

# **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

## **Executive – 20 May 2020**

### **Monkton Heathfield: SS1 Policy Area and MH2 Concept Plan and Design Principles**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Mike Rigby**

**Report Author: Andrew Penna, Garden Town Coordinator**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Council are committed to preparing Plans and Design Guidance for key development sites in the Garden Town to ensure that new development is of a high design quality and is comprehensively delivered, in line with adopted Planning Policies and more recent Garden Town principles.
- 1.2 Core Strategy, Policy SS1 allocates land in the Monkton Heathfield area for the development of 4500 new homes, employment areas, schools, community facilities open space and green infrastructure, a bus and ride facility, District Centre, together with new roads, cycleways and bus routes.
- 1.3 To date around 1350 of the houses have been built, 900 of which were in the first phase of the Monkton Heathfield urban extension (MH1). The majority of the remaining houses from the SS1 policy are will be delivered by means of another large planning application at Monkton Heathfield - MH2.
- 1.4 The Report recommends publishing a Framework Plans for the SS1 area as a whole and a Concept Plan for the MH2 area for public consultation in order to provide developers, local residents and businesses the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals. The Framework Plan and Concept Plan closely follows Policy SS1 of the Core Strategy, showing indicatively, the disposition of the main land uses – land for new homes, new roads, employment areas, the bus and ride, a new through school, District Centre, open space and green infrastructure etc.
- 1.5 Together with the Plan, a draft Design Guidance document has also been prepared for the MH2 site, and is again recommended for publication for public consultation. The Design Guidance is based on the Core Strategy Policy for MH2 and the Councils Garden Town Vision, Design Charter and the recently published District Wide Design Guide. The Design Guidance embodies the Councils commitment to addressing Climate Change and the need to deliver sustainable new development in the new Monkton Heathfield Garden Community.
- 1.6 Early versions of the Plans were included in a January Report to the Executive. Following feedback and discussions with the local community and local businesses, changes have been made. The Plans remain drafts for further consultation.

- 1.7 Following public consultation the Plans and Design Guidance are proposed to be adopted for Development Management purposes to allow them to be used in considering planning applications in the SS1 Monkton Heathfield Policy area and specifically the MH2 site.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

- (a) The draft SS1 Policy area Framework Plan, the draft MH2 Concept Plan and the draft MH2 Design Guidance be published for public consultation; and
- (b) That the outcome of the public consultation, including any appropriate suggested amendments, be reported back to the Executive as soon as possible with a view to seeking approval to adopt the Plans and Guidance for Development Management decision making purposes.

## **3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)**

- 3.1 No specific risk but failure to bring forward housing could put at risk housing and affordable housing delivery in Taunton.

## **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

### Introduction

- 4.1 The Council are committed to preparing Design Guides and Plans for key development sites in the Garden Town to ensure that new development is of a high design quality and is comprehensively delivered.
- 4.2 Members will recall that at the Executive in January a Report was presented seeking approval to publish for consultation a Masterplan and Development Guide for land South of Manor Farm, Langaller.
- 4.3 That land is part of the SS1 Monkton Heathfield Policy area allocated in the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy.
- 4.4 That Report also included, for context, emerging draft Framework and Concept Plans for the wider SS1 Policy area and the second phase of the Monkton Heathfield Garden Community (MH2). It was identified that these plans would be progressed, together with further Design work, in order to allow for the Plans and Guidance to be published for consultation.

### The Need for Plans and Design work

- 4.5 The adopted Core Strategy, Policy SS1, sets out that the Council would prepare Development Guides for the Monkton Heathfield sites. A Development Guide was approved as part of the planning process for phase 1 of the Monkton Heathfield scheme. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012.
- 4.6 It is expected that a planning application for the next phase of the Monkton scheme – MH2 - will be submitted in the next few months. There is pressing need to set out the Councils vision for the development and to set down key design principles to ensure the highest quality proposals are delivered.

- 4.7 There is considerable common ground with the developers of the MH2 site – Persimmon Homes and Redrow Homes and the local community and it is expected that the application, when submitted, will closely align with much of the Councils design aspirations for the area. Where there are differences it is important that the Council have in place a clear vision for the site to allow Officers to negotiate with the developers.

#### Concept Plan

- 4.8 The Framework Plan for the SS1 Policy area and the Concept Plan for the main MH2 site, are shown as Appendices 1 and 2 to this Report.
- 4.9 Both are clearly labelled DRAFT. These are not fixed plans, the recommendation is to publish them both for consultation with the Developers, the Parish Councils, local businesses consultees and other stakeholders and to continue engagement with these groups.
- 4.10 Both Plans follow the principles set out in the adopted Core Strategy and identify the location of key land uses and infrastructure, including green infrastructure that will be delivered in the next phase of the Monkton Heathfield scheme together with other housing sites in the SS1 policy area including those at West of Greenway, Prockters Farm and land at Dosters Lane. The site South of Manor Farm Langaller is the subject of a separate detailed Masterplan and Design Guidance.
- 4.11 The Plans show the indicative alignment of the Eastern Relief Road, housing areas, the location of a District Centre, a new through school, a site for bus and ride, reserve employment land and major new green infrastructure in the so-called 'green necklace' which surrounds the whole SS1 policy area.
- 4.12 These are all matters which are required to be delivered, as set out in the adopted Core Strategy, 2012.

#### Design guidance

- 4.13 Attached as Appendix 3 is the first (text) draft of a Design Guidance document for the SS1 Policy area as a whole, but focused in more detail on the main Monkton Heathfield 2 site.
- 4.14 The draft Design Guidance has been prepared by Thrive Architects, an urban design consultancy who have been working with the Council on the Monkton proposals for a number of years.
- 4.15 The draft design guidance follows the SS1 Policy of the Core Strategy but also embodies the Councils commitment to addressing Climate Change, and the need to deliver a high quality Garden Community following Taunton's designation as a Garden Town in 2017. It is closely based on the adopted Garden Town Vision, whilst also referencing the Government's National Design Guide and the Councils adopted Garden Town Design Charter/Checklist and District Wide Design Guide.
- 4.16 Again, the Design Guidance is a DRAFT for consultation.
- 4.17 Many of the principles set out are good design practice required by national guidance. Others are specific to the Garden Town and the Monkton 2 proposals as set out in the 2012 Core Strategy.

- 4.18 They identify clear design objectives and requirements for the new development in order to deliver the highest quality in design and to deliver the step change in design which is key to delivery of the Councils Corporate Strategy and the Vision for the Garden Town.
- 4.19 Key sections address climate change and sustainability.
- 4.20 Additional detail and graphics to illustrate key areas will be added to the document before public consultation commences. The form and layout of the document, in draft, is shown as Appendix 4.

#### Community comments

- 4.21 At the Executive in January a number of local residents and local businesses from the West Monkton and Creech St Michael areas spoke to Members and requested the opportunity to explain their concerns in more detail about the MH2 proposals.
- 4.22 In response to this the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation met with representatives from West Monkton and Creech St Michael Parishes, following a tour of the area in March shortly before the Government's lockdown measures were announced.
- 4.23 It was stressed to the community that the Framework and Concept Plans need to be published for consultation to put in place a more comprehensive framework for the consideration of future planning applications, and in order to avoid some of the outcomes from the first phase of the Monkton scheme.
- 4.24 It was also noted that the plans were DRAFTS, they are not fixed; and no options were being omitted at this stage nor, were any intended to be given any weight in terms of preference.
- 4.25 The communities were assured that all comments received on the draft Plans and draft Design Guidance will be carefully reviewed and discussions with the local community and the developers will continue before they are adopted for decision making purposes. This is confirmed in the recommendations to this Report.

#### Local road network

- 4.26 One of the key issues raised on the January Plans was the impact of the traffic arising from the SS1 / Monkton Heathfield proposals on existing local residents and businesses.
- 4.27 The Plans at Appendix 1 and 2 have been amended as a result of this feedback, to identify that all local roads will need to be included in consideration of the Monkton planning applications and that the traffic arising from the developments, and any measures to mitigate traffic impact, must seek to continue to allow access to local residents and business whilst also preventing rat-running on local roads.
- 4.28 Similarly the MH2 Concept Plan, Appendix 2 now identifies that the area between the built MH1 site and the proposed MH2 site must be subject to detailed design and technical work to ensure that the two communities can be properly integrated.
- 4.29 Again, the draft Concept Plan is not proposing or seeking to prefer any specific option for this area: feedback from public consultation will be carefully considered before the



Plan is adopted, and dialogue with the local community, businesses and the developers will continue.

- 4.30 Much of the assessment and potential solutions to roads and traffic issues, location of any bus gates etc, arising from the SS1/MH2 developments, can only be considered in detail once planning applications are received. In the meantime, rather than be prescriptive about the future, the plans have removed specific road proposals and potential bus gate locations in favour of more general notations and identification of areas needing to be addressed.
- 4.31 The only exception is the bus gate location shown in the Prockters Farm area which is to be put in place by the County Council following the completion of the Western Relief Road next year, in order to prevent through traffic using the A3259. This is required by legal agreements dating from the first phase of the Monkton scheme.
- 4.32 The same approach is followed in the draft Design Guidance, Appendix 3 and 4. The issue of integrating existing and new communities is highlighted as a key design challenge which must be addressed in any planning applications but is not prescriptive about how this be achieved.

## **5 Links to Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 The draft Plans and Design Guidance seek to deliver development which meets a number of objectives of the Corporate Strategy.
- 5.2 The Guidance addresses Climate Change and sustainability and the need to achieve high quality design. It provides a vision and design guidance for a key site in the Taunton Garden Town, the Monkton Heathfield Garden Community. The development of the SS1 Policy area and MH2 in particular will ensure the provision of adequate and affordable employment land, new shops and community facilities and a continuing supply of homes including affordable homes.
- 5.3 The site will deliver green open spaces and parks, enhanced public spaces, as well as additional opportunities to safely walk or cycle in order to encourage active and healthy lifestyles.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The budget for the preparation of the Plans and Guidance for the next phase of the Monkton Heathfield development are in place. The project is overseen by the Garden Town Coordinator and the Head of Strategy.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 None.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications (if any)**

- 8.1 The climate emergency, and our response to it, is a strong theme running throughout the draft Design Guidance. The proposed development aims to mitigate the climate emergency and adapt to its effects. It covers issues including reducing carbon emissions through walking, cycling and public transport, the creation of new open spaces and recreation areas, opportunities for tree planting and new allotments, the

energy efficiency of buildings, opportunities for renewable energy and ensuring provision of electric charging points, biodiversity enhancements, tree planting and flood risk/sustainable drainage.

- 8.2 Detailed guidance is provided on the sustainability of proposed new homes through good design and best practice construction methods.
- 8.3 More generally, the SS1/MH2 sites lie within the Garden Town, in a sustainable location with access to existing and proposed public transport routes including a new bus and ride facility. It proposes new footpath/cycleway networks and new facilities like shops and schools and community buildings, all of which help to minimise the need to travel by private car. The location of land for new businesses, next to new homes offers the opportunity for people to live and work close by.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

- 9.1 None.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

- 10.1 The Core Strategy is underpinned by an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **11 Social Value Implications (if any)**

- 11.1 None

## **12 Partnership Implications (if any)**

- 12.1 None.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)**

- 13.1 The site will deliver green open spaces and parks, enhanced public spaces, as well as additional opportunities to safely walk or cycle in order to encourage active and healthy lifestyles.

## **14 Asset Management Implications (if any)**

- 14.1 None.

## **15 Data Protection Implications (if any)**

- 15.1 None.

## **16 Consultation Implications (if any)**

- 16.1 The local community have been engaged in the preparation of the draft Plans, together with key stakeholders like County Council Highways and the developers.
- 16.2 The two Parish Councils, Creech St Michael and West Monkton have formed a Joint working Panel to review the plans and documents for the SS1 and MH2 areas.

**17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)**

17.1 None

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:** ☐ **Once only**

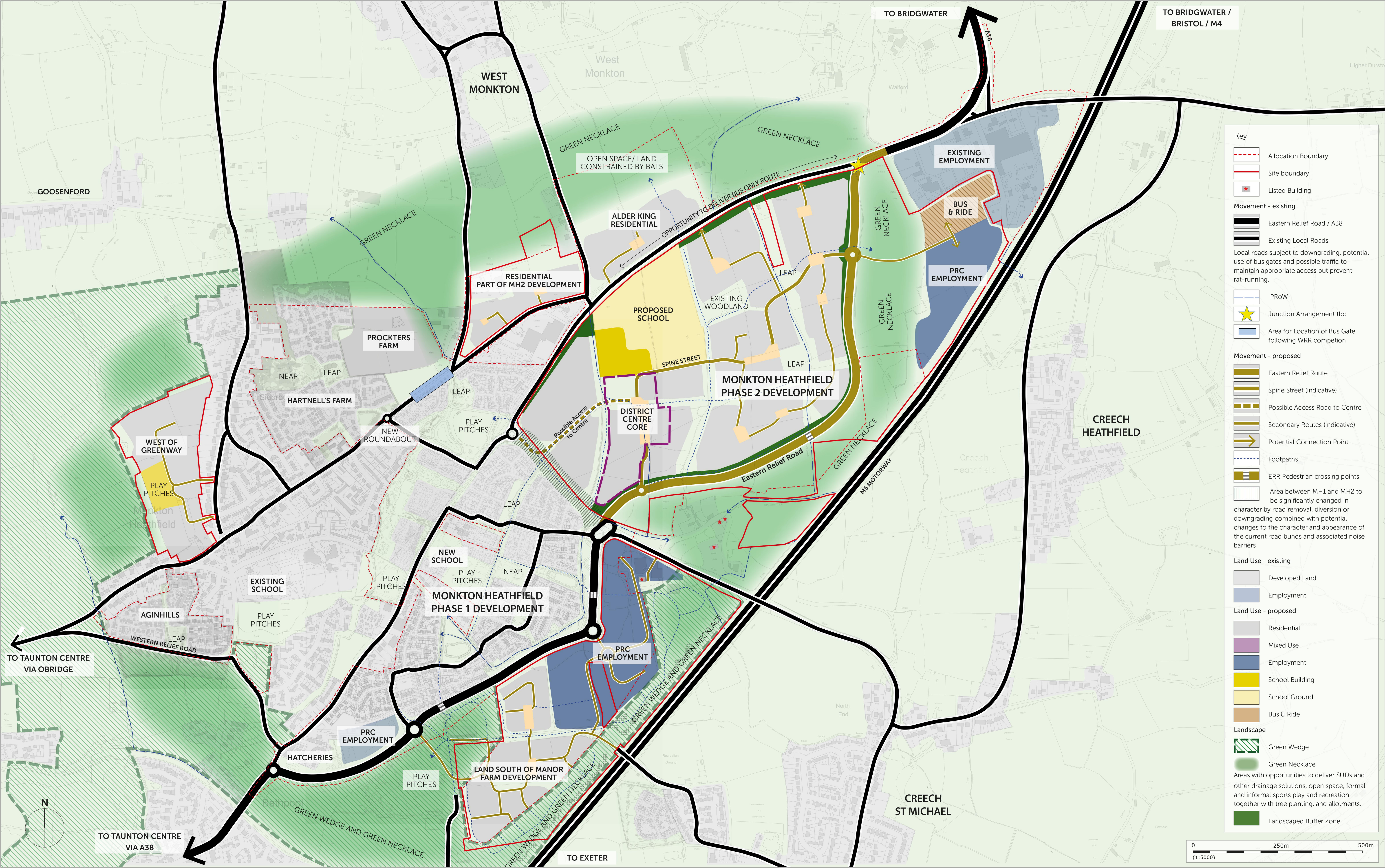
**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix 1	DRAFT SS1 Policy Area Framework Plan, May 2020
Appendix 2	DRAFT MH2 Concept plan, May 2020
Appendix 3	DRAFT MH2 Design Guidance, May 2020, text version
Appendix 4	DRAFT MH2 Design Guidance, May 2020

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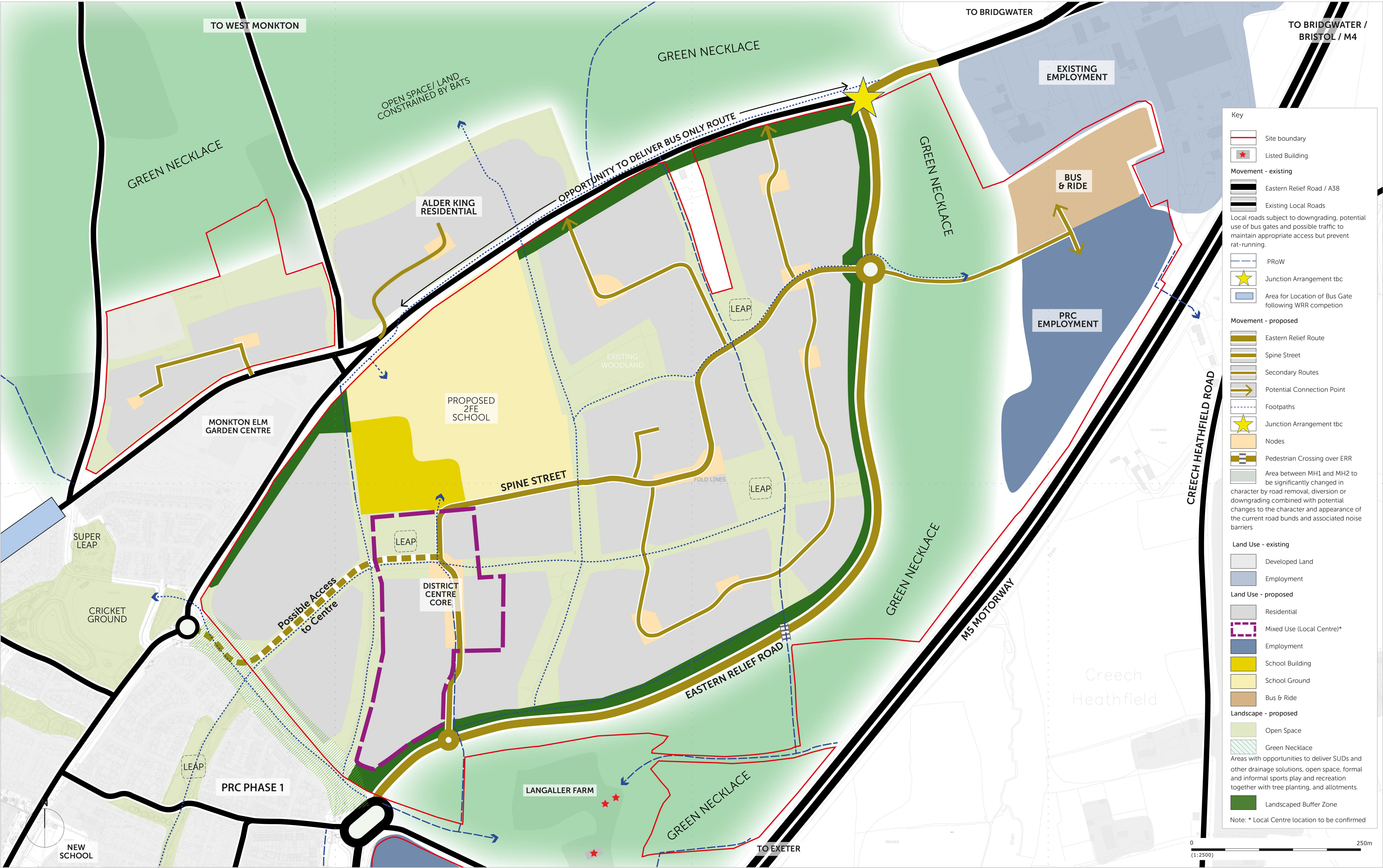
Rev	Description	Date	Au	Ch
P1	Preliminary Issue	07.01.20	MD	GR
P2	Amendments to layout, highway strategy and key	06.03.20	MD	GR
P3	Minor amendments following comments received	09.03.20	MD	GR

Project **Monkton Heathfield Framework Plan**

Client	<b>Taunton Deane BC</b>	Dwg no.	<b>FWP.01</b>
Scale	<b>1:5000 @ A1</b>	First Issue	<b>07.01.20</b>
Job no.	<b>SOME190507</b>		
Client ref.			

