



# HICKS GATE

## STRATEGIC PLANNING OPTIONS

**AECOM**

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# CONTENT PAGE

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4. ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5. PLACEMAKING STUDY</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>6. EMERGING THEMES FOR A SHARED VISION AND PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>7. SPATIAL FRAMEWORK OPTIONS</b>	<b>49</b>





Figure 1. Separator image

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# 01



# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0.1 This report by AECOM, commissioned by Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council, offers essential background data on the Strategic Planning Options (SPO) for Hicks Gate. It outlines current baseline conditions, the options development process, integrated stakeholder engagement and refined development opportunities to guide future site strategic masterplanning, design and development decision-making. This report serves as an evidence base to support the decision-making process with respect to the potential for development at Hicks Gate. It identifies opportunities and constraints within the study area and wider strategic setting that must be addressed in the delivery of development across this area. This report serves as an update to the Strategic Planning Evidence Base, prepared by AECOM in 2021.

## 1.1. Preparing the SPO

1.1.1 The SPO has been prepared following an extensive baseline evidence analysis, including ecology, landscape, transport, planning, utilities and drainage, and a series of stakeholder and working group workshops. The outcome of these exercises was synthesised within the placemaking study summarising the key issues, ideas and aspirations and describing the potential for change within the area.



Figure 2. Strategic location map showing Local Authority boundaries and surrounding context

## 1.2. Emerging themes for a shared vision and placemaking principles

1.2.1 The summary of emerging themes for a shared vision for Hicks Gate set out below has been formulated to provide guidance and direction for any potential future changes within the area.

*Hicks Gate aims for sustainable development set within an attractive urban setting. High quality built form, streets, spaces and integrated green infrastructure will encourage walking and cycling and create a strong sense of place, a feeling of community and enhanced access to nature. Improved active travel routes and transport services will provide connections to a wide range of complementary uses and to adjacent neighbourhoods. The development of Hicks Gate will be a cornerstone of a wider programme of regeneration and infrastructure delivery in the surrounding area.*

## Components of the vision themes

**1.2.2 Protecting and enhancing the natural environment:** Maintain and enhance the natural habitats and green corridors to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity across the site.

**1.2.3 Providing accessible, well connected and low-car neighbourhoods:** Provide a well connected, sustainable transport network that offers a range of realistic transport choices and promotes active travel modes.

**1.2.4 Promoting sustainable and healthy lifestyle:** Embed sustainability in all aspects of development at Hicks Gate, including the potential for generating food, energy and materials from the local landscape. Development proposals must aim to eventually reach carbon positive status.

**1.2.5 Ensuring cohesive, vibrant and safe communities:** Streets and public spaces will be overlooked by nearby buildings to establish safe and accessible places. Development will comprise a mix of housing sizes, type, and tenures.

**1.2.6 Achieving high quality living:** Provide a sustainable, well-designed and high quality built environment and public realm for people to live, work and enjoy leisure within the same neighbourhood.

## Emerging placemaking principles

1.2.7 The Hicks Gate area placemaking vision is supported by the following principles:

- Meet the challenge of climate change by delivering a zero-carbon development.
- Utilise habitat opportunity areas and connectivity identified in the Nature Recovery network to safeguard existing habitat, and enhance biodiversity through the delivery of 20% net gain.
- Promote the creation of Strategic Green Infrastructure.
- Ensure easy access to nature by providing a range of sports, recreational facilities, parks and open spaces.
- Promote a sense of well-being by designing tree-lined streets and public spaces.
- Design a compact development that includes a complementary mix of land uses such as residential, community and leisure facilities, local services, retail, small scale employment, offices and studios.
- Integrate the existing and new communities via a network of sustainable, accessible, and green movement corridors and active travel modes,

providing more opportunities for people to access amenities and services in their vicinity.

- Ensure the A4/Bath Road will function as a sustainable movement corridor, part of the Key Route Network (KRN), providing connectivity to urban centres and surrounding neighbourhoods as it passes through the site.
- Promote the use of walking and cycling and public transport, and introduce wider strategic transport and infrastructure initiatives in the Hicks Gate development.

The detailed analysis aims to provide evidence to assist the planning process for formulating a new Local Plan for B&NES.

## Spatial Framework Options

1.2.8 The document outlines two Spatial Framework Options identified as the potential for change, which were determined through various workshops with B&NES Council and stakeholders.

1.2.9 The context of the area is described, highlighting key constraints and opportunities. This information serves as evidence supporting the Spatial Framework Options.

1.2.10 Each Spatial Framework Option is further explained under the headings of placemaking, green and blue infrastructure and nature recovery, access and movement.





Figure 3. Separator image

## INTRODUCTION

# 02

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1. Planning background

2.1.1 The adopted Development Plan for Bath and North East Somerset (excluding minerals and waste policies) consists of the Core Strategy 2014, Placemaking Plan 2017 and Local Plan Partial Update 2023. The plan guides development in the district until 2029.

2.1.2 The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will establish the planning framework for Bath and North East Somerset from 2022 to 2042. It will contain a vision, strategy and policies to guide and manage how the district grows and changes over the next 20 years, and how planning applications for new development are decided. There are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans which cover the Hicks Gate study area, though the area is within the boundary for the emerging Keynsham Neighbourhood Plan (area designated in 2016).

2.1.3 The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) was preparing high level plans for the region, known as the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS). The SDS was intended to provide the strategic planning framework for the new Local Plan. However, the WECA Mayor decided in May 2022 to stop all work on the West of England Combined Authority Spatial Development Strategy. The Local Plans for Bath &

North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire will now provide the strategic planning framework for the West of England Combined Authority area. Work on the SDS has been halted and is not being progressed by the West of England Combined Authority, however the evidence base is due to be published and will inform the new Local Plan. It is worth noting that the SDS evidence base has yet to be tested at examination and will need to be fully reviewed and updated, where necessary.

2.1.4 The Hicks Gate Strategic Planning Evidence Base was prepared in 2021 in the context of the emerging SDS but proposals in this location will now be taken forward via Bristol City and B&NES Local Plans. Cross-border working continues to take place between Bristol City Council and B&NES to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to planning for development in this location.

2.1.5 The WECA Placemaking Charter provides a framework for developers, communities and public sector partners to create better places that are: future-ready, connected, biodiverse, characterful, healthy and inclusive.

2.1.6 Residential development is being actively promoted in Bristol UA administrative

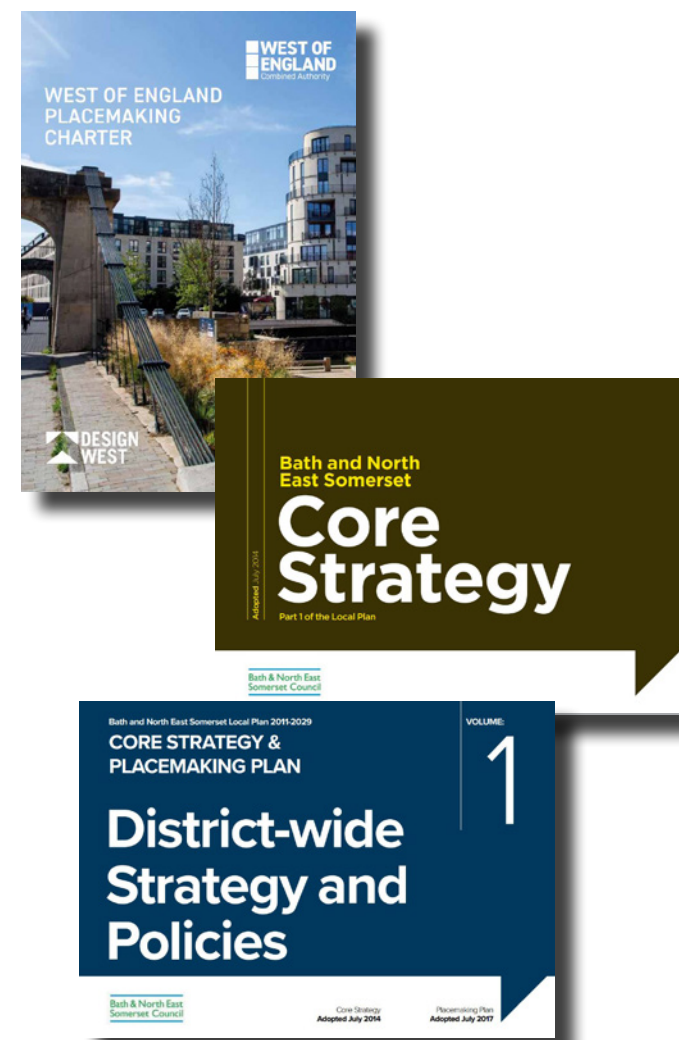


Figure 4. Planning documents

area with a scoping opinion being sought for development of up to 555 dwellings and a local centre at the land east of Brislington Park and Ride.

2.1.7 A draft allocation is made for this site at Bath Road, Brislington (DS12) by Bristol City Council in the Local Plan Review Regulation 19 consultation (November 2023) for 500-750 dwellings. The Local Plan also provides positive wording for cross-boundary working between B&NES and BCC at this location.

2.1.8 Immediately to the west along the A4 at Brislington (DS9) a draft allocation is made for an area of growth and regeneration, for 500-950 dwellings.

## 2.2. Introduction to this document

2.2.1 B&NES Council is embarking on a new Local Plan. AECOM has been commissioned to update the Hicks Gate Strategic Planning Evidence Base (September 2021) in order to feed into this new Local Plan.

2.2.2 The study has been undertaken in two main parts. The first part comprises the Strategic Place Assessment (SPA) which is high level and covers a broad area of search looking at character and capacity issues

such as ecology, landscape, transport, historic environment and the development potential of particular locations. This was informed by an evidence report and engagement with B&NES officers and local stakeholders.

2.2.3 The second part of the study identifies the Strategic Planning Options, for the Council to consider through the Local Plan process, which also draws upon evidence report workshops with B&NES officers and stakeholders.

2.2.4 This Hicks Gate Strategic Planning Options report provides a high level summary of the technical evidence analysis, our understanding of the site context and the outcomes of the B&NES officers and stakeholder workshops. It lists the key issues, ideas and aspirations that were raised at the workshops and identifies the potential opportunities by illustrating areas of search to be explored at a later stage in the process.



Figure 5. Local plan 2022-2042. Strategic Place Assessment and Strategic Planning Framework studies will feed into the Place based issues / priorities stage.

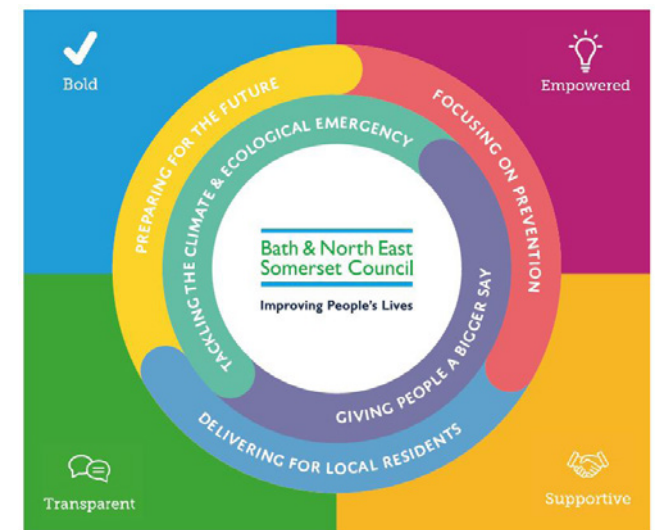


Figure 6. B&NES Corporate Strategy





Figure 7. Separator image

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

# 03

## 3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 3.1. OVERVIEW

3.1.1 The Hicks Gate area is located to the west of the junction of the A4 and A4174 at the western end of the Keynsham Bypass. This is also the junction at the southern end of the A4174 Ring Road route through East Bristol and the North Fringe. It is heavily trafficked in the weekday peak periods and at other times.

3.1.2 The A4 Bath Road, which cuts through the Hicks Gate area, is a major movement corridor between Bristol and Bath and destinations in between, such as Keynsham.

3.1.3 The Hicks Gate area is located wholly within the Green Belt. There is no existing 'settlement' at Hicks Gate and no status in terms of settlement or retail hierarchy. A small number of individual houses, some light industrial activities, education/sports provision and the Avon Fire and Rescue Service are located within the study area.

3.1.4 Hicks Gate is located on the administrative boundaries of Bristol and B&NES and, as a result, it affords the authorities the opportunity to work together to create a well-planned, sustainable new neighbourhood in an area that is likely to see substantial investment in key infrastructure. Hicks Gate was previously identified as a sustainable location and proposed for

allocation as one of a number of Sustainable Development Locations (SDLs) in the former draft West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP).

3.1.5 As mentioned earlier in the report, Bristol City Council has proposed to allocate the site at the south of the A4 for a mixed use residential development in their Draft Local Plan (November 2023).

3.1.6 The Hicks Gate area is clearly delineated with identifiable boundaries; to the north and to the south of the A4. The River Avon forms the northern edge, while the Bristol-Bath mainline railway reinforces the northern boundary. The Brislington Trading Estate runs along the southern stretch of Broomhill Road to the west. Within the northern parcel, about two-thirds of the land is dedicated to agricultural use. Notable uses in this area include St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Bristol Harlequins Rugby Football Club, Goals Bristol South leisure venue, Long Fox Manor homes, Brislington Juniors Football Club, Brislington Cricket Club, and a mixed commercial/light industrial site. The western half of the northern part falls within the Avon Valley Conservation Area, and the core area of Brislington House's grounds is designated as a Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden.

3.1.7 Moving to the southern parcel, the area south of A4 is characterised by a steep rise in topography towards the Stockwood Ridgeline. Connectivity to Stockwood is facilitated by Scotland Lane running approximately north to south in the southern corner of the study area. The southern part of the area is mainly pasture, with a small arable parcel at the eastern end. The area includes the Brislington Park & Ride, allotments, a garden centre, and scattered small employment sites.

3.1.8 Keynsham Town Centre, located approximately 2 km from the southeast edge of Hicks Gate, offers essential services and facilities. Keynsham Railway Station provides access to both Great Western Railway and South Western Railway services. Broadlands Academy, situated at the western edge of Keynsham, is one of the main secondary schools in the vicinity of the Hicks Gate area.

3.1.9 The Ring Road Cycle path, a local cycleway route to the north of Hicks Gate Roundabout, connects the area to NCN Route 4.

## 3.2. Historic background and heritage

3.2.1 The study area lies in an area of countryside which historically was characterised by agriculture and small-scale quarrying. The name Hicks Gate is derived from a farm which appears on mapping dating from 1884.

3.2.2 Earlier history includes the Durley Hill Roman Villa, part of the cemetery site on Durley Lane. Archaeological investigations have placed the villa as part of a larger Roman settlement including the old Cadbury Somerdale Factory site (Scheduled Monument) to the north-east, which is interpreted as potentially part of the town of Trajectus, which was an important settlement between Bath and the port of Sea Mills on the Severn estuary.

3.2.3 Additional later historical development within the area includes Brislington House (early 19th century Grade II) including the Registered Park and Garden (grounds) which is also Grade II listed, Swiss Cottage (1830 Grade II), Oakleigh House (early 19th century Grade II), Durley Cottage (late 18th century Grade II) and Durley Hill House (early 19th century Grade II).

## Heritage

3.2.4 The western side of the Hicks Gate area to the north of the A4 is within the Avon Valley Conservation Area and it includes two designated heritage assets. The Grade II listed Oakleigh and its lodge, the Grade II listed Brislington House (also known as Long Fox Manor), as well as the Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden which form the grounds surrounding Brislington House.

3.2.5 The Grade II listed Oakleigh is an early 19th century house and the presence of the A4 has affected the setting of the house and lodge. The open setting of the building reinforces its architectural value as part of this heritage asset.

3.2.6 The most significant heritage asset of the Hicks Gate area is the Grade II listed Brislington House and its grounds, a Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden. The house and grounds were built as a private hospital (purpose-built psychiatric hospital) in the early 19th century. The 80 hectares of grounds around the house were used for exercise, fresh air and a place for calmness which included a woodland walk.

