



Adopted Concept Statement

Golden Valley Mill, Bitton

November 2012

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South Gloucestershire
Council

Golden Valley Mill, Bitton

Concept Statement

Adopted November 2012

Overview

The Council encourages the preparation of concept statements to set a vision and broad principles for the development of key sites. The aim is to illustrate ideas which will make the most of a site and its surroundings. 'Concept statements should be imaginative, positive, ambitious and practical opening up design opportunities'. (South Gloucestershire Council Statement of Community Involvement – Adopted May 2008).

Golden Valley Mill, Bitton (also known as the Intier site) was in industrial use until November 2006. Since then it has been vacant pending redevelopment. The site is sensitive being a former mill complex within a small village and conservation area.

The mill site is relatively large for a village location (about 4 hectares, 10 acres). The former industrial buildings are considered to be of historical significance and the site is subject of a flood risk which also constrains redevelopment options. There is a wide degree of consensus that the site should be redeveloped for primarily residential use but there are differing opinions on the form that redevelopment should take.

At the time of adoption the site is owned by a Canadian company the Stronach Group. Their initial intention was to complete the preparation of a concept statement, secure planning permission for redevelopment and then offer the site for sale. However, it proved difficult for them to resolve site issues through the concept statement process and in April 2012 they made the decision to offer the site for sale without either an endorsed concept statement or planning permission.

In anticipation of developer interest and in consultation with local people, South Gloucestershire Council responded by producing its own version of a draft concept statement. That was published for public consultation in June 2012.

Following consultation and consideration of issues raised the Council resolved that, subject to minor textual changes being made, the document was 'adopted as non-statutory policy to be treated as a material consideration in relevant planning decisions.' (PT+SE Committee 28th November 2012).

The aim is for the concept statement to help guide and inform the development process without unduly constraining options. Future landowner/developers will be expected to consult widely in the preparation of their own proposals but will not be expected to provide a new concept statement for the site providing the planning principles set out in this document are followed.

In summary the adopted concept statement highlights key development issues, principles and processes for the site and will be material to consideration of any subsequent planning applications. The Design and Access Statement supporting any planning application(s) for the site should set out how the concept statement principles have been addressed.

Golden Valley Mill, Bitton – Concept Statement

Adopted November 2012

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Adoption Statement

Following consultation and consideration of issues raised the Council resolved on 28th November 2012 that the Golden Valley Mill Concept Statement is 'adopted as non-statutory policy to be treated as a material consideration in relevant planning decisions.'

Any further correspondence on this project should be directed to:

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PART 1 - BACKGROUND

1. Site context

1. Golden Valley Mill is a unique opportunity to redevelop a former employment site in a very special village environment.
2. The site is located in Bitton village to the north of Bath Road (A431). It stretches north-east from Bath Road into open countryside. The former mill ponds in this area are within the same ownership as the mill complex (see photo. opposite).
3. Bitton village has a generally linear form along Bath Road but with clusters of housing north and south of it. There are about 250 dwellings. The village sits in a much larger parish area.
4. The local area has a fascinating history both as part of the original Kingswood Forest and the more recent brass and paper making industries. Golden Valley to the north was also an area of coal mining.
5. The former industrial activities are an integral part of the village history. The form and scale of the former industrial buildings reflect that heritage and add diversity to the village as a whole.
6. The main mill site is:
 - Wholly within Bitton Conservation Area.
 - Within the defined settlement boundary for Bitton (South Gloucestershire Local Plan policy H2)
 - Surrounded by Green Belt to the west, north and east.
 - Within the Forest of Avon area
 - Close to the western edge of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
 - Low lying and discrete in the landscape.
 - Adjacent to the River Boyd (west) and the Pound Ground village playing field (south east) and scheduled monument within it.

Golden Valley Mill in Village Context



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Map 1. Extract from South Gloucestershire Local Plan Proposals Map showing Bitton and Area.



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7. Two strategic recreational paths pass near to the village.
 - The Bristol – Bath Railway Path
 - 'The Monarchs Way' - an east west route linking Golden Valley, via Upton Cheyney and Bitton to the River Avon.
8. There is also a network of local footpaths close to the site.

