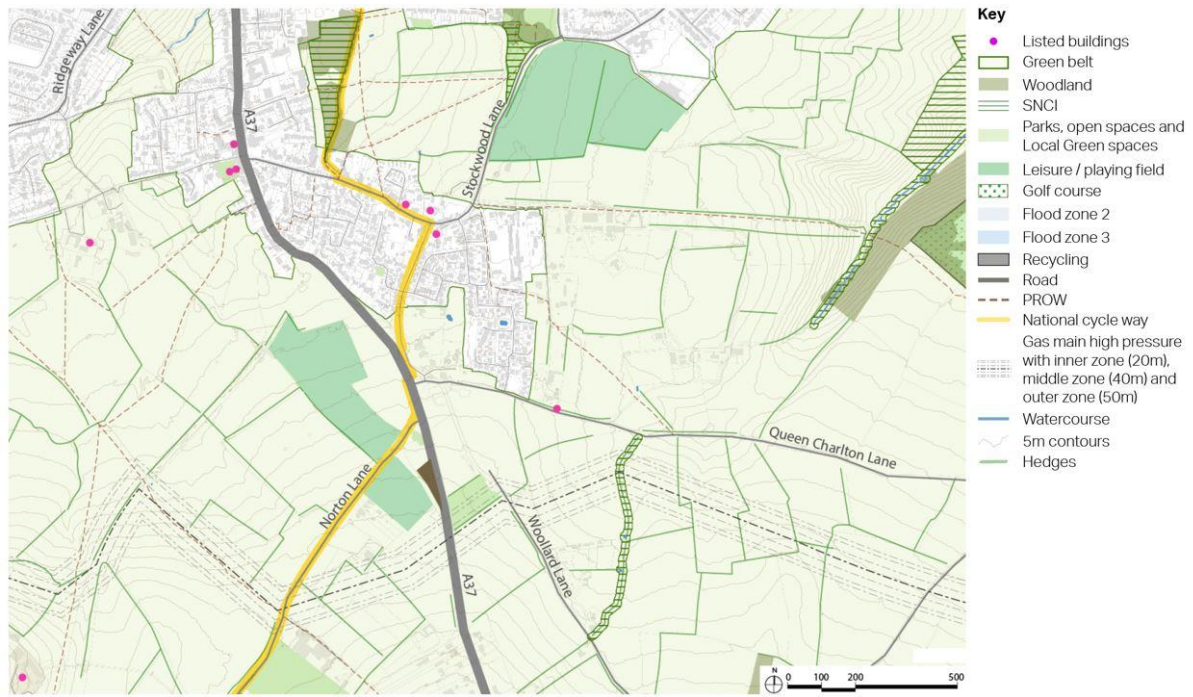


Figure 34: Context plan - Whitchurch Village

6.142 The local transport network for Whitchurch Village is characterised by the dominance of private car journeys. This contributes to the high traffic volumes on the A37 which bisects the village. The lack of high quality sustainable alternatives, notably a railway station, results in a high proportion of private car journeys, particularly to Bristol. For local journeys, walking, cycling and wheeling are not popular choices because of the lack of safe, attractive and convenient routes. There are a limited range of destinations served by direct bus services, although Whitchurch Village is well-served by frequent bus services to Bristol City Centre.

6.143 Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 3 links central and south Bristol to the Chew Valley and Wells, passing through Whitchurch Village, along Staunton Lane and Sleep Lane.

6.144 The WECA Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) identified the South East Bristol Orbital Low Carbon Corridor project as an opportunity to provide a multimodal orbital corridor close to Whitchurch Village to facilitate north/south connectivity. However, this project is now under review through the preparation of the WECA Joint Local Transport Plan 5 (JLTP5), which is being prepared in the context of the climate emergency declared by each of the local authorities.

6.145 Various important heritage assets are located within and surrounding the village. Of particular note is Maes Knoll Scheduled Ancient Monument, which is located around 2km to the south west of Whitchurch Village (see figure 36). Maes Knoll is a substantial, univallate fort enclosing the eastern end and highest point of a plateau of high ground running approximately west to east for around 3km from East Dundry. Maes Knoll is a visually prominent local landmark, with its distinctive flat-topped profile visible across large areas of Bristol and north-east Somerset. In turn, views from the site are very extensive, reaching as far as both Severn crossings and a swathe of historic Somerset. The setting of Maes Knoll is defined by its hilltop location. Its elevated location affords panoramic views of the immediate fields on the hillslopes and the green buffer surrounding suburban Bristol.

6.146 A Statement of Heritage Significance and Appraisal of Risk of Harm for all heritage assets in and around Whitchurch Village, including Maes Knoll Scheduled Ancient Monument, has been carried out to inform the preparation of the options set out in this chapter. The diagram below provides a summary of this assessment, indicating, using a RAG rating, the parcels of land on which development would likely cause the most harm to the significance of one or more heritage assets.

6.147 With the exception of Option 4 which is a larger development of a scale that could potentially deliver significant public benefits as part of a comprehensive and well-planned new development the options shown below for Whitchurch Village have been directed to locations where harm to heritage assets would likely fall within the NPPF definition of 'less than substantial harm' or could be reduced by appropriate mitigation such as landscape design solutions. Any future development on land parcels assessed to cause less than substantial harm to a heritage asset will need to weigh this harm against any public benefits that are provided by developing the parcel. Any future development assessed to cause substantial harm should be 'wholly exceptional' in line with the NPPF.

6.148 The area covered by Option 4 is shown in the Whitchurch Heritage Assessment as being entirely within an area of ‘very high’ risk of harm to the significance of heritage assets. A further area to the south west of Whitchurch Village at Lyon’s Court Farm is also in an area of ‘very high’ or ‘high’ risk, however in contrast to Option 4 it is considered that a smaller residential-only option located south west of Whitchurch Village at Lyon’s Court Farm is unlikely to be able to deliver sufficient public benefits to outweigh the heritage harm. This site has therefore not been proposed as an option in this Local Plan Options Consultation.