3.2.7 The grounds were described as 32 hectares of parkland and gardens, 14 hectares of pleasure grounds, and fruit

and vegetable gardens. The gardens were surrounded on three sides by a farm. The woodland at the western boundary of the grounds was designed to buffer the Park. The perimeter of the original Brislington House and grounds is defined by stone walling and extensive tree and shrub planting which extends between the A4 boundary (the section close to Emery Road junction) to Broomhill Road and Ironmould Lane.

3.2.8 The significance of Brislington House and the Registered Park and Garden has been eroded and fragmented by various developments. St Brendan's Sixth Form college moved into the grounds in the



Figure 8. Hicks Gate house



1960s. Within the same timeframe, many of the fields and area of former parkland have been rearranged as sports pitches and the industrial area to the north, which is accessed via Ironmould Lane, was built. The former psychiatric hospital building was converted into apartments (Long Fox Manor) in 2001.

3.2.9 The area to the south of the A4 is largely rural landscape characterised by a medieval landscape of open enclosed fields with grasslands created by local arrangement and exchange. The area closer to Stockwood Lane is an area of medieval enclosures of steep-sided cultivation.

3.2.10 The construction of the A4, Hicks Gate Roundabout, A4174 and the Brislington Park and Ride has changed the post medieval fields layout of the area significantly.

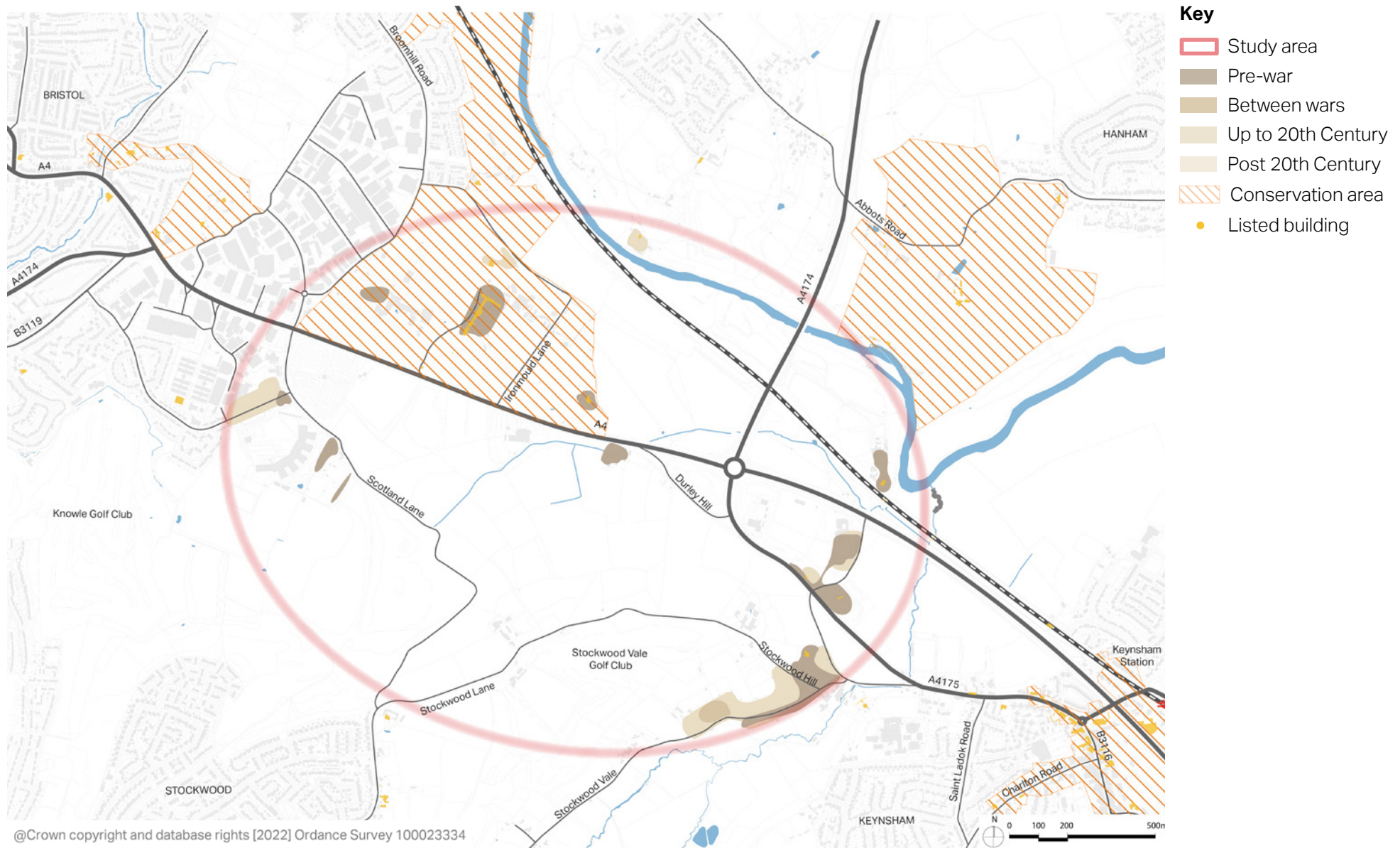


Figure 9. Heritage Assets

### 3.3. Natural environment

#### Landscape

3.3.1 Hicks Gate consists of the edge of a plateau that runs southwards forming a ridgeline that overlooks the River Avon valley to the north. The landform falls steeply northwards from the ridgeline and then more gently towards the river. The River Avon is in a steep sided ravine which opens out to the east, forming a floodplain to the north of Keynsham. To the northeast are the Cotswold Hills of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.3.2 Four Landscape Character Areas (LCA) are identified around and to the east of Hicks Gate roundabout within the B&NES Landscape Character Assessment (2021). Although different, all the LCAs display an urban fringe landscape of small-scale pasture often for horses, golf courses, sports pitches, and infrastructure. Hedgerows enclose small to medium sized fields, with wooded river valleys including the River Avon to the north, and linear tree and shrub belts along the railway and within the Stockwood Vale Golf Course. Watercourses form important landscape features and shape the landform.

3.3.3 The ridgelines enclose the Hicks Gate area, allowing open views to the north from the ridge. Within the valley, views are interrupted by vegetation and other structures, creating a more enclosed landscape. Views to the east are available towards the hills of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.3.4 The Hicks Gate Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment (2020), assesses the landscape and visual sensitivity of the area against a variety of development types including a 2-3 storey, medium-to-high density residential development, a 5-7 storey high-density residential development, commercial/ light industrial sheds, and a transport interchange.

3.3.5 The assessment identifies the areas south of the A4 beneath the ridge, associated with Stockwood Open Space and the area around Brislington House within the Avon Valley Conservation Area as high sensitivity for residential development.

3.3.6 The area between Brislington House and the A4174 as average or medium sensitivity for residential development, with some areas of high visual sensitivity (eastern half) for 5-7 storey high-density residential development. Other areas south of the A4 are defined as the areas that

can accommodate 2-4 storey medium-to-high residential development, including the Brislington Park and Ride which is defined as low sensitivity for medium and high-density residential development. For further information please refer to Hicks Gate Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment (2020).

#### Green and blue infrastructure

3.3.7 Hicks Gate area includes several open spaces which provide ecological and recreational value. These include Stockwood Open Space Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Stockwood Vale Golf Club and Bickley Wood. Other nature reserves and riverside parks are accessible from the River Avon Trail heading westwards towards Bristol City Centre.

3.3.8 A local network of pedestrian and cycle routes also provides connectivity throughout including several promoted routes:

- River Avon Trail is a 37km pedestrian route running along the river from Pill (near Avonmouth) in the west, through Bristol to Bath in the east. In parts, it is accessible to cyclists and horse riders.
- Two Rivers Way Trail is a 32km pedestrian route from Keynsham on the River Avon



to Congresbury on the River Yeo. It follows the River Chew and River Yeo.

- National Cycle Network Route (NCN) 16 begins on the A4 and heads north along the A4174, passing along the edge of settlements.
- Bristol and Bath Railway Path forms part of NCN 4. It is a 24km pedestrian and cycle route and an important wildlife corridor.

3.3.9 The West of England Joint Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy led to a number of GI programmes, which were intended to target funding and improvements to key GI assets. Two of the key programmes are set out below.

3.3.10 WaterSpace – Focused on the River Avon and Kennet and Avon Canal (Dundas Aqueduct to Bath to Hanham Lock), the programme includes opportunities to create moorings, improve green spaces, parks and access, enhance biodiversity and provide safe access for sport and leisure. Project ideas include:

- River Avon Park – connecting people with riverside green spaces by creating a new city park;

- Improved slipways, moorings and related boating facilities;
- Re-wilding of the river and improve habitats for species such as otters and bats; and,
- River taxi and art projects.

3.3.11 Chew Valley Reconnected – From Keynsham to the foot of the Mendip Hills with three integrated themes focusing on nature recovery and landscape restoration; sustainable water management; and enhanced public engagement with landscape and nature. Projects include:

- Chew Valley Lake Recreational Trail;
- Riparian enhancements to improve aquatic, marginal and terrestrial habitat; and,
- Sustainable Water Usage engagement.

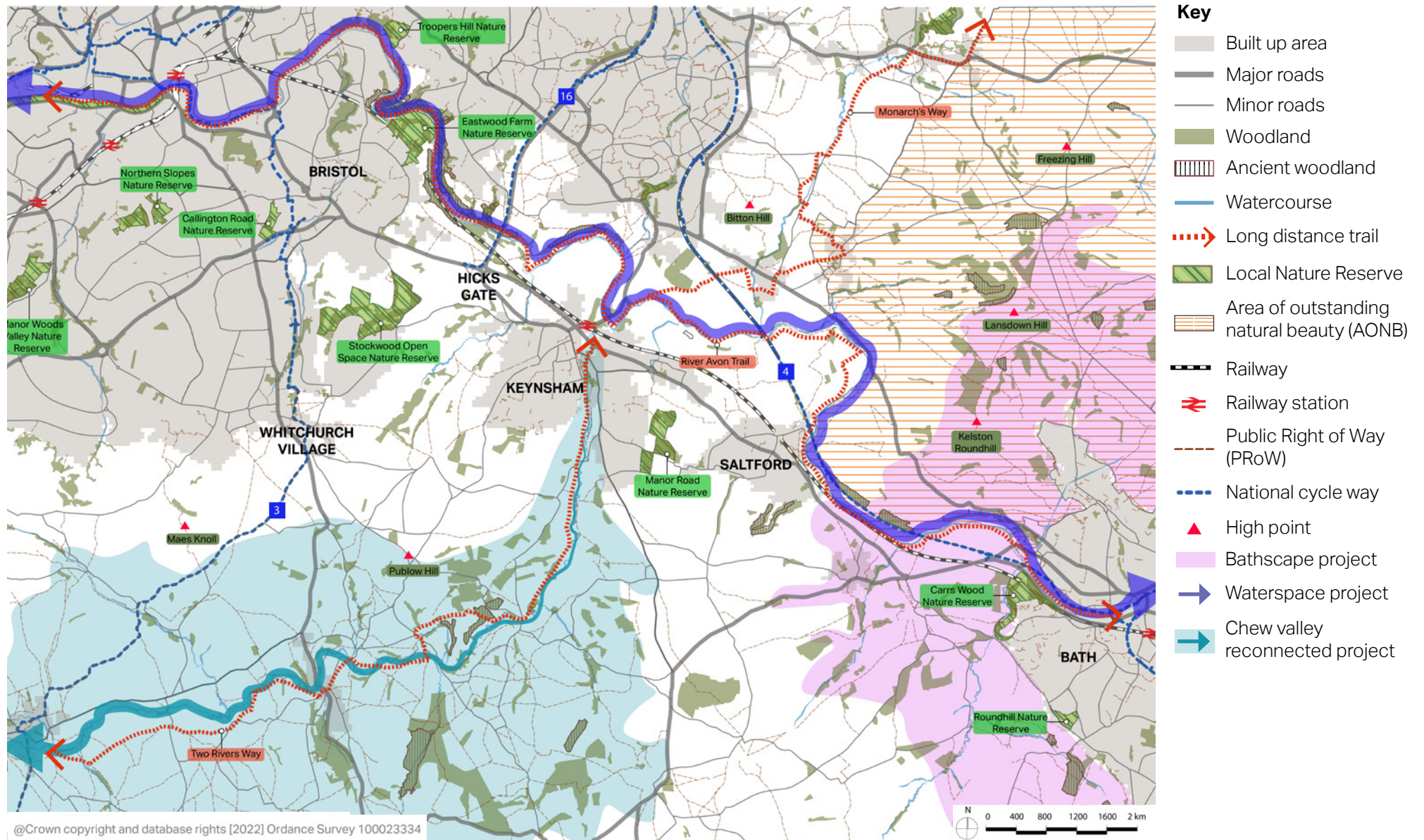


Figure 10. Natural environment including green and blue infrastructure

## Ecology and nature recovery

3.3.12 Several habitats within the area, particularly the hedgerows and woodlands, are likely to be of high value. Habitat of high ecological value, including ponds and streams, should be enhanced and retained. In summary:

- Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland is located within and directly adjacent to the north of the area. The habitat within the area is dominated by grassland, including poor semi-improved, semi-improved and improved grassland. Sparsely located woodland blocks are located across the area as well as bordering the River Avon which runs along the northeast of the area. Arable fields are also located in the southwest of the area.
- The habitats within the area are likely to support several protected species whilst providing connectivity between Stockwood Open Space Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) in the south-west; and East Wood and Fox's Wood SNCI, East Wood and Keynsham Humpy Tumps complex SNCI, the River Avon SNCI, Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and Avon Valley Woodland LNR in the north.

- The hedgerows and woodlands are potentially of high ecological value and a designated wildlife corridor is located in the west of the area.
- Ecological buffer zones should be maintained on hedgerows, woodlands, the River Avon and ponds to avoid negative impacts on their ecological function.
- The River Avon is known to support otters and may provide a habitat for water vole. Small streams running through the site (including Scotland Bottom brook) may provide suitable habitat for commuting otter and water vole. A water quality survey in 2009 suggested that an upstream capped landfill may be having adverse impacts on a stream within the site, improvement to this stream may therefore be of ecological benefit.
- The area is known to support a population of slow worm near Hicks Gate roundabout with suitable habitat for reptiles in the wider area, including semi-improved grassland, scrub, hedgerows and woodlands. The area is also likely to be used by breeding birds and barn owls. Hedgerows and woodlands provide suitable habitat for hazel dormice as well as foraging and sett-building habitat for

badgers. A good number of bat species were recorded in the area. There are buildings and trees within and adjacent to the area which may support roosting bats, and the habitats within the area provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. Three ponds are present within the area which may provide suitable habitat for the great crested newt. There are another eight ponds within the vicinity, three of which are known to support great crested newts (2014 and 2018).

3.3.13 The West of England Nature Partnership has identified a regional Nature Recovery Network which runs through the area. It is a joined-up network of marine, water and terrestrial habitats which identifies opportunities to deliver nature recovery. Opportunities identified in the area include Wetland Opportunities in Flood Zone 2 along the River Avon and Scotland Bottom—Potential for creating wetland habitats to build resilience to flood risk and deliver wider benefits for nature and people.