2. Village character, amenities and constraints.

9. There are pockets of housing development of varying periods and character throughout the village. Boundary walls are generally high and of local stone.
10. Older properties, including the Church, are mainly located south of Bath Road.
11. A Conservation Area character appraisal was published in December 1994 and is still current.
12. Any new proposals for the site will need to be supported by a review of local character.
13. To the west of the main site is the corridor of the River Boyd which stretches from Golden Valley to the north to the river Avon in the south. It is a site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and is important habitat for a range of species including kingfishers and otters.
14. To the east of the site is the Pound Ground public open space. This informal area includes a scheduled ancient monument and offers views across the mill site to properties at Bitton Hill. The views are currently limited by a row of mature poplar trees.
15. At their peak the mills in Bitton offered several hundred jobs. Since closure in 2006 local employment opportunities have been limited and the village has become a largely dormitory area with commuting to work in the Bristol East Fringe and wider greater Bristol and Bath areas.
16. Facilities within the village include:
 - The Church and Church Hall, located south of Bath Road.
 - The Meadows Primary School (about 250 metres to the west of the site.)
 - Two garages for car sales and servicing
 - A small general store and a hairdresser on Bath Road.
 - The White Hart pub – which has recently re-opened
 - Sports recreation ground and garden centres to the west of the village.
 - Aubrey Meads play area - east of the site.

Local Street Character in Bitton



Pound Ground open space with mill site screened by poplars



Bath Road Bitton – with the White Hart pub



- Angling on lakes north of the site.
- The village post office has closed - the nearest alternatives are at Oldland Common, Longwell Green and Keynsham.
- The Methodist Church, adjacent to the site on Mill Lane, closed in August 2010 and has been offered for sale.
- Bus services to Bristol, Bath Kingswood and Cribbs Causeway - with stops on Bath Road adjacent to the site.
- Rail services at Keynsham Station.

3. Site Description

17. Although the core of the site is known as Golden Valley Mill the full site has six main areas totalling about 7 hectares (17.29 acres) Map 2

Map 2 The Golden Valley Mill Site



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Key Areas

A. The Bath Road frontage and former Phoenix Foundry

This area is of mixed industrial and residential character



B. The open area between the foundry and mill

The area is open and regenerating to a scrub habitat. It is recorded as semi-natural habitat.



C. The original Golden Valley Mill buildings

There were several phases to this development and the origins and evolution of the buildings is complex and reflects varying design periods



D. The cleared area of the former mill pond

The former mill pond was cleared and the site lowered in the 1970s to make way for a number of steel framed buildings and concrete circulation areas.



E. The River Boyd and land either side of it.

In this location the river is contained within a deep artificial channel with a 'ski-jump' weir which formed part of flood relief works in the 1970s



F. The remnant ponds

The area is of regenerating scrub which is assumed to be of benefit to wildlife.



4. Site history

18. Golden Valley Mill developed as a brass works in the early 18th Century with the involvement of William Champion. There is little, if any, evidence of the brass works remaining on site, although the ponds to the north east may date at least in part from that period.
19. The original brass and paper mill buildings appear to have been destroyed by fires in the 19th Century. Paper production continued until the 1960s.
20. The scale of the former manufacturing uses is surprising. Records show that in 1881 the mill employed some 400 people, manufacturing 30-35 tons of writing, envelope and government paper per week. By 1895 employee numbers had risen to around 450 operating 24 hours per day, 6 days per week.
21. From 1963 the site was in use for the manufacture of wood fibre moulded components for the automotive sector. This included pulping on site of over 20 tons of logs every 24 hours for use in Fords, Saabs Jaguars, and Rovers.
22. The economic impact of jobs on the village of Bitton and its ability to support a range of services was significant.
23. Traffic generation in the form of lorry and car movements was also significant in the local context.
24. The redbrick 'Dacora' office block fronting Bath Road and the adjacent industrial buildings fronting Mill Lane were not part of the original paper mill but were part of the Phoenix Foundry.
25. The mill and foundry sites were joined and continued in use until November 2006. The site has remained vacant and in a deteriorating condition. It comprises approximately 16,700 sq m of unused floorspace.
26. There is no relevant planning history other than use of the site for industrial purposes.