Office	<b>Portishead</b>
Revision	<b>P3</b>
Au/Ch	<b>MD/GR</b>
Status	<b>PRELIMINARY</b>





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Rev	Description	Date	Au	Ch
P1	Preliminary Issue	06.03.20	MD	GR
P2	Minor amendments following comments received	09.03.20	MD	GR

Project **Monkton Heathfield II**  
Drawing **Concept Plan**

Client	<b>Taunton Deane BC</b>	Dwg no.	<b>CP.03</b>	Office	<b>Portishead</b>
Scale	<b>1:2500 @ A1</b>	Au/Ch	<b>MD/GR</b>	Revision	<b>P2</b>
Job no.	<b>TAUN160301</b>	First Issue	<b>06.02.20</b>	Status	<b>PRELIMINARY</b>
Client ref.					



# DRAFT SS1 Policy area and Monkton Heathfield phase 2 Design Principles

Prepared by Thrive Architects and Somerset West and Taunton Council, April 2020

## 1 Overall Placemaking Strategy

### Policy SS1

Policy SS1 sets out a series of provisions in terms of development form and layout as follows:

- A variety of character areas which reflect the existing landscape character and the opportunities and constraints provided by natural features to create a place that is distinctive and memorable;
- An accessible district centre with a mix of uses and facilities;
- A connected street network which accommodates pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and promotes a viable public transport system;
- Well designed public open spaces which are enclosed and overlooked by new development;
- A positive relationship between new housing and existing communities; and
- A well-defined green edge to the urban area that protects views from Hestercombe House and the Quantock Hills.

## 2 Character Areas

Design Strategy and objectives

Create a distinctive place through the identification of specific elements that must meet certain design criteria. The criteria will be clearly set out with shared narrative themes that are contained in the following documents.

- National Planning Policy Framework:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)
- National Design Guide:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843468/National\\_Design\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf)
- Taunton's Garden Town Vision:  
<https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1450/taunton-garden-town-vision.pdf> , and
- Taunton's Garden Town Charter and checklist:  
<https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/2108/taunton-design-charter-and-checklist.pdf> .

The interpretation of the aforementioned criteria must have regard to this guidance.

The design of these elements will then form a framework for creating the placemaking narrative and resulting identity for the SS1 area generally and MH2 specifically.

### 3 Built Form principles

- Block Form – Generally perimeter block style. Smaller blocks of higher density must be located closer to district centre, along the Spine Street and central green corridor to create a finer grain of development. Generally the blocks forms will gradually get larger and less dense towards the edges of development.
- Townscape – A hierarchy of streets and spaces with a coherent and varied townscape must be created to reflect the many good design precedents that exist locally and within traditional garden towns. This will aid legibility and provide the opportunity to create a place with its own identity.
- Density – The density of the development will be determined by the application of the design criteria. Appropriate design responses will determine density rather than the other way around. Hence the requirement to have a greater populous close to the District Centre and along public transport routes will result in higher densities in these locations.
- Building Heights – The strategy for building heights should recognise that heights should be commensurate with their function. The development will be predominantly two storeys. Taller buildings however have an important role to play in creating interesting townscape that is legible and distinctive. There are many ways this can be achieved such as:
  - Creating an intensification of development near to District Centre and along transport routes and movement corridors such as the spine street and central green corridor;
  - Being an important component of set-piece designs enclosing spaces and creating nodal points;
  - To create key buildings and impart landmark status to buildings or groups of buildings;
  - To create focal points and visual markers;
  - To function as important corner buildings;
  - To add variety to the street-scene and create interesting townscape/roofscape.

### 4 Street hierarchy

#### Design Strategy and objectives

Streets must be designed to create a coherent and recognisable hierarchy that will reinforce legibility and connectedness within the development. The design of any street must have regard to its function in the wider development. Important principles include:

- Creating a permeable development with streets providing direct and convenient connections to the District Centre, transport nodes and amenity areas;
- Street design to prioritise safe pedestrian and cycle movement whilst still accommodating vehicles;
- Streets design to encompass a variety of uses; streets for play, social interaction, safe and overlooked environments; 'green streets' containing landscape corridors, SuDs, amenity space and wildlife/ecology corridors;
- The creation of a 'Spine Street' as a gateway to the development from the Eastern Relief Road (ERR) to the east and taking the form of a gently winding tree-lined street accessing the school and district centre before reconnecting with the ERR to the south-west;
- Any on-street parking must be designed in association with hard and soft landscaping to provide an attractive and practical street-scene;

- Any on-street parking must not dominate the street or have a detrimental effect on the overall composition of the street-scene;
- Consideration of how building form relates to the composition of the street;
- More continuous and unbroken street form closer to District Centre and along important routes;
- Common or staggered building line depending on street type and location;
- Placement of buildings either close to street to create high degree of enclosure or set back behind garden boundaries or landscape elements to create streets of differing character;
- Streets can be oriented to create vistas to form visual connections to important nodes;
- Thoughtful parking solutions must be explored including the use of parking courts such that the integrity of street frontage can be maintained and the over dominance of the highway be reduced;
- The integration of conveniently placed electric charging points into the street network must be considered and promoted.
- Where possible street design should promote rooflines running within 20 degrees of east-west in order to provide promote south facing roofs and facades thus promoting the benefits of solar gain.

## 5 Development Edges

### Design strategy and objectives

The edges of the development will have development on one side only (with the exception of those adjacent MH1), nevertheless the same principles of good street design apply to these areas. Specific requirements include:

- Housing along the ERR must provide an active and attractive frontage to create a coherent and overlooked development edge avoiding poor relationships associated with rear and side garden fences/walls and indiscriminate parking;
- The noise levels generated by the ERR will have to be considered when considering appropriate design solutions, glazing specifications and acoustic ventilation must be considered along with other noise mitigations measures which avoid unsightly acoustic fencing and the like;
- Design promoting dwellings that face the ERR and provide an acoustic barrier protecting the private amenity spaces behind must be explored;
- Development along the northern boundary with the downgraded A38 will be designed as outward facing development, set back from the boundary and retaining existing trees and hedgerows within a landscaped setting.

## 6 Public Space Network

### Design Strategy and objectives

A series of well-designed public spaces will be an essential ingredient of MH2. The spaces may take the form of squares, large open spaces, streets, green corridors, pocket parks or even small incidental areas with seating. They will fulfil a variety of functions and strategic aim such as:

- To serve as nodal points to aid orientation and wayfinding within the development;



- Providing destination points for people to meet, socialise and share experiences (the beginning of community) ;
- To be available to the whole range of user groups and be well overlooked by adjacent dwellings with active frontages;
- To be given identity and attractiveness through design, such that their function is clear and their form is fit for purpose;
- To recall examples of traditional garden town spaces but designed to 21<sup>st</sup> Century requirements and technology;
- To be given integrity through design (the intrusion of poorly designed parking and highways into important spaces should be resisted for example).

## 7 Open Space and Landscape

### Design Strategy and objectives

The land within MH2 contains existing landscape features that will be retained and used to contribute to the overall character of the development. MH1 will be designed as a garden community with a network of green spaces and corridors linking into the green necklace, MH1 and the northern green edge. This network will consist of:

- A network of green routes focused around the retention of existing woodland, trees, hedgerows and public rights of way;
- The establishment of a central green corridor running from the eastern side of the development through the District Centre and onto MH1 that;
- Will be predominantly a car free zone to prioritise movement for pedestrians/cyclists and will be complemented with substantial tree planting to provide shaded areas and offset carbon emissions;
- Opportunities for the establishment of pocket parks with micro allotments, raingardens and orchard planting to promote community engagement through horticulture;
- Ecological mitigation through the establishment of wildlife corridors and wildflower meadows will be promoted within the green infrastructure,
- The introduction of swales and ditches into the green infrastructure should be as naturalistic as possible with measures to promote ecological mitigation and habitat creation;
- The planting of a substantial number of new trees to offset the effect of climate change and meet carbon reduction targets;
- A well-defined green edge to the Eastern Relief Road 2 including noise mitigation measures, drainage swales and opportunities pedestrian movement;
- An inclusive set of principles will be established for each green space or corridor addressing its form, function, connections, built form enclosure, landscape elements, surfacing, seating, lighting, boundaries and maintenance to inform its design and identity;

Design Aesthetics – Placemaking is about more than just assembling the various components that make up a place. Aesthetic considerations are also important if a place is to actually look attractive and fulfil its function to its fullest potential. These must not be neglected on the grounds of aesthetic considerations being subjective. There are immutable rules relating to scale, proportion and appearances of building forms that have stood the test of time, and these should be fully considered at the design stage.

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### Design Strategy and objectives

To create a well-designed and conveniently located mixed-use District Centre with a range of facilities to meet the needs of the community, along with the ability to draw in passing trade from the ERR. The District Centre will be a community hub and should blend the various uses into an environment that is safe, well-enclosed and a focus for social interaction.

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#### The District Centre will:

- Provide a mix of uses including community hall, multi-functional space, health facilities, convenience store, retail businesses, café/hot food outlets, pub/restaurant, professional and financial services;
- Provide children's play facilities within a village green setting located between the District Centre and the school site;
- Integrate office space and residential uses in buildings at first floor and above;
- Residential provision included elderly persons housing should be seamlessly integrated within the District Centre to create a mixed use community and promote activity beyond core opening hours;
- Be designed within an overall transport and movement strategy to promotes the use of the ERR for HGV traffic local farm traffic, thus reducing such traffic within the internal road network in MH2.

The design of the District Centre should be aspirational, it will contain landmark buildings and be designed to create areas of enclosure such as the village green along with other intimately designed spaces with seating and well designed landscaping to encourage social interaction. Consideration should also be given to the provision of covered areas in order to create useable and sheltered space all year round. Special consideration must be given to provide for the needs of all user groups including the visually impaired and disabled, to ensure that no one is disenfranchised.

#### From a design point of view the District Centre should:

- Be populated by development forms that increase the local populous in the immediate context to encourage as many people as possible access the District Centre via non-car means and;
- Therefore buildings up to 4 storeys in height will be acceptable;
- Buildings must effectively enclose the spaces without being overbearing and should also function as focal points identifying the District Centre along vistas within the development;
- The overall design intention must be to create a high quality public realm that relates to a human scale similar to a high-street or traditional village/town core, however the design response may be;
- Traditional or more modern but still promoting the use of traditional and more locally identifiable materials;
- The example of 'out of town' retail consisting of low rise single use retail buildings within large car parking areas is not considered appropriate in creating a well-designed centre;
- Some parking provision will be required and this must be sensitively design such that it is safe and convenient to use, whilst not dominating the public realm;

- Servicing of the retail must be designed to avoid movements of delivery vehicles within the public realm areas such that a more sensitive design response is achievable, therefore;
- Servicing should be provided to the rear unless its small drop off type of deliveries;
- Hard and soft landscaping should be used imaginatively to create social spaces.

## **9      The positive integration of Monkton Heathfield 1 and 2.**

### **Design Strategy and objectives**

To explore potentials for creating a positive relationship between the existing community of MH1 and the final phase of MH along the boundary where the two developments will meet.

### **Existing boundary and challenges to integration**

The recently development of MH1 shares a boundary with MH2 directly south of Monkton Elm garden centre and abutting the western side of the existing A38 (inc footway and cycleway), from the existing roundabout next to West Monkton Cricket Club down to the existing roundabout west of Langaller. The houses generally face this boundary at a distance of between 15 and 30 metres from the road and are separated by exiting hedges and a grassed noise reducing bund with a 300m noise reducing fence along the southern part of the boundary. An existing footway and green corridor through MH1 connects to the A38 just north of the noise fence.

### **Barriers to integration**

- The existing A38 is a wide road with no speed constraints between the roundabouts;
- The existing A38 to be rerouted as part of MH2 proposal (although this road is to be retained for local traffic provision);
- The noise bund is physical and visual barrier between housing and the A38
- The noise reducing fence (set on at various points on top of a bund) is a particularly unattractive barrier to the A38 as existing

### **Potential positive interventions**

- An acceptable interface between MH1 and MH2 must be delivered;
- Consideration should be given to potential for part/total pedestrianisation of current road subject to ensuring continued local road access to existing homes and businesses;
- Removal of noise bunds and fencing with regard to reduced use and traffic noise on the downgraded road must be considered;
- Realignment of road if necessary with regard to removal of existing noise reducing fence must be considered;
- Further speed constraint methods should be explored if required;
- Safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists from MH1 to MH2 across the road is essential given the need to ensure residents and school children have safe, convenient access to the District Centre, through school and green necklace beyond;
- This should be via an extension of the green link into MH2 and potentially from culs-de-sac 'opened up' by bund removal or breaks in the bunding;
- Creation of a more people friendly and landscape focused environment between MH1 and MH2 through design must be achieved;
- Housing within MH2 will be designed to face the boundary and MH1 to create a positive street frontage.

## **10      The downgrading of the existing A38 alignment**

### **Design Strategy and objectives**

To explore potentials for creating a positive relationship between the existing communities to the north of the site and the final phase of MH along the A38 boundary.

### **Existing boundary and challenges to integration**

The proposed development will see an Eastern Relief Road (ERR) running along the eastern and southern edge and will form the new settlement edge of Monkton Heatfield as proposed in the Core Strategy and the SS1. This ERR will enable downgrading of the existing the A38 to the north of the new development and will provide the infrastructure route for the new bus rapid route proposed along this stretch of the A38.

The A38 changes along the development boundary form a dual carriageway to the east of the A3259 junction to a single carriageway westwards. The character however changes further west with the appearance of the new development at Heathfield Gardens and Monkton Elm Garden Centre behind the existing hedges along the road.

The junction with the A3259 also provides access to Doster's Lane which is a direct connection to West Monkton to the north. The A38 provides access to a limited number of dwellings along the eastern part of the road. There are currently very limited visual connections to the surrounding landscape and properties due to the existing major vegetation alongside the road with the exception of Springfield House which lies to the north of the road.

The PRoW's provided on site and to the north of the site currently terminate at the A38. No pedestrian crossings are provided and a pedestrian connection between the northern and southern footpath network is broken as a crossing and is quite dangerous.

### **Barriers to integration**

- The existing A38 is a dual carriage way with no speed constraints;
- The existing A38 will be downgraded as part of the MH proposal set out in the Core Strategy and SS1 Policy;
- The road can be retained for local traffic provision;
- Current traffic volume will need to be guided along the new ERR to relief the current A38 route
- Appropriate traffic measures will need to be realised to disable easy traffic flow along this route towards the west and towards the town centre. Considerations should be given to bus only routes or bus gates along the existing roads and where best suited for the movement network, the new development and the existing settlements;
- Local traffic will still have to be allowed along this route to access the existing dwellings and to maintain the connection to West Monkton

### **Potential positive interventions**

- A reduction of the carriageway width from dual (four lanes) to a single (two lanes) should be delivered;
- A traffic speed reduction along this route should be explored and adjusted to highlight the ERR as the preferred route to destinations to the west of Monkton;
- The route should be designed to accommodate the rapid bus service proposed along this road;

- The downgrading of the A38 will create the opportunity to deliver an attractive pedestrian and cycle route and will connect more safely with the existing network of PRoW and proposed footpath within the proposal site and the surrounding;
- Access from this route into the new development of MH2 can be delivered but should be restricted to a minimum of two and exclude an access south of Elm Monkton Garden Centre and Heathfield Gardens development.
- Furthermore there should be no public traffic access into the school site provided from the A38;
- Bus stops should be provided along this route to serve new development and in particular the school site;
- The existing hedges and hedge trees framing the A38 corridor should be maintained and enhanced with new planting where gaps are present;
- The corridor should also provide an attractively landscaped pedestrian and cycle route separated from the car traffic along the downgraded road to connect with the green network and footpaths/cycle paths within the new development;
- Due to the utilities easement corridor along the northern development boundary the housing proposed here will have limited direct connection to the downgraded A38. The easement will have to be landscaped to provide a green linear open space along the existing planting along the A38.

## **11 ERR corridor**

### **Design Strategy and objectives**

The new Eastern Relief Road (ERR) is defined as eastern spine road within Taunton's Core Strategy which runs south and parallel to the existing A38. The ERR will have to be designed as a road that balances traffic capacity with the needs of development access, walking, cycling and public transport.

The ERR will accommodate and divert the traffic from the existing A38 around the new development at MH2 to connect with the already constructed part of the ERR to the south and Western Relief Road (WRR) further west. The road will provide a corridor with access points into the new development as well as towards the new B&R and employment land to the west adjacent to the existing employment area at Walford Cross.

### **Barriers and opportunities to construction**

- To the north west of the development site the majority of traffic will be diverted to follow the alignment of the ERR and relieve the existing A38, which will be downgraded;
- The point of diversion must be appropriately constructed to guide the traffic along the new ERR but equally provide convenient access for local traffic along the downgraded A38;
- Access to the ERR from the north east should be discussed and agreed with the Highway Authority and should preferably take the form of a roundabout;
- The proposed ERR adjacent to the new development will connect to the south with the existing ERR roundabout already providing access to Hardys Road and MH1;
- This roundabout will have to be upgraded and repositioned to accommodate the connection to the new ERR stretch proposed;
- The ERR will be a single carriage way with speed limit approved by the Highway Authority and which should seamlessly connect with the existing ERR further south;
- Access into the new MH2 development will be provided via roundabouts along the ERR;

- Buildings at these access points should use the opportunity to create key and gateway buildings supported by a sophisticated landscape design to appropriately announce the entrance into the new development;
- Generally housing along the ERR will provide an active and attractive frontage and façade;
- The noise levels generated by the ERR will have to be considered when designing the site for housing development
- Careful consideration should be given to the appropriate masterplan layout design, glazing specifications and acoustic ventilation design, and at a later detailed stage in the planning process, external building fabric acoustic performance along the ERR;
- An acoustic bund, acoustic fence or a combination of these must if at all possible be avoided in order to provide an attractive route, as this would create a physical and visual barrier between housing and the Green Necklace;
- House types will provide a natural acoustic barrier with a close frontage protecting the private amenity spaces behind;
- The building line along the ERR should vary to create an interesting frontage along the route;
- Consideration should be given to design and roof orientation to create corner turning buildings to emphasise access points into the development;
- The Development edge will be supported by a landscaped corridor along the ERR which will include avenue style tree planting, hedge and shrub planting as well as swales;
- The accessibility and usability of the Green Necklace along the eastern side of the ERR will need to be carefully considered with safe pedestrian/cycle crossing points at the roundabouts as well as at the existing PRow's;
- The number of pedestrian crossings will be restricted due to the nature of the road and its function as a swift and convenient route around the new development;
- Further considerations should be given at future planning stages to the impact of the road on the air quality and vibration and appropriate design solutions should be implemented to prevent any negative impact of the road on new residents;

## **12 Green Necklace**

### **Design Strategy and objectives**

The adopted Core Strategy Policy SS1 states that the following will be provided: A multi-purpose 'Green Necklace' of landscape and open space surrounding the settlement provide allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat. In the Policy the Green Necklace was conceived as a belt of landscaping between the motorway and the development areas including the Monkton Heathfield development.

The Green Necklace is a linear landscape area located along the development edge to protect this important area of open landscape, woodland planting and recreational uses from development and as a contributor to the quality of life of the new residents and to promote landscape and wildlife corridors. This linear park should contain new tree and woodland areas which will provide a notable landscape context to the new development edge of MH2 and should be designed with a wooded country park character.

This will create a natural setting for the development, complimented by woodland interspersed by glades, some areas of open space and open swales. The Green Necklace should connect with the development and its integral green spaces / corridors via pedestrian crossing points over the proposed ERR2.