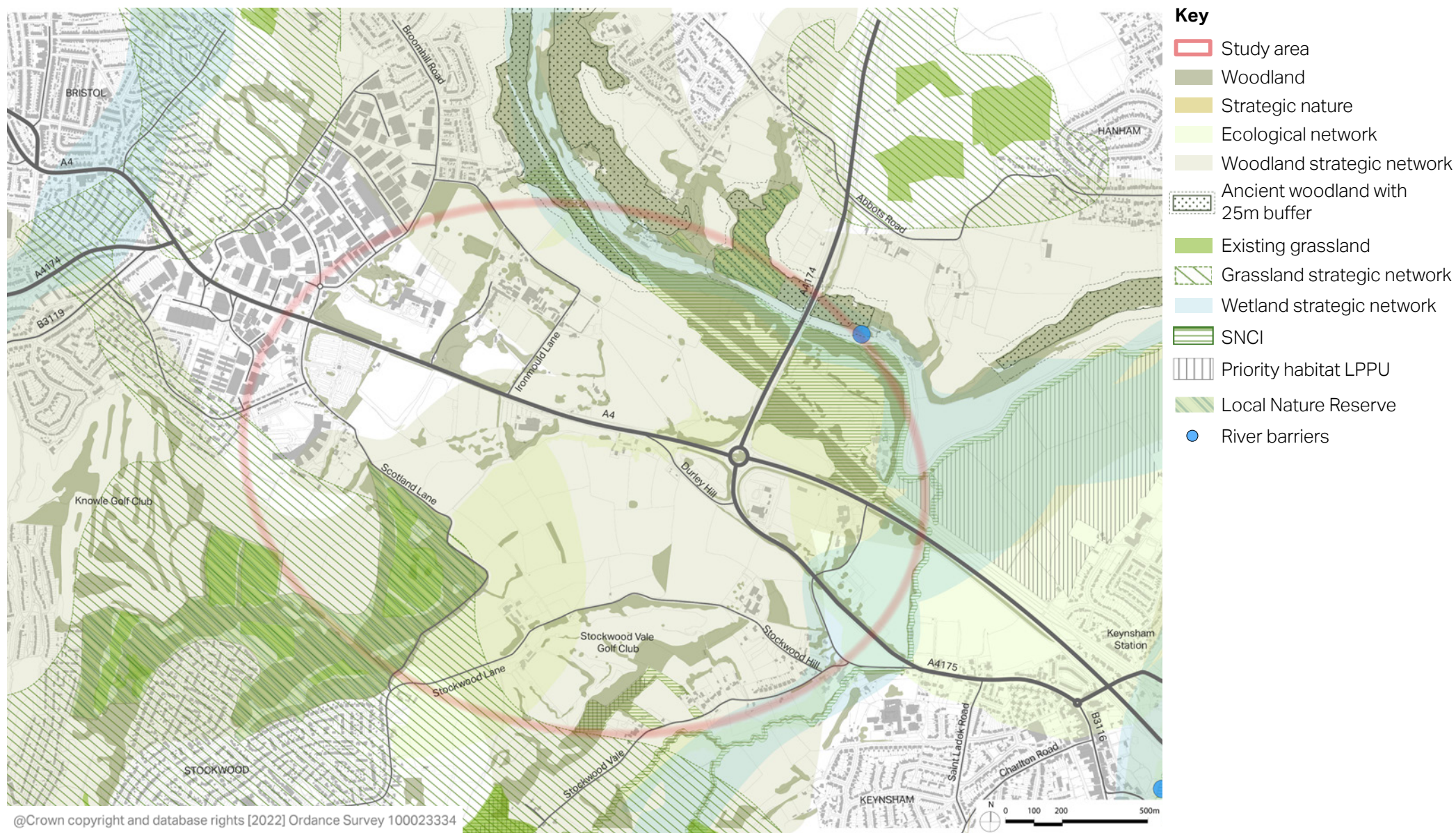


Figure 11. Ecology












### 3.4. Settlement analysis

3.4.1 By the late 19th century, the study area was still rural in character, with no substantial settlement. It comprised scattered farmsteads and Brislington House with grounds and associated buildings. By 1920, linear development was expanding from Keynsham along the Bristol Road through Stockwood Vale and up to Durley Hill, including private housing and Almshouses. By 1945, Brislington was expanding south, with the creation of new development roads and by 1954 development extended up to the western edge of Brislington Hall grounds (West Town Lane). The bypass was built in the 1960s and this changed the road network hierarchy and altered movement characteristics through the area, but despite this the central core of the study area today remains largely undeveloped.

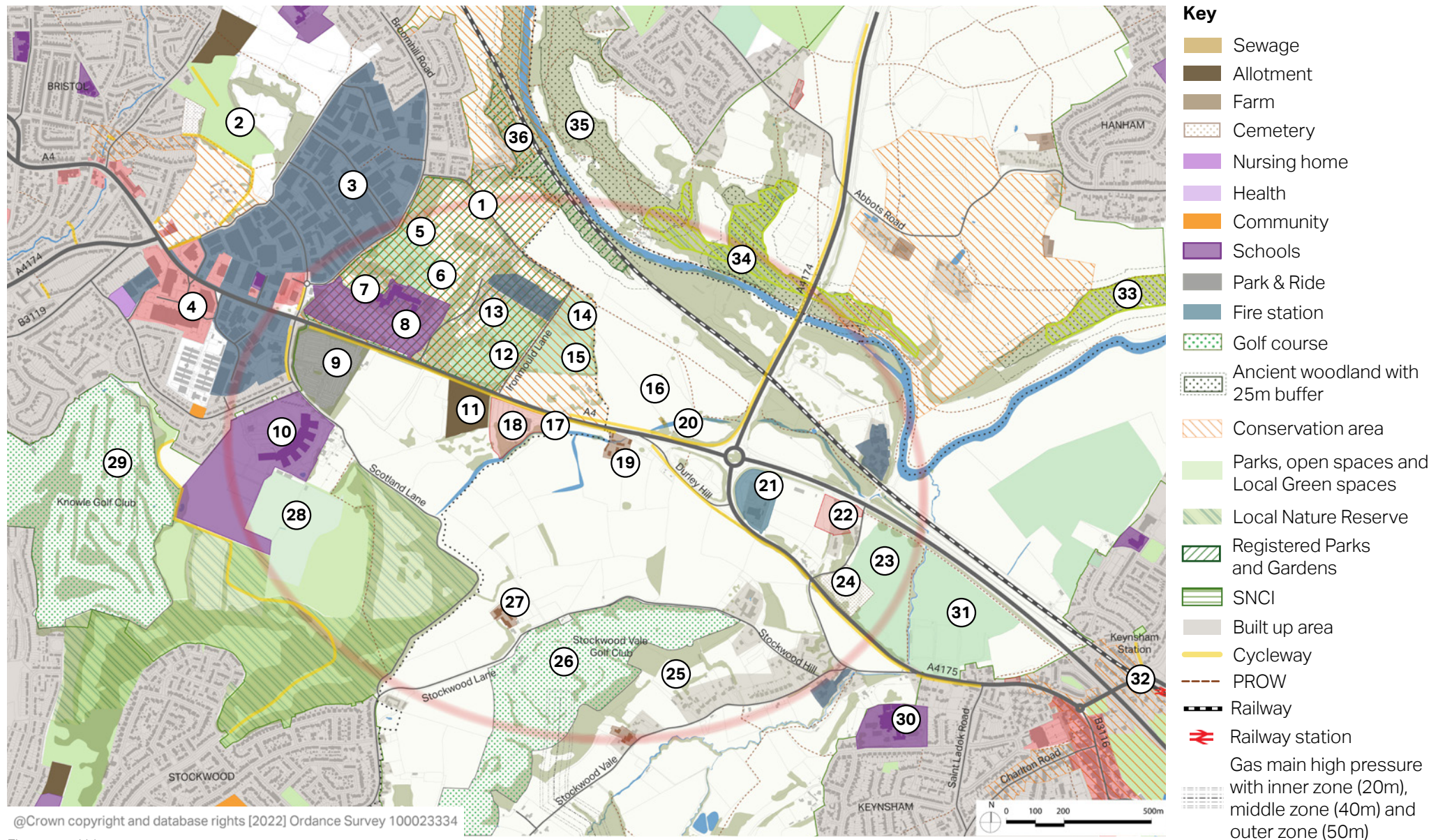
#### Key

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| ① Study area                             | ⑲ Hicks Gate Farm            |
| ② Victory Park                           | ⑳ Sewage bed                 |
| ③ Brislington Trading Estate             | ㉑ Avon Fire & Rescue Service |
| ④ Brislington Retail Park                | ㉒ Devonport House            |
| ⑤ Bristol Harlequins Rugby Football Club | ㉓ Durley park                |
| ⑥ Goals Bristol South                    | ㉔ Keynsham Cemetery          |
| ⑦ Beeches Hotel                          | ㉕ Pumping Station            |
| ⑧ St Brendan's Sixth Form College        | ㉖ Stockwood Vale Golf Club   |
| ⑨ Brislington Park & Ride                | ㉗ Oakleaze Farm              |
| ⑩ Brislington Enterprise College         | ㉘ Old Redcliffians RFC       |
| ⑪ Allotment Gardens                      | ㉙ Knowle Golf Club           |
| ⑫ Brislington Junior Football Club       | ㉚ Broadlands School          |
| ⑬ Long Fox Manor                         | ㉛ Rugby Football Ground      |
| ⑭ Brislington Football Club              | ㉜ Keynsham Station           |
| ⑮ Brislington Cricket Club               | ㉝ Cleeve Wood Hanham SSSI    |
| ⑯ Oakleigh House                         | ㉞ Bickley Wood SSSI          |
| ⑰ Maidenhead Aquatics                    | ㉟ Hencliff Wood              |
| ⑱ Wyevale Garden Centre                  | ㊱ East Wood                  |

#### Key

-  Study area
-  A Road
-  B Road
-  Minor roads
-  District boundary
-  Woodland
-  Watercourse
-  Retail
-  Industrial
-  Leisure/ playing field
-  Business park







## Land use

3.4.2 The Hicks Gate study area lies between Brislington and Keynsham, bisected by the A4. The Hicks Gate roundabout connects to the A4174, with access north over the River Avon to the areas Hanham, Longwell Green and Barrs Court, and south on the A4175 via Durley Hill to approach Keynsham from the west.

3.4.3 The area retains an agricultural/ farming land use characteristic, including a swathe of land centred around the A4/A4174 roundabout which is listed as Grade 2 (very good quality agricultural land) under the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC).

3.4.4 There is limited residential development within the study area, although it includes a number of heritage buildings, including the Brislington House, which was converted from being an asylum to private residential. Elsewhere, linear development of Stockwood Vale continued with mid/late-20th century detached dwellings. At Brislington, there is post-war development on Hungerford Road and a distinct commercial area focused around the A4 access.

3.4.5 Study area land use includes Keynsham Cemetery, Avon Fire & Rescue Service, Stockwood Vale Golf Club, areas of light industry at Stockwood Hill, north

of Brislington House on Ironmould Lane, Durley Lane and the commercial edge of Brislington in the north west. Examples of civic use include Bath Road allotments and two educational facilities Brislington Oasis Academy and St Brendan's Sixth Form College.



Figure 13. Commercial activities in Brislington

## Green and public spaces

3.4.6 The study area is almost equally split north/south by council and parliamentary constituency boundaries, with areas in the west part of Bristol City Council (Bristol East) and those in the east part of Bath and North East Somerset Council (North East

Somerset). These boundaries influence the coverage of strategic green infrastructure policies across the study area.

3.4.7 The designated Green Belt covers a large swathe of the eastern study area, as far as the River Avon, through Stockwood Vale and up to the development edge of Keynsham. Defined Ecological Networks are also concentrated to the east, up to the River Avon, the eastern edge of Durley Hill and through Stockwood Vale. Indeed, the latter (Stockwood Vale) is not only an ecologically rich non-statutory designated area (SNCI), but also a defined contributor to the setting of Keynsham (Landscape Setting). Areas in the west include defined Wildlife Corridors adjacent to St Brendans College, Agricultural Land at Brislington and land at Brislington Oasis Academy.

3.4.8 Minimal housing development combine with green/blue infrastructure assets, including the River Avon, the spine of Stockwood Vale which flanks the eastern edge of the study area and agricultural fields, to give the study area a rural quality despite proximity to Keynsham, Brislington and the influence of the A4. Stockwood Vale includes Wood Covert and the Shoulder of Mutton Covert, which cover the south eastern upper slopes of Durley Hill.

3.4.9 Accessible green spaces include Stockwood Vale golf course, Stockwood Open Space and playing fields on Ironmould Lane. There is a small network of PRow, focused in the north eastern parts of the study area, including limited access to the River Avon frontage. In western areas PRow provision links Stockwood Road to Stockwood Lane via Stockwood Open Space and north of the A4 around Brislington House. The NCN 16 provides access from the A4 north along the A4174.



Figure 14. Local ancient woodland

### 3.5. Socioeconomics

3.5.1 B&NES is in the process of drafting its Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priorities. This document sets out four key priorities, namely:

3.5.1 Ensure that children and young people are healthy and ready for learning and education.

3.5.2 Improve skills, good work and employment.

3.5.3 Strengthen compassionate and healthy communities.

3.5.4 Create health promoting places.

### Households

3.5.5 There has been some population growth between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses in the wider Hicks Gate area with 7,850 people recorded in the 2011 Census, increasing to 9,060 usual residents in 2021 living in 3,837 households. Single family households make up the majority of these households at 63.7%. In terms of household size, the largest percentage of households in Hicks Gate are made up of two people.

3.5.6 Semi-detached properties are the most popular accommodation type in Hicks Gate accounting for 31%, closely followed by terraced houses. There are not many

detached properties in the study area, just 12%, and there are a large proportion of flats in Hicks Gate, 21%, which is unusual for the wider district.

3.5.7 The property ownership in Hicks Gate is slightly lower than other areas within B&NES at 65%. There are much higher levels of social rented properties (21%) and private renting (13%), but still low levels of shared ownership in Hicks Gate.

### Age profile

3.5.8 The age profile in the study area is in line with the wider B&NES area, and the country as a whole. The 0 - 24 age group accounts for 27% of the population in Hicks Gate, which is just slightly lower than the under 25 categories in B&NES (32.6%) and England (29%). As in most places, the 25-69 age group makes up the majority of the population, totalling 58% in the study area compared to 53% in B&NES and 57% across the country. The percentage of over 70's is slightly higher in Hicks Gate (15%) than this category in both B&NES (14.6%) and England (13.5%).

## Health

3.5.9 A total of 81% of the population state that they had 'very good' or 'good' health in the 2021 Census and a small amount, around 6%, commenting that they had 'bad' or 'very bad' health. These figures are broadly in line with the general health in the wider B&NES area and England. 19% of the residents in Hicks Gate are recorded as disabled under the Equality Act, these figures are similar to those in the wider district and England with the majority of the cases in Hicks Gate recorded as disabilities which 'limit day-to-day activities a little' rather than 'a lot'.

## Economic activity and education

3.5.10 According to the 2011 Census, around 72% of the population in Hicks Gate were economically active. In 2021 this has decreased to 61.3%. The 2021 economic activity levels in Hicks Gate were still higher than those recorded across B&NES and in England. The population within the Hicks Gate area is well educated with around 79% of the population having some levels of qualifications between level 1 and level 4 or above and 19% of the population with no qualifications. The highest levels of qualification have improved since the 2011 Census, with those who had no qualifications

recorded as 26% and 69% noted as having between level 1 and level 4 highest qualifications.

## 3.6. Access and movement

3.6.1 The Hicks Gate area is located between the cities of Bath to the east and Bristol to the west and it is connected to both cities via the A4 corridor. Hicks Gate is located at the junction of the A4 and A4174, which are key movement corridors and carry significant volumes of both radial and orbital traffic with congestion at peak times. The A4 Bath Road which transects the area is part of the Major Road Network and also a key public transport route between Bristol and Bath and destinations in between. Brislington Park & Ride is accessed directly from the A4. The Park & Ride serves Bristol City Centre and has a capacity of 1,300 car parking spaces.

3.6.2 In the absence of a rail station within walking distance, bus services provide strategic public transport connections to the surrounding areas. Direct bus services are provided to destinations including Bath, Bristol, Bristol Airport and the Somer Valley. Following service changes in April 2023, the services now operating through Hicks Gate are the 39/X39 Bristol to Bath

service, the 349/522 service and the A4 Air Decker between Bristol Airport and Bath. The frequency of the 39/X39 service has been increased from previous, with weekday buses running every 15 minutes through the daytime. The 349 service operates every 30 minutes. As a result of funding provided following the successful award to the WECA and North Somerset Council Bus Service Improvement Plan, a new service 522 has been introduced. This service operates between Bath, Midsomer Norton, Keynsham and Bristol. Combined with Service 349, up to eight buses an hour are provided between Hicks Gate, Brislington and Bristol City Centre. Park and Ride services operate every 15 minutes to Bristol City Centre. This provides a convenient link to the employment opportunities and retail facilities in Bristol City Centre. The A4 corridor, in this location, often experiences congestion which can have a detrimental effect on the reliability and reliance of existing bus services.

