Policy Title:

LP5 - New Woodlands

Existing Policies Which adopted Core Strategy or Policies Sites and Places (PSP) policy would eventually be replaced	**NEW**
Non-Strategic / Strategic	**Non-Strategic**

Purpose

Policy LPS2– Locational Strategy for South Gloucestershire makes provision for a major mixed-use development comprising 2400 dwellings plus supporting facilities and infrastructure on land east of the M4 M5 interchange and Bradley Stoke. This new contemporary village will provide more and a greater choice of homes, with an emphasis on age friendly accommodation to this part of district and in relatively good proximity to existing jobs and services, in an extensive landscape setting. It will also play a key role in enhancing bus services and active travel infrastructure in the locality. This policy and supporting Concept Diagram set out the key principles of development for the new urban extension.

Policy wording

Land comprising four sites including the former Woodlands Golf Course (Figure 2) will deliver about 2400 new dwellings in a new compact, net zero energy, mixed-use contemporary village.

Acceptable development proposals will be required to:

1. **Ensure a new robust Green Belt edge along the Hortham Brook, tree & hedgelines along eastern edge of sites A, C & D and Gaunts Earthcott Lane to the north. Tree & hedgelines will require reinforcement with substantive new woodland planting.**

2. **Provide a comprehensively planned and connected development to ensure full integration between different uses, phases and landholdings to deliver a single distinct compact mixed-use new village.**

Site A (Woodlands Golf Course) will:

3. **Provide about 1900 dwellings including a minimum of 250 age friendly dwellings. 30% of the new homes will be affordable. About 1000 dwellings will be delivered in the plan period. The site will be phased from south to north.**
4. **Deliver a vibrant local centre anchored by a high-density, vertically mixed-use age friendly/retirement and residential facility. New facilities will comprise, a convenience retail store, cafe/restaurant/pub, indoor leisure uses, community meeting space(s), nursery, primary care services, office space and some small affordable workspaces. A 2FE primary school will also be provided nearby. All the facilities will be open to the wider community providing intergenerational activity.**
5. **Establish a multi-functional green infrastructure network that enhances existing woodland cover, particularly along the motorway bund, takes an integrated approach to SuDs, incorporates the local PROW network where practical and in the interests of good placemaking, creates an interlinked network of wetland spaces focussed along the Hortham Brook, provides tree-lined streets, allotments & provision for children & young people. A minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain will be delivered onsite.**
6. **Meet formal outdoor sports requirements onsite in a single complex with ancillary facilities on land east of the Hortham Brook/north of the water sports centre. Any remaining requirement to be provided via financial contributions towards existing local outdoor sports facilities.**
7. **Provide a new active travel bridge across the M4 motorway and widen the carriageway on the existing M4 bridge to allow the passage of buses (the bridge will be opened prior to the first occupation). It will also create a very low speed active travel corridor between Trench Lane, the local centre and Gaunts Earthcott Lane, provide a strategic mobility hub that will include provision of electric bikes & scooters, private bike storage and repair shop, EV charging spaces, bus stop and at least 5 car club vehicles for hire. A circular walking route around the site will also be provided. Minimum parking standards will be reduced to enable the efficient use of land and encourage non-car modes of transport.**
8. **Provide utilities, active travel and vehicular connections to sites B, C & D as necessary.**

Sites B & C will:

9. **Be planned and delivered together to provide about 330 dwellings, with vehicular and active travel connections between themselves and to site A. They will also include a robust green buffer to the east and north, allotments, provision for children and young people in a central play area and segregated cycleway alongside Gaunts Earthcott Lane. Sites B & C will only be developed when key local amenities (primary school and convenience retail store) have been opened on Site A.**

Site D will:

10. **Provide about 170 dwellings with a robust green buffer to the motorway, new wetland and meadow habitat along the Hortham brook, a mobility hub, provision for children & young people, allotments, segregated cycleway and traffic calming along Trench Lane, footpaths and safe crossing(s) to Site A. Buildings opposite the Site A access will have landmark status. Site D will only be developed when the new active travel bridge has been provided across the M4, the existing M4 bridge carriageway has been widened to allow for buses to pass and safe access for pedestrians has been provided.**