As an integral part of the overall landscape and open space framework for Monkton Heathfield, the Green Necklace:

- Will provide a buffer for the new development to the M5 motorway;
- Will provide a noise buffer along the M5 motorway incorporating appropriate noise mitigation measures and must be informed by a detailed noise report.
- Should provide well-designed edge to the development that protects views from Hestercombe House and the Quantock Hills;
- Should complement the existing landscape features on site with new hedge, trees, woodland planting and wildlife meadows;
- Should provide an increase in biodiversity through the creation of wildlife corridors and wetland habitats;
- Will include a sustainable drainage strategy in form of open swales which should be accompanied with the provision for surface water drainage storage and release e.g. open swales which can also create new habitats for wildlife. The swales should be scaled appropriately and should seamlessly integrate in the designed landscape of the area;
- Should incorporate provision for active and passive recreation in the open space strategy as part of a network of routes throughout the area in form of footpaths, informal paths, routes for walking and running and natural play;
- Should also include the potential to provide seating opportunities and outdoor exercise equipment to promote the usability of the area and healthy living. Gravel bound footpaths should be provided suitable for walking, running and cycling;
- Will create potential opportunities to provide areas for growing food, micro allotments and community orchards;
- Should minimise light pollution and any adverse effect on wildlife. Lighting provided in the area will need sensitive treatment to ensure a natural woodland character is achieved with no negative affect on the wildlife;
- Will provide improvements to the air quality due to the proposed uses and planting within the area which will absorb the majority of potential pollutions coming from the M5 motorway; and
- Must be thoroughly assessed in regards to the significant level changes across the site and especially the lower lying ground between the ERR / development and the M5 motorway.

### **13      Employment Land reserve**

#### **Design Strategy and objectives**

This area should be seen as regional scale employment site with potential connection to the adjoining employment site at Walford Cross and other employment areas north and south of the A38. In addition to the employment land provision at The Hatcheries and at land south of Langaller, 10ha of land should be released for employment land as set out in the Core Strategy and SS1.

The layout form should indicate a series of plots or 'rooms' bounded by landscaping to

- divide parking areas and provide spaces for swales or other attenuation features within the area connecting to the adjacent Green Necklace;



- Within plots landscaping should be used to provide relief to large areas of parking and to guide pedestrian routes to building entrances;
- The buildings themselves will provide employment in the form of office space, storage and industrial usage.

The concept of dividing the employment site into rooms will enable the massing of the buildings to be controlled by limiting large runs of tall buildings. Along with appropriate landscaping this will effectively limit the scale of development and the visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

#### **Layout opportunities:**

Site access is taken from a roundabout off the new proposed ERR2 which also provides access to the new Bus & Ride area adjacent to the employment land. There is an opportunity to access the employment area from the north and directly from the existing Walford Cross. This option would need road and junction improvements beforehand to create an acceptable access point.

Generally, the site and its new buildings will be screened from views from the surrounding, including the M5 motorway, due to the existing levels and hedge and tree planting surrounding the site. The proposed tree planting within the adjacent Green Necklace site will provide additional screening. In addition:

- Pedestrian links will have to be provided to connect the employment site with the new and existing residential areas including settlements to the east of the M5 motorway
- The existing footpath/cycle link crossing the M5 motorway will need to be maintained and enhanced and should be considered a benefit for the overall pedestrian/cycle network within the area;
- Routes through the employment site will be reinforced by the inclusion of a structured landscape treatment alongside the roads which is intended to unify the individual plots and highlight the routes through the site;
- The sites layout should be structured along strong primary routes linking the entrance with all parts of the site;
- Car parking areas will have to be arranged to minimise visual connections with the surrounding context other than the existing employment area to the north and the Bus & Ride;
- A combination of internally structured landscape zones will provide a balanced environment shared by roads, parking bays, cycle parking sheds and hard / soft landscaped areas;
- Service yards should be located at the perimeter of the sites away from the public areas. The visual impact of service yards should be minimised through the use of appropriate landscape buffers where possible;
- Buildings addressing the access route to the Bus & Ride area to the north must be designed with a higher quality finish and with visual interest through combinations of height, scale and design.

## **14      Landscape and Green Infrastructure Opportunities:**

Design Strategy and objectives



Every effort should be taken to integrate a purposeful landscape strategy and should focus on:

- Including street trees which enclose the main road corridors to emphasise the importance of these main roads and function as orientation within the area. Well-designed modern street signage should be used to mark the access road from the ERR and to enhance the overall appearance of the employment site.
- The use of native hedges, ornamental shrub planting and trees within the parking areas which provides visual seasonal interest. This should be provided through the use of flowering fruit trees in certain areas within the employment site.
- Clearly defined routes along the main routes will be landscaped to provide attractive landscape pedestrian links connecting the employment area with the Green Necklace and area to the east of the motorway.
- Attenuation measures will be an integrated SUDs network located within the green corridors and spaces included in the employment area. This network and any wetland areas and potential ponds should be planted with natural species suited to local environment and climate and the creation of wetland habitats should be promoted. The attenuation measure will furthermore enhance the ecological value of the site and the wider environment.

## **15      Bus and Ride Site**

### **Design Strategy and objectives**

An area for a new Bus and Ride (B&R) is set aside in the north eastern corner of the site and west of Walford Cross. This facility will provide opportunities to create a central point for a rapid bus service and local bus service. The vision is to provide appropriate sustainable transport opportunities, connect visitors efficiently with the centre of Taunton and potentially provide a sustainable connection to the north to Bridgwater.

Access is proposed to be provided from a roundabout along the new ERR which also serves the proposed employment site adjacent to the B&R.

Supporting infrastructure will include new bus stops within the MH2 area and along the A38 route. The alignment of the A38 is proposed to be downgraded as the ERR will take the majority of traffic currently passing along this road. Therefore, the original A38 route can provide bus stops as well as shared walking/cycling paths.

The B&R scheme is proposed in combination with other junction and crossing improvements proposed in the wider area with bus lanes and bus gates specifically designed to improve the reliability, frequency and journey times of public transport using the route.

Overall, the scheme aims:

- To support the employment and housing growth and economic vitality within the area;
- To reduce transport emissions and meet our obligations to the Garden town vision of Taunton;
- To protect and possibly enhance the environment and improve quality of life within the MH2 area as well as within Taunton; and
- To improve public health, air quality, safety and individual wellbeing for the existing and new residents as well as for visitors.

In particular for the design and layout of the site and any structures proposed will be:

- To communicate a strong environmental message and embracing the natural environment in the design of the scheme and gatehouse building;
- A simple permanent building set within a much greener landscape setting is considered appropriate;
- Potentially creatively incorporating recycled materials such as recycled materials in the boundary treatment and hard surface, such as incorporating walls built from plastic bottles or recycled tires as boundary treatment or planting support; and
- Sympathetically designed potentially with a green roof and or solar panels.

The siting and location of the gateway building on the B&R site should be sympathetically designed potentially with a green roof and or solar panels. The site boundaries should support the existing and retained hedges by providing pergolas with climbing plants as well as opportunities for artwork to softening the usual monotone and rather bleak area of car park normally proposed. Furthermore, a “green” building or build form element should be of appropriate size and massing and accompanied by a thoughtful landscape scheme which should improve the quality of the environment for the general public.

### **Design Criteria**

- Retain and enhance the existing good level of boundary planting around the perimeter and expand where necessary
- Arrival at the B&R site presents the first impression to many visitors and therefore the appearance of the “green” building and site has relevance to the perceived quality of the towns public realm and should be appropriately landscape led designed
- The site should consider including new individual native tree planting, hedge and shrub planting, ground cover and wildflower meadow areas where possible
- A Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan should be considered to protect the trees on site and to ensure the landscape scheme is realised and maintained as proposed
- In addition to the car parking arrangements, the site should also provide for cycle parking facilities for the staff but also for potential visitors and commuters using the local or rapid bus transport opportunity to access the town centre.
- A significant number if not all car parking spaces should be equipped with electric charging points
- In the light of potential shortage of coach parking spaces within the town centre, coach parking spaces should be considered and accommodated within the B&R area
- Solar panels on the roof of the proposed buildings on site or within the parking spaces can be used to feed the electric car charging points
- Following the Core Strategy, the majority of the new homes should be located in appropriate walking distance and should be within 800m of a bus rapid stop and within 400m of other bus routes.

## **16      School site and grounds.**

Design Strategy and objectives

The proposed 2-form-entry school will provide the places needed for the new and proposed strategic development areas and the appropriate guideline should be used for space calculation and allocations within the site. There is a potential to create appropriate spaces which will include: classrooms, dining/hall, sports hall, administration space, specialist teaching rooms, meeting rooms, storage, and staff room. The school could also include specialised areas such as sensory & therapy rooms, warm water pool and medical spaces if required. Outdoor spaces will include sensory gardens, habitat areas, MUGA and adventure playground.

The building should be designed using Government guidance designed to a specification to be agreed by SCC and meeting DFEE standards. The scale and aesthetics of the school building design is informed by the functionality of the spaces within the unit itself. Classrooms should benefit from being orientated north to south to avoid disruptive glare and solar gain during school hours. The building orientation will be an important factor in defining the siting, proportion and configuration of the proposed building. The external outdoor spaces will play a crucial part of the school ground design and should include:

- Grassed sports play pitches suitable for a variation of sports games such as football;
- Opportunities for dual use of school facilities. This will be considered, subject to security and safeguarding issues being overcome;
- Hard play areas for formal play such as PE lessons;
- Adventure play areas with play equipment for appropriate age groups;
- Specialised outdoor areas to accommodate sensory gardens to stimulate senses including sight, touch, taste, sight and hearing. This area can also be used for outdoor teaching;
- Quiet soft play areas and informal meadowland and ecological areas which potentially can contain small ponds for outdoor teaching, socialising and relaxing; and
- Retain and enhance any existing planting such as trees and boundary hedges to promote biodiversity.

The school building layout should be developed in cooperation with the Local Planning Authority as well as the Education Authority responsible and respond to the site constraints on and around the site. The entrance locations should be specifically considered to provide a drop-off and pick-up solutions benefiting from the location of the adjacent District Centre. Staff / visitor car parking and drop-off / pick-up area will be located at the front of the building with a range of landscaping proposals behind the secure line. The school building will be positioned in the south western corner of the school site and provide the northern edge of the green open space proposed adjacent to the school site.

## 17 **Energy and Climate change**

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### Design Strategy and objectives

In line with the objectives set out the NPPF and within the Garden Town Vision for Taunton the main concern lies to deliver sustainable development which addresses economic, environmental and social factors.

The design should also follow the requirements of Policy SS1 and DM5 to allow for a development to be built with a focus on sustainability and climate change resilience. Whilst at very early stages, the new Local Plan seeks to deliver carbon neutrality for the district by 2030. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and the emerging SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan identify the importance of planning to ensure new built environments respond appropriately. A

guideline on how a development should respond is described within the Design Charter and Checklist for Taunton. This document identifies opportunities to address the Climate Emergency under the most relevant subsections below:

## **Energy**

The approach to energy demand and carbon emissions will be to ensure that the dwellings are as energy efficient through its fabric. This not only reduces energy demand (and therefore costs) but also ensures that the implemented measures last for the life of the building. This includes high performance glazing, well insulated building structure (walls, ground floor and roof) and a well-built envelope that minimises heat loss through draughts. It also addresses issues of passive solar design and gain, so that at least half of the dwellings will still have a southerly aspect. Thus the principles of energy conscious design for this site should follow Policy SS1 and are to minimise the use of energy in the first place.

The Councils recent motion to declare a climate emergency should encourage any development to comply with a sustainable energy hierarchy created for the site and should in general consider:

- Development location: Reduces transport need and gives access to sustainable transport;
- Site master planning: Solar master planning optimises use of natural light and heat;
- Building fabric: High performance fabric gives maximum thermal efficiency;
- Building services: Low carbon building services support fabric measures;
- Clean on-site energy: Low carbon / renewable energy reduces unavoidable emissions;
- Offsite measures: Developer contributions finance offsite carbon reduction where onsite measures are not practical/viable;
- In-use performance: To ensure actual performance aligns with design intent.

Developments should envisage achieving high levels of insulation and air tightness as well as MVHR (mechanical ventilation with heat recovery) on buildings near the motorway.

Developers must also prove that a development is provided with carbon reduced and CO2 reduced energy resources which follows the energy reduction aspirations of the Council. This need to include the options for a combined local energy source for developments in close proximity and includes local energy centres.

## **Potable Water**

Water efficiency becomes increasingly important in a changing climate with diminishing water resources.

The use of Part G Building Regulations will be the means by which water demand will be measured and reduced. There will be a focus on reducing demand for water in the first place and using the water that is required as efficiently as possible. Such measures include dual flush toilets and water butts for external watering in gardens.

## **Surface Water**

Inevitably there will be an increase in hardstanding and surfaces on the site once completed, which under normal circumstances would increase the amount of run off from the site and potentially cause flooding issues further downstream.

However, measures must be introduced to eliminate this risk, particularly in light of a worsening climate with more intense rainfall projected. Sustainable Urban Drainage and attenuation measures must be introduced as part of considered drainage strategy, and this can be complemented by the design and arrangement of green spaces with rain gardens to help cope with surface water run-off.

## **Ecology**

Full ecological surveys must be undertaken and reports produced. Any measures required to mitigate the impact of development on native or endangered animal species must be set out within an Ecological Management Plan. The removal of any habitat must be mitigated by enhancement elsewhere. New landscape planting must be designed to enhance the biodiversity of the development area as part of the overarching landscape strategy.

## **Materials**

Materials can have a significant impact on environmental performance, both in construction, but also ongoing use. Through construction, where those materials are sourced from, the means of extraction and manufacture and how far they travel all have varying effects on the environment. The materials issue will be addressed in the following ways:

Through the use of 'C' rated materials, as defined in the Green Guide to Specification;

By using materials in the main elements of construction (roof, walls, floors, etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;

By using materials in the finishing elements of construction (doors, staircases, fascias etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;

Maximise the re- use of recycled building waste material and spare soil generated by the site preparation and adopt sustainable soil management practices to guarantee this practise to be carried out.

## **Tree Planting**

The Council recently committed to prioritise the planting of new trees and considers this an important aspect in the future for many reasons which include the sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub> and the positive aspects of urban shading and cooling to the climate. The aim is to provide tree species in locations suitable for the development and the trees themselves. New woodlands should contain a variety of species to avoid the creation of areas of monoculture.

## **A Better Quality of Life**

Well designed, environmentally friendly homes have an important role to play in maintaining a sense of well-being and a good quality of life.

Therefore, buildings should be Building for Life (BfL) compliant. For example, dwellings will be designed to enable good levels of natural daylighting to help create a feeling of space and to promote healthier environments.

Furthermore, all residents will have access to private external space in the form of gardens or communal space in the case of flats, a vital component of improved health.

Furthermore, developments within Taunton should follow the 'The Vision for our Garden Town' document and the 'Design Charter and Checklist' provided by the Council. These guides and charter/checklist provide the opportunity to create a higher quality natural and built environment which will support healthier and happier places.

## **Transport**

Any development should be located in an area to promote the reduction of energy usage and CO2 emissions.

This development is conveniently located adjacent to the existing MH1 area along the proposed ERR which provides a vital transport route for the region as well as for Taunton and will relieve the existing A38 which is proposed to be downgraded once the ERR is provided.

The ERR will provide direct access with good connections for the new mixed used development of MH2 as well as for the employment site and B&R proposed near the existing employment area at Walfod Cross.

The site and its residential development encourage sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling rather than car usage by providing the option to easily access:

- The green necklace to the east and south for recreational use,
- The proposed green corridors within the residential development, and
- The existing bus stops, educational facilities and local centre proposed within the proposed new development and the adjacent MH1 site, and
- The new development also proposes a rapid transport system that can be easily accessed from the site and creates a sustainable connection to the centre of Taunton and the Bus&Ride area.

The development should encourage compliance with a sustainable transport hierarchy created for the site and should in general motivate to:

- Reduce the need to travel;
- Inspire active travel, public transport, and shared transport modes; and
- Instigate a preference of Electric Vehicles over fossil fuel vehicle when buying a new vehicle.

Furthermore, the development is proposed to encourage local scale employment rather than a strategic employment location to reduce the use of cars within the area.

## **Waste**

Throughout construction, there will be a number of measures in place that will facilitate high levels of reuse and recycling, including the development of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which will:

- Identify all waste streams and planning for their management,
- Set targets for waste reduction, and
- Identify a specific person responsible for its oversight and implementation.

Operationally, the dwellings will be provided with bins to split the different recycling streams prior to storage outside. Suitable provision will be made for the safe, convenient and sensitively located storage receptacles.

Following the Council's climate emergency declaration any development should foster sustainable waste management behaviour within the development and encourage waste prevention and lower waste lifestyle as well as promote a strong self-motivation through the development of personal responsibilities.

The location will afford the opportunity for residents to access a range of existing and new facilities within the site and in the surrounding. In turn, the provision of new homes and employment will support the activity and economy of the town. The location also maximises the opportunities to provide convenient public transport and cycle links to and from the town centre as well as pedestrian and cycle routes around the development site.

The scale of the development and the density at which the houses are built, are also important to enable a range of facilities such as the school, district centre and shops to be viable.

## 18 Achieving Sustainable development

The following paragraphs describe the aspects fundamental to this project which will result in achieving sustainable development. These integrate the mix of economic, social and environmental attributes that define sustainable development.

- Building a Strong Competitive Economy - Providing homes in MH2, in addition to the recent developments at MH1, Hartnell's Farm, Prockter's Farm and the proposed new development at Land South of Manor Farm, supports the local area and the continued development of its economy. Furthermore and vital for the development, the scheme will include buildings and facilities which will provide employment and thus create jobs locally.
- Providing Sustainable Transport - The site offers an opportunity to bring about a change in behaviour and encourage residents to use healthier and sustainable modes of transport. A Travel Plan should be drawn up and be developed to encourage travel by walking, cycling and public transport instead of using the private car. The development will have to be designed to encourage residents to reduce the need for car journeys by providing car sharing schemes, pedestrian and cycle opportunities and by delivering sustainable public transport, such as local and rapid bus services. The majority of the new homes should be located in appropriate (ideally no more than 5 min walk) distance to the nearest bus stop on the spine road or the downgraded A38.
- All houses should be equipped or provided with sufficient infrastructure to be upgraded in the near future, with electric car charging points. Additionally and where possible, electric car charging points should also be provided within the District Centre and overall street network.
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes - The dwellings proposed should include a variety of sizes and tenures including open market and affordable homes. The five overarching principles of Lifetime Homes should be considered and include:
  1. Inclusivity - An inclusive environment aims to assist use by everyone, regardless of age, gender or disability.
  2. Accessibility – Convenient and independent access into and around the built environment and to services to be provided for the widest range of people, including



house with physical / sensory impairments, older people and children, convenient and independent.

3. Adaptability - A building can be adapted in the future to meet people's changing needs over time or to suit the needs of different users.
  4. Sustainability – The new sustainable communities should be underpinned by essential accessible elements aimed at meeting current and future needs, including homes, facilities, goods and services.
  5. Good Value – The main objective is to provide greater flexibility that allows homes to adapt to the changing circumstances of their occupants has the potential to build a more stable and diverse community. This will attract a wider range of occupants and create a thriving community.
- Requiring Good Design -A key element of good design is the efficient use of land, requiring densities that reduce the amount of land required to accommodate the houses and that can support the necessary social and green infrastructure to create high quality attractive places and spaces in which to live and work. The density of development set out in the masterplans will result in good accessibility and a high quality scheme and provide a living environment and amenity appropriate for the location. Higher densities around the District Centre encourage easy access while lower densities will provide and indicate the transition to the countryside.
  - To encourage the use of public transport, shared trips and sustainable transport options, the District Centre will have a concentration of community, retail and social facilities. This local provision of essential facilities should encourage local trips, with a high proportion of access by foot, bicycle or by public transport and function and enhance the opportunities for social interaction.
  - Promoting Healthy Communities - Walking and cycling will be encouraged by creating clear routes with good vision green corridors and well planned destinations throughout the development. The green landscape corridors serve as a framework for leisure and recreational walking and cycling. The layout of the perimeter blocks will create a permeable network of walkable routes usable for a variety of activities. Designated walking and cycling networks using both quiet roads and the attractive green corridors will also encourage sustainable transport to access the district centre.
  - Extensive areas of open space within the Green Necklace will include recreational facilities, informal natural play areas, community orchards and potentially allotments which are an integral part of the development and will provide opportunities for a healthy community to develop.
  - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change - As a general principle, new development will incorporate high standards of sustainable design and construction. Any applications will have to be supported by information which demonstrates how the environmental design principles will be delivered and how the developments accords with Taunton's Garden Town Vision and Checklist. This will include the production of an Energy Assessment in order to demonstrate how energy and emissions have been minimised in accordance with an Energy Hierarchy, and a Sustainability Assessment, which explains how the environmental design principles will be accommodated by any new development.
  - The community facilities, including the school and community buildings should therefore be taken forward as a flagship and example of sustainable design and construction and should be constructed in that way.