3.6.3 A Demand Responsive Transport service known as the 'WESTlink' service was launched across the West of England on 3rd April 2023. WESTlink is comprised of a fleet of minibuses providing an on demand service. The 'South' zone for WESTlink



services is located to the immediate west of the Hicks Gate area, whilst the 'North / South' zone is located to the immediate east. The coverage of WESTlinkservices could likely be extended into Hicks Gate in future.

3.6.4 The Hicks Gate area benefits from access to a range of bus services. When combined together, the bus services provide a network of frequent connections to a range of destinations.

3.6.5 There is a network of Public Rights of Way and cycleways in and around the area, albeit connectivity is hampered by topography and the severance related to the A4, the river and rail line.

3.6.6 Cycle provision is limited, mostly on-street and in bus lanes, with shared pedestrian/cycle provision at the cross-roads with Emery Road. Away from the A4, there is limited pedestrian, cycle or vehicle permeability through the area. Further enhancements to the public transport, walking and cycling networks will be made through the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor scheme, which is funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements programme. This facilitates a transformational change to the existing sustainable transport network, through new bus and cycle lanes and walking routes.

3.6.7 The National Cycle Network (NCN) is present within the study area, with the following routes available:

- NCN 3 – Runs in a north-south alignment to the west of Brislington, crossing the A4 at its junction with Sandy Park Road. Within the vicinity of the study area, the route varies in nature between traffic-free and on-road. To the north, NCN 3 provides access to Bristol city centre, whilst to the south, the route runs to Whitchurch Village and beyond as part of a long-distance southwest route.
- NCN 16 – Runs in a north-south alignment at the eastern extent of the study area, routing from the A4 at its southern extent, along the A4174 Bristol Ring Road and terminating in Filton, north Bristol. The majority of the route is traffic-free.

3.6.8 As part of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement, the Bristol to Bath Corridor project is being led by WECA and delivered in partnership with B&NES and BCC. It aims to improve travel between Bath and Bristol through better bus services and enabling more cycling and walking, through the delivery of a Mass Transit corridor. The current scope of the project includes bus priority measures, road space reallocation, enhancement to bus stops, improved walking

and cycling facilities and improvements to the public realm. Works will be broken down into phased projects focusing on different sections of the route over the next three to five years. In addition, BCC is progressing an Outline Business Case for the A4 corridor between the Three Lamps Junction (northwest of the Hicks Gate study area) and the BCC/B&NES Local Authority Boundary, prior to Hicks Gate Roundabout. These programmes intend to improve sustainable movement along the corridor.

3.6.9 The Park and Ride site at Brislington is proposed to be relocated, expanded, and increased in functionality to provide interchange between a variety of transport modes to provide a network of connections across the local area. The Southeast Bristol/Whitchurch OAR and emerging plans for the Bristol – Bath Strategic Corridor identifies the south west corner of the Hicks Gate Roundabout as the preferred location.

3.6.10 Analysis of the 2021 census data (noting its limitations owing to the pandemic restrictions in place at the time) shows that the Hicks Gate area has a lower car mode share as compared to the South West region, with 68.4% compared to 70.4%. However, it is lower than the B&NES average (excluding the city of Bath) of 77.1%.

3.6.11 Regarding the distance travelled to work, the results from the 2021 census show that 19.6% of respondents in Hicks Gate answered 'Up to 2 km' as compared to 16.7% for the B&NES district (excluding the city of Bath), 20.3% for Great Britain and 23.6% for the South West Region. Hicks Gate has the highest percentage of respondents answering '5km to 10m' 34.5%, as compared to 24.3% for the B&NES district (excluding the city of Bath), 19.4% for the South West, and 21.7% for Great Britain nationally.

3.6.12 Car ownership data from the 2021 census shows that the Hicks Gate area has a slightly higher proportion of houses with one car (42.9%), than the B&NES district (excluding the city of Bath) (38.7%) but it had a lower proportion of household with two cars (28.4%), than the average for the B&NES district (excluding the city of Bath) (38.7%).

3.6.13 The Hicks Gate area had a lower proportion of household with three or more cars (8.9%), than the B&NES district (excluding the city of Bath) (14.6%), the South West region (11.6%) and the average for Great Britain (10.2%).



Figure 15. Brislington Park & Ride



Figure 16. A4/ Bath Road

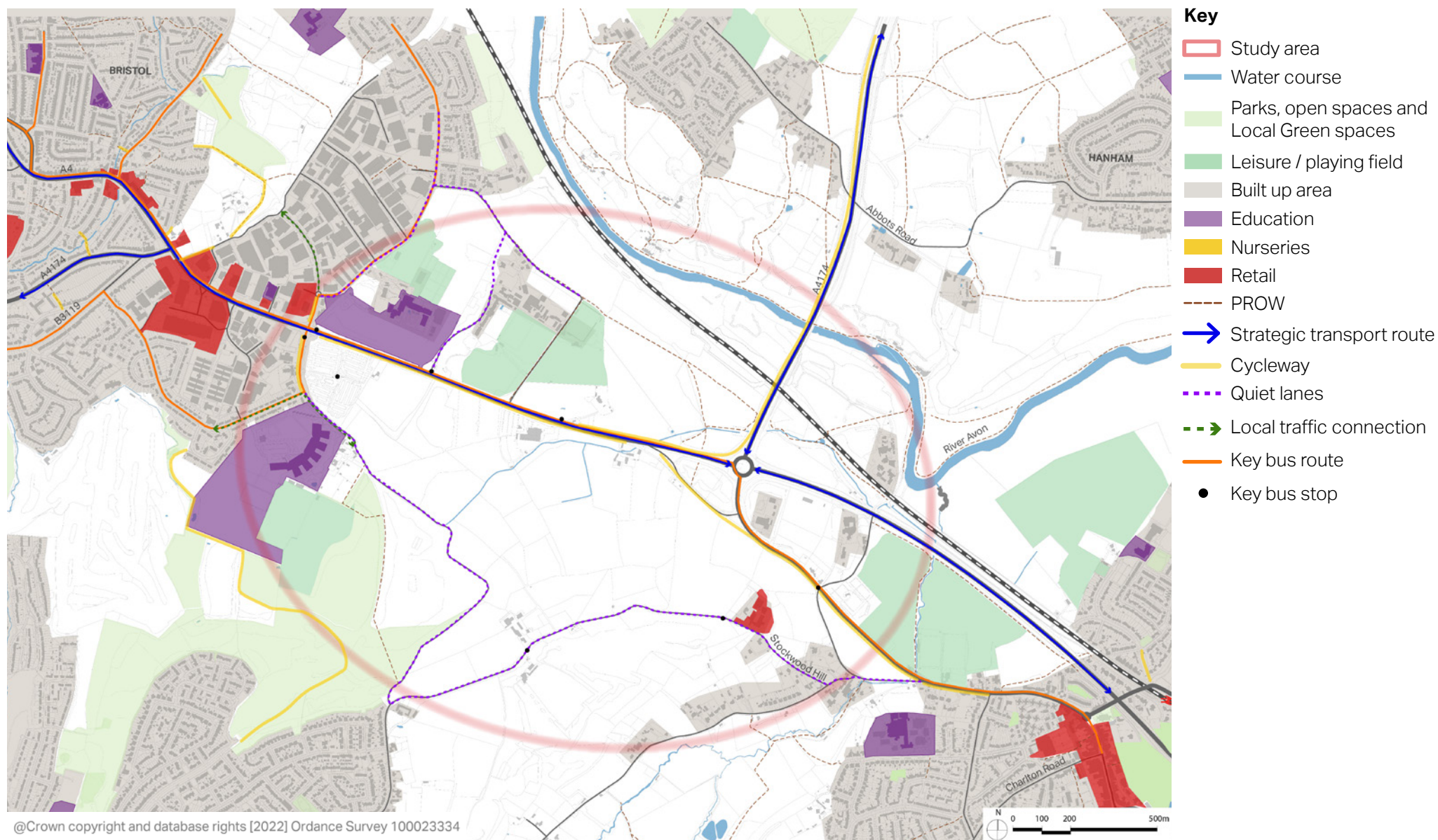


Figure 17. Access and movement





Figure 18. Separator image

## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

# 04

## 4. ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

### 4.1. B&NES officers workshop

4.1.1 B&NES officer workshops and external stakeholder workshops were held in January and February 2023 to inform the Strategic Planning Frameworks for the key study areas. During the officer workshops, participants were asked two key questions including **'what is this place?'** and **'how could this place change?'**. Groups to focused on the five key themes listed below that were derived from the West of England Placemaking Charter.

- Zero Carbon and Climate Resilience
- Moving Around
- Natural Spaces and Biodiversity
- Identity and Belonging
- Thriving, Healthy and Inclusive Homes and Communities

4.1.2 A summary of the discussions is as follows.

- The existing designated Green Belt does not create sufficient levels of biodiversity, and with new developments there is an opportunity to design them **to be 'greener', more environmentally rich than the current Green Belt.**
- Due to the low amounts of green space within the towns, residents often have

to drive to surrounding areas to go for a walk. Therefore, towns either need **more provision of green spaces within the settlements and links to the outer green area**, or more education on the availability of open space around the town.

- The Hicks Gate **interchange is proposed to have direct links between Bristol and Bath**, and will then branch off into the surrounding area. The proposed interchange would 'funnel' bus services from the surrounding area, creating transport 'branches' into the wider area. The issue was raised about ensuring it was a commercially viable strategy, as the bus companies will only undertake profitable options. If the Local Plan does not incorporate profitability, or ensure a reliable positive relationship with bus providers, it will not work as a system. There were suggestions that WECA could take some or all control of local public transport to ensure it stays running and reliable.
- Flooding and water quality were raised as issues along the River Avon and it was suggested that **B&NES should work with farmers and local communities to seek improvements with nature-based solutions.**



Figure 19. Discussions at workshop

- There have been very few changes in the Hicks Gate area in the last 20+ years. There have been many plans formulated and ideas developed but nothing has come of it to date. Officers felt that this area needs **a comprehensive approach to strategic scale development**, given the location and transport infrastructure required, and not piecemeal development.
- There is limited existing residential development in Hicks Gate, therefore **creating the appropriate infrastructure and mix of uses** could be the start of a new community.

## 4.2. First Stakeholder engagement

4.2.1 A stakeholder workshop was held on the 26th of January 2023 with various stakeholders including representatives from Saltford Parish Council, Keynsham Town Council and Compton Dando Parish Council. The participants were asked to discuss the following questions: **“what do you value about the area?”** and **“what are the key priorities for your area?”**.

4.2.2 Participants were asked to include Hicks Gate in their discussion as it is within the Keynsham North Ward, however, due to its small size, low population and, hence, lack of significance to many attendees, it was

often left out of the discussion and only a couple of the points referenced the area.

- It was suggested that **the area could accommodate student housing** due to its proximity to all four universities in Bristol and Bath.
- Another idea was that the area could provide the opportunity for development **to become a new community for young professionals and families**.
- If either of these options were to be viable, **public transport connections to surrounding areas would have to be improved** to reduce reliance on cars.

## 4.3. Second stakeholder engagement

4.3.1 A stakeholder workshop was held on the 16 November 2023 focusing on Hicks Gate with various stakeholders including representatives from Bristol City Council, Keynsham Town Council, B&NES officers, and Hanham Abbots Parish Council.

4.3.2 The purpose of this workshop was to:

- Understand the area in further detail;
- Gather feedback on the emerging themes for shared vision and placemaking principles; and

- Gather feedback on the development opportunities.

4.3.3 The session started with a presentation from B&NES and AECOM, followed by an open discussion about the area. The session went on to present the emerging themes and principles and finally the development opportunities in Hicks Gate.

4.3.4 The key outcomes of the open discussions on “understanding the area” is summarised below.

- Hicks Gate area requires solutions which do not rely on cars.
- The bus services in the area needs to be improved.
- The Bristol to Bath strategic corridor is an ongoing WECA project. The study will look at creating an interchange closer to Hicks Gate with a range of sustainable modes. The project also looks at public transport infrastructure more widely along the A4, as well as walking and cycling improvements.
- The transportation initiatives in Hicks Gate should consider how to serve to the aging population within the surrounding areas.



- There is an opportunity to provide family housing at Hicks Gate due to the good service provision.
- It is crucial for the local authorities to collaborate to produce a comprehensive masterplan for a high quality place to live and work to cater for the high numbers of housing that both authorities have to deliver.
- Hicks Gate area should link the surrounding open spaces and improve the accessibility to these areas.
- Any development in Hicks Gate area should protect Keynsham's boundaries and reinforce its character as an independent market town.
- Hicks Gate should accommodate an inclusive development where every type of need is catered for.
- Smart homes should be considered within the Hicks Gate area to create environmentally friendly development.
- Hicks Gate presents a good opportunity to attract digital industries.

4.3.5 The key outcomes of the open discussions on "emerging themes for a

shared vision and placemaking principles and development opportunities" is summarised below.

- The area should deliver more than the BNG required and avoid damaging the existing biodiversity while only adding a token amount back in.
- A holistic BNG approach should be followed.
- The development in this area should contribute towards improving sustainable transport within its surroundings by creating better walking and cycling connectivity and access to public transport.
- The Hicks Gate area should deliver integrated social housing and affordable housing.
- Any new development in this area should be a "low-car" development but ensure that it is accessible and inclusive, catering for the needs of everyone.
- The Hicks Gate needs a strategic masterplan, and this needs to be delivered through collaborative working across Local Authority borders.

- Bristol City Council recognises an opportunity for development in the area, ensuring that the Green Belt is not lost. The Green Belt should be protected by the Local Planning Authority from any inappropriate development.



Figure 20. Separator image

# PLACEMAKING STUDY

# 05

## 5. PLACEMAKING STUDY

### 5.1. Composite site analysis

5.1.1 The composite site analysis plan summarises the high-level evidence to influence decisions regarding potential future development within the area. Some of the constraints create spatial restrictions and mitigation requirements.

5.1.2 At a strategic level, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (covers whole WECA area) and the West of England Joint Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy regional programme include the Waterspace Connected project. There is a 10% mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement across Bath & North East Somerset, and 20% Net Gain is encouraged for major developments.

5.1.3 The Bath Road A4/ Keynsham bypass and A4174 pass through the study area and the treatment of the A4 should be a key consideration of future development. The A4 has acute high volumes of traffic at high speeds and is of strategic importance as a freight and movement corridor to / from Bristol. Changes to its operation will need to balance sustainable transport and placemaking with vehicle movement and the degree to which rebalancing is acceptable to

a range of stakeholders is a key development risk. The railway passes through the north of the study area and the nearest station is in Keynsham.

5.1.4 Surrounding the study area there are ecological and landscape assets which exert influence within the study area. The Cotswolds AONB is 4.5km to the east and is a sensitivity receptors due to proximity. The Brislington, Hanham Abbots and Keynsham Conservation Areas are just beyond the study area. There are green and blue infrastructure assets with direct linkages (Ecological Networks) to internal networks. The study area is also connected to the wider context by a network of pedestrian and cycle routes including the River Avon Trail and National Cycle Network Route (NCN) 16 which begins on the A4 and heads north along the A4174.

5.1.5 Blue infrastructure assets include: the River Avon and associated branching brooks, which mainly flow between Bath and Bristol, within the northern section of the study area, set in a steep river valley which includes ancient woodland. The River Avon is located within a high risk flood zone, although due to the depth of the River Avon valley, this does not affect the land south of the river. The River Chew lies to the southeast of the study area and connects with the River

Avon at Keynsham and Scotland Bottom watercourse (western central) and flows into the River Avon, the corridor along Scotland Bottom watercourse is also within a high risk flood zone. Flood Zone Mapping shows the study area is predominantly within Flood Zone 1, however areas around the River Avon are shown as within Flood Zones 3. Areas located within Flood Zone 3 are classified as having a 'high risk' of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources. Surface Water mapping shows the study area has a 'Very Low' to 'Low' risk. Watercourses should be given a 10m buffer from development and future developments must be cognisant of the BNG blue infrastructure riparian zone implications. Further blue infrastructure assets include three ponds close to flood risk areas with potential for reptiles, amphibians, and Schedule 1 birds.