6.149 The full heritage assessment can be viewed in the supporting evidence base.

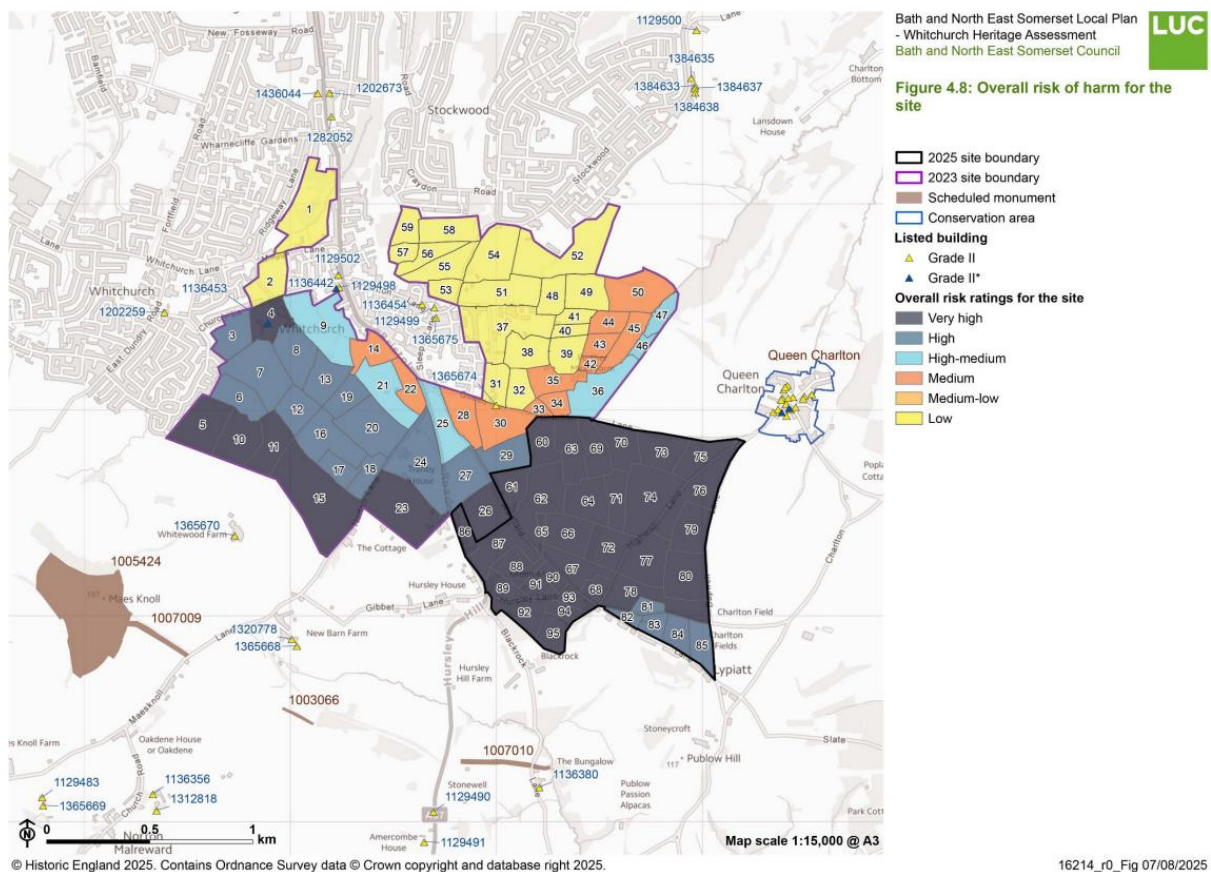


Figure 35: Extract from LUC Heritage Impact Assessment, Addendum (August, 2025)

Rating	Level of Risk of Harm to Asset
Very high	An area of high importance and sensitivity, where development would have the greatest impact. The development of the site is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would experience significant harm, up to and potentially including 'substantial harm' for the purposes of the NPPF, with no potential for meaningful mitigation.
High	An area of high importance and sensitivity, where development would have a significant impact. Development of the site is likely to result in a significant harmful impact on the significance of the heritage asset, but this could be reduced (but not removed) via appropriate mitigation.
High – medium	Area of medium-high importance and sensitivity where development would have a harmful impact if no mitigation occurred. Development of the site could result in a harmful impact on the significance of the heritage asset but this impact is likely to fall within the definition of 'less than substantial harm', and/or could be reduced via appropriate mitigation (such as via landscape design solutions).
Medium	Area of medium importance and sensitivity. The development of the site may result in a harmful impact to the significance of a heritage asset but it is likely that these impacts could be avoided via appropriate mitigation (such as via landscape design solutions).
Medium - low	Area of medium to low sensitivity. Potential impact will be of such a minimal scale that the significance of the heritage asset will not be harmed.
Low	Area of low sensitivity. Development of the site is likely to result in minimal impact on the significance of the asset. It is likely that no mitigation would be required.

6.150 The area surrounding Whitchurch Village is also highly sensitive in terms of landscape impact. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was carried out in 2017, which assessed the significance of effects of development on landscape and views for land parcels surrounding the village. The summary results of the assessment are shown on the diagram below. All of the site options for Whitchurch Village include development of parcels rated as having a high or medium-high negative significance of effects. These are noted in the constraints for each site, and if any allocations are proposed in Whitchurch Village at Draft Local Plan stage, these will need to be informed by additional landscape sensitivity work, and consideration of potential mitigation.

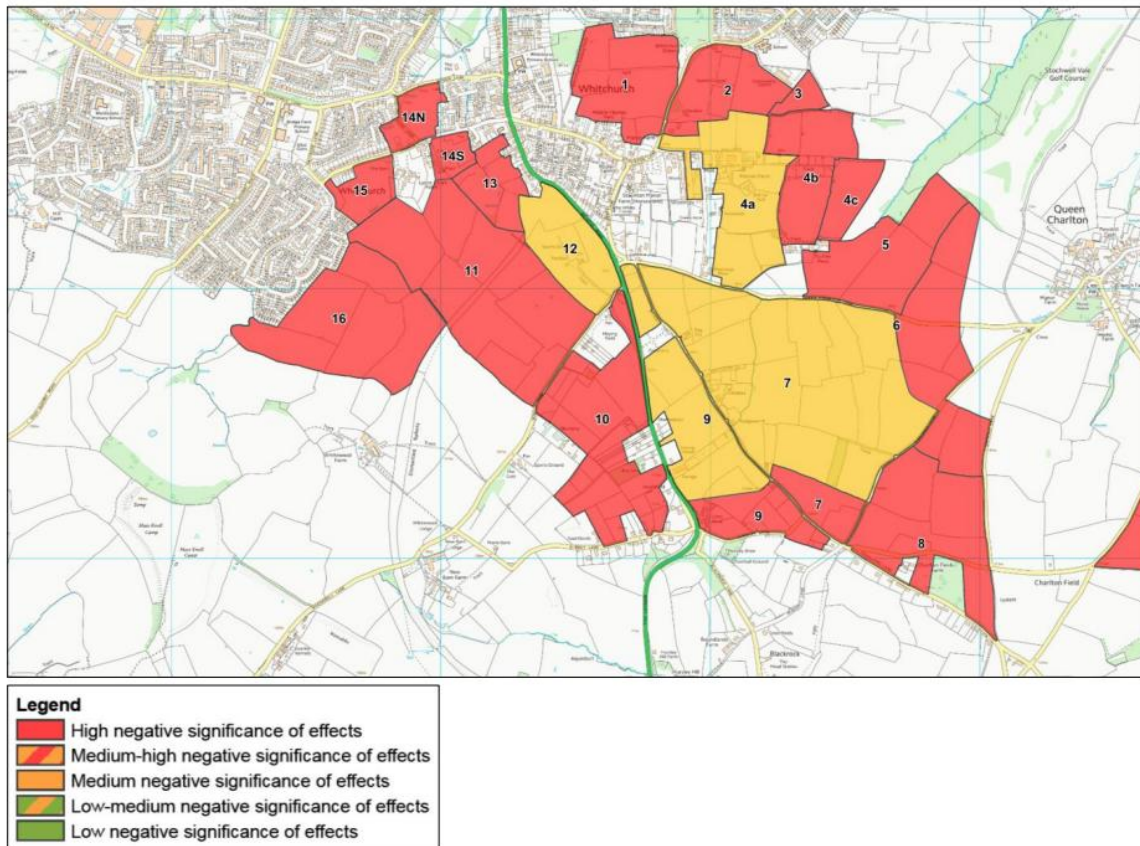


Figure 36: Extract from 2017 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Key Issues and Opportunities