- Energy and Climate Change Mitigation - The new development should be designed in accordance with an energy hierarchy, which promotes the reduction of energy, before using efficient systems and renewable energy. New development should also incorporate renewable energy produced on site. An analysis of feasible technologies will have to be provided in support of planning applications.
- Options for providing heating and hot water on site will need to be considered and could include a review of a local or district heating scheme in addition to more traditional alternatives. The lighting within the public realm areas should consider innovative low energy lighting and use renewable energy where possible.
- Provisions for electric car charging points within the street network and community car parking areas should be considered and introduced where possible and feasible.

DRAFT

Monkton Heathfield - Phase 2 Development

# Design Guidance

June 2020

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architects

Somerset West  
and Taunton

# Contents

1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 About this document	3
3.0 Planning Policy	4
4.0 Taunton - Garden Town	7
5.0 Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience	8
6.0 Garden Town Vision for Taunton	9
7.0 Sustainability Principles	10
8.0 Overall Placemaking Strategy	12
9.0 Green Necklace	15
10.0 Integration of MH 1 and 2	16
11.0 District Centre	18
12.0 Eastern Relief Road (ERR)	20
13.0 Downgrading of the A38	22
14.0 Bus & Ride Land	23
15.0 Employment Land Reserve	24
16.0 School Site	25
17.0 Landscape / Green Infrastructure Opportunities	26
18.0 Sustainability / Energy / Climate change	28

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Policy SS1 of the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy allocates land for a Strategic Development at Monkton Heathfield. The Policy seeks to deliver a new sustainable neighbourhood. Part of the area has already been developed. The first phase of the Monkton Heathfield main site (MH1) delivered around 900 new homes together with new education and community facilities and the first phase of the A38 Eastern Relief Road (ERR); a further 100 homes were built at Aginhills Farm. Development is underway at Hartnells Farm which will eventually deliver 320 new homes.

1.2 There remains land within the SS1 policy area that will deliver around 2500 further new homes and related infrastructure. By far the largest and most significant of these areas is the second main Monkton Heathfield site, known as MH2.

1.3 MH2 will deliver around 1600 new homes, a through school, employment land, a bus and ride, a new district centre with shops and community facilities, a green necklace of open space and a further section of the ERR.

1.4 The Council have prepared a draft Framework Plan for the SS1 Policy area which is published for consultation with this Design Guidance, and shows the various sites and allocations in the SS1 Policy area. The Council have also prepared a draft Concept Masterplan for the MH2 site showing the disposition of the main land uses at MH2 together with indicative information about roads and key infrastructure, together with the green necklace.

1.5 This document contains Design Guidance which is relevant to the whole SS1 policy development area, but is focused on MH2. It sets out the context for the development of MH2 and sets the site in the context of the designation of Taunton as a Garden Town in 2017, together with key material considerations which post-date the Core Strategy such including the Climate Emergency and the National Design Guide.

1.6 In 2017 Taunton was designated as a 'Garden Town' following a submission to the Government. The submission was reflective of the then Council's commitment to deliver new housing growth focused on a number of new garden communities and town centre regeneration supported by essential infrastructure and an enhanced network of green spaces. Monkton Heathfield 2 is one of the Garden Communities.

1.7 The Council recently declared a climate emergency and has set out targets to resolve the emergency which should form the base of determining a development proposal within the Council's area. Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) is proposed to be carbon neutral by the year 2030 and every effort should be taken to guarantee that this will be achieved especially in new developments. New development should address the climate emergency through sustainable development, low carbon design, prioritising active travel and promotion sustainable activities and fostering waste management behaviours. Additionally, tree planting within the Council's area should be promoted and prioritised and should include a mix of species with the aim to sequestrate CO2 from the air and provide urban shadowing and natural cooling in and around urban areas.

1.8 Under the new structure of the merged (SWT) this commitment has been reinforced with the publication in 2019 of 'Taunton: The Vision for our Garden Town' which articulates this vision. Monkton Heathfield - Phase 2 (MH2) is part of the proposed Monkton Heathfield garden community and wider strategic development land allocation as set out in Core Strategy Policy SS1.

1.9 The Council's recently provided Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2024 seeks to increase the number of affordable and social homes and, ensure the provision of adequate and affordable employment land to meet different business needs.

1.10 The Monkton Heathfield land was identified for a mixed use urban extension development through the former Taunton Deane Local Plan and the Development Guide for Monkton Heathfield (phase 1). The employment land provision is part of the preparation of the Core Strategy, adopted 2014, and reflected in the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) adopted in 2016.

# 2.0 About this document

2.1 The Core Strategy identifies that Development Guides will be prepared for key sites. A Guide was prepared for the first phase of the MH1 site, setting out an indicative Masterplan and key planning policies and design aspirations.

2.2 The Council recognise that since the adoption of the Core Strategy there have been changes in National Planning Policies and the adoption of additional and supplementary policy guidance locally, including the Sites Allocation and Development Management Plan in 2016. Further, there have been changes ‘on the ground’ at Monkton Heathfield such as changes in schooling requirements.

## Stage 1

Background research into the sites current condition and physical strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

## Stage 3

A period for the development of the Framework and Concept Plans and design guidance working alongside the Garden Town Design document, including feedback meetings with the local authority and key stakeholders on the emerging proposals.

## Stage 2

Engagement with other stakeholders such as Parish Councils, Environment Agency and County Highways Authority, and prospective developers and land owners.

## Stage 4

Council approval of draft; and further targeted stakeholder consultation. Adoption for planning decision making.

2.3 Whilst Policy SS1 is the starting point for the consideration of any development proposals on the SS1 sites, there are material considerations which also need to be considered. In January 2019 the former TDBC Council’s Scrutiny Committee approved a report summarising these matters. The Council approved ‘in principle’ that part of the employment land for MH1 could come forward as housing and, that plans and a Design Guide should be brought forward for SS1 and MH2 in particular.

2.4 This Design Guidance and the accompanying Framework and Concept Plan will, following consultation, be adopted for the purposes of determining applications within the SS1 Policy area. It is a material consideration reflecting policies and guidance which post-dates the adoption of the Core Strategy.

2.5 Unlike the recently published Masterplan and Design Guidance for the employment land South of Manor Farm, Langaller, this document identifies key features of the MH2 site and the design challenges faced in delivering a sustainable new garden community.

2.6 The Council is committed to achieving the highest possible design quality in the new Monkton Heathfield Garden Community, in line with the National Design Guide and the Garden Town Vision, Charter and Checklist. This document sets out the Council’s design aspirations and vision for MH2.

2.7 The Council have worked closely with the developer consortium brining forward the MH2 site and there is much common ground. The Council are committed to continuing engagement with developers, consultees, stakeholders, local businesses and the local community through the planning process to ensure the Vision for the Garden Town and the Garden Communities is delivered.

2.8 This Design Guidance addresses key polices from the Policy SS1 of the Core Strategy:



A development delivering an area of employment land to the north east focused on meeting business needs.



Green key areas in strategic locations making use of existing green links and providing green connections with the surrounding open space network and delivering the 'Green Necklace'\* servicing the Green Wedge\*\* further south.



Create a new community whilst delivering high quality new homes including affordable and social homes.



Addressing climate change through sustainable development and new woodland and tree planting.



A new Eastern Relief Road along the eastern development edge to guide the traffic more efficient around the development and into the town centre.



Providing a Bus&Ride area to the north east of the site in close proximity to the existing and proposed employment site at Walford Cross.



Downgrade the existing A38 to a more pedestrian / cycle friendly route with local traffic retained.



Providing guidance on associated physical, social and green infrastructure potentials within the site.

### Notes:

\* The 'Green Necklace' is a multi-purpose belt of landscaping around the Monkton Heathfield development which provides a buffer to, and follows the M5 Motorway corridor.

\*\* The Green Wedges are protected green areas to prevent coalescence of settlements and maintain a sense of place and identity for neighbourhoods whilst contribute to health and wellbeing of residents, provide accessible formal and informal open spaces, provide valuable wildlife habitats and protect the landscape and visual amenity of the areas.

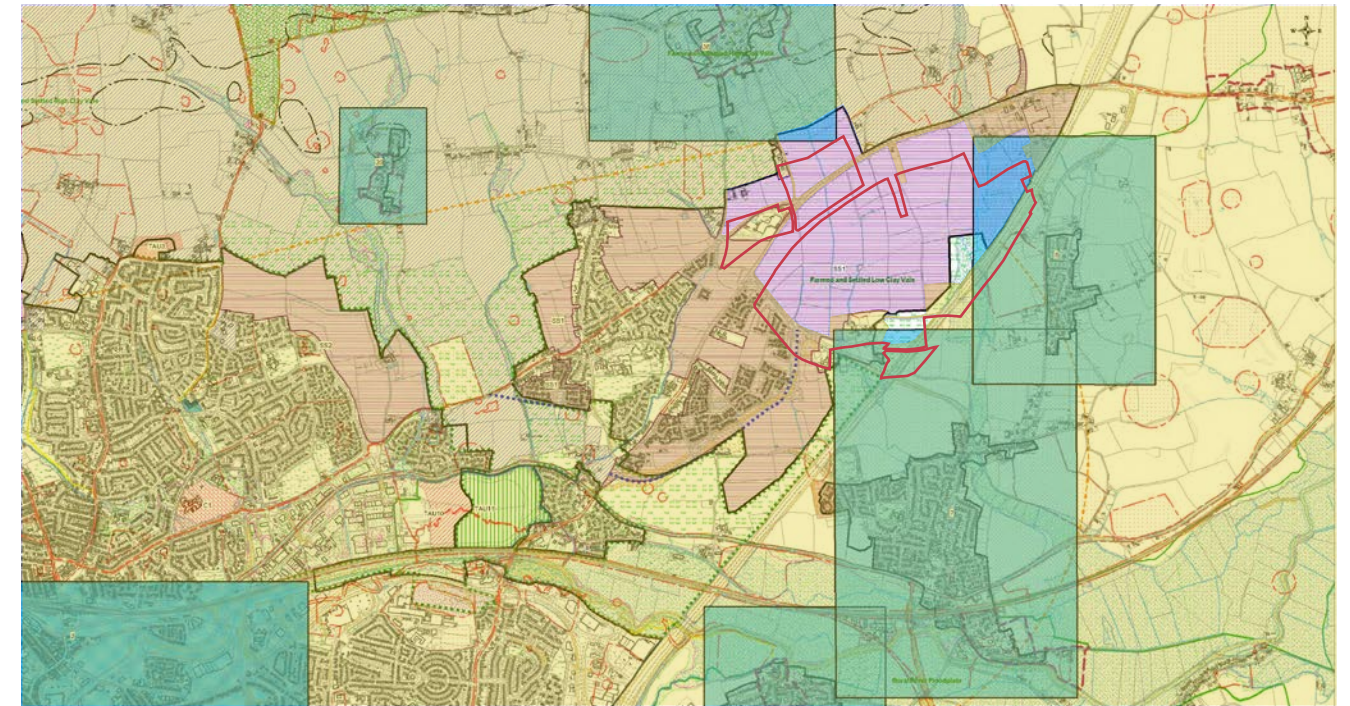


# 3.0 Planning Policy

## Core Strategy

3.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012 and covers a plan period up until 2028. It contains a spatial portrait and vision along with core policies to be applied borough-wide. The Core Strategy also includes spatial policies to guide and support its strategic allocations, and specific development management policies that should be applied to all planning applications during their determination.

3.2 Core Strategy policies that are relevant to the MH2 area are listed below:



**Fig 2:**  
Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan Extract

<b>Policy SD1</b>	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - planning applications that accord with the Core Strategy policies (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, reflecting the principles of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 14 and 49.
<b>Policy CP1</b>	Climate Change - development proposals should result in a sustainable environment, and will be required to demonstrate that the issue of climate change has been addressed through reducing the need to travel and appropriate design measures.
<b>Policy CP2</b>	Economy - proposals which lead to the loss of existing or identified business, industrial or warehousing land to other uses, including retail, will not be permitted unless the overall benefit of the proposal outweighs the disadvantages of the loss of employment or potential employment on the site.
<b>Policy CP4</b>	Housing - seeks to maintain a flexible supply of housing by making provision for the delivery of at least 17,000 new homes over the period 2008 – 2028, including 4000 affordable homes.
<b>Policy CP5</b>	Inclusive Communities - development proposals will promote sustainable development that creates social cohesive and inclusive communities; reduce inequalities, promote personal well-being and address accessibility to health, inclusive housing, training, education, places of worship, leisure and other community facilities ensuring a better quality of life for everyone both now and for future generations.
<b>Policy CP6</b>	Transport - development should contribute to reducing the need to travel, improve accessibility to jobs, services and community facilities, and mitigate and adapt to climate change by managing strategic corridors and networks, improving accessibility of public transport, walking and cycling from rural centres to key destinations and robustly managing the effects of new development in terms of transport impacts and parking provision.

<b>Policy CP7</b>	Infrastructure - ensure that infrastructure is in place at the right time to meet the needs of Taunton Deane and to support the growth set out in the Core Strategy. It will also secure developer contributions towards the provision of physical, social and green infrastructure.
<b>Policy CP8</b>	Environment - conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment, retain and enhance green infrastructure assets, improve green infrastructure, public access, visual amenity and the overall quality of the natural environment, direct new development away from land at risk of flooding, encourage the use of sustainable drainage systems.
<b>Policy SP2</b>	Realising the vision for Taunton establishes the scale of employment and housing growth, including 4,500 dwellings at Monkton Heathfield. It also confirms the protection and extension of the existing network of green wedges to prevent coalescence of settlements and maintain a green lung between town and country and supports sustainable transport choices.
<b>Policy SS1</b>	Monkton Heathfield – discussed in more detail at Section 4 of this Neighbourhood Development Plan.
<b>Policy DM1</b>	General Requirements – planning applications should make the most efficient use of land, taking into account transport impacts, protect wildlife, consider impacts on character and appearance of landscapes and settlements, pollution, amenity and utilities.
<b>Policy DM2</b>	Development in the Countryside – will only support defined uses in specified circumstances.
<b>Policy DM5</b>	Use of Resources and Sustainable Design – New developments will be required a range of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to reduce CO2. Urban developments should exceed the CO2 reduction requirements of general development.



Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) DPD 6.2.4

3.3 The SADMP is a Development Plan Document (DPD) that includes policies in respect of specific development management considerations and allocates smaller sites. The following policies are relevant to the South of Langaller area:

<b>Policy C2</b>	Provision of recreational open space	<b>Policy ENV4</b>	Archaeology
<b>Policy C3</b>	Protection of recreational open space	<b>Policy ENV5</b>	Development in the vicinity of rivers and canals
<b>Policy C4</b>	Protection of community facilities	<b>Policy D2</b>	Approach routes to Taunton and Wellington
<b>Policy C5</b>	Provision of Community Facilities	<b>Policy D7</b>	Design Quality
<b>Policy A1</b>	Parking	<b>Policy D8</b>	Safety
<b>Policy A2</b>	Travel Planning	<b>Policy D9</b>	A co-ordinated approach to development and highway planning
<b>Policy A3</b>	Cycle network	<b>Policy D10</b>	Dwelling Sizes
<b>Policy A4</b>	Protection of disused transport corridors	<b>Policy D12</b>	Amenity Space
<b>Policy A5</b>	Accessibility of Development	<b>Policy D13</b>	Public Art
<b>Policy I4</b>	Water Infrastructure		
<b>Policy ENV1</b>	Protection of trees, woodland, orchards and hedgerows		
<b>Policy ENV2</b>	Tree planting within new developments		

Policy SS1

3.4 This policy deals specifically with the Monkton Heathfield area.

3.5 The development is proposed to deliver 4,500 new homes, of which 25% will be affordable. Policy SS1 requires new development to deliver:

- A mixed-use district centre containing shops, restaurants, cafés and offices
- Community facilities including community hall, places of worship and health and care facilities
- A village green
- 22.5 hectares of new employment land
- 3 new primary schools
- A country park
- An energy centre to provide locally generated electricity to the new development
- A park and ride site
- Improvements to the A38 to transform it into an urban street
- A new ‘western development spine’ to connect the A38 and the A3259

- A new ‘eastern development spine’ to the south, parallel to the A38
- Infrastructure for rapid bus transit
- Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure
- A multi-purpose ‘green necklace’ of landscape and public open space surrounding the settlement providing allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat
- Landscaping between the M5 and areas of new development.

Policy SS1 also advises that the site should provide:

- Connected street network which accommodates pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and promotes a viable public transport system
- Well-designed public open spaces
- A positive relationship between new housing and existing communities.

3.6 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy there have been significant material changes in government planning policy and guidance, together with changes in local policy and circumstances which has resulted in some aspects of the adopted SS1 Policy appearing to be out of date or overtaken by events on the ground. The report provided information to inform Masterplanning of the next phases of the project and information for developers in particular.

3.7 An update on the key ‘heads’ of the policy, where these have changed since the policy was adopted was provided:

Site Capacity

3.8 Policy SS1 identified the need for the delivery of around 4500 new homes within the Monkton Heathfield policy area. Latest monitoring indicates that the overall Monkton Heathfield policy area will not deliver this number of new homes. This is largely as a result of lower density development than was anticipated when the policy was adopted, at a time when national minimum density standards were in place.

3.9 In addition, it is now proposed to deliver a through school ‘within’ the second phase of the main Monkton Heathfield development site, east of the current A38, rather than north of the A38.

3.10 In order to address this likely shortfall in housing delivery at Monkton Heathfield the Council resolved to release some of the Employment land, south of Langaller Lane for residential use. Such an approach is in accordance with the resolution of the former TDBC Executive Committee following publication of the Employment Land Report commissioned by the Council.

Affordable Housing

3.11 To date the policy has successfully delivered around 25% affordable housing across the Monkton Heathfield policy area, and this remains a central commitment of future development, subject to viability considerations.

3.12 To date there has been little accommodation provided specifically for elderly persons within the policy area. There is an increased national focus on the needs of an ageing population and there remains an opportunity to deliver specialist accommodation for the elderly within the policy area.



# 3.0 Planning Policy (continued)

## Employment Land

3.13 As noted above the Council endorsed the findings of the Peter Brett Associates Employment Land Report that there is a surplus of employment land identified within the Borough as a whole.

3.14 At Monkton Heathfield nearly 20ha of land is committed or reserved south of Langaller Lane, east of the phase 1 completed development area. There is an opportunity to address the shortfall in housing numbers in Policy SS1 through the release of some of the land south of Langaller Lane for housing.

3.15 There remains a commitment to identify the strategic reserve of employment land, of up to 10ha, south of Walford Cross, as part of the second phase of the Monkton Heathfield development site.

## West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan, 2017

3.16 The West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2017. Its vision is to successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the area. To ensure a high quality of design with the creation of sustainable places with excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy. During this period of growth, the historic settlements and surrounding countryside will be protected to maintain and enhance the locally distinctive characteristics of the area for future generations.

3.17 A series of objectives are set out for housing, transport, employment, recreation and the environment.

3.18 A number of the plans policies are relevant to the SS1 policy area generally and MH2 in particular:

<b>H1</b>	Housing Suitable for Older People
<b>H2 and H3</b>	External Materials and Refuse Bin Storage
<b>H4</b>	Affordable Housing
<b>T1</b>	Developing A Comprehensive and High Quality Cycle and Footpath Network
<b>E1</b>	Starter Workshop Units
<b>E2</b>	Sustainable Diversification of Rural Buildings for Other Employment Uses
<b>E3</b>	Retain Existing Employment Land/ Buildings for Employment Usage
<b>E4</b>	Social Care Employment Opportunities

<b>E5</b>	Wider Roll out of Broadband Connectivity
<b>R1</b>	Dark Skies
<b>R2</b>	Green Space and Wildlife
<b>R3</b>	Flood Attenuation
<b>R4</b>	Recreation & Community Facilities
<b>R5</b>	Local Green Spaces (LGS)
<b>CA1</b>	Developing high quality bus infrastructure

## Creech St Michael Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2028

3.19 The Creech St Michael Neighbourhood development Plan was made in September 2019. The Vision for the Plan for Creech St Michael Parish is that in 10 years should aim for a safe and friendly environment while remaining rural, peaceful and green. The vision reflects what has been learned about community’s priorities for the Parish through the community consultation carried out for the NDP. It has been developed following consultation with the community and the word cloud below reflects the key themes and priorities most frequently referred to within the consultation by the community during the preparation of the NDP.