5.1.6 The varied ecological baseline comprises designated green and blue infrastructure assets which provide rich habitats for a diverse range of species. The Green Belt designation covers a large section of the study area which currently separates Keynsham, Whitchurch, Stockwood and Brislington. A defined corridor of Green Infrastructure enters the study area from the east and is enclosed by the River Avon in the north. Defined areas of Landscape Setting











include the demarcation of the western extents to Keynsham and the north/north west extents to Whitchurch. Designated SNCI follows the blue infrastructure from Queen Charlton through Stockwood Vale to the East Wood and Keynsham Humpy Tumps complex on the southern edge of the River Avon, which is also identified as priority Acid Calcareous Neutral Grassland. Green infrastructure assets include: Bickley Wood SSSI, Avon Valley Woodland LNR and Stockwood Open space LNR. Areas of ancient woodland include Bickley Wood, Hencliff Wood and Fox's Woodland. There are several priority habitats such as areas of Deciduous Woodland across the site, Coastal and Flood Plain Grazing Marsh to the east and Acid Calcareous Neutral Grassland associated with Keynsham Humpy Tumps complex. There are Tree Preservation Orders at Dudley Park. Spatial requirements due to the impact of roads on air quality include a minimum 200m buffer for SSSI, a minimum 100m buffer for LNR, a minimum 50m buffer for ancient woodland and a minimum buffer of 30m for non-statutory sites including SNCI and all other woodland.

5.1.7 The study area contains historic designations predominantly of Grade II listed

status, Brislington House (known as Long Fox Manor) Registered Park and Garden (Grade II\*) and Avon Valley Conservation Area

5.1.8 Two overhead powerlines spanning east-west lie within the study area, located north and south of the A4. Further, high voltage cables cross the study area and run parallel to the northern boundary. Any diversion of the 33kV cables crossing the site would be required within a new overhead or underground easement corridor. Low, medium and high-pressure gas mains cross the study area, and there is a maximum clearance requirement for high pressure main.

### Key

-  Study area
-  District boundary
-  Listed buildings
-  Green Belt
-  Woodland
-  SNCI
-  SSSI
-  Proposed allocation in  
Bristol Local plan-Publication  
version-Policy DS12

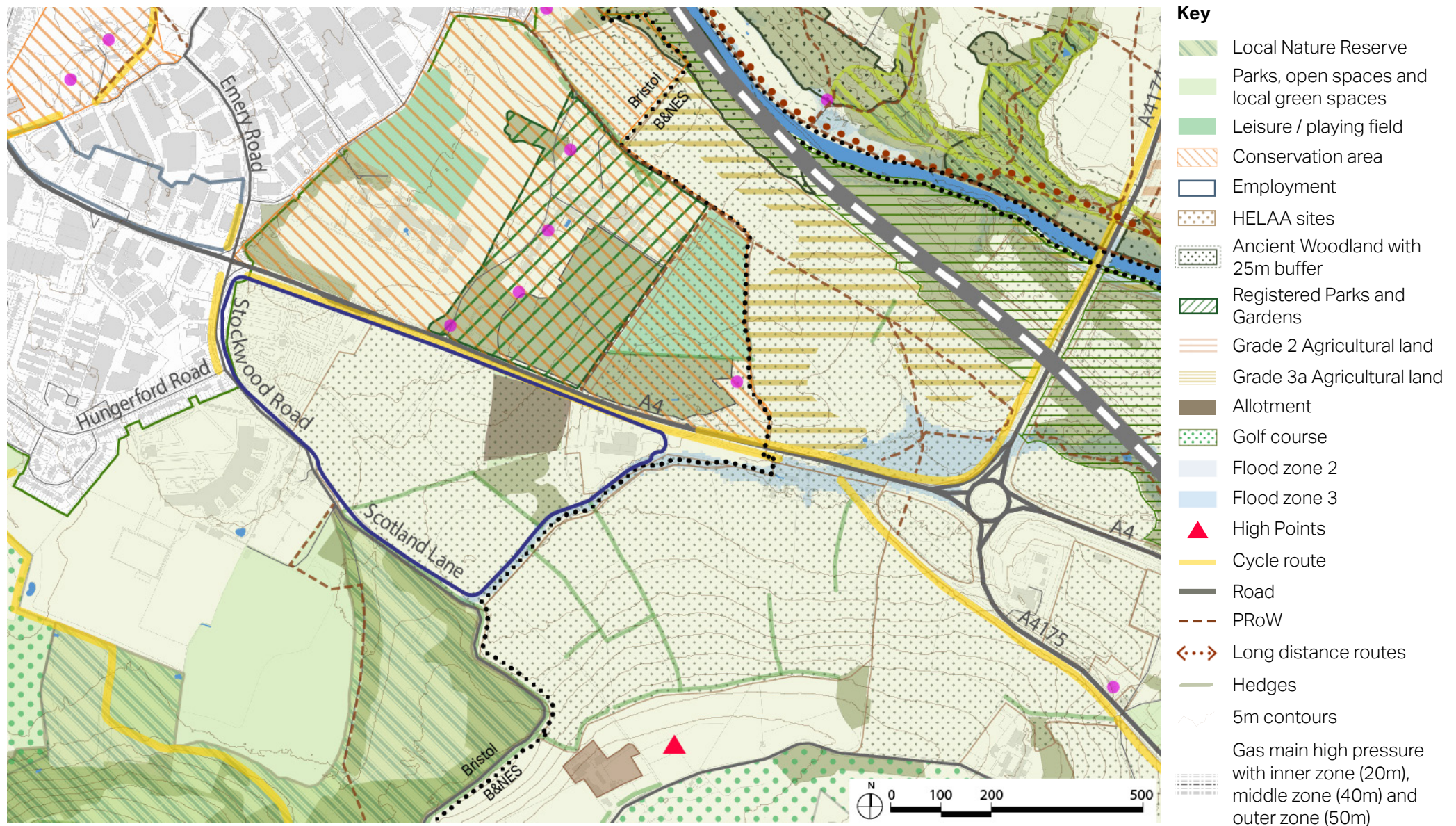


Figure 21. Composite site analysis



## 5.2. Key issues

5.2.1 The following key issues listed below reflect the findings of technical research as well as the outcomes of the workshops.

- The Stockwood Road/A4/Emery Road crossroads is heavily congested on the A4 with active travel users forced to navigate four or five signalised crossing points. The A4 is a strategic route for vehicles and for freight so significant road space will need to be retained, however the introduction of segregated facilities for walking, cycling, public transport, plus green infrastructure and crossing points is needed to reduce the severance effect.
- The prospect of the Park and Ride moving towards the Hicks Gate Roundabout, and becoming an interchange, is important to the quality of any wider future development. It would mean that traffic would not pass through the development area to reach the Park and Ride, and would be better situated to provide connections with the surrounding area.
- Delivery of an interchange at Hicks Gate offers the potential to provide a broader range of sustainable connections with surrounding communities, including Keynsham and Bristol's East Fringe. This could include additional bus services, active travel connections, and shared mobility facilities such as E-car clubs and hire bikes. It also would provide access to bus services on the Bristol Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC), which will benefit from journey time improvements provided by the BBSC project.
- There are few footpaths in Hicks Gate, reducing connectivity within and through the area. The A4 severs movement across the area and cycling is restricted along this busy route. Cycle routes could be relocated away from the A4 to provide active travel links and improve the air quality.
- In terms of access to natural spaces, there is no connection to the River Avon and Stockwood Vale Golf Course restricts access to the south to the wider countryside.
- The landscape setting within the Hicks Gate area is sensitive, in particular in relation to the land immediately to the south of the A4 before the slope begins. This area has a coherent landscape with small to medium late or post medieval permanent pasture (mostly) fields and excellent original, tall hedgerows.
- The existing hedgerows within the area are essential resources with associated wildlife. They need to be integrated in the new development and any hedgerow loss must be compensated at some other areas in line with the BNG and nature recovery requirements and strategies.
- The issue of the potential adverse impact on the water quality of the streams within the site should taken into account and mitigations should be applied.
- There have been very few changes in the Hicks Gate area in the last 20+ years. There have many plans formulated and ideas developed but none of these have been realised. This indicates there are barriers to develop a comprehensive development scheme that needs to be overcome.
- There are very few residents currently in the Hicks Gate area. The challenge will be to create a community with appropriate infrastructure and mix of uses.



### 5.3. Ideas and aspirations

5.3.1 The following list summarises the ideas and aspirations derived from the stakeholder workshops (Section 4, above) and provides some direction as to how the study area could change and improve.

- The Hicks Gate area needs a comprehensive approach to strategic scale development, given the location and transport infrastructure required, and not piecemeal development.
- The limited existing residential development in Hicks Gate gives the opportunity to start a new community. An idea is to provide housing suitable for those who are aspiring to take their first step onto the housing ladder, such as young professionals and young families.
- Pedestrian and cycle routes could be separated or relocated away from the A4 to provide active travel links and improve the air quality along these routes.
- The views to the Cotswolds AONB are important to integrate in any proposed development.
- Deliver quality new homes which make the best use of land and rely on the potential future sustainable transport initiatives to achieve modal shift and meet local and regional housing needs.
- Promote economic growth.
- Enhance employment and skills improvement.
- Protect and enhance existing habitats where possible and create new ones to achieve the BNG and nature recovery strategies and requirements.
- Promote carbon neutral development.
- Contribute to achieve West of England' nature recovery target to double woodland cover by 2050.
- Maintain and enhance the cultural heritage.
- Protect and enhance the settings of Brislington House and the Registered Park and Garden.
- Explore efficient and sensitive land use opportunities within the conservation area.

## 5.4. Opportunities

5.4.1 This section outlines the potential opportunities for change within the Hicks Gate area. These opportunities reflect the outcomes of the workshops, the evidence base analysis, and the Sustainable Transport Strategy studies which run in parallel with this study.

5.4.2 The opportunities plan, below, addresses not only the immediate context of the study area, but also considers the opportunities presented within adjoining areas, such as Bristol, Keynsham and Whitchurch Village. This wider analysis supports a much wider and more comprehensive approach to future planning.

5.4.3 Development opportunities include:

- The proposed Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor being developed by WECA will transform the A4 Bath Road into a green route for buses, walking, cycling and some local traffic. This is comprised of new bus lanes and new and improved routes for walking and cycling. This is a significant opportunity to shift the priority towards sustainable modes and vastly improve the journey between Bristol, Bath and Keynsham, via Hicks Gate.
- A new multi-modal Interchange Facility could be provided to the south west

of Hicks Gate roundabout, linked to the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor proposals. This could provide an interchange with WESTlink buses, fixed time bus services and potentially relocated Park & Ride buses. A new interchange facility in this location benefits from its proximity and ease of access to Bath, Bristol and Keynsham. This enhances the connectivity of the Hicks Gate area and new housing growth in this location would be less reliant on private car journeys, thereby reducing the quantum of car parking required.

- Developing a strong frontage along the A4, including active uses to provide the opportunity to change the aspect and function of the A4. The A4 can reduce its severance effect and function more as a sustainable movement corridor, supporting denser development and establishing a strong urban edge.
- Existing pedestrian and cycle connections can be enhanced and integrated with new proposals across the area to ensure wider commuter routes north-south and east-west, and can connect the Hicks Gate area.
- A network of green spaces can be created within the area of search to be

connected to the existing and proposed green infrastructure.

- Create the opportunity to preserve the existing trees, hedgerows, and green infrastructure as well as wildlife corridors and enhance the existing biodiversity.
- Create integrated water management improving the water quality within the area.
- Create a new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity to serve the wider community, both existing and new, providing the opportunity to integrate existing green spaces, such as Stockwood Open Space, Stockwood Vale, and its Valleys, River Avon, and Avon Valley west of Keynsham Hams with the new network of open spaces within the Hicks Gate opportunity area. This can become a multi-functional green space appropriate to its topography without changing the existing landform, protecting the soil structure, and promoting the existing green infrastructure.
- Retention of views should be part of developing the character of the place within any development.



- Sports facilities can be accommodated within the area and allow the community to socially interact.
- A mixed-use local centre could be located in the heart of the area, providing cafés, shops and community facilities. This would create a strong community node where people can gather together and interact.
- A primary school, community uses, and open spaces could be located in close proximity, supporting a place-based approach to development.



Figure 22. Opportunity to transform Scotland Lane into a pedestrian and cycle only route



Figure 23. Opportunity to create a new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity, view to the hillside from Stockwood Lane



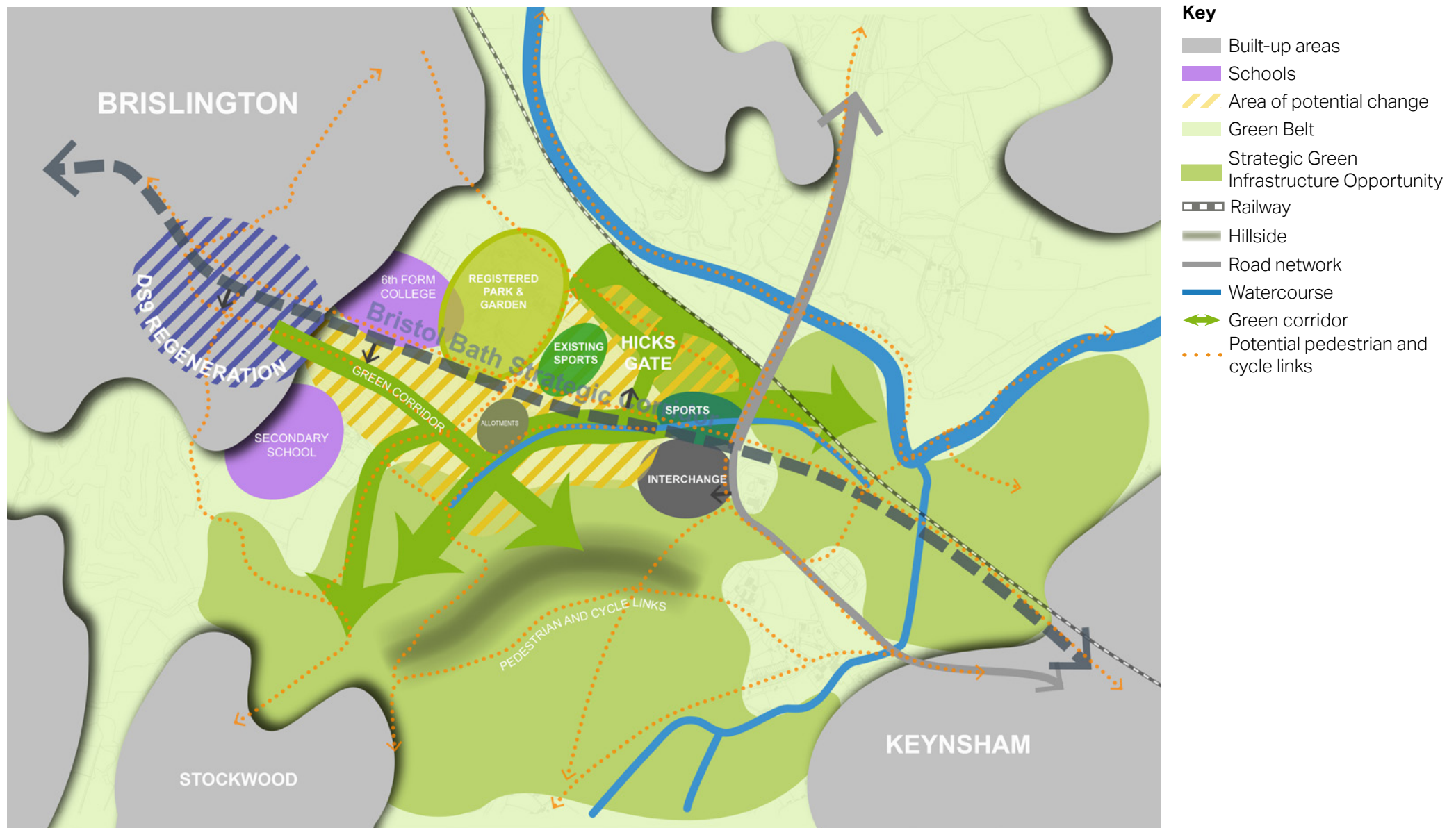


Figure 24. Areas of potential change



Figure 25. Separator image

# EMERGING THEMES FOR A SHARED VISION AND PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

# 06

## 6. EMERGING THEMES FOR A SHARED VISION AND PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES

### 6.1. Emerging themes for a shared vision

6.1.1 The emerging themes set out below, derive from the placemaking vision and principles and also reflect the issues, ideas, aspirations and opportunities identified in the stakeholder engagement exercise. They draw upon the original visioning exercise undertaken as part of the original Strategic Planning and Evidence base commission and they aim to provide comprehensive guidance on potential changes in the area in the future.