- Lack of employment in the local area results in out-commuting, mostly by car.
- Whitchurch Village is surrounded nearly entirely by Green Belt, separating it from Bristol to the north and west, and Keynsham to the east.
- A number of important heritage assets are located in and around the village, including Maes Knoll and Wansdyke Scheduled Ancient Monuments located to the south west.
- Landscape sensitivity assessments carried out in the area surrounding Whitchurch Village indicate that land located to the south of the village, between the village and Maes Knoll, is of particularly high landscape sensitivity, apart from a small parcel of land directly adjoining the A37 to the west, which is assessed to have a medium landscape sensitivity. Parcels of land directly adjoining the village to the east are also assessed as having a medium landscape sensitivity, becoming more highly sensitive moving further east.

- There is currently no dedicated shop in the village to buy convenience goods, though the existing music shop sells some convenience items. There are a limited number of commercial units, a pub / restaurant, a primary school and sports facilities. Growth of the village in recent years did not include provision of any supporting facilities.
- The existing village primary school could accommodate pupils from around 150 new homes, but any larger scale of development would need to be supported by the provision of a new primary school as there is insufficient space for on-site expansion.
- Without the provision of a new secondary school at Whitchurch, secondary age pupils from any new development at Whitchurch Village will need to be transported to school in Keynsham or the Chew Valley, at cost to the council. These pupils will not be able to travel to school sustainably by active modes.
- High traffic volumes cause congestion issues along the A37 corridor, particularly at peak times. This can lead to poor air quality.
- Footway widths are narrow at points along the A37, and the carriageway width is frequently constrained by on-street parking.
- The village play park is well-used, but is located along the A37 at the southern end of the village, accessed via a very narrow footpath along A37. A new signalised crossing to be installed as part of the Whitchurch Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme will improve access to the play park from the east.
- The A37 severs the east and west parts of the village, and there are limited pedestrian crossings across the busy road.
- There are inadequate walking and cycle facilities on the A37 corridor, owing to the constrained carriageway and footway widths along parts of its length.
- There are limited orbital routes available for journeys to the northeast and northwest of the Whitchurch Village for sustainable modes.

Emerging Vision and Priorities

6.151 The following list sets out the key priorities for Whitchurch Village. These priorities will inform a vision for the village that will also cover and reflect areas that are proposed for development in the Draft Local Plan. Many of the priorities can be addressed by new development, and site options have been selected in response to the key issues, priorities and objectives. However, there are some priorities that won't be addressed through new development but will be addressed through other policies in the local plan or initiatives undertaken by the council or by other stakeholders.

- Maximise the delivery of affordable housing responding to local social and economic needs, and local demographics, including provision of homes fit for downsizing and single people.
- Provision of small-scale local employment space in order to provide the opportunity for local residents to be able to access and thrive in good work.
- Retain green buffer between Bristol and Whitchurch Village, in order to ensure that the two do not merge
- Preserve and enhance the settlement's village identity
- Provision of new local facilities such as a village shop, community facilities and spaces to increase social interaction and encourage local living.
- Protect heritage assets and their settings.
- Protect areas of landscape sensitivity.
- Maximise ecological mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Create a safe and attractive walking route between the village centre and the existing playground located to the south of the village.
- Enhance connectivity and access to the surrounding countryside including to Maes Knoll through better provision of active travel routes.
- Encourage the use of sustainable travel choices and reduce reliance on car use.

Transport Opportunities

6.152 Some of the key issues in Whitchurch Village relate to transport and highways, as listed above. A number of transport opportunities and potential interventions have been identified for Whitchurch Village. These interventions will need more detailed consideration whilst working up the Draft Local Plan, including mechanisms for funding them.

- Improving the connectivity for active travel, reducing the severance of the A37 corridor.
- Improving access routes for pedestrians to facilities including the South Bristol hospital and Leisure Centre, to reduce the need to travel further afield.
- Improving public spaces and routes, including crossing facilities, to encourage people to use active modes of travel, including:
- Building on the success of the existing Liveable Neighbourhood scheme at Queen Charlton Lane to create greener, safer spaces for people, and;
- New signalised pedestrian and cycle crossings on the busiest routes to improve safety of those using active travel modes.
- Identifying minor rural roads to be designated as Quiet Lanes to provide safer routes for active travel, away from speeding traffic.
- Extension of short-term e-scooter and e-bike rental within Whitchurch Village.
- Provision of a mobility hub in Whitchurch Village on the A37, providing a host of transport options in one place, allowing people to change modes easily between shared transport such as car clubs and e-scooters, public transport and active travel modes.
- Bus priority measures could be considered and provided along the A37 corridor.
- There is a need for Whitchurch Village to have good access to the facilities and services in Keynsham, such as Broadlands Academy. A new bus service between Keynsham and Whitchurch Village would fill a gap in the existing provision.
- Demand Responsive transport (DRT) can complement fixed route public transport on the main corridors by providing connections into these existing services. WESTLink South zone currently runs through the middle of

Whitchurch Village. DRT could be used to connect to the proposed mobility hub within Whitchurch Village, where passengers can gain access to a connecting bus or rail service to complete their journey.