Historic significance of the site.

27. Bitton Conservation Area is a designated conservation asset.
28. The remaining mill structures are surviving evidence of Bitton's industrial heritage which the council considers is of significance and worthy of conservation.
29. Buildings towards the front of the site, including the former Phoenix foundry site, the former Wesleyan Chapel, Ash House and Heather House are also of traditional and contrasting character. These are considered to have some historic interest and contribute positively to the character and diversity of the conservation area and village.
30. Therefore, subject to further studies, the council considers that redevelopment will affect both designated and non-designated heritage assets of significance.
31. Conservation policies and their application to this site are outlined in more detail at Appendix 1.



The existing site is very discrete in the wider landscape. Future impact should be minimised.



Existing buildings will need to be surveyed and considered for re-use.

5. The concept statement process to date

32. The original draft concept statement for the site broadly followed the council's preferred process but experienced some difficulties.



Stakeholder workshop

20. An initial site visit and workshop was held on behalf of Magna International during December 2008.
21. The workshop developed some ideas for redevelopment of the site but also highlighted concerns over site constraints including access and flood risk.
22. The flood risk position is particularly complex and it took several months to find a possible way forward.
23. Some delays and difficulties also arose because initial surveys, particularly in respect of heritage assets were not complete, and led to an assumption that buildings were of little significance and could be demolished.

Public exhibition

24. A first draft concept statement was subject of consultation in July 2010.
25. While there appeared to be general support for the principle of redeveloping the site for residential purposes a number of further issues and concerns were raised including proposals for treatment of heritage assets, the proposed character and density of the development, flood mitigation measures and potential traffic impacts.
26. Issues raised were considered and addressed in preparing the submission version of the concept statement.

Submission draft concept statement

27. The draft concept statement was submitted for Council consideration and endorsement in December 2010.
28. Copies were made available locally and on line together with supporting information. This included a document responding to issues which had been raised through consultation.
29. The main proposals of the December 2010 draft concept statement were for:
- Clearance of most existing buildings and remediation of contamination
 - Raising of ground levels to overcome flood risk
 - The development of up to 145 dwellings and a care home of about 60 beds.
 - Provision of car parking in line with Council standards i.e. an average of up to 1.5 spaces per dwelling.
30. The proposals prompted significant public concerns about the redevelopment of the site, its role within the village and on potential impacts.

Actions 2011 - 2012

31. The landowner sought to address the issues raised through consultation and to bring forward more detailed proposals. On this basis the council delayed its formal response to the draft concept statement.
32. In April 2012 the landowners advised that they intended to sell the site and that the draft concept statement and supporting material were withdrawn.
33. This revised draft concept statement has been prepared by the council, with input from local community representatives and English Heritage to help respond to any emerging proposals from prospective developers.

Part 2 – Vision and Concepts

6. Vision for the site

34. It is essential that development proposals are based on a clear vision of what a development is expected to achieve. The vision should draw from planning policies and public consultation.
35. Key planning policies and consultees for this site are listed at Appendix 2. Issues are summarised below.

The nature of redevelopment

36. This is a former industrial site and Council policies (Core Strategy Policy CS13) seek re-use for employment purposes. Where this is not viable mixed-use development is promoted ahead of full residential schemes.
37. It is recognised that large scale employment use in this location could present traffic and environmental issues. While accepting the principle of primarily residential use the council is keen to ensure some local vitality through a mix of uses providing some local employment opportunities.

Conservation and integration of design into the village setting

38. Local people have been clear that they do not want a homogenous suburban housing estate but a development which respects and enhances the village and conservation area.
39. The layout and architecture should be informed by the industrial heritage and village character, but may also include opportunities for more modern design. The National Planning Policy Framework (Core Planning Policies and Chapters 7 and 12) are particularly relevant to design issues here.

Integration as part of the wider village community

40. Local people do not want a segregated or 'gated' community within the village. There has also been discussion of how the site might contribute to the enhancement of community facilities and whether this would best be achieved on site or by contributions to help enhance facilities elsewhere in the parish. (Bitton Parish Plan and BVRA extracts at Appendices 4 and 5)

Overcoming constraints

41. The need to resolve potential flood risk, safety and contamination issues.

Sustainability

42. The means of promoting and achieving the highest achievable levels of sustainability in terms of building design, energy efficiency and in providing healthy lifestyle choices for residents.



