

CLH Policies CULTURE, LEISURE & HEALTH



of rural routes. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

1. 2. Opportunities for improvement of existing walking and cycling routes as well as creation of new routes were identified in the 2017 Buckingham Transport Strategy and reviewed as part of the Buckingham Local Cycling and Walking Plan Lite. These have been identified on the Policies Map to highlight opportunities for new development to enhance the Network, in line with VALP Policy T7.

POLICY CLH1 ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Sustainable Travel Network and opportunities for improvements, as shown on the Sustainable Travel Map, for the purpose of prioritising active travel and encouraging the use of public transport.

B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should avoid harm and should sustain and where practicable enhance the connectivity of the Network by virtue of their layout, means of access and landscape treatment.

1. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applicants to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness

POLICY CLH2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANAL AREA

- A.** The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 11.6 Ha of land at Bourton Meadow, with a developable area of approximately 3.73 Ha, as shown on the Policies Map, for a mixed-use development scheme comprising:
- 1.** A new small scale visitor interpretation centre for a mix of local community uses (Class F1/F2) and associated parking; and
 - 2.** An enabling residential scheme of approximately 90 homes.
- B.** The visitor centre scheme will be located entirely within the developable area and shall comprise a single building of a detailed specification to be agreed with the Buckingham Canal Society. It shall be located adjoining to the associated parking and designed in a way that will protect the amenities of nearby residential properties whilst also enabling the facility to be accessible and functional to meet a wider range of community needs. The scheme will need to demonstrate that EV charging and cycle parking provisions have been considered and incorporated where possible.
- C.** The enabling residential scheme will be located entirely within the developable area and shall comprise a tenure mix of 35% affordable housing and 65% open market housing and shall be located in such a way that relates well to the visitor centre scheme to aid natural surveillance.
- D.** The design strategy will have regard to all the relevant provisions of Buckingham

hamshire and Buckingham Design Guidance and Codes. The strategy should sustain and enhance the significance of the setting of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as a non-designated heritage asset.

- E.** The transport strategy shall make provision for a new single access point in a suitable location to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority and demonstrate that a number of options have been considered, including a combined access/crossing onto the A413 at the northern junction of Burleigh Piece.
- F.** The active travel strategy shall comprise a layout that creates new walking and wheeling routes across the A413 to improve public access to Bourton Meadow and to enhance connectivity with the wider countryside beyond. The layout should also accommodate new walking and wheeling routes within the site and must include improving the accessibility of the towpath along the Buckingham Arm section of the Grand Union Canal. These routes shall be well signposted with information boards, nature hides and observation areas forming part of the strategy.
- G.** The layout and landscaping scheme has particular regard to the character of the Local Landscape Area, as set out in the report "Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District" (Final Report, 2016) and the Landscape Character Assessment (2008), or any subsequent versions, and shall acknowledge views across the site from the Ouse Valley Way. The scheme should also demonstrate how it has responded to the location of the site as a transitional edge-of-town and rural countryside setting.

- H. The green infrastructure strategy shall make provision for onsite public open space and biodiversity net gain of at least 10% (as measured by the most up to date metric) as part of its proposals to integrate with the wider network of green infrastructure. The strategy shall**
- 1. minimise the loss of existing mature trees and hedgerows within the site boundaries and shall seek to meet or exceed an Urban Greening Factor of 0.4 in accordance with Policy ENV2;**
 - 2. use species of known benefit to UK wildlife in any soft landscaping proposals;**
 - 3. include a minimum 10 metre buffer area along the River Great Ouse which should be designed to be kept free from human disturbance comprising semi-improved grassland/ other neutral grassland with scattered scrub and occasional individual trees;**
 - 4. introduce permanent or ephemeral waterbodies (such as ponds, scrapes, ditches and rain gardens) on site to create new habitats; and**
 - 5. demonstrate how it supports habitat creation along the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal and River Great Ouse.**
- I. The flood and drainage strategy shall direct more vulnerable development away from areas subject to flood risk and demonstrate that full consideration has been given to an infiltration drainage system and maintaining water levels of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as part of an**


overall SuDS strategy.