3.20 It continues, noting that it is important that the vision does not conflict with the wider strategic growth priorities established for the west of the NDP area at the Monkton Heathfield Urban Extension and delivery of the spatial strategy set out in the adopted Development Plan. It is the aim of this NDP to promote integration and cohesion between existing and new settlements and to shape development proposals outside of the strategic growth and spatial strategy to reflect local priorities.

3.21 Key objectives are identified:

- To deliver housing growth that is tailored to the needs of the Parish as a whole;
- To ensure sensitive and sustainable development which protects, enhances and enriches the landscape of the Parish;
- To sustain and improve local facilities for existing and new residents in the Parish;
- To strengthen and support existing and new business activity;
- To improve and enhance transport facilities and digital connectivity;
- To improve and enhance leisure and cycle routes, including leisure trails and associated facilities;
- To prioritise local village and settlement distinctiveness in every element of change and growth;
- To protect our valued green spaces and landscapes, waterways and the natural environment generally;
- To involve all Parishioners in the monitoring and delivery of the vision.

3.22 A number of the Plans policies are relevant to the SS1 Policy area generally and MH2 in particular:

- CSM 1 – Cycle and footpath network
- CSM 2 – Parish Traffic Management
- CSM 3 – Housing to meet local needs
- CSM 4 – Quality of design
- CSM5 - Employment
- CSM 6 – Community cohesion
- CSM7 – Public realm improvement
- CSM 8 – Sports, leisure and recreational facilities

3.23 Copies of both Neighbourhood Plans can be located on the SWT website, Planning Policy pages.



# 4.0 Taunton - Garden Town

4.1 Taunton is the South West's first Garden Town. Garden Town status represents a fantastic opportunity to improve the lives of the community, but what exactly is a Garden Town?

4.2 The notion of a Garden Town is derived from the garden city movement and the pioneering ideas initiated by Ebenezer Howard in Victorian England of 1898. The utopian ideal of marrying town and country together with pursuing land value capture for the sharing benefit of the community, created a legacy that influenced not only town planning in the UK but around the world.

4.3 The Garden City ethos can be viewed as a direct response to the movement of people from the town to the countryside together with increases in the birth rate that were spurred on by changes in society following the industrial revolution. The unregulated growth of towns and cities generated an accumulation of problems associated with poor sanitation and pollution that in turn caused poverty and inequality within the urban populations. The intellectual response to these and other societal ills was an idealistic vision based on romantic pre-industrial utopian ideals where art and nature provided a more rewarding life.

4.4 Howard's solution was to proffer a self-sufficient model of development where rises in land values over time would be reinvested in order to provide community benefits.

4.5 This altruistic conception reflected the growth in social reform in the Victorian era. This approach was intrinsic to the design of garden cities themselves, which were to consist of a series of planned compact towns that combined urban amenities with access to green spaces and natural land (ring fenced by wide rural belts of land). Land was provided for industry and agriculture and at the heart of the city would be a garden ringed with a civic and cultural complex of facilities. This cultural centre was to be connected to the wider neighbourhoods via avenues and a series of concentric boulevards.

4.6 The design of garden cities were much influenced by model villages and the aesthetic sensibilities of the 'Arts and Craft' movement. Sensitive architect designed houses set within boulevards and verdant leafy lanes are the hallmarks of garden cities. This vision was realised most fully in the town of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City but there are many other examples in the UK and across the world, particularly in North America. The movement influenced the design of new towns that were initiated after the end of the Second World War. Over time the original tenets of the movement were distilled and facsimile estates of housing were constructed without appropriate facilities or quality spaces.

4.7 In the era of climate change and the need to promote sustainable growth and carbon neutral development, garden cites are very much back on the agenda. There are many new and emerging developments based on the tried and tested garden town principles, providing proof that garden town principles can be applied to modern developments. These principles are aligned with good urban design practice and the new National Design Guide October 2019.



'Arts and Craft' housing set within generous landscaping at Letchworth



Houses facing green space at Welwyn Garden City

4.8 In August 2018 the government published a Garden Communities Prospectus to support the delivery of new garden communities. Taunton was one of the towns chosen as a new Garden Town with the principle of building new garden communities applied to new and emerging strategic developments in and around the town.

4.9 Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller is the first development to be designed as a garden community from the outset. It will be designed in accordance with the Taunton Garden Town Design Charter and Checklist. Therefore, any new development needs to demonstrate an appropriate approach on the basis of the Building for Life standards as well as the Design Charter and Checklist.

4.10 The Council have recently completed public consultation on a District Wide Design Guide and targeted consultation on a Public Realm Guide for the Garden Town. Both are available on the Councils website and should be referenced as part of any planning applications on the land South of Manor Farm site.

4.11 What makes Garden Towns so successful is the synergy between architecture, landscaping, usable open space and walkability. The Garden Town precedents examples opposite and below illustrate how these elements work together in creating successful place.



Within Taunton itself the Edwardian period housing east and north of Staplegrove Road exhibits the characteristics of Garden Town design and architecture.



Enclosed garden courtyard with focal point entrance at Hamstead Garden Suburb



The architecture framing garden communities need not be traditional, a contemporary approach can deliver the same



# 5.0 Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience

5.1 Whilst at very early stages, the new Local Plan seeks to deliver carbon neutrality for the district by 2030. The Council has declared a climate emergency. This guide identifies opportunities to address the climate emergency.

5.2 The information used within this section is a summary of a 30 page draft 'ideas' plan produced for the district, called the 'Somerset West and Taunton Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan'.

5.3 A similar draft document is currently being produced for the County of Somerset, called the 'Somerset Climate Emergency Framework'.

5.4 Both documents will evolve at the same time and are designed to start conversations with our residents, businesses and communities. Action also continues to be taken whilst these plans are developed.

5.5 Somerset West and Taunton Council is committed to creating a more sustainable future for our families and the places we enjoy. The Council is therefore working with partners to produce plans for tackling climate change within our district and across the wider county. Action will be outlined soon to reduce the contribution to global heating and to prepare for local impacts. All powers will be used to action, enable and support everyone to work towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030.

5.6 The proposed actions are:

## Transport

54% of carbon emissions in our district come from transport. Actions should grow a green transport system, increase active lifestyles and reduce business travel, by:

- Electrifying transport options and meeting that demand through renewable energy;
- Supporting Taunton Park & Ride, reopening Wellington Train Station and exploring innovative urban and rural transport options;
- Developing new routes and pedestrian zones that make walking and cycling the preferred choice;
- Enabling people to reduce the amount they need to travel (e.g. through better digital connectivity).

## Energy

Our lives are energy intensive and we can't continue to meet that demand through fossil fuels. 37% of carbon emissions in the UK derive from heating homes and businesses. Activity is required to help generate, store and consume energy in smarter ways:

- Building new cases for renewable energy like wind, solar and biomass;
- Enabling and raising awareness of local community energy projects;
- Providing advice for reducing and shifting energy demand;
- Developing a Somerset Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.

## Waste

Although ranked in the top 10% areas in England for recycling household waste, Somerset must continue to reduce its environmental impact. Our ideas include:

- Creating campaigns to help us all reduce plastic use;
- Diverting remaining waste away from landfill to energy generation projects;
- Working with businesses to develop joint waste schemes;
- Reducing supply chain waste in key areas, like the public sector.

## Farming & Food

Many existing practices for producing, distributing and consuming food generates significant carbon and methane emissions. We want to work with partners to explore:

- Land management techniques that reduce emissions and protect wildlife;
- Supporting farmers in adapting to the impacts of climate change;
- Improving understanding about the importance of buying local produce;
- How we reduce reliance on the use of plastics in food packaging.

## The Built Environment

There are about 80,000 homes and businesses in our district and plans for more, all of which must be fit for the future. Ideas to enable this include:

- Retrofitting homes and advising homeowners on changes they can make;
- Locating new developments sustainably, close to transport and services;
- Ensuring new buildings achieve zero carbon emissions as soon as possible;
- Planting trees and re-wilding urban spaces to increase well-being.

## Natural Environment

Somerset's many special landscapes are under threat. We need plans to radically improve the chances for wildlife and carbon capture through better land management. We plan on:

- Planting more trees and sowing more wildflower meadows;
- Working with landowners to enhance vulnerable habitats;
- Introducing less intensive practices in managing Council owned spaces;
- Empowering residents and communities to deliver local wildlife projects.

## Water

Climate projections predict more intense and variable rainfall patterns, leading to more flooding, drought and water quality issues. Ideas to mitigate these risks include:

- Delivering flood alleviation improvements and coastal erosion management;
- Harnessing the energy generating potential of water treatment processes;
- Working with businesses with significant water usage to reduce their consumption;
- Increasing use of sustainable urban drainage systems in developments.

## Industry, Business and Supply Chain

Our economy accounts for 29.5% of carbon emissions in Somerset. Actions are required to help businesses and employees improve operations and influence supply chains, such as:

- A business toolkit to help reduce emissions from supply chains;
- Sharing best practice and championing businesses that make positive changes;
- Increasing the resilience of small businesses affected by changes;
- Changing Council procurement processes to engage sustainable suppliers.





# 6.0 Garden Town Vision for Taunton



## Theme 1: Growing Our Town Greener

Transforming our open spaces and streets

### Objectives

- Link up our watersides
- Connect our key destinations
- Grow a garden grid
- Seeding 'Country Parks'
- Sow active landscapes
- Germinate a rich network of green spaces
- Cultivate productive landscape
- Locate 'pocket parks' on your doorstep
- Make more of managing our water
- Punctuating routes with green features

### Design Charter: Key Characteristic

1. Green infrastructure to be fully integrated into the design of new residential developments, whilst re-establishing connections to our landscape, and connecting up our green corridors and watersides.
2. Improve water and air management and habitat creation.
3. Significantly reduce energy consumption and harness individual and site-wide renewable or low-carbon energy solutions, whilst promoting the use of recycled and locally sourced materials.



## Theme 2: Branching Out

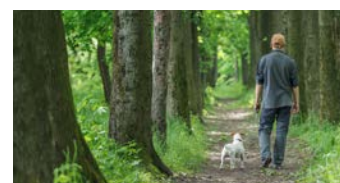
Moving Cleaner, Moving Smarter

### Objectives

- Make more of our strategic connections
- Make our streets work harder for us
- Orient development with transit hubs and corridors
- Our green walking and cycling branches
- Upgrading accessibility & mobility for all
- Moving Taunton ahead

### Design Charter: Key Characteristic

1. The design and layout of the neighbourhoods of the Garden Town will promote sustainable and active modes of travel over all others.
2. Provision to facilitate the use of cycles and electric vehicles will be exemplary.
3. Town 'Gateways' will be upgraded with greenery.



## Theme 3: Growing Quality Places to Live

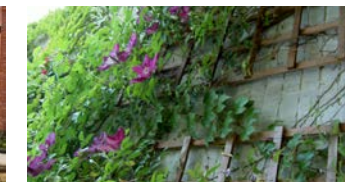
Town Centre, new and existing neighbourhoods

### Objectives

- Diversifying and intensifying our Town Centre
- Improving quality and greening public spaces
- Putting the river at the heart of the town
- Our future Town Centre
- New Garden Neighbourhoods
- Rejuvenated Neighbourhoods

### Design Charter: Key Characteristic

1. The Town Centre will be made more attractive and accessible.
2. Vitality and Diversification of the Town Centre will be encouraged.
3. New Garden Neighbourhoods will be created that are well-designed places with a clear identity.
4. New Garden Neighbourhoods should be designed to promote community cohesion and resilience.
5. Rejuvenated Neighbourhoods should be carefully planned with the close cooperation of existing residents to improve the efficiency, amenity and character of their place.



## Theme 4: New Shoots and Blossom

A dynamic and prosperous community founded on knowledge, culture and business

### Objectives

- A differentiated, sustainable future
- Town Centre vitality
- A connected and networked community
- A knowledge sharing environment
- Business and innovation support
- Engage artists and other creative practitioners
- Arts and culture

### Design Charter: Key Characteristic

1. Development should help to facilitate a new dynamism and prosperity that draws on and supports the knowledge, culture and business communities of Taunton.



# 7.0 Sustainability Principles

7.1 The design should follow the requirements of Policy SS1 and DM5 to allow for a development to be built with a focus on sustainability and climate change resilience. Whilst at very early stages, the new Local Plan seeks to deliver carbon neutrality for the district by 2030. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and the emerging SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan identify the importance of planning to ensure new built environments respond appropriately. A guideline on how a development should respond is described within the Design Charter and Checklist for Taunton. This document identifies opportunities to address the Climate Emergency under the most relevant subsections below:



## Energy

7.2 The approach to energy demand and carbon emissions will be to ensure that the dwellings are as energy efficient through its fabric.

This not only reduces energy demand (and therefore costs) but also ensures that the implemented measures last for the life of the building. This includes high performance glazing, well insulated building structure (walls, ground floor and roof) and a well built envelope that minimises heat loss through draughts. It also addresses issues of passive solar design and gain, so that despite the north-south orientation of the site, at least half of the dwellings will still have a southerly aspect. Thus the principles of energy conscious design for this site should follow Policy SS1 and are to minimise the use of energy in the first place.

7.3 The Councils recent motion to declare a climate emergency should encourage any development to comply with a sustainable energy hierarchy created for the site and should in general consider:

- Development location: Reduces transport need and gives access to sustainable transport;
- Site master planning: Solar master planning optimises use of natural light and heat;
- Building fabric: High performance fabric gives maximum thermal efficiency;
- Building services: Low carbon building services support fabric measures;
- Clean on-site energy: Low carbon / renewable energy reduces unavoidable emissions;
- Offsite measures: Developer contributions finance offsite carbon reduction where onsite measure are not practical/viable;
- In-use performance: To ensure actual performance aligns with design intent.

7.4 Developments should envisage to achieve high levels of insulation and air tightness as well as MVHR (mechanical ventilation with heat recovery) on buildings near the motorway.

7.5 Developers should also prove that a development is provided with carbon reduced and CO2 reduced energy resources which follows the energy reduction aspirations of the Council. This needs to include the options for a combined local energy source for developments in close proximity and includes local energy centres.



## Potable Water

7.6 Water efficiency becomes increasingly important in a changing climate with diminishing water resources. The use of Part G Building Regulations will be the means by

which water demand will be measured and reduced. There will be a focus on reducing demand for water in the first place and using the water that is required as efficiently as possible. Such measures include dual flush toilets and water butts for external watering in gardens.



## Ecology

7.7 Details regarding the proposed landscape proposals have been provided earlier within this document and are an important part of making this development an attractive place

to live. The new landscape planting will enhance the biodiversity of the development area. Full details are submitted separately.



## Surface Water

7.8 Inevitably there will be an increase in hardstanding and surfaces on the site once completed, which under normal circumstances would increase

the amount of run off from the site and potentially cause flooding issues further downstream.

7.9 However, measures have been introduced to eliminate this risk, particularly in light of a worsening climate with more intense rainfall projected. Further details are provided in this document or other reports accompanying this application.



## Materials

7.10 Materials can have a significant impact on environmental performance, both in construction, but also ongoing use. Through

construction, where those materials are sourced from, the means of extraction and manufacture and how far they travel all have varying effects on the environment. The materials issue will be addressed in the following ways:

- Through the use of 'C' rated materials, as defined in the Green Guide to Specification;
- By using materials in the main elements of construction (roof, walls, floors, etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;
- By using materials in the finishing elements of construction (doors, staircases, fascias etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;

7.11 Maximise the re-use of recycled building waste material and spare soil generated by the site preparation and adopt sustainable soil management practices to guarantee this practise to be carried out.



## Tree Planting

7.12 The Council recently committed to prioritise the planting of new trees and considers this an important aspect in the future for many reasons which include the

sequestration of CO2 and the positive aspects of urban shading and cooling to the climate. The aim is to provide tree species in locations suitable for the development and the trees themselves. New woodlands should contain a variety of species to avoid the creation of areas of monoculture.



## A Better Quality of Life

7.13 Well designed, environmentally friendly homes have an important role to play in maintaining a sense of well-being and a good quality of life. Therefore,

buildings should be Building for Life (BfL) compliant. For example, dwellings will be designed to enable good levels of natural daylighting to help create a feeling of space and to promote healthier environments. Furthermore, all residents will have access to private external space in the form of gardens or communal space in the case of flats, a vital component of improved health.

7.14 Furthermore, developments within Taunton should follow the 'The Vision for our Garden Town' document and the 'Design Charter and Checklist' provided by the Council. These guides and charter/checklist provides the opportunity to create a higher quality natural and built environment which will support healthier and happier places.





### Transport

7.1 Any development should be located in an area to promote the reduction of energy usage and CO2 emissions.

7.2 This development is conveniently located along the A38 which provides a vital transport route for the region as well as Taunton, and accesses other recent or existing residential areas nearby. Furthermore, the A38 provides direct access for the employment site and a good connection to other potential employment sites in the area.

7.3 The site and its residential development encourage sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling rather than car usage by providing the option to easily access:

- The green wedge/green necklace to the east and south for recreational use;
- The proposed playing fields to the west;
- The existing bus stops, educational facilities and local centre within MH1; and
- The future facilities within the proposed MH2 site.

7.4 The proposed MH2 development to the north of the site will enable a rapid transport system that can be accessed from the site and creates a sustainable connection to the centre of Taunton and the Bus&Ride area further north-west.

7.5 The development should encourage compliance with a sustainable transport hierarchy created for the site and should in general motivate to:

- Reduce the need to travel;
- Inspire active travel, public transport, and shared transport modes; and
- Instigate a preference of electric vehicles over fossil fuel vehicle when buying a new personal car.

7.6 Furthermore, the development is proposed to encourage local scale employment rather than a strategic employment location to reduce the use of cars within the area.



### Waste

7.7 Throughout construction, there will be a number of measures in place that will facilitate high levels of reuse and recycling, including the

development of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which will:

- Identify all waste streams and planning for their management;
- Set targets for waste reduction; and
- Identify a specific person responsible for its oversight and implementation

7.8 Operationally, the dwellings will be provided with bins to split the different recycling streams prior to storage outside. Suitable provision will be made for the safe, convenient and sensitively located storage receptacles.

7.9 Following the Council's climate emergency declaration any development should foster a sustainable waste management behaviour within the development and encourage waste prevention and lower waste lifestyle as well as promote a strong self-motivation through the development of personal responsibilities.

# 8.0 Overall Placemaking Strategy

## Policy SS1

8.1 Policy SS1 sets out a series of provisions in terms of development form and layout as follows:

- A variety of character areas which reflect the existing landscape character and the opportunities and constraints provided by natural features to create a place that is distinctive and memorable;
- An accessible district centre with a mix of uses and facilities;
- A connected street network which accommodates pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and promotes a viable public transport system;
- Well designed public open spaces which are enclosed and overlooked by new development;
- A positive relationship between new housing and existing communities; and
- A well-defined green edge to the urban area that protects views from Hestercombe House and the Quantock Hills.

## Identity Areas - Design Strategy and objectives

8.2 Create a distinctive place through the identification of specific elements that must meet certain design criteria. The criteria will be clearly set out with shared narrative themes that are contained in the following documents.

- National Planning Policy Framework: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)
- National Design Guide: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843468/National\\_Design\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf)
- Taunton's Garden Town Vision: <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/1450/taunton-garden-town-vision.pdf> , and
- Taunton's Garden Town Charter and checklist: <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/2108/taunton-design-charter-and-checklist.pdf> .

8.3 The interpretation of these aforementioned criteria must have regard to this guidance.

8.4 The design of these elements will then form a framework for creating the placemaking narrative and resulting identity for the SS1 area generally and MH2 specifically.

## Built Form principles

### Block Form

8.5 Generally perimeter block style. Smaller blocks of higher density must be located closer to district centre, along the Spine Street and central green corridor to create a finer grain of development. Generally the blocks forms will gradually get larger and less dense towards the edges of development.

### Townscape

8.6 A hierarchy of streets and spaces with a coherent and varied townscape must be created to reflect the many good design precedents that exist locally within traditional garden towns. This will aid legibility and provide the opportunity to create a place with its own identity.