Sites B, C & D will:

11. **Contribute a greater (40%) of affordable housing than site A and proportionately more per dwelling than site A towards offsite infrastructure (see below). They will provide financial contributions towards existing local outdoor sports facilities to meet their own respective needs.**

All sites will:

12. **Provide and or contribute as necessary and towards traffic calming and new active travel infrastructure along Trench Lane, Hortham Lane & Gaunts Earthcott Lane, delivery of a new bus service to the new village and enhanced services in the locality, and financial contributions towards secondary and special education needs places, primary care, Travel Plans, library & waste services. Contributions towards gypsy & travellers pitches offsite will also be required:**

    and

13. **The developers of site A will work together and with the Council to develop a single robust stewardship model/entity to manage and maintain all the strategic green infrastructure, public realm and communal facilities on that site that ensures public access in perpetuity. This will also include the creation of a single stakeholder group and appointment of a community development worker to assist in promoting community integration and cohesion. The Developers of sites B, C and D will need to join the agreed entity when they come forward to ensure that open space across all four sites is managed as a whole.**

    The Concept Diagram provides a framework for a more detailed community consultation and master planning process. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan, coordinating masterplan & strategic design code will be agreed prior to approval of any outline permission(s) on any of the sites. A detailed phase 1 design code (site A) will be agreed prior to the submission of any applicable reserved matters. On sites B, C & D detailed design codes will be agreed as necessary prior to the grant of any detailed permissions.

Supporting text

Woodlands benefits from its proximity to the principal urban area, nearby employment opportunities, amenities in Bradley Stoke and leisure facilities at the West Country Water Park. Existing planting and ponds associated with the golf course and motorway bund also provide a mature green infrastructure framework within which to plan the new village. It is though separated from the urban area by the motorways so will need to work hard to provide a suitable level of local amenities to make it a sustainable and vibrant new settlement.

Comprising 4 sites it is expected that a total of about 2400 dwellings will eventually be constructed. The core of the new village will be on the Golf Course (site A), which will therefore provide the key services and amenities, in a mixed-use development.

1. The Green belt will be drawn back to the Hortham Brook to the east, [eastern edge of the Water Park], existing tree & hedgelines & Gaunts Earthcott Lane. Some hedge and tree lines will need to be reinforced with new woodland planting.
2. The four sites will need to be connected via foot/cycle and vehicular links. Landowners & developers will therefore be required to work together to deliver these links in a timely way. Ransoms of any kind will not be permissible.

<u>Site A (Woodlands Golf Course)</u>

3. This site will provide about 1900 dwellings (30% will be affordable) and include a substantive age friendly offer. The site will build out beyond the plan period. As the principal access point and existing amenities are located to the south it is expected that the scheme will build out from south to north.
4. The site sits within a landscape bowl so development will not be prominent in the wider landscape. There is therefore potential for higher buildings within the core of the development Such critical mass creates the opportunity for a vibrant vertically mixed local centre, lending itself to delivery of a significant integrated age friendly (extra-care/retirement) neighbourhood with a wide variety of local amenities to serve the new community. (Note: Age Friendly accommodation comes in a variety of models, but essentially is Homes with Care. It is also known as ExtraCare Housing, Assisted Living, Retirement Living Plus or Integrated Retirement Communities). See Policy X – Age Friendly Housing & Care Homes, for more detail. A new primary school and nursery will also be a key component of this new centre.
5. The site is bounded by a mature and substantive hedges and woodland providing a robust framework from which to provide a comprehensive and integrated green infrastructure network to serve the new community. Woodland planting along the motorway bund will be further enhanced to provide a wooded backdrop and screen the new village, the Hortham Brook will be protected and supplemented with new wetland habitat and some of the existing ponds will remain to provide a mature and interesting setting for new residents. The site also contains two ‘focus areas for nature recovery’ (watercourse & riparian buffers, & The Motorway Bund) within the West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The creation and good management of riparian habitat (floodplain wetland mosaic grassland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ponds and scrub) should be prioritised accordingly to receive a 15% BNG uplift.