J. Proposals should be made in the form of a comprehensive planning application and must include:

- 1. An illustrative masterplan that defines the land uses and sets out the key development principles for access, layout and design;**
- 2. A delivery plan setting out how the visitor centre and associated parking will be secured and delivered, with the requirement that a planning obligation is agreed to require the scheme to be delivered and available for operation before the final occupation of the residential scheme at the latest; and**
- 3. Evidence that it meets the provisions of Policy 1 of the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2016 – 2036, or any subsequent replacement.**

1. The made neighbourhood plan recognised that this area of land had potential to enhance the green and blue infrastructure and the historic significance of the former and current Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal, and its potential as a tourist attraction, and it supported new development that delivered these aims. It was intended to aid the Buckingham Canal Society in redeveloping the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal which forms part of a wider strategy to re-open the canal as a working water way with links through to Cosgrove. The policy now allocates the site for specific purposes building on the original framework set out by the made neighbourhood plan.
2. The allocation extends to 11.6 Ha of land at Bourton Meadows on the eastern edge of Buckingham and includes a new visitor centre scheme and associated parking,



Project title	Bourton Meadow	Drawing title:	Site Concept Plan	Scale:	1:2000 @ A1	 <small>RIBA</small>
Client:	Manor Oak Homes	Drawing reference:	02-22001	Date:	22.06.2024	
				Checked:	MM	

Plan 2. Outline site concept: Development of the Canal Area

and green and blue infrastructure enhancements, together with a housing scheme that will enable the delivery of these benefits. An illustrative proposal for the site is shown in Plan 2.

3. The land is in control of a single developer and can be delivered within the next five year plan period. The developer is working with the Buckingham Canal Society and other local stakeholders to develop the scheme and has confirmed that a viable scheme can be delivered as per policy requirements. The Buckingham Canal Society is a well-established organisation affiliated to the Inland Waterways Association and one of its main objectives are to promote the education of the public in the history and use of the canals and waterways and Buckingham Canal in particular. The inclusion of a small visitor centre to provide information and a base for educational activities for the Canal Society contributes to meeting this objective and the specific function and design of the building is being agreed with the Canal Society and through public consultation. The use of the building is likely to incorporate a mix of Class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) and Class F2 (Local Community Uses) uses. Whilst the building may include a café or small plant nursery, these would be ancillary to the main uses of the building and not a separate standalone facility. A small car park is also planned to serve the facility. The Buckingham Canal Society, and other local keyholders, will seek to agree these matters with the developer as a priority on the making of the Plan.
4. The housing scheme will enable the land to be made available from its private owner to achieve the visitor centre scheme, as well as a range of green and blue infrastructure improvements, including new active travel and recreational movement routes. The new homes will also contribute to the housing supply in Buckingham over an extended plan period.
5. The policy defines the developable area of the site and this is located within Flood Zone 1 and at a low risk of flooding from other sources. The north-eastern part of the site is located within Flood Zone 3 and is subject to a high surface water flood risk. This land is excluded from the developable area. Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity proposals are water-compatible development and are planned to be located within this north-eastern part of the site. For all these reasons, it has not been necessary to undertake a sequential test in line with national policy and guidance. Given these flooding constraints on the site, the policy also requires the flood and drainage strategy for the site consider an infiltration drainage system. If an infiltration technique is not viable, a detention basin will be required to slow the rate of run off into the River Great Ouse to the south of the site. A detention basin is water-compatible development and can therefore be located within Flood Zones 1 and 2 without the need to undertake a sequential test in line with national policy and guidance. The strategy will also need to consider maintaining water levels of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal. In this respect, it is noted that a top-up pump solution which uses a solar powered pump to draw water from the river water to maintain canal water levels is already operational.
6. This neighbourhood plan seeks to identify the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal as a non-designated heritage asset as part of the historic infrastructure of the town. The policy therefore also requires that the design strategy should sustain and enhance the significance of the setting of this non-designated heritage asset alongside meeting the provisions of existing design guidance and the Buckingham Design Code which is expected to carry the

full weight of the development plan following the making of this Plan.