6.1.2 The draft vision, opposite, embodies a place-based, sustainable approach to development at Hicks Gate.

*Hicks Gate will be a vibrant, zero-carbon community, and a well-defined, attractive urban setting. It will be a place characterised by a **high-quality urban environment** that is in harmony with its attractive landscape setting. It will be an exemplar for sustainable living, providing new approaches to transport and green and blue infrastructure. Hicks Gate will **include a wide mix of complementary uses** which will help bind the new community with existing settlements, ensuring that new and existing residents will have equal access to a wide range of services and facilities.*

*Hicks Gate will be a fantastic nature positive place to live, work and visit with an enduring quality of place derived from a well designed and managed network of **green connections and space**. Development at Hicks Gate will be a cornerstone of a wider programme of regeneration and **infrastructure delivery in the surrounding area**. It will deliver a positive relationship between the local urban context and the surrounding countryside, with a focus on delivering innovative, robust and replicable examples of **climate resilient placemaking** and design.*



## 6.2. Components of the vision themes

### Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

6.2.1 Hicks Gate will integrate the built development with the existing landscape setting, creating a place characterised by an urban form and multi-functional green infrastructure working in harmony. The new development will seek to maintain existing, and also create new, natural habitats and biodiversity corridors with the aim of achieving an overall net gain in biodiversity across the site. This is a key objective, as it supports climate change and placemaking agendas and responds to the Climate and Ecological Emergencies declared by both BCC and B&NES. Well-planned, sustainable drainage systems will be integrated into the landscape and contribute towards habitat enhancement and creation. The development will also conserve built heritage assets, including the settings of listed buildings.

### Providing accessible, well-connected and low-car neighbourhoods

6.2.2 Hicks Gate will provide a well-connected, sustainable transport network that offers greater, realistic travel choice and makes walking, cycling and public transport the convenient way to travel, contributing to a cleaner environment and enhanced quality of life. It will maximise the benefit of existing and future transport infrastructure and promote a low-car development to make trips across the West of England seamless, faster, cheaper, cleaner and safer. It will offer safe and low-car walking and cycling routes between destinations for both leisure users and commuters. It will prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles within its interconnected movement network with multiple access options throughout.

### Promoting sustainable and healthy lifestyle

6.2.3 Sustainability will be embedded in all aspects of design at Hicks Gate, including the potential for generating food, energy and materials from the local landscape, as well as the application of new technologies and infrastructure predicated on zero-carbon living. Development will aspire to

be zero-carbon with the aspiration that the development will eventually reach a state of being carbon positive. Development at Hicks Gate will be water efficient, minimising flood risk and reducing water waste through the use of innovative technologies, layout and design.



Figure 26. Mood board.



6.2.4 Hicks Gate will provide a range of leisure, sports and recreational facilities, parks and open spaces, as well as sustainable linkages to existing facilities. New green links for walking and cycling will connect residents to these amenities while enabling them to have close contact with nature. Tree-lined streets and public spaces will make for attractive places, encouraging people to choose walking and cycling as their main mode of travel. This network of local green spaces will also enhance residents' well-being, while contributing towards the development's climate change resilience capabilities by providing shading and cooling.

### Ensuring cohesive, vibrant and safe communities

6.2.5 The development at Hicks Gate will deliver physical, environmental and social links to surrounding communities via new, attractive walking and cycling routes. All the streets and public spaces will be overlooked by buildings, establishing safe and accessible connections within and beyond the development. A mix of housing sizes, types and tenures, including market and affordable, will help to meet the needs of a wide range of residents by fostering a diverse, inclusive and well-balanced community. Public and open spaces will be designed to be attractive places where people will choose to meet up

and linger, taking the opportunity to both enjoy the amenities and the company of neighbours and friends.

### Achieving high quality living

6.2.6 Hicks Gate will be a successful and sustainable community, characterised by a built environment and public realm that is sustainable, well-designed and well-managed. Placemaking will be at the core of Hicks Gate, with the express intention of giving people great places to live and work and a sustainable, neighbourly and enduring quality of life. Development will incorporate future-proofed design so that it can adapt to the cultural, technological, environmental and economic changes that are almost certain to happen in the years to come. The streets, public places and green spaces will be full of life, being both movement routes and exchange spaces, supporting safe, convenient and sustainable modes of travel set within a matrix of well-designed, attractive, zero-carbon development that comprises a mix of uses and amenities thereby supporting a more sustainable way of life. Employment and commercial activities will be neatly woven into the built development, in such a way as to maximise the benefits to be accrued from people being able to live, work and take their leisure within the same neighbourhood.

## 6.3. Emerging strategic placemaking principles

6.3.1 A series of strategic placemaking principles were identified in the series of workshops during this and the previous SPEB commission, the aim being to begin the process of ascribing qualities and substance to the opportunity for strategic development at Hicks Gate. These are:

- Deliver zero-carbon homes and a built environment that seeks to meet the challenge of climate change by delivering a development that is both resilient and enduring.
- Utilise habitat opportunity areas and aspirational connectivity identified on the Nature Recovery network to safeguard existing habitats and seek opportunities to deliver at least 20% biodiversity net gain with a comprehensive network of hedgerows and flower rich verges throughout.
- Promote a strategic nature park.
- Provide a range of sports, recreational facilities, parks and open spaces incorporating existing landscape assets to enable new residents to have an easy access to nature and promote active modes of travel.
- Maximise the delivery of affordable housing responding to social and economic needs, and local demographics.
- Reduce the need to travel, particularly by retaining and providing jobs, services and community facilities at suitable locations close to residential areas.
- Tree-lined streets and public spaces will promote a sense of well-being as well as providing shading and cooling in the summer months and contributing towards the development's climate change resilience capabilities.
- Integrate natural water management solutions to achieve resilient places to respond to the challenge of water stress by integrating sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), rain gardens, permeable pavers and rooftop gardens.
- The land use mixes across the site will be flexible, balanced and complementary with residential, community and leisure facilities, local services, retail, small scale employment, offices and studios, all woven together to create a place that is truly designed for a healthy work-life balance.
- The development will be compact, with an efficient use of the available land predicated on a well-balanced housing density, and a mix of house sizes, typologies and tenures.
- Development at Hicks Gate will seek to complement existing provision of services and amenities providing for the needs of both new and existing communities.
- The new community will integrate with existing communities via a network of sustainable, accessible and green movement corridors, allowing people to access amenities and services in Hicks Gate and across the wider Keynsham and south-east Bristol area.
- Hicks Gate will aim to be a low-car settlement, promoting limited through routes within the development and focusing on walking and cycling, and accessible and competitive public transport opportunities.
- The development will enable and enhance the delivery of projects established in JLTP4 to provide sustainable travel options for longer distance trips, Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor and new interchange.



- The A4/ Bath Road, as it passes through the site, will function as a sustainable movement corridor, including segregated walking and cycling paths and public transport, and it will re-balance road space to embed a green zone and contribute to the green infrastructure. Notwithstanding this, the A4 is part of the Key Route Network (KRN) and performs a strategic movement function, including for freight. These opportunities will need to be balanced to ensure a multi-functional corridor. The corridor will be defined with strong building lines and active frontages to amplify its role as a gateway to Bristol.
- The Hicks Gate development will be designed to tie in with a number of wider strategic transport and infrastructure initiatives. It will be built around a sustainable transport network to promote the use of walking and cycling routes and public transport from day one and continue to evolve to incorporate future infrastructure initiatives when they come on stream.



Figure 27. Separator image

# SPATIAL FRAMEWORK OPTIONS

# 07

## 7. SPATIAL FRAMEWORK OPTIONS

### 7.1. Hicks Gate

7.1.1 This section of the document identifies two high-level spatial Spatial Framework Options, each of which explores potential development capacity and extent based on the application of the key placemaking principles and objectives for Hicks Gate, identified above. The Spatial Framework Options set out different development opportunities that respond to the sensitive landscape setting and the study area's sustainable location.

7.1.2 The Spatial Framework Options address the objectives identified by B&NES' Climate and Ecology declarations by promoting low car and active travel principles, seeking to protect and enhance the natural environment, integrate blue and green infrastructure and create biodiversity corridors within the development to achieve at least 20% Biodiversity Net Gain.

7.1.3 The Spatial Framework Options focus mainly on residential-led development within the Hicks Gate area, but also include elements of mixed use including a local centre and a primary school within the main Hicks Gate parcels, north and south.

7.1.4 The Spatial Framework Options have been developed using the following overarching placemaking principles:

- Creating walkable "Liveable Neighbourhoods" with a vibrant local centre and community facilities that are accessible to all.
- Setting a development within an interconnected, easily accessible network of attractive streets, green infrastructure, green corridors and open spaces to act as wildlife corridors and sustainable transport links.
- Integrating with surrounding communities and encourage a sense of belonging and ownership for local residents.
- Increasing access to the surrounding landscapes and supporting health and well-being through opportunities for active lifestyles and living in close contact with nature.
- Ensuring the streets, public realm and open spaces are well overlooked to promote safety and security.
- Incorporating existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and watercourses and introducing new ones throughout the development to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Prioritising sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport to create low-car neighbourhoods.

- Redefining the A4 as a tree lined multi modal corridor.

### Green Belt

7.1.5 Any new development within Hicks Gate requires a release of land from the Green Belt. The Spatial Framework Options explore different approaches to creating a new, defensible Green Belt boundary and identify the land which would be required to be released from the existing Green Belt.

7.1.6 The NPPF states the following on the creation of Green Belt boundaries (section 13, paragraph 139).

*"When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:*

- *Ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;*
- *Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;*
- *Where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;*
- *Make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present*



*time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;*

- *Be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and*
- *Define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent."*

7.1.7 The A4174 Avon Ring Road to the east of the Hicks Gate area is a clear boundary between the opportunity area and the countryside to the east. Likewise, to the north of the opportunity area, the steep slope, together with the woodland and railway, is

considered to be a clear boundary. Therefore, it is envisaged that the A4174 and northern slope provide new robust and defensible boundaries for the Green Belt for the area to the north of the A4.

7.1.8 To the south of the A4, each framework explores different configurations and alignments for the Green Belt Boundary, based on variations in the scale and spatial arrangement of development option.



Figure 28. View of the hillside to the south of the A4 from north

## New Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity

7.1.9 Each of the Spatial Framework Options integrates with the adjacent countryside in such a way as to create a varied, attractive, accessible and well-connected Strategic Green Infrastructure.

7.1.10 The potential for creating a new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity is explored by integrating Stockwood Open Space, Stockwood Vale, the River Avon and Avon Valley west of Keynsham Hams with the new green infrastructure network at Hicks Gate. A network of pedestrian and cycle connections is proposed with a multitude of route options increasing the access and connectivity to a wide diversity of destinations. The new Interchange will support access to the Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity, providing a "Ride and Stride" opportunity for people from a wider area to access the natural environment. These multi-modal transport options will allow the wider community, both existing and new residents to have easy access to it.

7.1.11 The new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity has the potential to deliver enhanced social and environmental benefits beyond its designation in planning policy as Green Belt, and the 'five purposes' it

contributes towards serving. This would be in line with NPPF Paragraph 150 which encourages local planning authorities to “plan positively to enhance [Green Belt land’s] beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity”.

7.1.12 Furthermore if the Council consequently decides during the plan-making process that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries elsewhere within the District, then the Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity could satisfy



Figure 29. View from north east towards Oakleigh House

NPPF 147 which states that local planning authorities “should set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land”.

7.1.13 The New Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity will contribute to improving the “environmental quality and accessibility” of the remaining Green Belt land providing compensatory measures, a principle introduced in the NPPF, 2018. In fact, paragraph 138 states that plan-makers should “set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land”.

## Density

7.1.14 The Spatial Framework Options promote a wide range of housing provision, with different densities, typologies and tenures across Hicks Gate, the aim being to maximise the potential for a sustainable and low-car settlement.

7.1.15 The Spatial Framework Options follow a density strategy informed by the context of the location, land use mix and landscape

context and comprise a range of housing densities. The Spatial Framework Options are envisaged as being able to accommodate higher density (80+) to the south west (at the area where existing P&R is located), high density development (55-70 dph) on both sides of the A4, lower densities (35-45 dph) towards the fringes of Hicks Gate, with medium densities (45-55 dph) located in those areas closer, but not immediately adjacent, to the public transport corridors and mixed-use areas.

7.1.16 The Spatial Framework Options propose the use of a low residential car parking ratio, between 0.5 to 1.2 per home, depending on the number of bedrooms in order to achieve a sustainable and low-car settlement. The aim is to reduce on plot car parking and provide more innovative and efficient solutions which will reduce the impact of car parking spaces. Wider parking control measures will be considered, as necessary, to avoid unintended consequences of overspill parking.

## Access and movement

7.1.17 The Spatial Framework Options seek to create a permeable and well-integrated development with a strong, legible network of high-quality, LTN1/20 compliant, active travel routes. By contrast, car permeability is limited with the aim of designing out the risk of creating car dominated environments, and providing tangible priority for active travel. Walking and cycling will be the modes of choice for local trips, and access to public transport will be convenient and attractive through good links to services along the A4, including Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor, and the Interchange Hub.

## Interchange

7.1.18 Both of the Spatial Framework Options propose using the existing Park and Ride site for development and the creation of a new “Interchange Hub” in a more appropriate location. A reasonable location is at the south west corner of the Hicks Gate Roundabout, however, the scale, specification and exact location of the Interchange Hub will be determined through the Bristol – Bath A4 Strategic Corridor Programme, an Outline Strategic Business Case for which has recently been commissioned by WECA, independently of this study. The principles

of the Interchange Hub proposed here have been worked up in collaboration with B&NES and BCC, are in line with JLTP4 policy and emerging Planning Policy, and are suitable for this early stage of masterplanning.

7.1.19 The traditional form of interchange is a P&R site which intercepts car trips towards a city centre and provides a high frequency direct bus service. However, it needs to consider transport as mode-agnostic mobility, and expand origins and destinations beyond the traditional periphery-core model. The transport network facilitates people moving, and many of these journeys are, or could be, made via a number of different types of transport. The ability for people to change between modes is integral to improving the efficiency of the system, and can be an important factor in reducing car usage for whole journeys where a viable, realistic, sustainable alternative exists for part of the journey.

7.1.20 The Interchange Hub expands the concept of P&R and enables people to interchange between a range of modes. It will support orbital and radial movements, as well as providing opportunities for people to access the countryside by sustainable modes. Facilities could include safe and secure cycle parking, electric bike hire and charging, micro-mobility such as walking

infrastructure and wayfinding, electric vehicle charging, last mile freight consolidation, coach parking and interchange with a range of public transport services including the integration of local bus services.

7.1.21 Complementary uses, such as renewable energy generation and community uses should be investigated and included as appropriate. Depending on capacity requirements and other considerations, some parking may be provided in a multi-storey structure to limit space dedicated to private vehicle storage and maximise the quality of the overall development.

## Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor

7.1.22 Indicative locations for Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor bus stops have been shown on the Spatial Framework Options plans. It is understood that initially, public transport improvements along the corridor are likely to be delivered in the form of bus services and priority measures, with Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor being delivered in the longer term. It is understood that the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor project will be developing its own design guidelines, which would include spacing between stops



and desirable walking catchments, although this is not available at present. It is also not clear at this stage what mode Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor might take, although for the purpose of this study it is assumed to be segregated, surface level, public transport. It is necessary to balance good coverage of stops with the need to avoid diluting the quality of service through stopping too regularly and introducing delay.

7.1.23 The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) recommends a maximum walking distance to a bus stop of 400m. Given the enhanced quality of metrobus, the West of England (WoE) Authorities consider that it has a 1km walking catchment. It is reasonable to use these principles when considering a public transport network that is likely to comprise a metrobus service initially, and Metrobus/ Mass Transit in the longer term. We have, therefore, determined that two stops should be placed along the A4 within the study area, in addition to the stop at the Interchange (as shown in the spatial framework plans, Figures 39, 47 and 54).