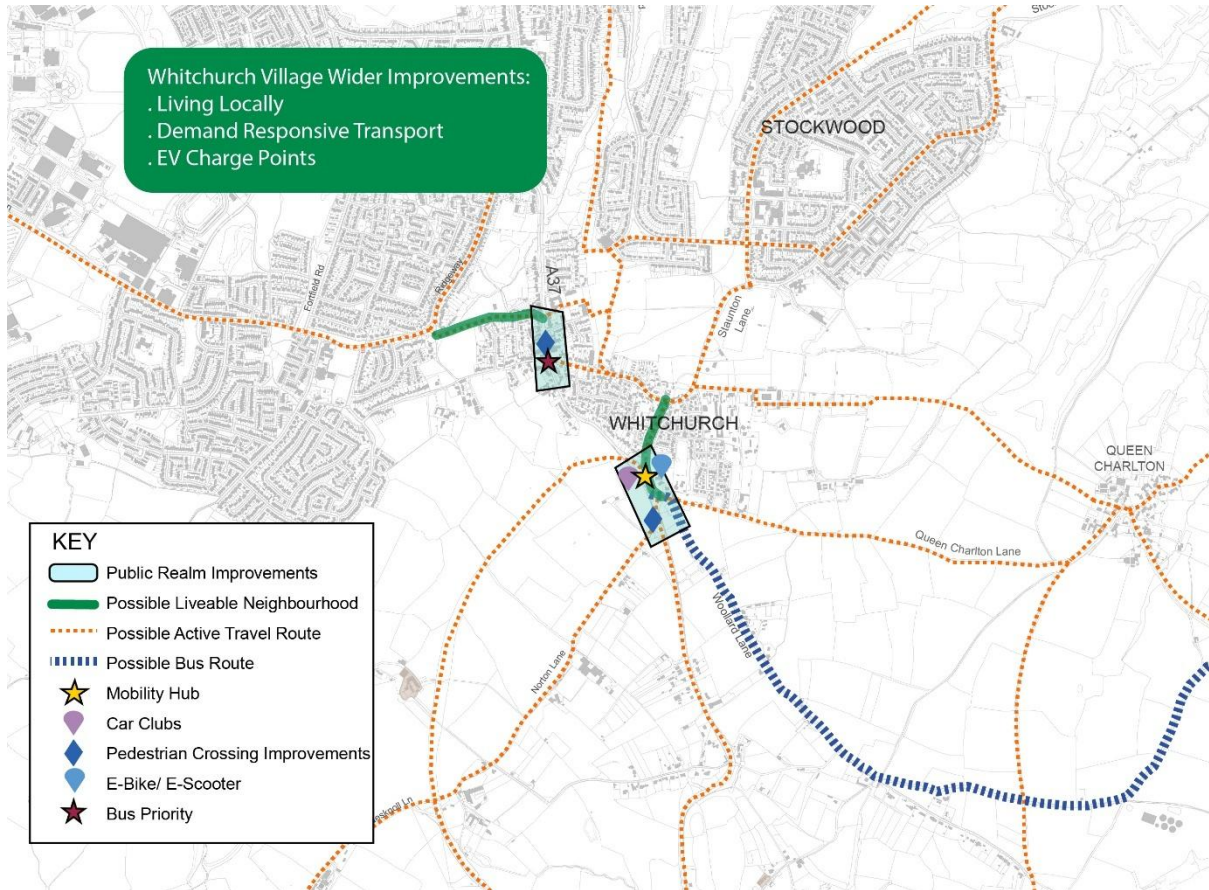


Figure 37: Transport opportunities in Whitchurch Village

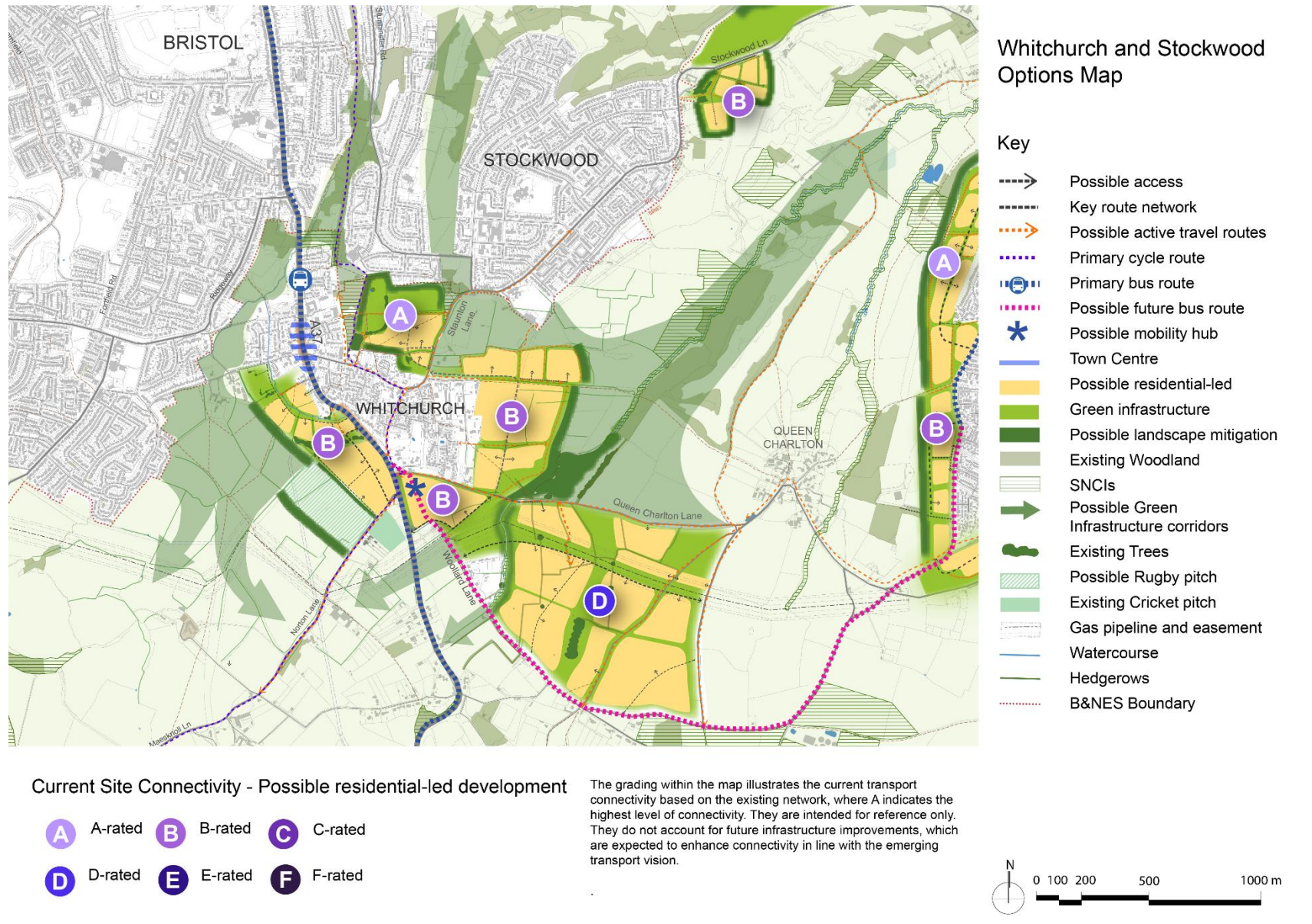
Options Consultation 2024

6.153 Comments on the previous options consultation in Spring 2024 are still relevant. These comments will be reviewed and taken into account, together with additional comments received, when the draft Local Plan is being prepared. Below is a short summary of some of the main issues raised in the previous consultation.