7. A new access point into the site is likely to be required from the A413. Anticipated traffic volumes into the site at the detailed testing and planning application stage will determine the nature and scale of the access point. The Town Council's preferred option would be for combined access/crossing at the northern junction with Burleigh Piece in the form of a traffic signal controlled new single access point onto the A413. The policy requires that the consideration of options is demonstrated and that the final option is agreed to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority.
8. The policy also makes provision for the development to provide new walking and wheeling routes across the A413. The Town Council's preference is for this to include the provision of a Toucan crossing at the preferred traffic signal-controlled junction with Burleigh Piece (northern junction) and a second Toucan crossing to the south of the development to serve the existing Ouse Valley Way. There has been a long-standing aspiration to improve the accessibility of the towpath along the Buckingham Arm section of the Grand Union Canal, and new walking and wheeling routes within the site is also important. Negotiations have included the provision of information boards, nature hides and observation areas. These (active travel strategy) provisions have been made to improve public access to Bourton Meadow and to enhance connectivity with the wider countryside beyond.
9. The site lies at the edge of the town where it meets the countryside in a location that is considered has important landscape characteristics. As such the site falls within a local designation, a Local Landscape Area. The policy therefore requires the layout and landscaping scheme to respond to this.
10. The neighbourhood plan is supported by its own evidence base and benefits from the insights of a desk-based ecological assessment prepared by Future Nature WTC, which is published alongside this plan. It recognises that the River Great Ouse, which passes through the west of the site, is a designated a Biological Notification Site due to its raised ecological interest and that the site lends itself to the creation of wetland habitats with a focus on the species they may support. The policy therefore requires the consideration of specific measures as part of the wider green infrastructure strategy which also reflects wider requirements imposed by national policies.
11. The site also lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for limestone and clay, silt, sand and gravel. Policy 1 of the adopted Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2016 – 2036 requires schemes located within such areas, that are not development exempt from its requirements, to demonstrate that prior extraction is possible; the development is of a form or nature that would not hinder future extraction; there is an over-riding need for the development; or that the resource is not viable. The proposal does not meet exemption criteria and the policy therefore seeks to ensure that this test is undertaken and demonstrated as part of any planning application submitted.
12. The policy requires that any planning application that wishes to benefit from its support must be comprehensive in covering all of its elements and must set out precisely how and when the visitor centre scheme will be delivered. This reflects the fact that the housing scheme will enable its timely delivery, leaving no prospect that it will be built out and occupied before it is secured and able to operate. This will be done through a planning obligation, which will also secure other elements of the policy, for example its provision of affordable housing. The land interest has confirmed that this approach is reasonable and acceptable

and that the project is small enough to be completed in one phase comprising all its elements. In which case, it is not considered neither necessary nor reasonable for the policy to require the delivery of the visitor centre scheme any earlier than before the housing scheme is completed and almost completely occupied.

POLICY CLH3 HEALTH FACILITIES

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies health care sites in Buckingham, as shown in the Policies Map, for the purpose of protecting healthcare provision from unnecessary loss.**
- B. All new residential development proposals will only be permitted where they provide or improve the delivery of essential health and/or wellbeing facilities and services required to serve the scale of the development proposed. Proposals to meet increasing demand, by expanding the Lace Hill health care facilities in particular, will be supported.**
- C. Proposals for the redevelopment of existing established healthcare facilities at North End and Verney Close, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported provided health care facilities at Lace Hill, or other suitable alternative provision to serve the local community within Buckingham, are operational. In the event that the Lace Hill relocation project is not implemented then proposals that will result in the loss of the existing established health care facilities will be resisted.**