### Density

8.7 The density of the development will be determined by the application of the design criteria. Appropriate design responses will determine density rather than the other way around. Hence the requirement to have a greater populous close to the District Centre and along public transport routes will result in higher densities in these locations.

### Building Heights

8.8 The strategy for building heights should recognise that heights should be commensurate with their function. The development will be predominantly two storeys. Taller buildings however have an important role to play in creating interesting townscape that is legible and distinctive. There are many ways this can be achieved such as:

- Creating an intensification of development near to District Centre and along transport routes and movement corridors such as the spine street and central green corridor;
- Being an important component of set-piece designs enclosing spaces and creating nodal points;
- To create key buildings and impart landmark status to buildings or groups of buildings;
- To create focal points and visual markers;
- To function as important corner buildings;
- To add variety to the street-scene and create interesting townscape/roofscape.

**Street hierarchy - Design Strategy and objectives**

8.9 Streets must be designed to create a coherent and recognisable hierarchy that will reinforce legibility and connectedness within the development. The design of any street must have regard to its function in the wider development. Important principles include:

- Creating a permeable development with streets providing direct and convenient connections to the District Centre, transport nodes and amenity areas;
- Street design to prioritise safe pedestrian and cycle movement whilst still accommodating vehicles;
- Streets design to encompass a variety of uses; streets for play, social interaction, safe and overlooked environments; ‘green streets’ containing landscape corridors, SUDs, amenity space and wildlife/ecology corridors;
- The creation of a ‘Spine Street’ as a gateway to the development from the Eastern Relief Road (ERR) to the east and taking the form of a gently winding tree-lined street accessing the school and district centre before reconnecting with the ERR to the south-west;
- Any on-street parking must be designed in association with hard and soft landscaping to provide an attractive and practical street-scene;
- Any on-street parking must not dominate the street or have a detrimental effect on the overall composition of the street-scene;
- Consideration of how building form relates to the composition of the street;
- More continuous and unbroken street form closer to District Centre and along important routes;
- Common or staggered building line depending on street type and location;
- Placement of buildings either close to street to create high degree of enclosure or set back behind garden boundaries or landscape elements to create streets of differing character;
- Streets can be oriented to create vistas to form visual connections to important nodes;
- Thoughtful parking solutions must be explored including the use of parking courts such that the integrity of street frontage can be maintained and the over dominance of the highway be reduced;
- The integration of conveniently placed electric charging points into the street network must be considered and promoted; and
- Where possible street design should promote rooflines running within 20 degrees of east-west in order to provide promote south facing roofs and façades thus promoting the benefits of solar gain.

**Development Edges**

**Design strategy and objectives**

8.10 A series of well-designed public spaces will be an essential ingredient of MH2. The spaces may take the form of squares, large open spaces, streets, green corridors, pocket parks or even small incidental areas with seating. They will fulfil a variety of functions and strategic aim such as:

- To serve as nodal points to aid orientation and wayfinding within the development;
- Providing destination points for people to meet, socialise and share experiences (the beginning of community);
- To be available to the whole range of user groups and be well overlooked by adjacent dwellings with active frontages;
- To be given identity and attractiveness through design, such that their function is clear and their form is fit for purpose;
- To recall examples of traditional garden town spaces but designed to 21st Century requirements and technology; and
- To be given integrity through design (the intrusion of poorly designed parking and highways into important spaces should be resisted for example).

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### Open Space and Landscape

#### Design Strategy and objectives

8.11 The land within MH2 contains existing landscape features that will be retained and used to contribute to the overall character of the development. MH1 will be designed as a garden community with a network of green spaces and corridors linking into the green necklace, MH1 and the northern green edge. This network will consist of:

- A network of green routes focused around the retention of existing woodland, trees, hedgerows and public rights of way;
- The establishment of a central green corridor running from the eastern side of the development through the District Centre and onto MH1 that;
- Will be predominantly a car free zone to prioritise movement for pedestrians/cyclists and will be complemented with substantial tree planting to provide shaded areas and offset carbon emissions;
- Opportunities for the establishment of pocket parks with micro allotments, raingardens and orchard planting to promote community engagement through horticulture;
- Ecological mitigation through the establishment of wildlife corridors and wildflower meadows will be promoted within the green infrastructure,
- The introduction of swales and ditches into the green infrastructure should be as naturalistic as possible with measures to promote ecological mitigation and habitat creation;
- The planting of a substantial number of new trees to offset the effect of climate change and meet carbon reduction targets;
- A well-defined green edge to the Eastern Relief Road 2 including noise mitigation measures, drainage swales and opportunities pedestrian movement;
- An inclusive set of principles will be established for each green space or corridor addressing its form, function, connections, built form enclosure, landscape elements, surfacing, seating, lighting, boundaries and maintenance to inform its design and identity.

8.12 Design Aesthetics – Placemaking is about more than just assembling the various components that make up a place. Aesthetic considerations are also important if a place is to actually look attractive and fulfil its function to its fullest potential. These must not be neglected on the grounds of aesthetic considerations being subjective. There are immutable rules relating to scale, proportion and appearances of building forms that have stood the test of time, and these should be fully considered at the design stage.

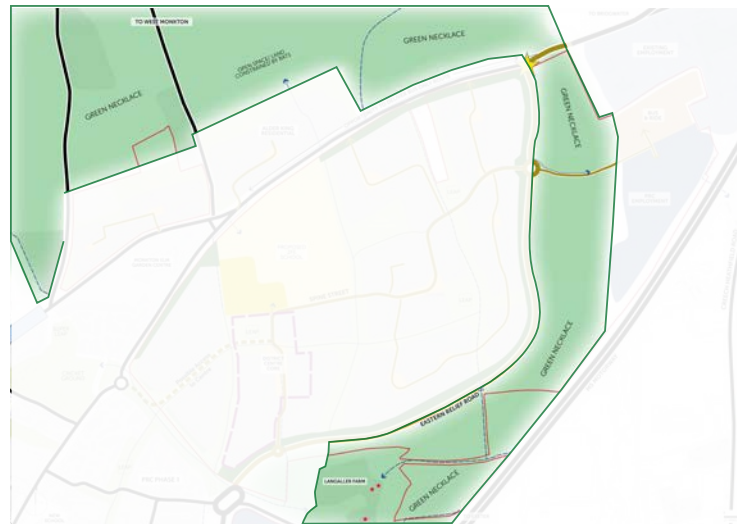


# 9.0 Green Necklace

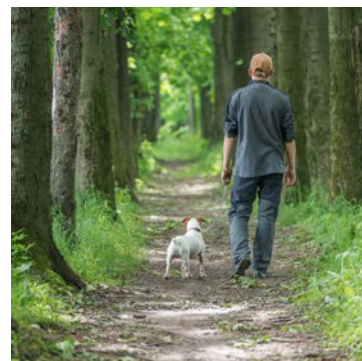
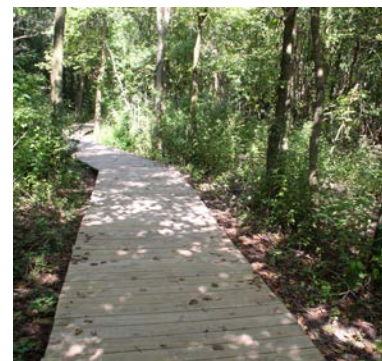
## Identity Area 1.

9.1 The adopted Core Strategy Policy SS1 states that the following will be provided: A multi-purpose 'Green Necklace' of landscape and open space surrounding the settlement providing allotments, outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat. In the Policy the Green Necklace was conceived as a belt of landscaping between the motorway and the development areas including the Monkton Heathfield development.

9.2 The Green Necklace is a linear landscape area located along the development edge to protect this important area of open landscape, woodland planting and recreational uses from development and as a contributor to the quality of life of the new residents and to promote landscape and wildlife corridors. This linear park should contain new



Location Plan



tree and woodland areas which will provide a notable landscape context to the new development edge of MH2; and should be designed with a wooded country park character. This will create a natural setting for the development, complimented by woodland interspersed by glades, some areas of open space and open swales. The Green Necklace should connect with the development and its integral green spaces / corridors via pedestrian crossing points over the proposed ERR2.

9.3 As an integral part of the overall landscape and open space framework for Monkton Heathfield, the Green Necklace will provide the following below:

### The Green Necklace will:

- Will provide a buffer for the new development to the M5 motorway;
- Will provide a noise buffer along the M5 motorway incorporating appropriate noise mitigation measures and must be informed by a detailed noise report;
- Will provide well-designed edge to the development that protects views from Hestercombe House and the Quantock Hills;
- Will complement the existing landscape features on site with new hedge, trees, woodland planting and wildlife meadows;
- Will provide an increase in biodiversity through the creation of wildlife corridors and wetland habitats;
- Will include a sustainable drainage strategy in form of open swales which will be accompanied with the provision for surface water drainage storage and release e.g. open swales which creates new habitats for wildlife. The swales will be scaled appropriately and integrate seamless in the designed landscape of the area;
- Will incorporate provision for active and passive recreation in the open space strategy as part of a network of routes throughout the area in form of footpaths, informal paths, routes for walking and running and natural play;
- Creation of a more people friendly and landscape focused environment between MH1 and MH2 through design must be achieved;
- Safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists from MH1 to MH2 across the road is essential given the need to ensure residents and school children have safe, convenient access to the District Centre, through school and green necklace beyond;
- Housing within MH2 will be designed to face the boundary and MH1 to create a positive street frontage.

### The Green Necklace should:

- Further speed constraint methods should be explored if required;
- This should be via an extension of the green link into MH2 and potentially from cul-de-sac 'opened up' by bund removal or breaks in the bunding.



# 10.0 Integration of MH 1 and 2 Identity Area 2.

## The positive integration of Monkton Heathfield 1 and 2

10.1 To explore potentials for creating a positive relationship between the existing community of MH1 and the final phase of MH along the boundary where the two developments will meet.

### Barriers to Integration:

- The existing A38 is a wide road with no speed constraints between the roundabouts;
- The existing A38 to be rerouted as part of MH2 proposal (although this road is to be retained for local traffic provision);
- The existing noise bund is physical and visual barrier between housing and the A38. The noise reducing fence (set at various points on top of a bund) is a particularly unattractive barrier to the A38.

### Potential Positive Interventions:

- An acceptable interface between MH1 and MH2 must be delivered;
- Consideration should be given to potential for part/total pedestrianisation of current road subject to ensuring continued local road access to existing homes and businesses;
- Removal of noise bunds and fencing with regard to reduced use and traffic noise on the downgraded road must be considered;
- Realignment of road if necessary with regard to removal of existing noise reducing fence must be considered;
- Further speed constraint methods should be explored if required;
- Safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists from MH1 to MH2 across the road is essential given the need to ensure residents and school children have safe, convenient access to the District Centre, through school and green necklace beyond;
- This should be via an extension of the green link into MH2 and potentially from cul-de-sac 'opened up' by bund removal or breaks in the bunding;
- Creation of a more people friendly and landscape focused environment between MH1 and MH2 through design must be achieved;
- Housing within MH2 will be designed to face the boundary and MH1 to create a positive street frontage.

## Existing boundary and challenges to integration

10.2 The recent development of MH1 shares a boundary with MH2 directly south of Monkton Elm Garden Centre and abutting the western side of the existing A38 (including footway and cycleway), from the existing roundabout next to West Monkton Cricket Club down to the existing roundabout west of Langaller. The houses generally face this boundary at a distance of between 15 and 30 metres from the road and are separated by exiting hedges and a grassed noise reducing bund with a 300m noise reducing fence along the southern part of the boundary. An existing footway and green corridor through MH1 connects to the A38 just north of the noise fence.



Location Plan

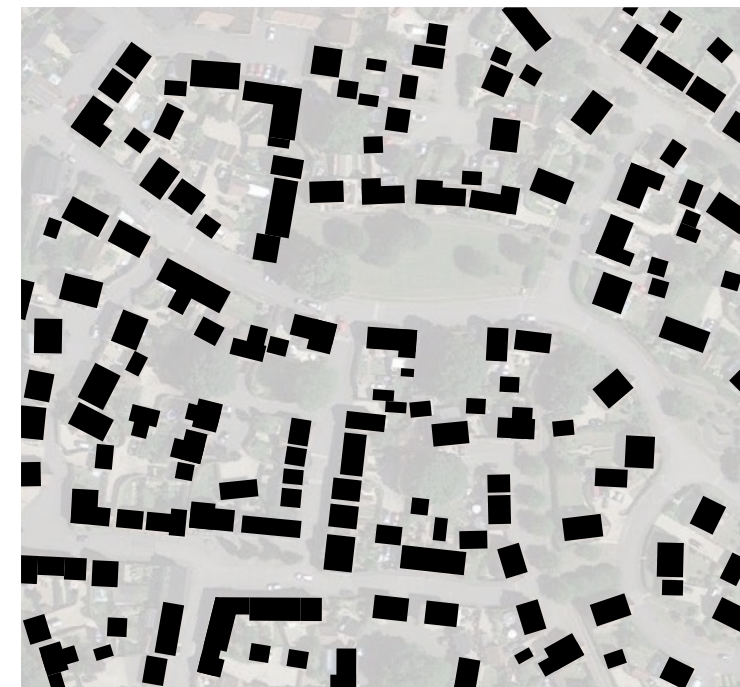
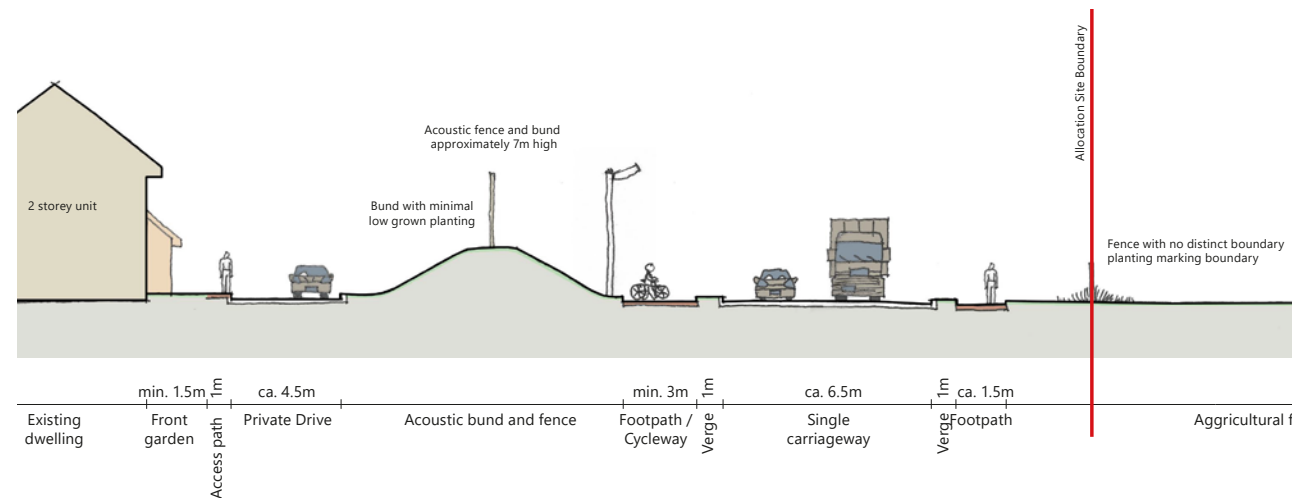
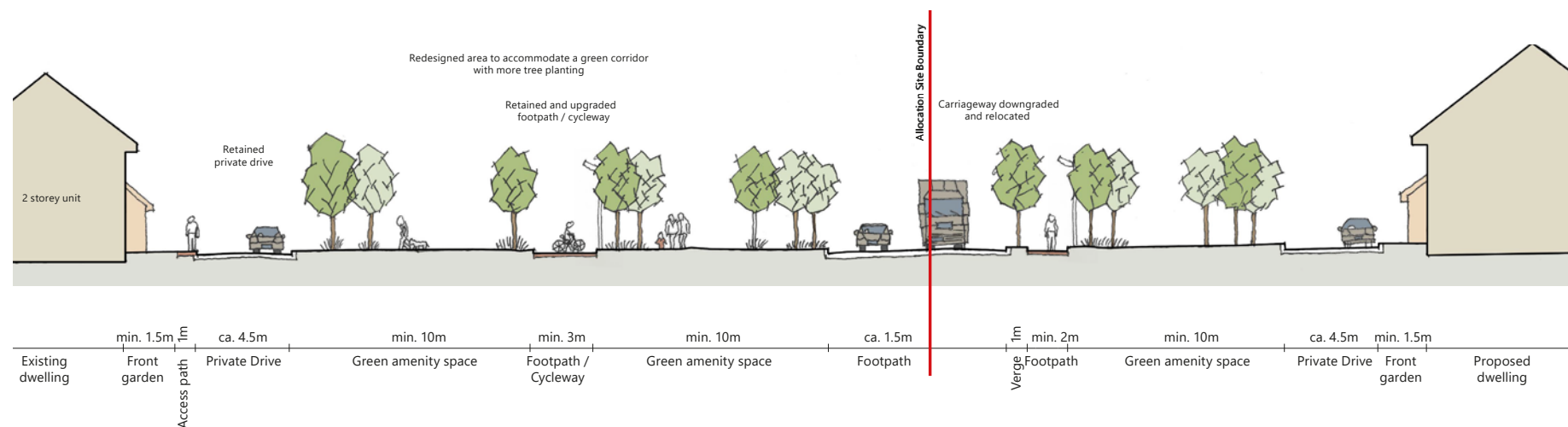


Figure ground plan illustrating the majority of development: Medium density organic village form of layout.





Existing section A-A



Section A-A indicating how the realignment of the road and removal of the existing acoustic bund and fence could offer a solution to integrating the MH1 and MH2 communities





# 11.0 District Centre

## Identity Area 3.

11.1 To create a well-designed and conveniently located mixed-use District Centre with a range of facilities to meet the needs of the community, along with the ability to draw in passing trade from the ERR. The District Centre will be a community hub and should blend the various uses into an environment that is safe, well-enclosed and a focus for social interaction.

11.2 The design of the District Centre should be aspirational, it will contain landmark buildings and be designed to create areas of enclosure, such as the village green along with other intimately designed spaces with seating and well designed landscaping to encourage social interaction. Consideration should also be given to the provision of covered areas in order to create useable and sheltered space all year round. Special consideration must be given to provide for the needs of all user groups including the visually impaired and disabled, to ensure that no one is disenfranchised.

### The District Centre will:

- Provide a mix of uses including community hall, multi-functional space, health facilities, convenience store, retail businesses, café/hot food outlets, pub/restaurant, professional and financial services;
- Provide children’s play facilities within a village green setting located between the District Centre and the school site;
- Integrate office space and residential uses in buildings at first floor and above;
- Residential provision included elderly persons housing should be seamlessly integrated within the District Centre to create a mixed use community and promote activity beyond core opening hours;
- Be designed within an overall transport and movement strategy to promotes the use of the ERR for HGV traffic, local farm traffic, thus reducing such traffic within the internal road network in MH2.

### The District Centre will:

- Be populated be development forms that increase the local populous in the immediate context to encourage as many people as possible access the District Centre via non-car means and;
- Therefore buildings up to 4 storeys in height will be acceptable;
- Buildings must effectively enclose the spaces without being overbearing and should also function as focal points identifying the District Centre along vistas within the development;
- The overall design intention must be to create a high quality public realm that relates to a human scale similar to a high-street or traditional village/town core, however the design response may be;
- Traditional or more modern but still promoting the use of traditional and more locally identifiable materials;
- The example of ‘out of town’ retail consisting of low rise single use retail buildings within large car parking areas is not considered appropriate in creating a well-designed centre;
- Some parking provision will be required and this must be sensitively design such that it is safe and convenient to use, whilst not dominating the public realm;
- Servicing of the retail must be designed to avoid movements of delivery vehicles within the public realm areas such that a more sensitive design response is achievable, therefore;
- Servicing should be provided to the rear unless its small drop off type of deliveries;
- Hard and soft landscaping should be used imaginatively to create social spaces.

11.3 From a design point of view the District Centre should focus on the following:

11.4 The starting point to determine the uses provided within the District Centre is those listed in the policy SS1 and does not take into account the existing settlement (phase 1) requirements but has to given the current lack of local centre and discussions thereon. Whilst it may be expected that the existing community have existing provision for convenience goods, they need to be factored into the provision for comparison uses. These figures have been shared and agreed with the PRC (Persimmon-Redrow-Consortium) in 2018.