- Issues raised relating to addressing the housing shortage and the need for affordable options for young people, but also concerns about development not reflecting and therefore changing the village's local character and resulting in overdevelopment. Preference for development on brownfield sites is noted to protect green spaces.
- There is concern that local infrastructure and services (GP and dental practices, schools, shops) are inadequate for current residents, exacerbated by poor public transport that disconnects the community. There's a call for improving infrastructure alongside or prior to housing expansion.
- There is a push for a sustainable Whitchurch Village with reduced car dependency via better planning, despite the current reliance on cars due to inadequate public transport.
- There is concern over potential increases in traffic congestion, particularly on the A37, with suggestions including enhancing public transport, promoting sustainable travel, and upgrading road infrastructure.
- Proposals to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality include rerouting heavy goods vehicles and establishing traffic calming measures, amid concerns that new development could intensify these issues.

Figure 38:

OPTIONS MAP showing all the potential site allocations in Whitchurch Village and adjacent to Stockwood



Strategy

6.154 The emerging strategy set out below relates to the wider Bristol to Bath corridor, incorporating Whitchurch and other places. The strategy has been set out for this wider area because of the close functional and physical relationships between different places, that is they do not sit in isolation from nearby places.

6.155 The strategy for the Bristol to Bath Corridor seeks to deliver sustainable growth that capitalises on the strategic location between Bath and Bristol to take advantage of existing, and significantly enhance improvements to, sustainable transport links in the area.

6.156 Economic growth will build on the area's strengths and links to Bristol and Bath, with a proportionate level of complementary employment at Whitchurch Village. Additional residential and employment growth will support the role and function of Whitchurch Village centre.

6.157 Additional housing will meet the needs of existing and future residents, including the delivery of affordable housing, which will be facilitated by the 'golden rules' where this takes place on land released from the Green Belt. The plan will retain the identity of Whitchurch by avoiding coalescence with Bristol and integrating new development with strategic green infrastructure corridors that improve access to nature and enhance biodiversity. Development at Whitchurch will retain the village's separate identity to Bristol and will ensure planned growth delivers improved services and infrastructure for the village and addresses the severance caused by the A37, whilst respecting the setting of Maes Knoll.

Site Options

6.158 A variety of site options for development are set out below, which have been prepared in response to the key issues and priorities set out above. Some of the site options comprise more than one land parcel or area that means they are not in single ownership. Not all of the site options presented will necessarily be taken forward for allocation for development in the Draft Local Plan. Explanation as to how each of the site options responds to the key issues and priorities is set out within the opportunities and constraints tables for each site option. Where mitigation or additional evidence work is required to achieve priorities and objectives, this is referenced within the table.

6.159 The land parcels which make up the site options below have been assessed in more detail in various supporting documents, including the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and the Whitchurch Village Strategic Planning Options Document (SPO). The table below sets out the HELAA and SA references relevant to each site option:

Location Option	New sites - appx. housing capacity
West Whitchurch (Option 1)	350-450 dwellings
East Whitchurch (Horseworld and Woollard Lane) (Option 2)*	1,000-1,300 dwellings
North Whitchurch (Staunton Lane) (Option 3)	300-400 dwellings
South East Whitchurch (Option 4)*	1,950-2,500 dwellings (2,950-3,800 dwellings in combination with East Whitchurch Option 2)
Stockwood Lane	300-400 dwellings

* denotes a site option with potential for mixed use and/or economic development

6.160 Following consultation on these site options, a detailed assessment of the transport impact of each site will be undertaken, to inform selection of sites to be included in the Draft Plan. The cumulative impact of all sites included in the Draft Plan will also be assessed. Any site allocations in the Draft Plan will define site specific interventions required.

6.161 The Department for Transport has developed a Connectivity Tool that integrates transport and land use data to produce a national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. This tool allows users to filter connectivity scores by local authority, assigning each location a grade from A to J, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity within its local authority area.

6.162 Each site option has been evaluated with the Connectivity Tool, and an average grade reflecting its connectivity relative to the Bath and North East Somerset area has been assigned. It's important to note that this assessment is based on the current transport network and existing land uses such as schools and shops, and does not take into account planned or future developments. The grading from A to J is not an overall ranking of site options and in deciding which sites are allocated in the Draft Local Plan other sustainability criteria and deliverability factors will also be considered.

6.163 Sustainable growth of Whitchurch Village will need to be unlocked by significant investment in transport infrastructure delivering on projects and mitigation measures outlined in the Creating Sustainable Communities Strategy for Whitchurch Village and referenced in the Transport Opportunities above.

**Whitchurch Village Option 1: West Whitchurch (land to the west of the A37)
(range between 350 and 450 dwellings)**

6.164 Option 1 includes:

Land located to the west of the A37, between Norton Lane to the south, and Blackacre to the north.

6.165 The land is primarily used as arable fields. However, the Bristol Barbarians RFC club is located in the southeastern part of the area, which would need to be relocated to the south if this option was to be taken forward.

6.166 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes set out in national policy is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is now sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.



Figure 39: Indicative concept plan – Whitchurch Village Option 1

Whitchurch Village Option 1: West Whitchurch	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 350-450 homes, plus extension of existing village centre along A37, with provision of a primary school (if brought forward in combination with other options), village green, village shop, and other community facilities. Development of this site in isolation would not require the delivery of additional primary school places in the Whitchurch area. Located close to the existing village centre, and with good access by active travel modes to facilities located in Whitchurch Bristol. Safe and attractive walking route from north west end of village to existing village playground. Public realm improvements along the A37 to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, with local mobility hub connecting to national cycle route.

Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Requires relocation of rugby club further south. Further exploration required relating to whether relocated rugby club could be adequately accommodated within the existing hedgerow network, with buffers. The majority of this option is located within areas assessed to have either a high-medium, or medium risk of harm to heritage assets in the area. In these areas it is considered that development could result in a harmful impact on the significance of heritage assets but this impact is likely to fall within the definition of 'less than substantial harm', and/or could be reduced via appropriate mitigation (such as via landscape design solutions). Some of the land parcels located to the south west of the option are located in areas assessed to have a high risk of harm to heritage assets, where it is considered that development would likely result in a significant harmful impact on the significance of heritage assets, but that this could be reduced (but not removed) via appropriate mitigation. Any harm will need to be weighed against public benefits that are provided by developing the parcel. Development would impact historic field pattern to the west of A37. Located in area of high landscape sensitivity – further assessment and consideration of appropriate mitigation required. Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to school at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using active travel modes. Although located close to the existing village centre and facilities within Whitchurch Bristol, without improved public realm and crossings along A37, severance with the existing village could occur. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	Careful consideration of pedestrian and cycle crossings required within public realm improvements to alleviate severance issues. Significant green infrastructure and planting required throughout and along the edge of the development parcels, to provide softening to edges of development, and mitigate impact on landscape and heritage assets located to the south.