7.1.24 400m, 800m and 1,200m walking catchments are shown to indicate the level of existing and proposed development within walking distance of a Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor bus stop. Further stops

will of course be located along the A4 into Bristol, and the locations of these stops may affect the locations of those within the development. The design of Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor, including stop locations, as it passes through the Hicks Gate development area will need to be determined through the relevant Business Case process.

### Sustainable Drainage

7.1.25 The surface water strategy for the Hicks Gate development will be designed to follow the National Planning Policy Framework with regards to the provision of mitigation of flood risk, compliance with Local Policy including the West of England Sustainable Drainage Developer Guide. This will also comply with the provisions of the CIRIA SUDS Manual C765 for the implementation of the design.

7.1.26 The hierarchy of surface water management solutions will comply with the guidance, namely infiltration to ground where feasible, followed by managed and controlled discharge to the nearest receiving waters. Discharge to sewer will only be employed as a last resort in those instances, as a consequence of topography or geological conditions, no other alternative is available.

7.1.27 The overall strategy will aim to utilise

surface features such as swales in public open space to transport water through the development site, providing water quality improvement as well as flow management. This will be coupled with source control measures within each development parcel, incorporating permeable paving or other suitable surfaces or underground storage to provide attenuation and water quality improvements, along with localised rain gardens, where possible.

7.1.28 The swales will, if ground conditions and testing permit, direct water to infiltration locations where the water will discharge to ground. If infiltration is not feasible, then the swales will be utilised as discharge corridors to the localised receiving water / sewer network, where they will discharge at a controlled rate. If attenuation to manage discharge is required, this will be in the form of either above ground retention basins or ponds, which can either be permanently wet or dry and incorporate additional planting for water quality control.

7.1.29 It is expected that the development may have to reduce surface water flows to greenfield runoff rates or better; however this will be confirmed during discussions with the Lead Local Flood Authority and Environment Agency as applicable.

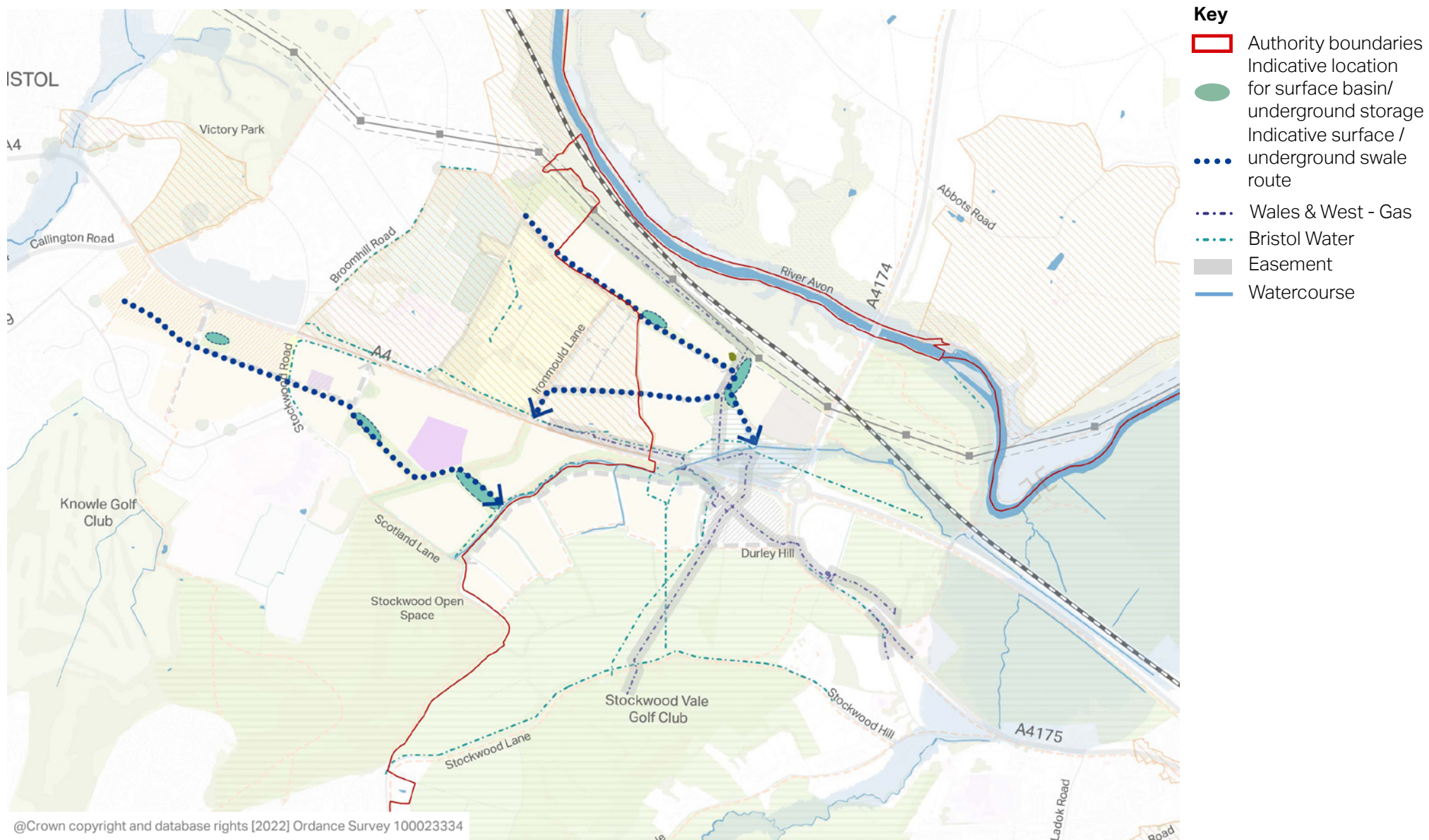


Figure 30. Indicative drainage plan

## 7.2. Key design drivers

### Potential future transport initiatives and housing need

- Acknowledge potential future initiatives within the area, such as the A4 Bristol Bath Strategic Corridor Programme, and maximise the benefit from these infrastructure initiatives.
- Deliver quality new homes which make the best use of land and rely on the potential future sustainable transport initiatives to achieve modal shift and meet local and regional housing needs.
- Promote economic growth.
- Enhance employment and skills improvement.
- Promote a new transport interchange to play a key role in providing access to the countryside for local residents, in addition to managing journeys into, out of, and around Bristol.

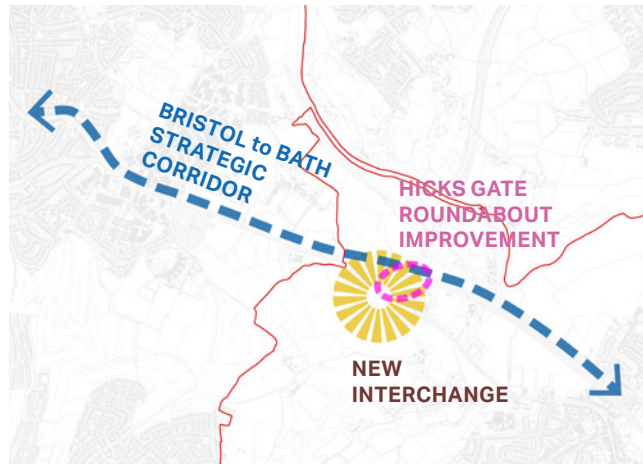


Figure 31. Potential future projects

### Context

- Protect the Stockwood Ridge and local views, and incorporate these areas into strategic green infrastructure.
- Protect and enhance the existing watercourses by incorporating into the wider green infrastructure.
- Reduce and manage flood risk within and adjacent to development areas.
- Protect existing landscape features and integrate them into new development.
- Ensure the achievement of mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain, and aspire to 20%, where feasible.
- Integrate new and existing open spaces with the wider green infrastructure.

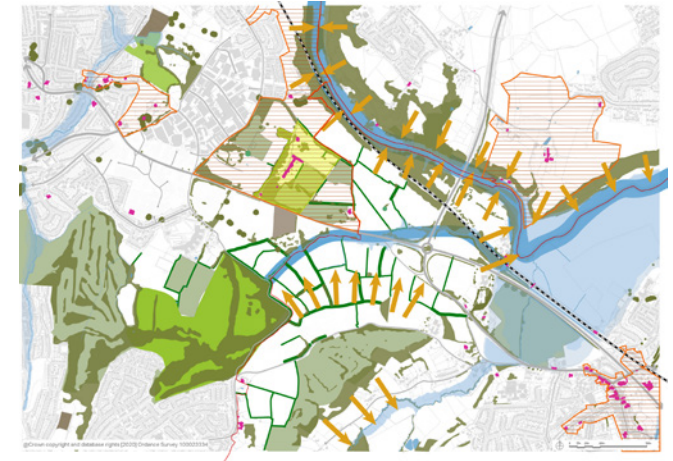


Figure 32. Existing context

- Create a network of open spaces to cater for a range of activities and users with the emphasis on ease of access to a variety of different types of open space.
- Protect and enhance existing habitats and create new ones.
- Maintain and enhance the cultural heritage.
- Protect and enhance the setting of Brislington House and the Registered Park and Garden.
- Explore efficient and sensitive land use opportunities within the conservation area.



## Sustainable travel

- Re-model the A4 whilst acknowledging its critical function as a public transport and movement corridor and enable the delivery of Metrobus/ Mass Transit.
- Create a space that accommodate sustainable traveling modes, including segregated walking and cycling facilities
- Create active frontages to reduce its severance effect and improve integration of communities.
- Create a strong building line along the A4 with appropriate development density to establish a strong urban corridor.
- Improve the A4 corridor, re-allocating road space, making it a tree line boulevard and creating a new, green gateway into Bristol.
- The strategic vehicle movement function of the A4 as part of the Key Route Network (KRN), including for freight, will need to continue to be accommodated.
- Protect and improve existing pedestrian and cycle routes and create new ones.

- Integrate the existing neighbourhood and open spaces via a network of pedestrian and cycle links.
- Connect to the surrounding countryside with multiple routes options.



Figure 33. Sustainable travel

## Spatial Framework Option 1

### Placemaking

7.2.1 The Spatial Framework Option 1 provides a residential development to the north and to the south of the A4.

7.2.2 The southern development parcel is accessed via the existing Park and Ride junction from the A4. A mixed-use local centre is located in this area providing shops, cafes and other community facilities for day to day needs. The development provides active and continuous frontages onto the A4 with pedestrian and cycle access. A primary school is proposed such that it fronts onto the diagonal linear open space at the western edge of the existing allotments (which are retained).

7.2.3 Stockwood Road continues to provide access for existing residents, but becomes a pedestrian and cycle only link via Stockwood Open Space which cuts across the proposed Strategic Green Infrastructure, connecting Hicks Gate to the Stockwood residential neighbourhood. The development provides access and active frontages onto Stockwood Road, creating natural surveillance.

7.2.4 The development to the north of the A4 is accessed by a new junction from the

A4. A green link at the northern edge is introduced to accommodate easements for overhead cables, a gas main, and a buffer zone for ancient woodland. The linear green space to the south creates a green link that includes the existing Public Right of Way. The open space to the south-east accommodates sports fields while retaining most of the hedgerows and the veteran tree. The gas main and its easement zone are also accommodated within this open space.

### Green and blue infrastructure and nature recovery

7.2.5 The area to the south of the A4 has a strong landscape character and various topographic and landscape features including hedgerows, Stockwood Ridge and medieval field patterns. Spatial Framework Option 1 proposes the protection of the areas to the south-east and north-west of Scotland Bottom. It creates a new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity comprising Stockwood open space, Stockwood Vale, the River Avon and the Avon Valley west of Keynsham Hams. It also retains the Brislington Football Club, Brislington Cricket Club, allotments, mature trees and the most of the hedgerows by consolidating them within the development's green infrastructure.

7.2.6 Sufficient set back of development should allow for growth of trees and preserving the ecological integrity of habitat corridors. The following minimum buffers will be required: 10m buffer zone from base of hedgerows and 15m buffer zone from base of hedgerows with ditch will be required.

7.2.7 This development framework seeks to protect green space along Scotland Brook, especially the area of flood zone and allocate new sports fields in this location.

7.2.8 The area to the north of the A4 Spatial Framework Option 1 seeks to protect the green space along Scotland Bottom Brook (to the north-west of Hicks Gate Roundabout), especially the area of flood zone and allocates new sports fields in this location. It also proposes retaining the veteran tree and most of the hedgerows by consolidating them within a network of open spaces.

## Access and movement

7.2.9 The development will create a strong legible network of pedestrian and cycle connections and limit vehicle dominance. This approach incorporates the existing network, integrating and enhancing, where necessary.

### **The A4**

7.2.10 The Bristol Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC) project will include significant changes to the A4. This will include:

- A bus lane in both directions
- Cycle route along the A4
- Connections to the wider active travel network

7.2.11 The development proposals will build on the benefits provided by the BBSC. This will include the remodelling of the A4, to provide an active frontage, crossing points, green infrastructure with street trees to create an avenue and reallocation of road space. These measures will facilitate sustainable travel modes, including segregated public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities, will reduce its severance effect and improve integration of communities.

## Active Travel

7.2.12 High quality walking / cycling connections through the area will be provided. These link with wider commuter and utility routes including along the A4, the A4175, a potential future segregated route along the A4 towards Bath, and routes towards Keynsham. There will be an attractive and direct walking and cycling route through green space and lightly trafficked streets running east-west between Durley Hill, all the way through the development and connecting with the A4. The network, as a whole, will enhance existing leisure routes and deliver good quality access to the countryside, including alongside the River Avon.

7.2.13 It is noted that future development proposals for the site are likely to require off-site improvements to the sustainable transport network to make onwards connections more attractive. The advent and increasing uptake levels of forms of Micromobility such as e-bikes, will unlock further destinations by breaking down distance and topography barriers. The Interchange Hub may include hire, charging and storage facilities to support Micromobility.

## Interchange

7.2.14 A new interchange hub is included at the south west corner of the Hicks Gate Roundabout. This will include traditional Park and Ride functionality for trips into Bristol, but also better connect the development and surrounding communities with a wider range of bus services, active travel routes, and shared mobility services, and allow those coming from further afield to access nature.

### **Public Transport**

7.2.15 The BBSC project will provide bus journey time benefits with the intention of supporting bus service improvements in terms of frequencies, journey times and improved reliability. The development will provide walking and cycling routes to access these services on the A4, and at the interchange. The delivery of an interchange will support delivery of a wider network of routes, including connecting the development with Keynsham and communities on Bristol's East Fringe.