11.5 The figures put forward are minimum provision for the District Centre and are displayed in the table below:



Location Plan

Use Class	Mix	Size
Class A uses	Convenience	770 sqm
	Comparison	1480 sqm
	Non-retail A2 – A5 uses	1120 sqm
Class B uses	Offices	1000 sqm
Community uses	Community hall	to be determined
	Health Care	to be determined
	Place of worship	to be determined
	Elderly accommodation	to be determined



Figure ground plan illustrating the District Centre Character: Higher density core with retail, school, community building and urban park/play areas







# 12.0 Eastern Relief Road (ERR) Identity Area 4.

12.1 The new Eastern Relief Road (ERR) is defined as eastern spine road within Taunton's Core Strategy which runs south and parallel to the existing A38. The ERR will have to be designed as a road that balances traffic capacity with the needs of development access, walking, cycling and public transport.

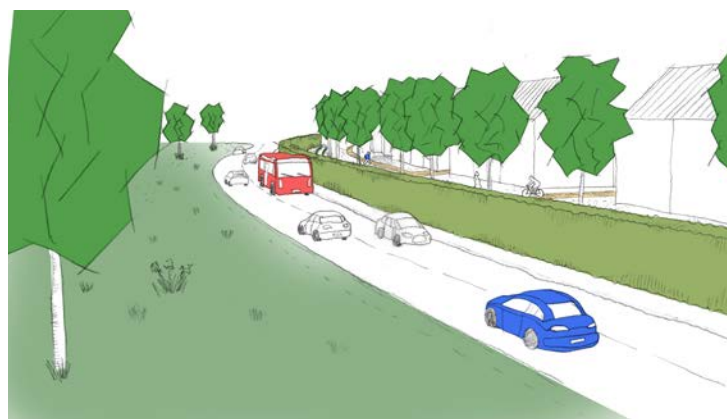
## Barriers and Potential Positive Interventions:

- To the north west of the development site the majority of traffic will be diverted to follow the alignment of the ERR and relieve the existing A38, which will be downgraded;
- The point of diversion must be appropriately constructed to guide the traffic along the new ERR but equally provide convenient access for local traffic along the downgraded A38;
- Access to the ERR from the north east should be discussed and agreed with the Highway Authority and should preferably take the form of a roundabout;
- The proposed ERR adjacent to the new development will connect to the south with the existing ERR roundabout already providing access to Hardys Road and MH1. This roundabout will have to be upgraded and repositioned to accommodate the connection to the new ERR stretch proposed;
- The ERR will be a single carriage way with speed limit approved by the Highway Authority and which should seamlessly connect with the existing ERR further south;
- Access into the new MH2 development will be provided via roundabouts along the ERR;
- Buildings at these access points should use the opportunity to create key and gateway buildings supported by a sophisticated landscape design to appropriately announce the entrance into the new development;
- Generally housing along the ERR will provide an active and attractive frontage and façade;
- The noise levels generated by the ERR will have to be considered when designing the site for housing development;
- Careful consideration should be given to the appropriate Masterplan layout design, glazing specifications and acoustic ventilation design, and at a later detailed stage in the planning process, external building fabric acoustic performance along the ERR;
- An acoustic bund, acoustic fence or a combination of these must if at all possible be avoided in order to provide an attractive route, as this would create a physical and visual barrier between housing and the Green Necklace;
- House types will provide a natural acoustic barrier with a close frontage protecting the private amenity spaces behind;
- The building line along the ERR should vary to create an interesting frontage along the route;
- Consideration should be given to design and roof orientation to create corner turning buildings to emphasise access points into the development;
- The development edge will be supported by a landscaped corridor along the ERR which will include avenue style tree planting, hedge and shrub planting as well as swales;
- The accessibility and usability of the Green Necklace along the eastern side of the ERR will need to be carefully considered with safe pedestrian/cycle crossing points at the roundabouts as well as the existing PROVs;
- The number of pedestrian crossings will be restricted due to the nature of the road and its function as a swift and convenient route around the new development;
- Further considerations should be given at future planning stages to the impact of the road on the air quality and vibration, appropriate design solutions should be implemented to prevent any negative impact of the road on new residents.

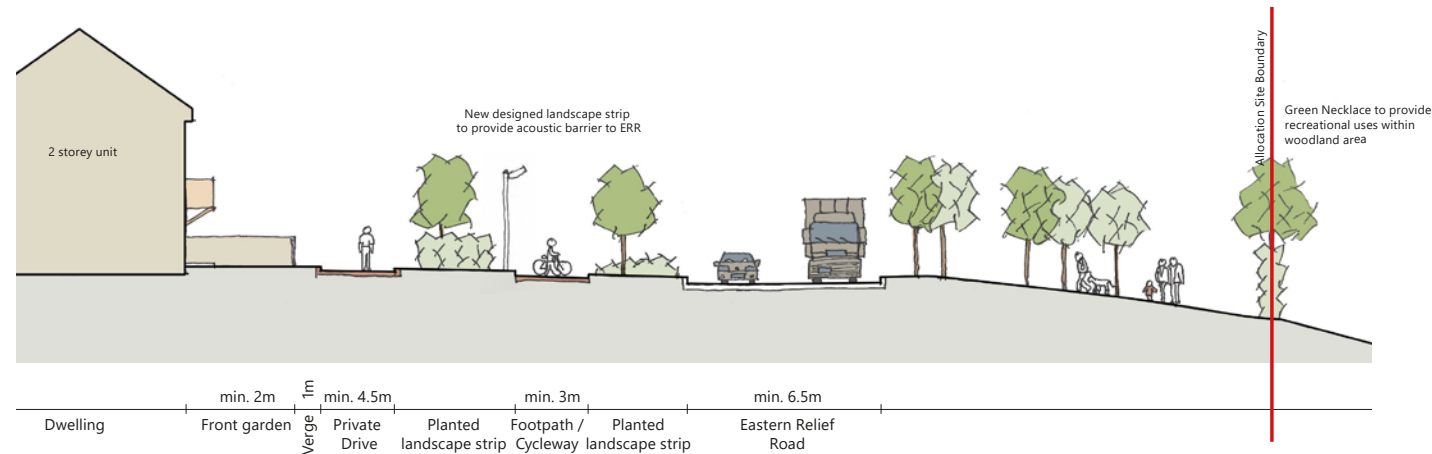
12.2 The ERR will accommodate and divert the traffic from the existing A38 around the new development at MH2 to connect with the already constructed part of the ERR to the south and Western Relief Road (WRR) further west. The road will provide a corridor with access points into the new development as well as towards the new B&R and employment land to the west adjacent to the existing employment area at Walford Cross.



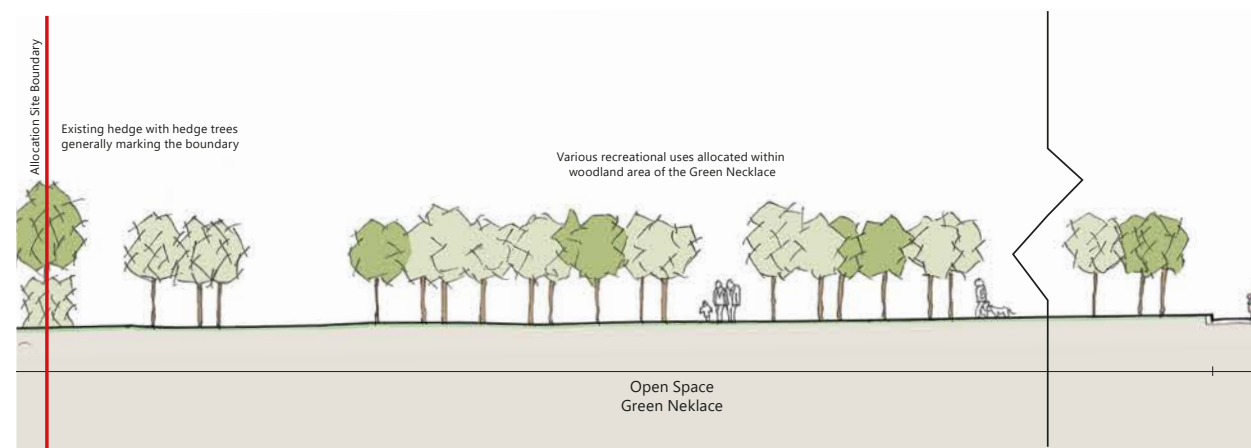
Location Plan



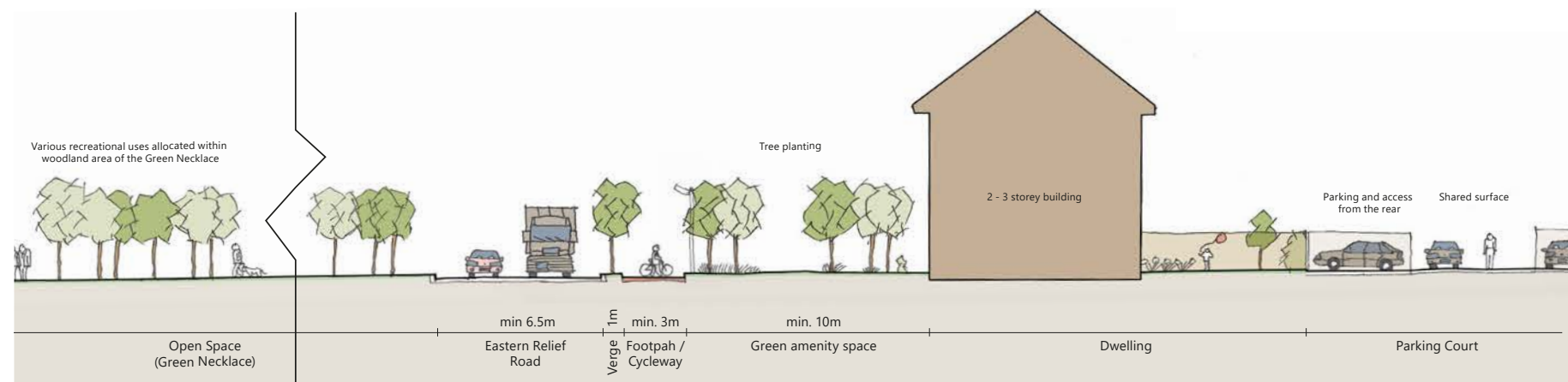




Proposed section B-B indicating a potential approach to design the ERR and residential development along the eastern development edge



Proposed section A-A indicating a potential approach to design the ERR and residential development near the southern access into MH2



Proposed section A-A continued



Regular bus service is proposed to run along the ERR



# 13.0 Downgrading of the A38

## Identity Area 5.

13.1 The proposed development will see an Eastern Relief Road (ERR) running along the eastern and southern edge and will form the new settlement edge of Monkton Heathfield as proposed in the Core Strategy and the SS1. This ERR will enable downgrading of the existing the A38 to the north of the new development and will provide the infrastructure route for the new bus rapid route proposed along this stretch of the A38.

13.2 The A38 changes along the development boundary form a dual carriageway to the east of the A3259 junction to a single carriageway westwards. The character however changes further west with the appearance of the new development at Heathfield Gardens and Monkton Elm Garden Centre behind the existing hedges along the road.

### Barriers to Integration:

- The existing A38 is a dual carriage way with no speed constraints;
- The existing A38 will be downgraded as part of the MH proposal set out in the Core Strategy and SS1 Policy;
- The road can be retained for local traffic provision;
- Current traffic volume will need to be guided along the new ERR to relief the current A38 route;
- Appropriate traffic measures will need to be realised to disable easy traffic flow along this route towards the west and towards the town centre. Considerations should be given to bus only routes or bus gates along the existing roads and where best suited for the movement network, the new development and the existing settlements;
- Local traffic will still have to be allowed along this route to access the existing dwellings and to maintain the connection to West Monkton.

### Potential Positive Interventions:

- A reduction of the carriageway width from dual (four lanes) to a single (two lanes) should be delivered;
- A traffic speed reduction along this route should be explored and adjusted to highlight the ERR as the preferred route to destinations to the west of Monkton;
- The route should be designed to accommodate the rapid bus service proposed along this road;
- The downgrading of the A38 will create the opportunity to deliver an attractive pedestrian and cycle route and will connect more safely with the existing network of PRoV and proposed footpath within the proposal site and the surrounding;
- Access from this route into the new development of MH2 can be delivered but should be restricted to a minimum of two and exclude an access off south of Elm Monkton Garden Centre and Heathfield Gardens development.
- Furthermore there should be no public traffic access into the school site provided from the A38;
- Bus stops should be provided along this route to serve new development and in particular the school site;
- The existing hedges and hedge trees framing the A38 corridor should be maintained and enhanced with new planting where gaps are present;
- The corridor should also provide an attractively landscaped pedestrian and cycle route separated from the car traffic along the downgraded road to connect with the green network and footpaths/cycle paths within the new development;
- Due to the utilities easement corridor along the northern development boundary the housing proposed here will have limited direct connection to the downgraded A38. The easement will have to be landscaped to provide a green linear open space along the existing planting along the A38.

13.3 The junction with the A3259 also provides access to Doster's Lane which is a direct connection to West Monkton to the north. The A38 provides access to a limited number of dwellings along the eastern part of the road. There are currently very limited visual connections to the surrounding landscape and properties due to the existing major vegetation alongside the road with the exception of Springfield House which lies to the north of the road.

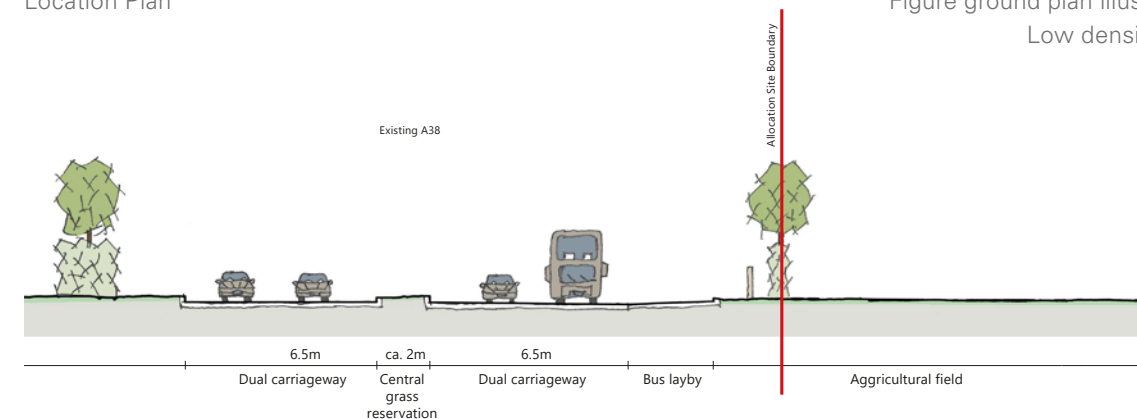
13.4 The PRoWs provided on site and to the north of the site currently terminate at the A38. No pedestrian crossings are provided and a pedestrian connection between the northern and southern footpath network is broken as a crossing and is quite dangerous.



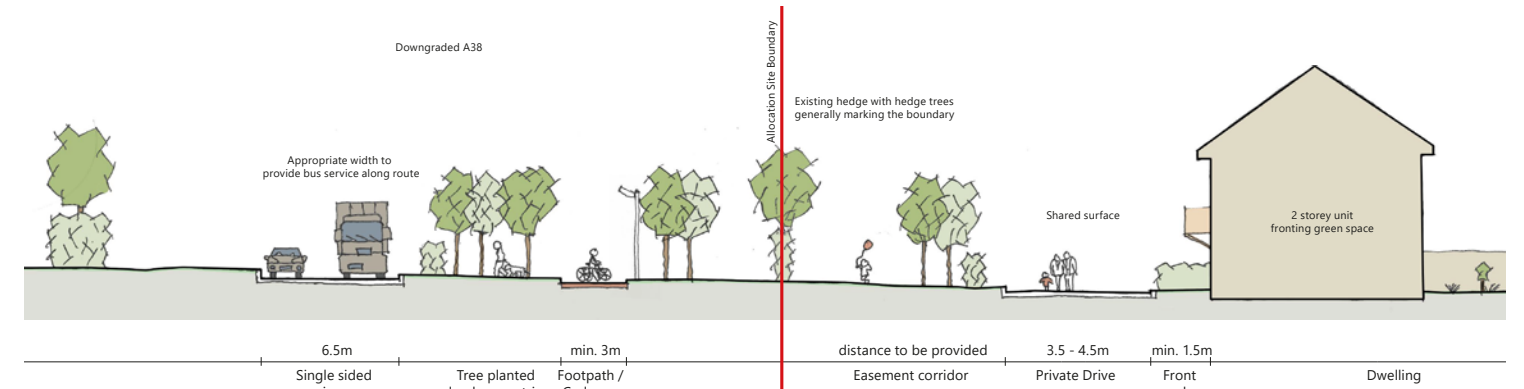
Location Plan



Figure ground plan illustrating the Garden Suburb areas: Low density garden suburb rectilinear form



Existing section A-A indicating the dual carriageway



Proposed section A-A indicating a potential approach to design a downgraded the A38

# 14.0 Bus & Ride Land

## Identity Area 6.

14.1 An area for a new Bus and Ride (B&R) is set aside in the north eastern corner of the site and west of Walford Cross. This facility will provide opportunities to create a central point for a rapid bus service and local bus service. The vision is to provide appropriate sustainable transport opportunities, connect visitors efficiently with the centre of Taunton and potentially provide a sustainable connection to the north to Bridgwater.

14.2 Access is proposed to be provided from a roundabout along the new ERR which also serves the proposed employment site adjacent to the B&R.

14.3 Supporting infrastructure will include new bus stops within the MH2 area and along the A38 route. The alignment of the A38 is proposed to be downgraded as the ERR will take the majority of traffic currently passing along this road. Therefore, the original A38 route can provide bus stops as well as shared walking/cycling paths.

14.4 The B&R scheme is proposed in combination with other junction and crossing improvements proposed in the wider area with bus lanes and bus gates specifically designed to improve the reliability, frequency and journey times of public transport using the route.

14.5 The siting and location of the gateway building on the B&R site should be sympathetically designed potentially with a green roof and / or solar panels. The site boundaries should support the existing and retained hedges by providing pergolas with climbing plants as well as opportunities for artwork to softening the usual monotone and rather bleak area of car park normally proposed. Furthermore, a “green” building or build form element should be of appropriate size and massing and accompanied by a thoughtful landscape scheme which should improve the quality of the environment for the general public.

### Overall, the scheme aims:

- To support the employment, housing growth and economic vitality within the area;
- To reduce transport emissions and meet our obligations to the Garden Town Vision of Taunton;
- To protect and possibly enhance the environment and improve quality of life within the MH2 area as well as within Taunton; and
- To improve public health, air quality, safety and individual wellbeing for the existing and new residents as well as for visitors.

### The Layout and Detail Design will:

- To communicate a strong environmental message and embrace the natural environment in the design of the scheme and gatehouse building;
- A simple permanent building set within a much greener landscape setting is considered appropriate;
- Potentially incorporating recycled materials such as recycled materials in the boundary treatment and hard surface, such as incorporating walls built from plastic bottles or recycled tyres as boundary treatment or planting support; and
- Sympathetically designed potentially with a green roof and or solar panels.



Location Plan



### Design Criteria:

- Retain and enhance the existing good level of boundary planting around the perimeter and expand where necessary;
- Arrival at the B&R site presents the first impression to many visitors and therefore the appearance of the ‘green’ building and site has relevance to the perceived quality of the towns public real and should be appropriately landscape led designed;
- The site should consider including new individual native tree planting, hedge and shrub planting, ground cover and wildflower meadow areas where possible;
- A Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan should be considered to protect the trees on site and to ensure the landscape scheme is realised and maintained as proposed;
- In addition to the car parking arrangements, the site should also provide for cycle parking facilities for the staff but also for potential visitors and commuters using the local or rapid bus transport opportunity to access the town centre;
- A significant number if not all car parking spaces should be equipped with electric charging points;
- In the light of potential shortage of coach parking spaces within the town centre, coach parking spaces should be considered and accommodated within the B&R area;
- Solar panels on the roof of the proposed buildings on site or within the parking spaces can be used to feed the electric car charging points;
- Following the Core Strategy, the majority of the new homes should be located in appropriate walking distance and should be within 800m of a bus rapid stop and within 400m of other bus routes.