Further evidence required	Landscape sensitivity assessment and mitigation. Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Further heritage assessment required relating to levels of harm to heritage assets, and consideration of weight of harm against public benefit. Impact of development on historic field patterns to be considered. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery Air quality assessment
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Whitchurch Village Option 2: Eastern extension of the village (Horseworld) and Woollard Lane (range between 1,000 and 1,300 dwellings)

6.167 This site option comprises two main parcels or areas of land, namely:

A triangle of land located directly east of the A37 between the A37 and Queen Charlton Road, and

Land adjoining the village to the east, currently occupied by Horseworld.

Comments are invited on the extent of this site option and whether it is considered appropriate and deliverable that it comprises two main areas or parcels of land that mean it is not in single ownership.

6.168 The site option is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes set out in national policy is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is now sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.

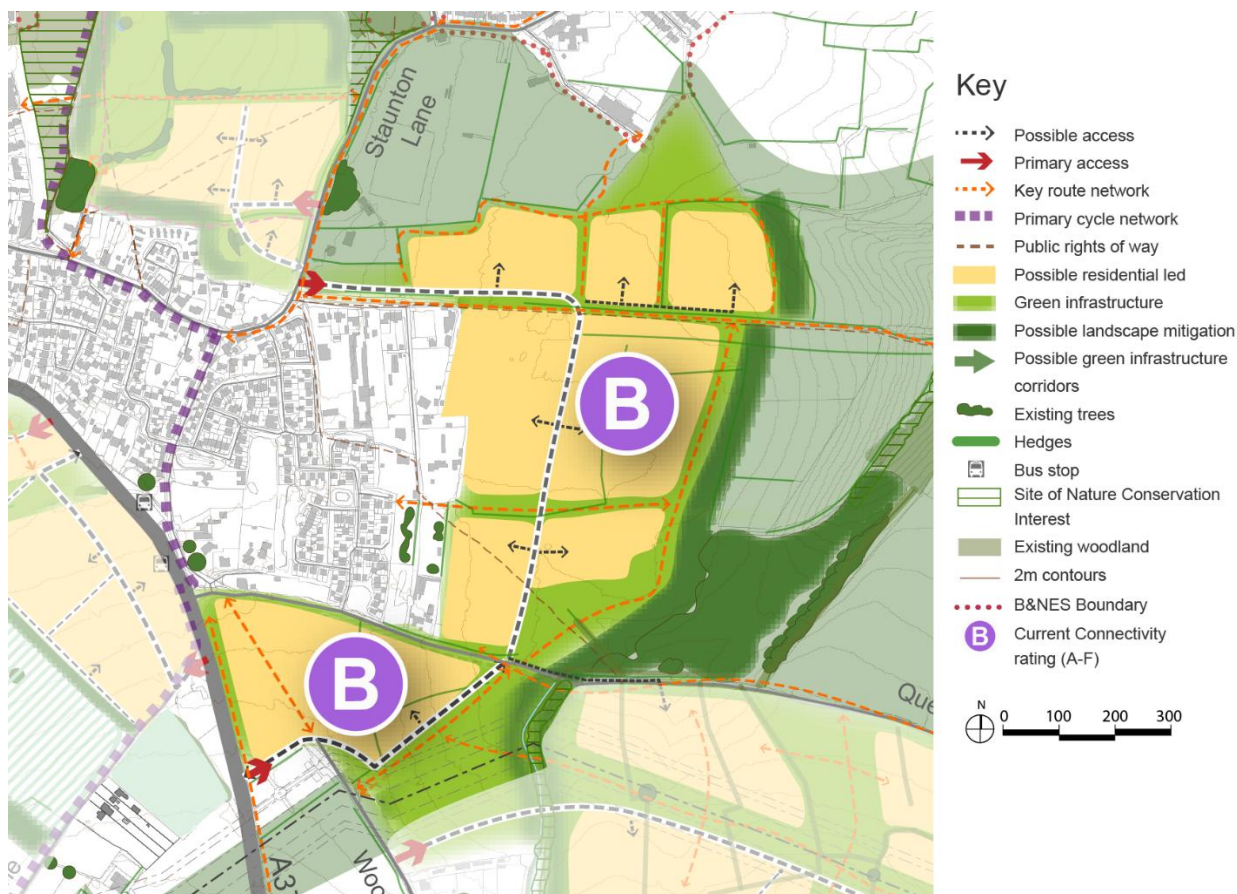


Figure 40: Indicative concept plan - Whitchurch Village Option 2

Whitchurch Village Option 2: East Whitchurch, Horseworld & Woollard Lane	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 1,000-1,300 homes. Residential-led mixed-use development, including provision of a primary school and small-scale employment space. Public realm improvements along the A37 to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, with local mobility hub connecting to national cycle route. Development in location less sensitive in heritage and landscape terms. Opportunity to improve access for residents into Stockwood Vale Valleys, and walking routes across to Keynsham.

Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. The site is in a sensitive gap between the village and the City of Bristol. Not considered to be a particularly good location to provide a village shop, due to distance from existing village centre and the A37. Significant walking distances from eastern edge of development parcels to existing village centre, and facilities located in Whitchurch Bristol. Land parcels making up this option are located within areas assessed to have either a low risk of harm to heritage assets, or in areas of high-medium, or medium risk of harm to heritage assets. In the latter two areas it is considered that development could result in a harmful impact on the significance of heritage assets, but this impact is likely to fall within the definition of ‘less than substantial harm’, and/or could be reduced via appropriate mitigation (such as via landscape design solutions). Any harm will need to be weighed against public benefits that are provided by developing the parcel. Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to school at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using active modes. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	Significant green buffer required to eastern edge, to protect views from Queen Charlton Conservation Area. Green infrastructure required along A37 to soften edge of development parcel when viewed from heritage assets located to the south west.
Further evidence required	Landscape sensitivity assessment and mitigation. Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Further heritage assessment required relating to levels of harm to heritage assets, and consideration of weight of harm against public benefit. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery Air quality assessment

Whitchurch Village Option 3: North of Whitchurch, Staunton Lane (range between 300 and 400 dwellings)