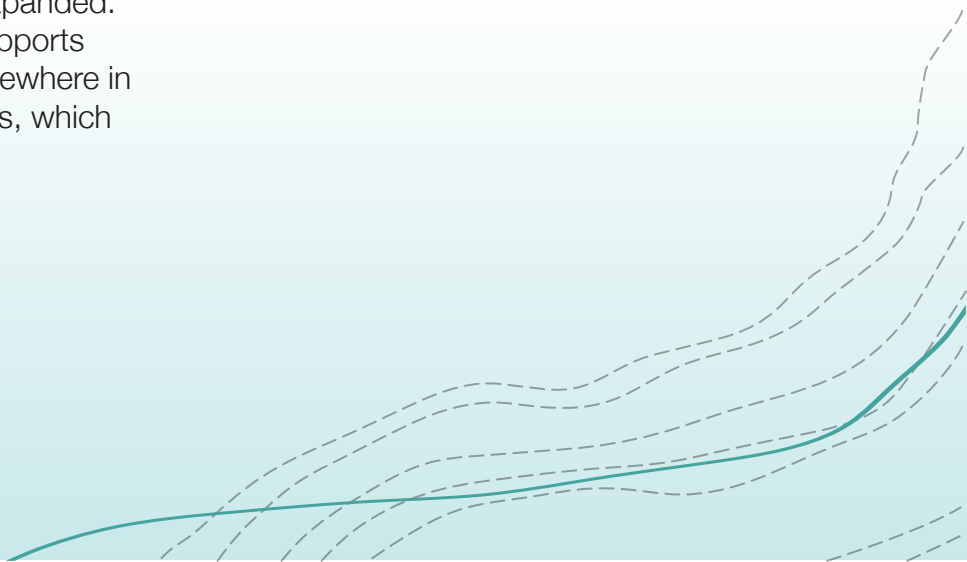
1. In granting permission for residential development in the town, the Local Authority agreed for healthcare provision to be relocated from the existing GP surgery sites in Verney Close and North End, to a site on the Lace Hill development to the southeast of the town. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot at this stage change this decision. The implementation of this relocation project is currently being pursued. Whilst the Town Council will continue to lobby relevant stakeholders for solutions to maintain accessibility to healthcare provision for the whole town and the GP Practice itself is currently pursuing several options, enabling

the redevelopment of the existing surgeries' sites are required to contribute to the implementation of the scheme at Lace Hill. The policy therefore seeks to update the current situation surrounding healthcare provision in Buckingham.

2. Clause A identifies healthcare sites in the town during the plan period which need to be protected from unnecessary loss. Following a change in the way in which the planning system classifies services and facilities, once built, the healthcare facilities at Lace Hill will fall within use Class E subcategory e). The hospital falls within a different use class where restrictions on change of use remain in place and do not require intervention. Permitted development rights allow for the change of use of a Class E premises to a residential use without the need to apply for planning permission. The submission of an application titled 'prior approval' is still however required to be made to Bucks Council. Bucks Council is required to consider the impact of the loss of a health centre in determining a 'prior approval' application amongst other matters. Although this policy will not be engaged in that determination (as it is not on the list of considerations in a 'prior approval' application), the policy demonstrated that these healthcare provision services play an important role in local provision to the community of the town and the wider rural hinterland and could therefore be a legitimate reason for refusing 'prior approval' for proposals that will harm this provision.
3. To accommodate any further growth that the town may undergo in the future, the Lace Hill site is likely to be required to expand its provision. The site is large enough, but the building may need to be expanded. Clause B of the policy therefore supports this and any other interventions elsewhere in the town, such as satellite surgeries, which

improve access to healthcare provision for the existing and any growing communities.

4. Finally the policy enables the redevelopment of existing healthcare facilities at North End and Verney Close to help enable the delivery of the relocation project to Lace Hill. It does so however, only if facilities at Lace Hill are operational. The loss of such facilities in this location without their re-provision elsewhere will have adverse effects on healthcare provision and could again be a legitimate reason for refusing any 'prior approval' or planning application.



POLICY CLH4 ART, CULTURAL, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

- A. A. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of a new community centre/hall, or the refurbishment of an existing building, to deliver a theatre space within the town.**
- B. B. Where proposals are made to improve and create new sports and recreational facilities to serve the town, significant weight will be given to their community and health and well-being value.**
- C. C. Development proposals coming forward within the town will be expected to demonstrate that the layout of schemes locates any required sports and recreational facilities in a way that does not harm the possibility of future expansion.**

1. Buckingham has a strong tradition of celebrating the arts, sports & culture in the town, including through Buckingham Town Council Awards, grants and the Fringe Festival. Buckingham has a variety of arts, sports and cultural facilities available to the community, largely on a not-for-profit basis and is particularly well served for outdoor sports facilities with over 20 different outdoors sports facilities available at a mix of public and private venues.