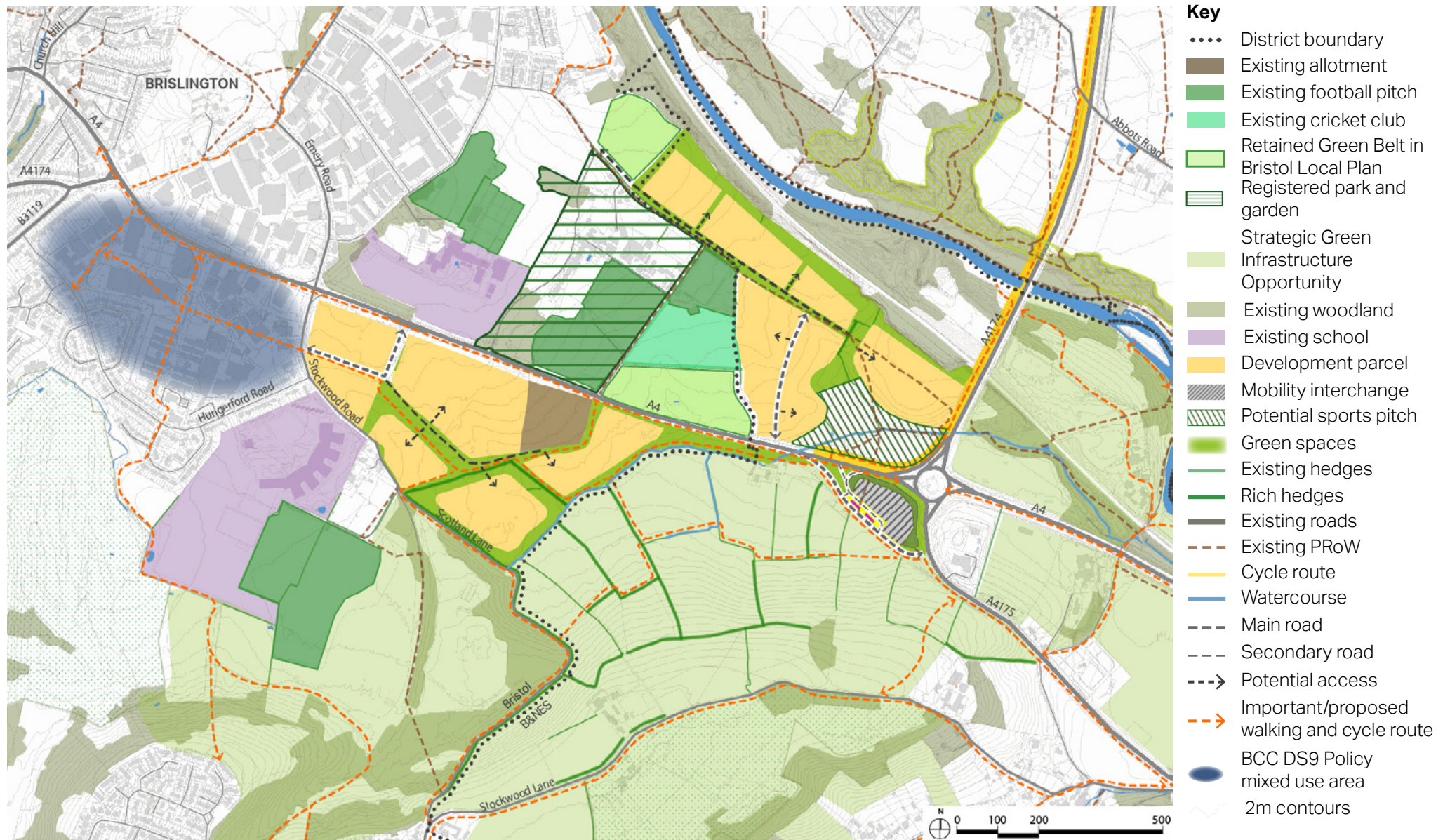


Figure 34. Hicks Gate Development Framework Option 1

## **Vehicle access**

7.2.16 The number of vehicle accesses on the A4 itself need to be minimised to limit potential impacts on the sustainable transport routes along the A4 being provided as part of the BBSC. The option includes the development of the existing Park and Ride. Re-using the P&R access as a vehicle access to the development would support this, albeit there would likely need to be design changes.

7.2.17 The Stockwood Road/A4/Emery Road junction is a significant congestion hotspot, with disbenefits for bus journey times. There are controlled crossings, but pedestrians and cyclists need to cross in multiple stages, with a significant amount of delay. A new vehicle access connection between Stockwood Road and the A4 at the Park and Ride access point would provide an opportunity to downgrade Stockwood Road at the Emery Road junction. This could reduce the number of traffic stages at the junction and offer opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities and reduce congestion, particularly for buses.

7.2.18 Vehicle connection to development to the north of the A4 will be via the junction with Ironmould Lane. It will not be possible

for private vehicles to travel through the site between Broomhill Road in the northwest and the A4 in the southeast, by use of modal filters, to ensure that vehicles are kept to primary routes and reduce the level of car traffic through residential areas. Subject to future bus service planning, it would be possible to allow buses to use this route if desirable for local connections.

7.2.19 Modal filters will be introduced to stop vehicles using the internal routes between access points as rat-runs, whilst ensuring that the permeability around the development for active modes is maximised.

7.2.20 Parking levels will be as low as possible, in accordance with adopted policy, reflecting the sustainable access opportunities being provided and prioritised. Wider parking restraints, such as Residents Parking Zones, may be required to support aims for low car ownership and avoid issues which can occur with overspill parking.



## Capacity

7.2.21 An indicative high-level capacity test has been undertaken based on the illustrated spatial framework and density parameters.

7.2.22 Spatial Framework Option 1 generates a total of 1,863 homes at an average density of approximately 55 dph.



Figure 35. Density, Spatial Framework Option 1

Land use budget	
B&NES developable area	15.65 ha
BCC developable area	16.23 ha
School (within BCC land)	2.13 ha
Green and other infrastructure (B&NES and BCC)	29.1 ha
B&NES homes	852
BCC homes	1,011
Total homes	1,863
<b>Total area</b>	<b>63.06 ha</b>
Interchange (within B&NES land)	2.35 ha

Table 1. Hicks Gate Spatial Framework Option 1 land use budget

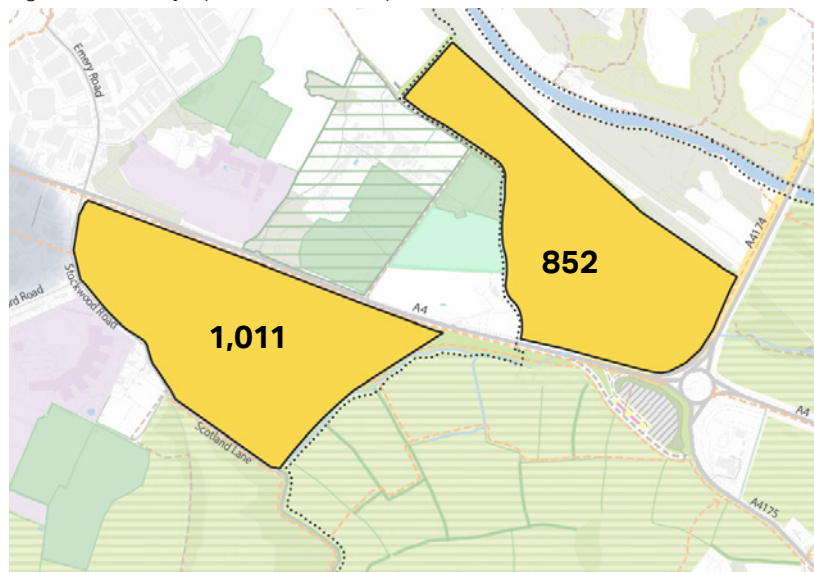


Figure 36. Capacity, Spatial Framework Option 1



## Spatial Framework Option 2

### Placemaking

7.2.23 Hicks Gate Spatial Framework Option 2 follows a very similar development proposition to Hicks Gate Spatial Framework Option 1 albeit with additional residential development located to the south of the A4.

7.2.24 It provides for the most extensive component of residential development to the south of the A4, compared to Spatial Framework Option 1.

### Green and blue infrastructure and nature recovery

7.2.25 To the south of the A4, this option proposes the line of existing hedgerows to the south of Scotland Bottom as the boundary of the new Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunity. Retaining and enhancing internal hedgerows including hedgerow specimen trees, enables the subdivision of the development into a number of parcels and provides a strong landscape and green infrastructure framework. Sufficient setback of development should allow for growth of trees, ecological functioning of habitat corridors and buffering of the Local Nature

Reserve. The following minimum buffers will be required: 10m from base of hedgerow; 15m from base of hedgerow with ditch; 25m to buffer the woodland LNR. Lightspill in the retained hedgerow network and habitat buffers should be avoided. This approach protects the ridge, the hillside and the existing hedgerows to the north of the ridge (and south of the A4) and integrates them with the site-wide green infrastructure.

### Access and movement

7.2.26 Spatial Framework Option 2 includes many of the same access and movement proposals as Spatial Framework Option 1. The main addition is further housing in the south east corner to the west of the Interchange Hub. This additional housing is located closest to the Interchange Hub with access to a variety of sustainable modes, potentially lowering levels of car ownership. The network of active travel routes remains as per Spatial Framework Option 1, with the additional areas of housing able to connect into the active mode route which leads to Durley Hill and the Interchange Hub.

7.2.27 In accordance with the aspirations of Spatial Framework Option 1, modal filters will be implemented to ensure that priority is given to maximising active mode

permeability. Modal filters will also ensure that through traffic is not able to easily route onwards to Durley Hill and the A4.

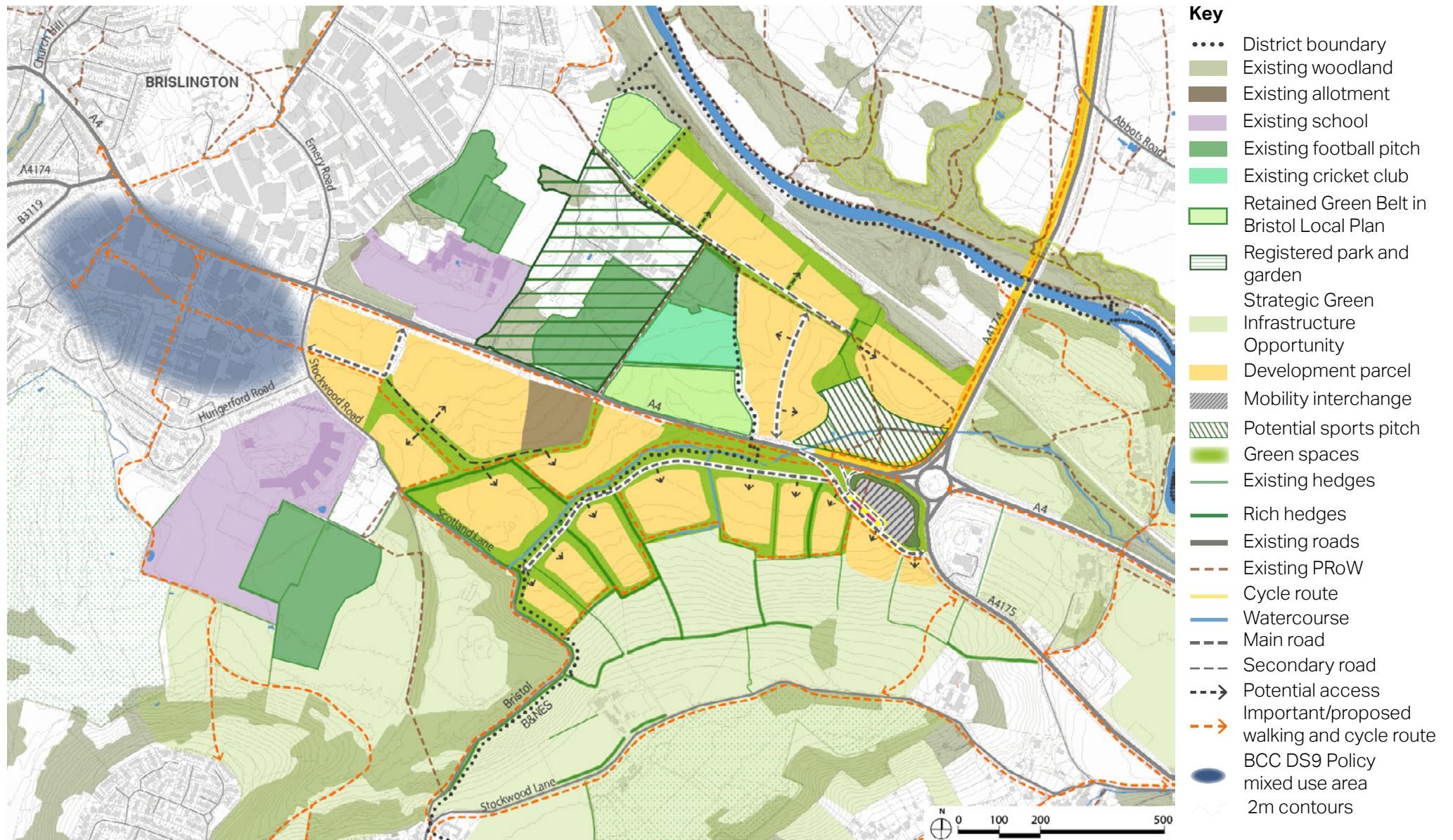


Figure 37. Hicks Gate Development Framework Option 2



## Capacity

7.2.28 An indicative high-level capacity test has been undertaken based on the illustrated spatial framework and density parameters.

7.2.29 Spatial Framework Option 2 generates a total of 2,324 homes at an average density of approximately 50 dph.

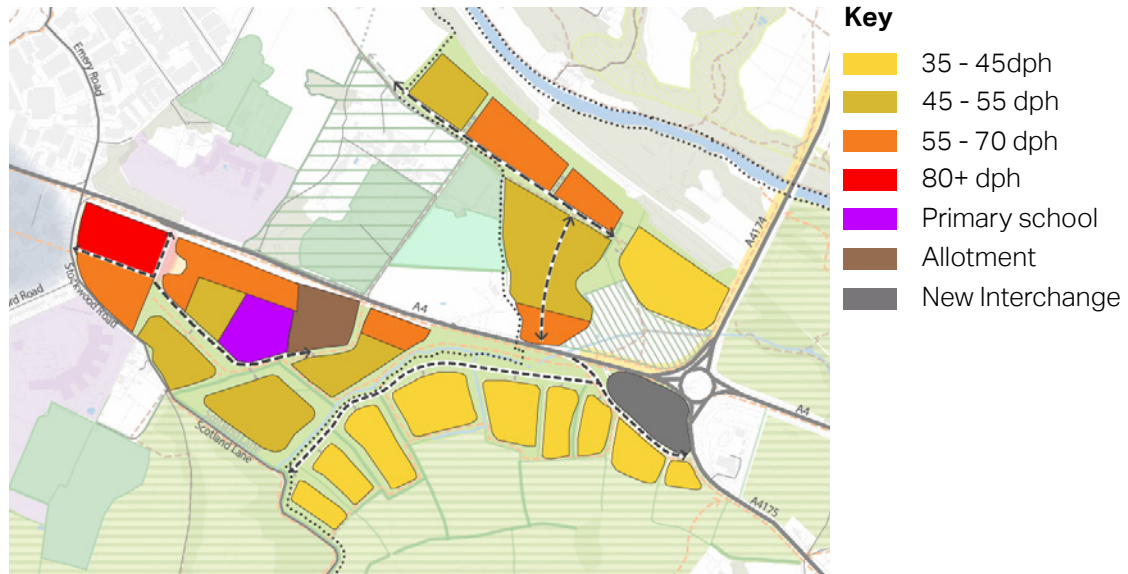


Figure 38. Density, Spatial Framework Option 2

Land use budget	
B&NES developable area	25.18 ha
BCC developable area	16.23 ha
School (within BCC land)	2.13 ha
Green and other infrastructure (B&NES and BCC)	31.6 ha
B&NES homes	1,313
BCC homes	1,011
Total homes	2,324
<b>Total area</b>	<b>74.74ha</b>
Interchange (within B&NES land)	2.35 ha

Table 2. Hicks Gate Spatial Framework Option 2 land use budget

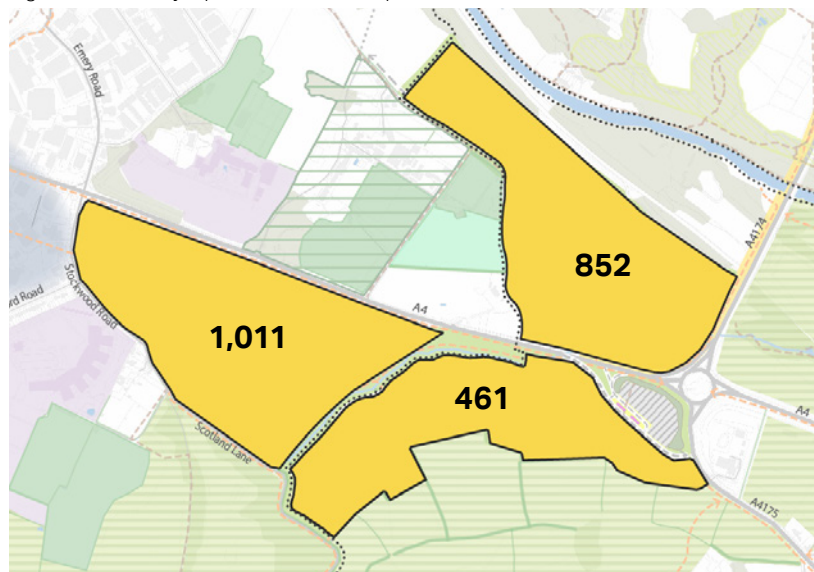


Figure 39. Capacity, Spatial Framework Option 2



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