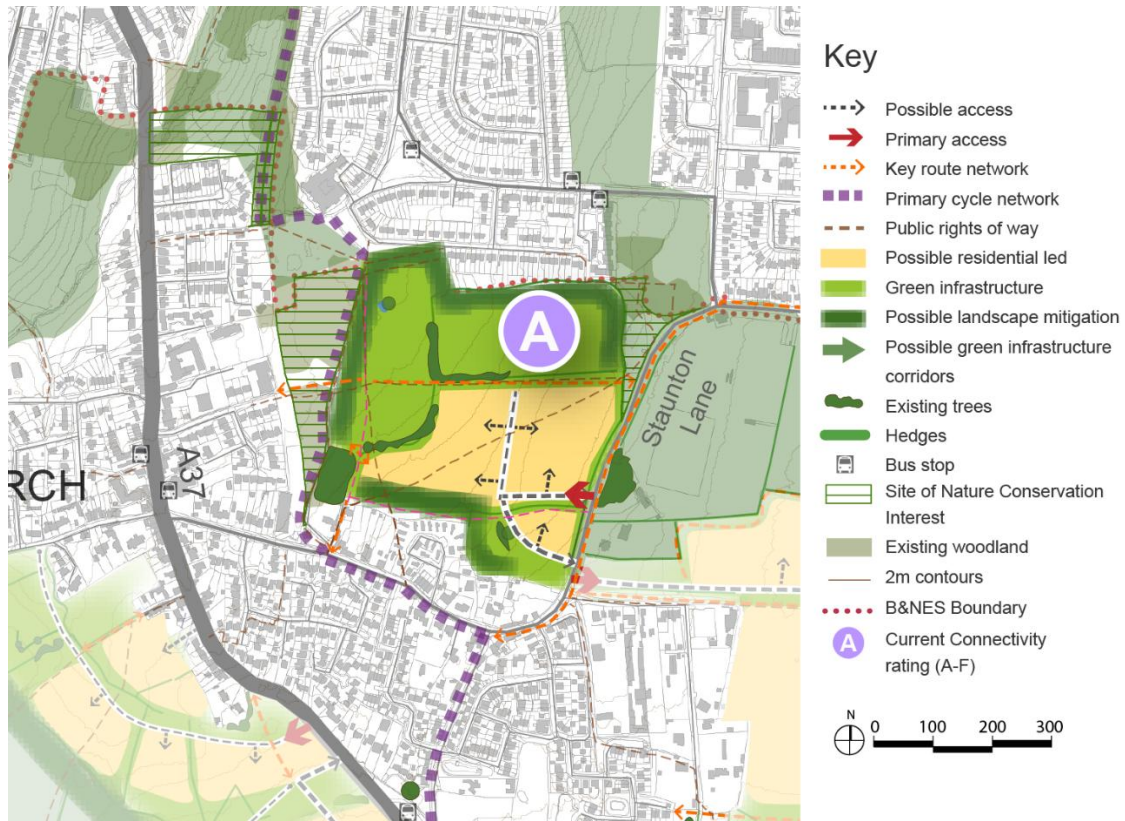


Figure 41: Indicative concept plan - Whitchurch Village Option 3

6.169 The site is located in the Green Belt in a sensitive gap between Whitchurch Village and the City of Bristol to the north. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes set out in national policy is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is now sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.

Whitchurch Village Option 3: North Whitchurch, Staunton Lane	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 300-400 homes Development of this site in isolation would not require the delivery of additional primary school places in the Whitchurch area. Located close to the existing village centre, and with good access by active travel modes to facilities located in Whitchurch Bristol. Public realm improvements along the A37 to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, with local mobility hub connecting to national cycle route.

Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to school at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using active modes. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	Significant green infrastructure and planting required throughout and along the edge of the development parcels .
Further evidence required	Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Air quality assessment

Whitchurch Village Option 4: South East Whitchurch (Range between 1,900 and 2,500 homes)

6.170 The site is located in the Green Belt. Any release from the Green Belt and subsequent allocation for development will need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances. To understand and consider the impact of potential development on the Green Belt an assessment of the extent to which different parcels of land serve the five purposes is being undertaken. The emerging Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment being carried out by WECA will assess the site for its contribution towards meeting the five Green Belt purposes and also whether it has the potential to meet the definition of grey belt set out in the NPPF and updated Planning Practice Guidance, which is sequentially preferable to greenfield Green Belt in national policy. The assessment work is ongoing and will inform the Draft Local Plan. It is likely that following the Stage 1 Strategic Green Belt Assessment a more detailed (stage 2) assessment of the impact of development on more specific areas of the Green Belt will also be required.

6.171 For the site to be a logical extension to Whitchurch Village it would need to be planned in combination with Option 2 (East Whitchurch). This would result in a combined 2,950-3,840 dwellings across both options.

Key

- > Possible access
- Primary access
- > Key route network
- Primary cycle network
- Public rights of way
- Possible residential-led
- Green infrastructure
- Possible landscape mitigation
- Possible green infrastructure corridors
- Existing trees
- Hedges
- Bus stop
- Site of Nature Conservation Interest
- Existing woodland
- 2m contours
- Gas pipeline and easement
- D** Current Connectivity rating (A-F)

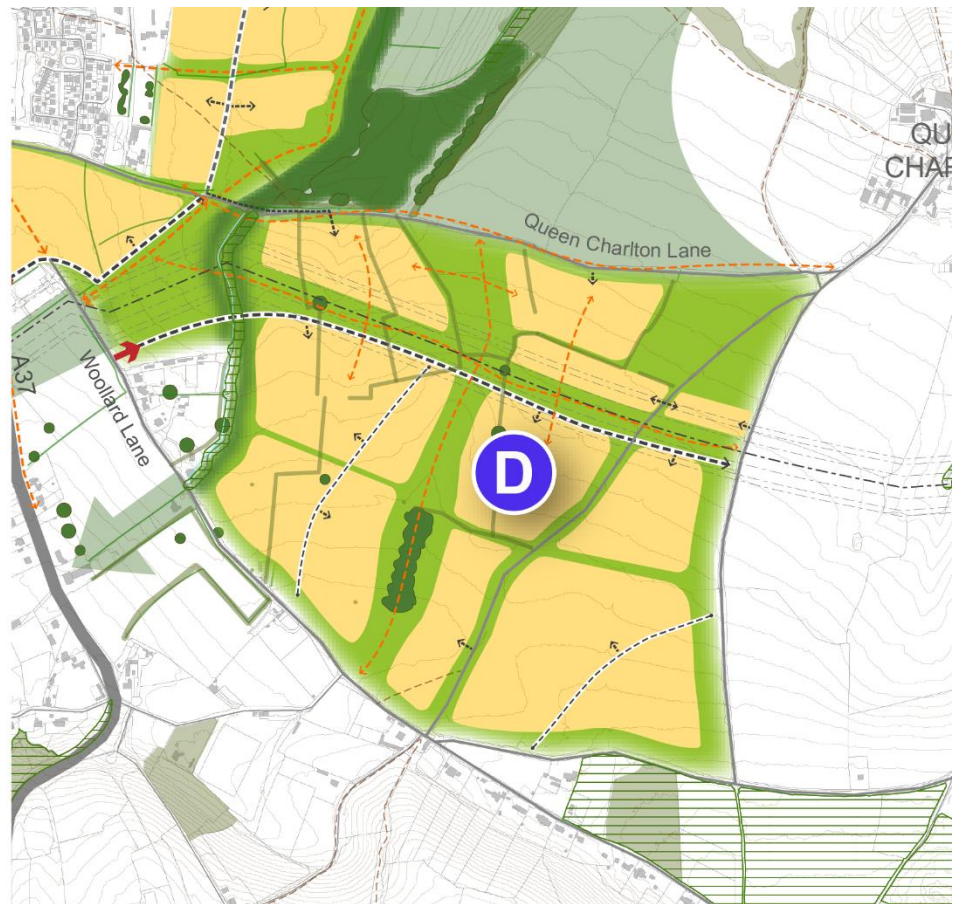
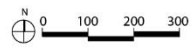