6. Outdoor sports provision will be provided on a new single complex east of the Hortham Brook adjacent to the West Country Water Park. It is hoped that via this co-location some mutual benefit could be realised between the two facilities.
7. The number of new homes necessitates two vehicular access points. These will be on Trench & Gaunts Earthcott Lanes. This north south connecting route will be tree lined, designed to restrict speeds to a maximum of 20mph and promote bus use and active travel. Sustainable travel modes will also be supported by a strategic mobility hub including electric vehicle and bike charge points, scooter parking, bus stop, car club vehicles, bike stands and repair point. Parking standards will necessarily be lower than current (Jan 25) standards to enable compact forms of development with a high degree of green infrastructure integrated into the scheme.
8. To ensure the sites to the north are connected, Site A will provide utilities, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connections to the legal boundary.

Sites B & C

9. At the northern end of the new village the landowners/developers will need to work together to bring forward a comprehensively planned single parcel for about 340 dwellings with connections between the two sites and with site A. Given their peripheral location and site A provides amenities to serve these two sites they will only be sustainable and therefore permitted to come forward when, as a minimum, the school and a convenience retail store have been opened on site A.

Site D

10. Located to the south of the new village off Trench Lane, this parcel is much better located in terms of access to existing services and facilities in Bradley Stoke and surrounds. Subject to the new M4 active travel bridge opening, works to the existing bridge to enable buses and safe pedestrian passage and to calm traffic along Trench Lane and make active travel to site A safe, this site will be able to come forward alongside the first phases of Site A. At the gateway to the new village buildings at the northern end of this site will be expected to be of high-quality distinct architecture befitting landmark status. The site will also provide new meadow and wetland habitat along the Hortham Brook.

Sites B, C & D

11. Sites B, C & D, due to their smaller size, have a higher net developable area and lower infrastructure burden than site A making them more financially viable. To ensure fairness they will therefore deliver a higher % of affordable housing than site A. They will also pay a higher per dwelling contribution towards offsite infrastructure needs than site A.

All sites

12. There will need to be an extensive package of offsite infrastructure needs agreed, including new active travel routes, traffic calming works, support for new and enhanced bus services, funds to provide for secondary and special education school places and improvements to primary care, waste and library services. The sites may also need to contribute towards SAMM (Strategic Access Management & Monitoring) and on or offsite SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace). As planning permissions for

sites B, C & D will be agreed no sooner than site A, proportionate contributions (either in kind or financial) can be calculated on a per dwelling basis, i.e. the package for the whole allocation will be broadly agreed with the promoter of site A and works / contributions required by sites B, C & D can be apportioned and agreed in a pragmatic consultative way via an Infrastructure Delivery Plan SPD or similar. Given sites B, C & D only represent about 20% of the new village are peripheral to the main site and alongside the differential AH%, this approach is considered pragmatic & proportionate and can avoid protracted and complex landowner and planning agreements.

13. As Sites B, C & D will benefit from open spaces and facilities on Site A, it is only equitable that these sites contribute towards their management. It is required therefore that developers and landowners of all three sites will collaborate and join the agreed stewardship arrangements for site A, enabling all open spaces and amenities across the 4 sites to be managed equitably. These stewardship arrangements should be carefully considered from very early in the development process and ensure public access in perpetuity.
14. CIL receipts as well as s106 contributions will need to be retained locally to achieve the objectives above. Contributions may be used to pay back expenditure on infrastructure, such as the Woodlands/Almondsbury Transport Package, where the infrastructure is delivered ahead of s106 triggers.
15. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan, coordinating master plan and strategic design code will be agreed for all 4 sites via a community consultation process with local people and stakeholders to inform future development proposals prior to any outline planning permission approval. Detailed design codes on a phased and site basis will then be agreed ahead of reserved matters.

Additions	
Key evidence	
Other relevant policies to cross-reference?	LP16 - Age Friendly Housing & Care Homes LP11 - Major Sites Delivery Policy

Figure 2. New Woodlands - Concept Diagram