2. List of Arts and Culture Facilities:

A number of privately owned arts and culture businesses or artists also operate in Buckingham, including: University of Buckingham Book Shop, The Dragon Gallery, local artists, musicians and graphic designers.

Facility	Details/uses	Run by
Old Gaol Museum	Two storey museum in the historic old gaol house, built in 1755. Museum tours, art displays, community events	Old Gaol Museum Trust (not-for-profit)
Radcliffe Centre	Racked seating Max. attendees 116. Concerts, including classical and folk music	University of Buckingham
Vinson Centre	Racked seating Max. seating 156. Special lectures, community cinema	University of Buckingham
Community Centre	Large community hall and small community hall with kitchen facilities. Annual pantomime, community dances, art exhibitions	Buckingham Community Centre Committee (not-for-profit)
Adult Learning	2x permanent classrooms, including ceramics studio with kiln Wide variety of arts & culture classes	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)
Library	Large community library, 2x smaller rooms for hire	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)

3. List of sports Facilities:

Facility	Details	Run by
Rugby Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 3 pitches (2 pitches to be confirmed at Moreton Road)	Buckingham Rugby Club (not-for-profit)
Football Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 2x pitches (Lace Hill) 1x pitch (Buckingham Athletic)	Buckingham Football Club (not-for-profit)
Cricket Club	Clubhouse, changing rooms, 1x pitch	Buckingham Cricket Club (not-for-profit)
Tennis Club	Clubhouse, 3x courts	Buckingham Lawn Tennis Club (not-for-profit)
Bowls Club	3 Clubs, separate venues 2x Outdoor Bowls facilities 1x Indoor Bowls facilities All with Clubhouse	Chandos Park Bowls Club (not-for-profit) West End Bowls Club (not-for-profit) Slade Indoor Recreation Club (not-for-profit)
Lace Hill Sports & Community Centre	Sports hall, community room, 2x sports pitches	

Facility	Details	Run by
Swan Pool & Leisure Centre	25m pool, learner pool, gym, soft play, 1 x sports pitch	Buckinghamshire Council
Skate Park	1x Skate Park	Buckinghamshire Council (not-for-profit)
BMX Track	To be built – Moreton Road.	To be confirmed

A number of privately owned sports businesses also operate in Buckingham, including: Sports4All who provide sports tuition to schools and holiday clubs, 5 gyms and 3 yoga and/or well-being studios.

The University of Buckingham, The Buckingham School and The Royal Latin School all have sports facilities available for the private use of their students and hire. Facilities vary across the sites but include football/rugby pitches, netball/basketball courts, tennis and badminton courts. Primary school facilities are more varied but all include playing fields and/or hardstanding suitable for use for a variety of sports at a beginner level.

4. In May 2024 the Town Council conducted a survey of local arts, sports and culture traders, businesses' and not-for-profit organisations. A varying picture of physical venue needs was presented. No single facility was identified as having a strong community need for a majority of respondents. However, some did identify that performance space would be useful. This matched the results of the Town Centre user study that asked for more investment in leisure and cultural facilities. In terms of sports facilities, changing rooms, additional full sized sports pitches, indoor sports centres, and running tracks were all requested by established sports clubs, in most cases, they wanted these to be on or near their site to supplement their facilities.

5. The policy therefore supports a theatre space

to be delivered within the town. Based on the survey responses the nature of the building consists of a minimum 18m x 10m hall with a fixed or demountable stage suitable for theatre, to seat at least 200 people, would suit the use of Buckingham community groups and businesses. A demountable stage would mean that the hall could be used for other purposes when it was not required as a theatre, for example, art displays, rehearsal or workshop space and community groups. The ideal hall would also include additional rooms for use as backstage areas.

6. The policy also seeks to support local sport club aspirations for expansion. Additionally, when housing developments are built near sport and recreational sites, the policy seeks to prevent sports facilities being 'hemmed in' by housing or business development that prevents them adding additional pitches or buildings if the club expands in the future.