# 15.0 Employment Land Reserve Identity Area 7.

15.1 This area should be seen as regional scale employment site with potential connection to the adjoining employment site at Walford Cross and other employment areas north and south of the A38. In addition to the employment land provision at The Hatcheries and at land south of Langaller, 10ha of land should be released for employment land as set out in the Core Strategy and SS1.

15.2 The layout form should indicate a series of plots or 'rooms' bounded by landscaping to:

- Divide parking areas and provide spaces for swales or other attenuation features within the area connecting to the adjacent Green Necklace;
- Within plots landscaping should be used to provide relief to large areas of parking and to guide pedestrian routes to building entrances;
- The buildings themselves will provide employment in the form of office space, storage and industrial usage.

## Overall, the scheme aims:

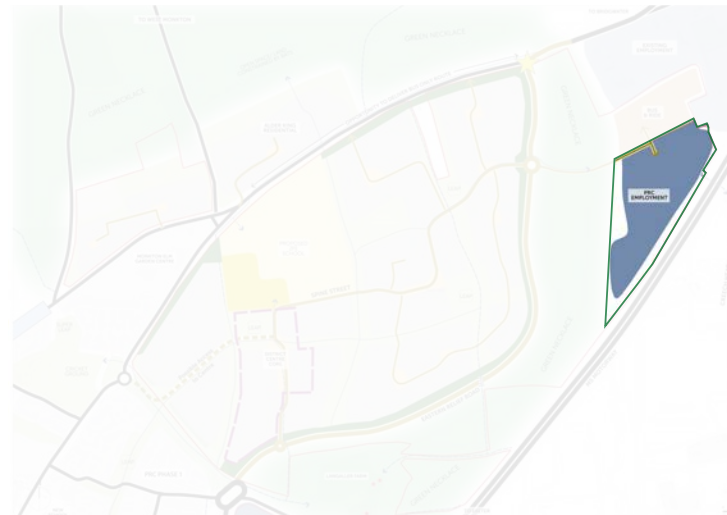
- Pedestrian links will have to be provided to connect the employment site with the new and existing residential areas including settlements to the east of the M5 motorway;
- The existing footpath/cycle link crossing the M5 motorway will need to be maintained and enhanced and should be considered a benefit for the overall pedestrian/cycle network within the area;
- Routes through the employment site will be reinforced by the inclusion of a structured landscape treatment alongside the roads which is intended to unify the individual plots and highlight the routes through the site;
- The sites layout should be structured along strong primary routes linking the entrance with all parts of the site;
- Car parking areas will have to be arranged to minimise visual connections with the surrounding context other than the existing employment area to the north and the Bus & Ride;
- A combination of internally structured landscape zones will provide a balanced environment shared by roads, parking bays, cycle parking sheds and hard / soft landscaped areas;
- Service yards should be located at the perimeter of the sites away from the public areas. The visual impact of service yards should be minimised through the use of appropriate landscape buffers where possible;
- Buildings addressing the access route to the Bus & Ride area to the north must be designed with a higher quality finish and with visual interest through combinations of height, scale and design.

15.3 The concept of dividing the employment site into rooms will enable the massing of the buildings to be controlled by limiting large runs of tall buildings. Along with appropriate landscaping this will effectively limit the scale of development and the visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

### Layout Opportunities:

15.4 Site access is taken from a roundabout off the new proposed ERR2 which also provides access to the new B&R area adjacent to the employment land. There is an opportunity to access the employment area from the north and directly from the existing Walford Cross. This option would need road and junction improvements beforehand to create an acceptable access point here.

15.5 Generally, the site and its new buildings will be screened from views from the surrounding, including the M5 motorway, due to the existing levels and hedge and tree planting surrounding the site. The proposed tree planting within the adjacent Green Necklace site will provide additional screening.

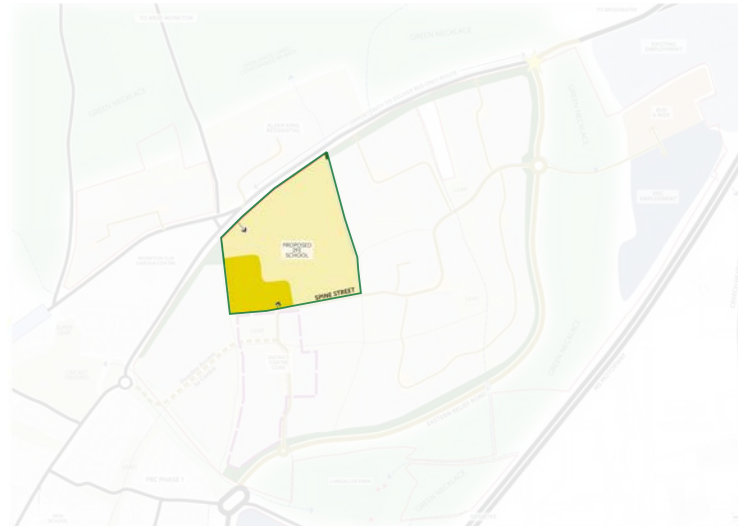


Location Plan



# 16.0 School Site

## Identity Area 8.



Location Plan

16.1 The proposed two form entry school will provide the places needed for the new and proposed strategic development areas and the appropriate guideline should be used for space calculation and allocations within the site. There is a potential to create appropriate spaces which will include: classrooms, dining/hall, sports hall, administration space, specialist teaching rooms, meeting rooms, storage, and staff room. The school could also include specialised areas such as sensory and therapy rooms, warm water pool and medical spaces if required. Outdoor spaces will include sensory gardens, habitat areas, MUGA and adventure playground.

16.2 The building should be designed using government guidance designed to a specification to be agreed by Somerset County Council (SCC) and meeting DFEE standards. The scale and aesthetics of the school building design is informed by the functionality of the spaces within the unit itself. Classrooms should benefit from being orientated north to south to avoid disruptive glare and solar gain during school hours. The building orientation will be an important factor in defining the siting, proportion and configuration of the proposed building. The external outdoor spaces will play a crucial part of the school ground design and should include the following aspects listed below.

16.3 The school building layout should be developed in cooperation with the Local Planning Authority as well as the Education Authority responsible and respond to the site constraints on and around the site. The entrance locations should be specifically considered to provide a drop-off and pick-up solutions benefiting from the location of the adjacent District Centre. Staff / visitor car parking and drop-off / pick-up area will be located at the front of the building with a range of landscaping proposals behind the secure line. The school building will be positioned in the south western corner of the school site and provide the northern edge of the green open space proposed adjacent to the school site.

### The School Site should include:

- Grassed sports play pitches suitable for a variation of sports games such as football;
- Opportunities for dual use of school facilities. This will be considered, subject to security and safeguarding issues being overcome;
- Hard play areas for formal play such as PE lessons;
- Adventure play areas with play equipment for appropriate age groups;
- Specialised outdoor areas to accommodate sensory gardens to stimulate senses including sight, touch, taste, and hearing. This area can also be used for outdoor teaching;
- Quiet soft play areas and informal meadowland and ecological areas which potentially can contain small ponds for outdoor teaching, socialising and relaxing; and
- Retain and enhance any existing planting such as trees and boundary hedges to promote biodiversity.



Example of new modern school design



# 17.0 Landscape and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

17.1 Every effort should be taken to integrate a purposeful landscape strategy and should focus on:

## Landscape and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- Including street trees which enclose the main road corridors to emphasise the importance of these main roads and function as orientation within the area. Well-designed modern street signage should be used to mark the access road from the ERR and to enhance the overall appearance of the employment site;
- The use of native hedges, ornamental shrub planting and trees within the parking areas which provides visual seasonal interest. This should be provided through the use of flowering fruit trees in certain areas within the employment site
- Clearly defined routes along the main routes will be landscaped to provide attractive landscape pedestrian links connecting the employment area with the Green Necklace and area to the east of the motorway;
- Attenuation measures will be an integrated SUDs network located within the green corridors and spaces included in the employment area. This network and any wetland areas and potential ponds should be planted with natural species suited to local environment and climate and the creation of wetland habitats should be promoted. The attenuation measure will furthermore enhance the ecological value of the site and the wider environment.







# 18.0 Sustainability / Energy / Climate change

18.1 In line with the objectives set out the NPPF and within the Garden Town Vision for Taunton the main concern lies to deliver sustainable development which addresses economic, environmental and social factors.

18.2 The design should also follow the requirements of Policy SS1 and DM5 to allow for a development to be built with a focus on sustainability and climate change resilience. Whilst at very early stages, the new Local Plan seeks to deliver carbon neutrality for the district by 2030. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and the emerging SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan identify the importance of planning to ensure new built environments respond appropriately. A guideline on how a development should respond is described within the Design Charter and Checklist for Taunton. This document identifies opportunities to address the Climate Emergency under the most relevant subsections below:



## 1. Energy

7.3 The approach to energy demand and carbon emissions will be to ensure that the dwellings are as energy efficient through its fabric. This not only reduces energy demand (and therefore costs) but also ensures that the implemented measures last for the life of the building. This includes high performance glazing, well insulated building structure (walls, ground floor and roof) and a well-built envelope that minimises heat loss through draughts. It also addresses issues of passive solar design and gain, so that at least half of the dwellings will still have a southerly aspect. Thus the principles of energy conscious design for this site should follow Policy SS1 and are to minimise the use of energy in the first place.

7.4 The Councils recent motion to declare a climate emergency should encourage any development to comply with a sustainable energy hierarchy created for the site and should in general consider:

- Development location: Reduces transport need and gives access to sustainable transport;
- Site master planning: Solar master planning optimises use of natural light and heat;
- Building fabric: High performance fabric gives maximum thermal efficiency;
- Building services: Low carbon building services support fabric measures;
- Clean on-site energy: Low carbon / renewable energy reduces unavoidable emissions;
- Offsite measures: Developer contributions finance offsite carbon reduction where onsite measures are not practical/viable;
- In-use performance: To ensure actual performance aligns with design intent.

7.5 Developments should envisage achieving high levels of insulation and air tightness as well as MVHR (mechanical ventilation with heat recovery) on buildings near the motorway.

7.6 Developers must also prove that a development is provided with carbon reduced and CO2 reduced energy resources which follows the energy reduction aspirations of the Council. This needs to include the options for a combined local energy source for developments in close proximity and includes local energy centres.



## 2. Potable Water

7.7 Water efficiency becomes increasingly important in a changing climate with diminishing water resources.

7.8 The use of Part G Building Regulations will be the means by which water demand will be measured and reduced. There will be a focus on reducing demand for water in the first place and using the water that is required as efficiently as possible. Such measures include dual flush toilets and water butts for external watering in gardens.



## 3. A Better Quality of Life

7.9 Well designed, environmentally friendly homes have an important role to play in maintaining a sense of well-being and a good quality of life.

7.10 Therefore, buildings should be Building for Life (BfL) compliant. For example, dwellings will be designed to enable good levels of natural daylighting to help create a feeling of space and to promote healthier environments.

7.11 Furthermore, all residents will have access to private external space in the form of gardens or communal space in the case of flats, a vital component of improved health.

7.12 Furthermore, developments within Taunton should follow the 'The Vision for our Garden Town' document and the 'Design Charter and Checklist' provided by the Council. These guides and charter/ checklist provide the opportunity to create a higher quality natural and built environment which will support healthier and happier places.



## 4. Ecology

7.13 Full ecological surveys must be undertaken and reports produced. Any measures required to mitigate the impact of development on native or endangered animal species must be set out within an Ecological Management Plan. The removal of any habitat must be mitigated by enhancement elsewhere. New landscape planting must be designed to enhance the biodiversity of the development area as part of the overarching landscape strategy.



## 5. Tree Planting

7.14 The Council recently committed to prioritise the planting of new trees and considers this an important aspect in the future for many reasons which include the sequestration of CO2 and the positive aspects of urban shading and cooling to the climate. The aim is to provide tree species in locations suitable for the development and the trees themselves. New woodlands should contain a variety of species to avoid the creation of areas of monoculture.



## 6. Surface Water

7.15 Inevitably there will be an increase in hardstanding and surfaces on the site once completed, which under normal circumstances would increase the amount of run off from the site and potentially cause flooding issues further downstream.

7.16 However, measures must be introduced to eliminate this risk, particularly in light of a worsening climate with more intense rainfall projected. Sustainable Urban Drainage and attenuation measures must be introduced as part of considered drainage strategy, and this can be complemented by the design and arrangement of green spaces with rain gardens to help cope with surface water run-off.



**7. Materials**

7.17 Materials can have a significant impact on environmental performance, both in construction, but also ongoing use. Through construction, where those materials are sourced from, the means of extraction and manufacture and how far they travel all have varying effects on the environment. The materials issue will be addressed in the following ways:

- Through the use of ‘C’ rated materials, as defined in the Green Guide to Specification;
- By using materials in the main elements of construction (roof, walls, floors, etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;
- By using materials in the finishing elements of construction (doors, staircases, fascias etc.) that have been sourced responsibly;

7.18 Maximise the re-use of recycled building waste material and spare soil generated by the site preparation and adopt sustainable soil management practices to guarantee this practise to be carried out.



**8. Waste**

7.19 Throughout construction, there will be a number of measures in place that will facilitate high levels of reuse and recycling, including the development of a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which will:

- Identify all waste streams and planning for their management,
- Set targets for waste reduction, and
- Identify a specific person responsible for its oversight and implementation.

7.20 Operationally, the dwellings will be provided with bins to split the different recycling streams prior to storage outside. Suitable provision will be made for the safe, convenient and sensitively located storage receptacles.

7.21 Following the Council’s climate emergency declaration any development should foster sustainable waste management behaviour within the development and encourage waste prevention and lower waste lifestyle as well as promote a strong self-motivation through the development of personal responsibilities.



**9. Transport**

7.22 Any development should be located in an area to promote the reduction of energy usage and CO2 emissions.

7.23 This development is conveniently located adjacent to the existing MH1 area along the proposed ERR which provides a vital transport route for the region as well as for Taunton and will relief the existing A38 which is proposed to be downgraded once the ERR is provided.

7.24 The ERR will provide direct access with good connections for the new mixed used development of MH2 as well as for the employment site and B&R proposed near the existing employment area at Walford Cross.

7.25 The site and its residential development encourage sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling rather than car usage by providing the option to easily access:

- The green necklace to the east and south for recreational use,
- The proposed green corridors within the residential development, and
- The existing bus stops, educational facilities and local centre proposed within the proposed new development and the adjacent MH1 site, and
- The new development also proposes a rapid transport system that can be easily accessed from the site and creates a sustainable connection to the centre of Taunton and the Bus&Ride area.

7.26 The development should encourage compliance with a sustainable transport hierarchy created for the site and should in general motivate to:

- Reduce the need to travel;
- Inspire active travel, public transport, and shared transport modes; and
- Instigate a preference of Electric Vehicles over fossil fuel vehicle when buying a new vehicle.

7.27 Furthermore, the development is proposed to encourage local scale employment rather than a strategic employment location to reduce the use of cars within the area.

# 18.0 Sustainability / Energy / Climate change (continued)

## The proposal

19.1 The location will afford the opportunity for residents to access a range of existing and new facilities within the site and in the surrounding. In turn, the provision of new homes and employment will support the activity and economy of the town. The location also maximises the opportunities to provide convenient public transport and cycle links to and from the town centre as well as pedestrian and cycle routes around the development site.

19.2 The scale of the development and the density at which the houses are built, are also important to enable a range of facilities such as the school, district centre and shops to be viable.

19.3 The following paragraphs describe the seven aspects fundamental to this project which will result in achieving sustainable development. These integrate the mix of economic, social and environmental attributes that define sustainable development.



### 1. Building a Strong Competitive Economy

7.4 Providing homes in MH2, in addition to the recent developments at MH1, Hartnell's Farm, Prockter's Farm and the proposed new development at Land South of Manor Farm, supports the local area and the continued development of its economy. Furthermore and vital for the development, the scheme will include buildings and facilities which will provide employment and thus create jobs locally.



### 2. 3. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

7.5 The dwellings proposed should include a variety of sizes and tenures including open market and affordable homes. The five overarching principles of Lifetime Homes should be considered and include:

1. Inclusivity - An inclusive environment aims to assist use by everyone, regardless of age, gender or disability.
2. Accessibility – Convenient and independent access into and around the built environment and to services to be provided for the widest range of people, including those with physical / sensory impairments, older people and children, convenient and independent.
3. Adaptability - A building can be adapted in the future to meet people's changing needs over time or to suit the needs of different users.
4. Sustainability – The new sustainable communities should be underpinned by essential accessible elements aimed at meeting current and future needs, including homes, facilities, goods and services.
5. Good Value – The main objective is to provide greater flexibility that allows homes to adapt to the changing circumstances of their occupants has the potential to build a more stable and diverse community. This will attract a wider range of occupants and create a thriving community.



### 4. Requiring Good Design

7.6 A key element of good design is the efficient use of land, requiring densities that reduce the amount of land required to accommodate the houses and that can support the necessary social and green infrastructure to create high quality attractive places and spaces in which to live and work. The density of development set out in the masterplans will result in good accessibility and a high quality scheme and provide a living environment and amenity appropriate for the location. Higher densities around the District Centre encourage easy access while lower densities will provide and indicate the transition to the countryside.

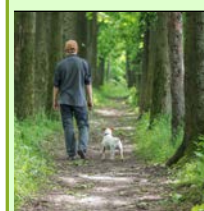


7.7 To encourage the use of public transport, shared trips and sustainable transport options, the District Centre will have a concentration of community, retail and social facilities. This local provision of essential facilities should encourage local trips, with a high proportion of access by foot, bicycle or by public transport and function and enhance the opportunities for social interaction.



### 5. Promoting Healthy Communities

7.8 Walking and cycling will be encouraged by creating clear routes with good vision green corridors and well planned destinations throughout the development. The green landscape corridors serve as a framework for leisure and recreational walking and cycling. The layout of the perimeter blocks will create a permeable network of walkable routes usable for a variety of activities. Designated walking and cycling networks using both quiet roads and the attractive green corridors will also encourage sustainable transport to access the district centre.



7.9 Extensive areas of open space within the Green Necklace will include recreational facilities, informal natural play areas, community orchards and potentially allotments which are an integral part of the development and will provide opportunities for a healthy community to develop.





**6. Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change**

7.10 As a general principle, new development will incorporate high standards of sustainable design and construction. Any applications will have to be supported by information which demonstrates how the environmental design principles will be delivered and how the developments accords with Taunton’s Garden Town Vision and Checklist. This will include the production of an Energy Assessment in order to demonstrate how energy and emissions have been minimised in accordance with an Energy Hierarchy, and a Sustainability Assessment, which explains how the environmental design principles will be accommodated by any new development.



7.11 The community facilities, including the school and community buildings should therefore be taken forward as a flagship and example of sustainable design and construction and should be constructed in that way.



**7. Energy and Climate Change Mitigation**

7.12 The new development should be designed in accordance with an energy hierarchy, which promotes the reduction of energy, before using efficient systems and renewable energy. New development should also incorporate renewable energy produced on site. An analysis of feasible technologies will have to be provided in support of planning applications.



7.13 Options for providing heating and hot water on site will need to be considered and could include a review of a local or district heating scheme in addition to more traditional alternatives. The lighting within the public realm areas should consider innovative low energy lighting and use renewable energy where possible.

7.14 Provisions for electric car charging points within the street network and community car parking areas should be considered and introduced where possible and feasible..



**8. Providing Sustainable Transport**

7.15 The site offers an opportunity to bring about a change in behaviour and encourage residents to use healthier and sustainable modes of transport. A Travel Plan should be drawn up and be developed to encourage travel by walking, cycling and public transport instead of using the private car. The development will have to be designed to encourage residents to reduce the need for car journeys by providing car sharing schemes, pedestrian and cycle opportunities and by delivering sustainable public transport, such as local and rapid bus services. The majority of the new homes should be located in appropriate (ideally no more than 5 min walk) distance to the nearest bus stop on the spine road or the downgraded A38.



7.16 All houses should be equipped or provided with sufficient infrastructure to be upgraded in the near future, with electric car charging points. Additionally and where possible, electric car charging points should also be provided within the District Centre and overall street network.