Figure 42: Indicative concept plan - Whitchurch Village Option 4

Whitchurch Village Option 4: South East Whitchurch	Description
Opportunities	Provision of around 1,900-2,500 homes, though this site would only form a logical expansion of Whitchurch if taken forward in conjunction with Option 2 (a combined 2,950-3,800 homes) New local centre Potential flexible small-scale employment workspace Requirement for two new 420 place primary schools should Options 2 and 4 come forward together. There could potentially be the need for new on-site secondary school provision, meeting needs of future Whitchurch Village residents without the cost of school transport to schools elsewhere. The need for this will be assessed once the sites to be bought forward in the Draft Lcal Plan, together with their dwelling capacities, have been finalised. Opportunity to improve access for residents into Stockwood Vale Valleys.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Significant walking distance to existing village centre, and from facilities located in Whitchurch Bristol. Land parcels making up this option are located within areas assessed to have a high risk of harm to heritage assets where it is considered that development could result in a harmful impact on the significance of heritage assets, potentially falling within the definition of ‘substantial harm’, with no potential for meaningful mitigation. Any harm will need to be weighed against public benefits that are provided by developing the parcel, with ‘substantial harm’ needing to be ‘wholly exceptional’ in line with the NPPF The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	50m green buffer required to eastern edge, to protect views from Queen Charlton Conservation Area. Further heritage assessment required relating to levels of harm to heritage assets, and consideration of weight of harm against public benefit.

Further evidence required	Landscape sensitivity assessment and mitigation. Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery Air quality assessment
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Stockwood Lane (Range between 300 and 380 dwellings)

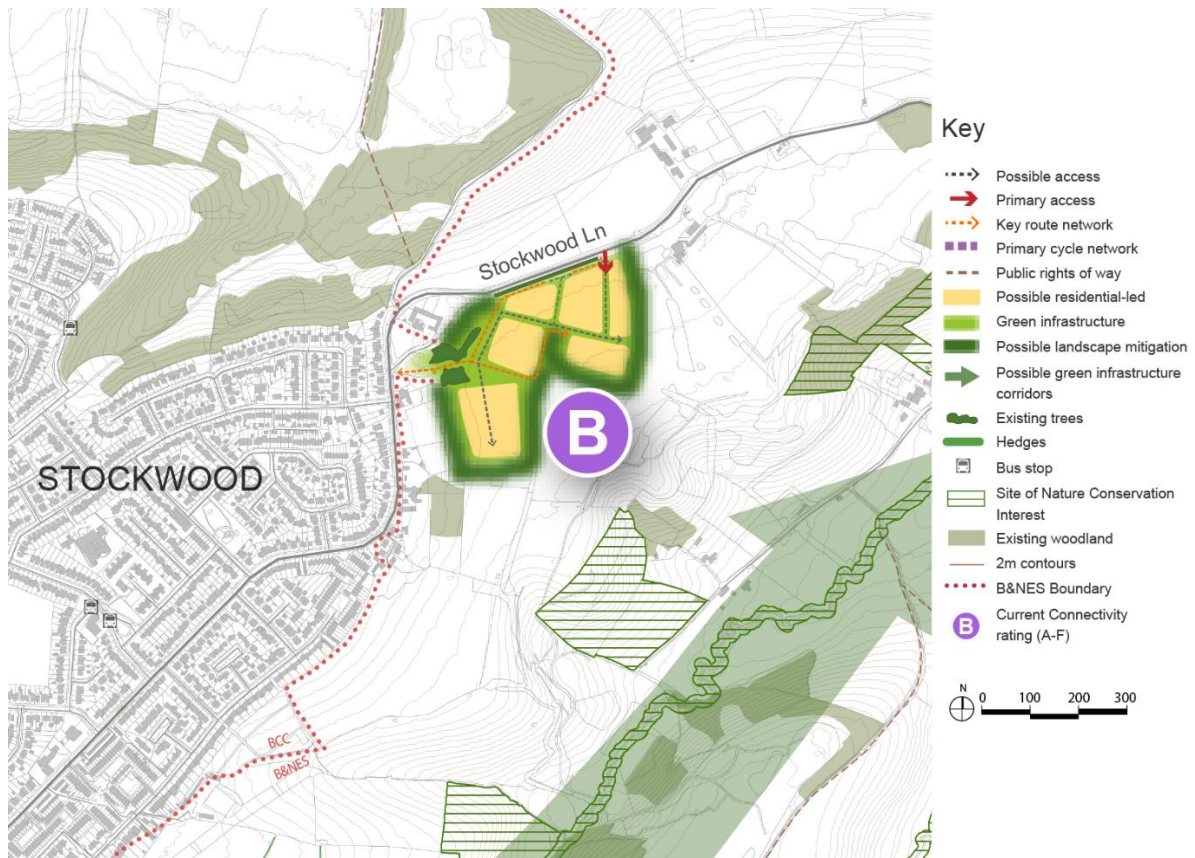


Figure 43: Indicative concept plan - Stockwood Lane

Option 5: Stockwood Lane	Description
The Opportunities	Provision of around 300-400 homes Opportunity to improve access for residents into Stockwood Vale Valleys. Opportunity to tie in to public transport and active travel improvements at Hicks Gate via a sustainable transport link along Stockwood Lane between the site and the proposed Hicks Gate Interchange.
Constraints	Located in the Green Belt. Significant walking distance to existing village centre and existing primary school, and from bus stop and facilities located in Stockwood (Bristol). Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to school at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using active modes. The availability and frequency of public transport services, particularly bus services, is currently dependent on external funding, which is subject to ongoing review and cannot be guaranteed over the plan period. This uncertainty should be taken into account when considering the sustainability and deliverability of this option.
Mitigation required	50m green buffer required to eastern edge, to protect views from Queen Charlton Conservation Area. There is a need for the site to provide early and substantial investment in active travel infrastructure, the creation of new or enhanced bus services with stops integrated into the development, connecting the site to Hicks Gate Interchange and the introduction of a mobility hub.
Further evidence required	Landscape sensitivity assessment and mitigation. Green Belt assessment required to assess impact of removing land from Green Belt, including cumulative impact when considering strategic removal across the district. Evidence to consider secondary school place planning in the Wellsway and Broadlands catchment areas, in combination with other proposed allocations in the area. Evidence to support requirements for strategic green infrastructure and nature recovery Air quality assessment