43. In summary the council and local community are keen to see the site redeveloped but there are concerns about the nature of the development and its potential impact on the existing community.
44. The council has drawn from these issues, planning policies and previous 'visions' for the site and wider village to suggest a new vision as follows.

THE VISION FOR GOLDEN VALLEY MILL

The Golden Valley Mill site at Bitton will be re-developed within the setting of key heritage and landscape assets, and with integration into the existing village and community of Bitton.

It will include primarily residential use but with scope retained for local services and employment opportunities including scope for working at or close to home.

It will be viable, vibrant, diverse, attractive, safe, healthy, accessible and a sustainable place for all ages to live.

7. Development principles – key surveys and issues

45. The remaining sections of the concept statement show how the vision should be taken forward.
46. Aims are suggested and key principles illustrated. Key Diagram 1 identifies site assets and opportunities that have been identified to date. Key Diagram 2 illustrates principles for re-development.

Aim 1

Survey, identify, safeguard and enhance key site assets as features of a locally distinctive redeveloped site.

Key surveys

47. Earlier surveys may need to be updated or replaced including:
 - Historic buildings surveys
 - Local (village) building and character assessment
 - Heritage significance assessment
 - Building condition surveys
 - Landscape assessment
 - Tree surveys
 - Ecological survey
 - Flood risk assessment
 - Traffic surveys
 - Contamination survey

Flood Risk

48. Much of the area cleared in the 1970s is below the level of the River Boyd. It is currently protected by the artificial channel but would flood if that were breached. The site is within Flood Zone 3.
49. There has been previous discussion of reinstating ground to the pre-1970s level to overcome the flood risk constraint but this and any alternative options should be explored in full.
50. If the site levels are raised there would be a consequential impact on layout options and the potential visual impact of redevelopment.

Contamination

51. Much of the former mill area is covered with extensive areas of concrete which may have some hydrocarbon and other pollutants below. The site needs to be 'cleaned' before the site can be redeveloped. The normal process for this is to remove the concrete capping and expose the disturbed ground to air to allow for "aerobic digestion".
52. That process is time consuming and weather (temperature) dependent and may affect the timetable for redevelopment.

Demolition and the planning process

53. Planning policies seek to avoid demolition or removal of any buildings or features until there are clear and agreed proposals for replacement. It follows that the council will not be in a position to formally agree which buildings can be removed until a full process has been followed to establish:
 - The heritage significance of the building;
 - Its condition,
 - The scope for conversion
 - If proposed for demolition, the nature and scale of the building(s) proposed as replacement.
54. While the Council cannot yet take a formal view on which buildings can be demolished there is unlikely to be any issue with the removal of the 1970s steel framed buildings.
55. There are particular issues around:
 - The high boundary walls and the buildings fronting Mill Lane which form 'walls' and contribute to the industrial character and sense of enclosure.
 - The former Wesleyan Chapel at the Bath Road frontage which has been much altered but which is at a focal point of the village and potential development.
56. Clear strategies for managing these and other constraints will be required.

8. Key Diagram 1 - Golden Valley Mill – site wide assets and opportunities

This Diagram indicates key assets and character areas of the site which have been identified to date and which need to be addressed in development proposals.



Key buildings and structures

1. The mill walls (in two main sections west and east)
2. The mill canteen
3. The mill gatehouse
4. The former Wesleyan Chapel and its setting
5. The built form character of Mill Lane
6. The built form and character of the mill buildings

Key trees and vegetation

7. The eastern line of poplar trees. Although subject of a Tree Preservation Order the poplars are a hybrid species and of limited life expectancy. In principle these can be felled and replaced with more appropriate species
8. All retained and new trees are to be managed in line with best practice. (Site wide)

Key ecological areas

9. The River Boyd and its corridor (Site of Nature Conservation Importance SNCI)
10. The mill ponds and surroundings
11. Trees and buildings which may be used by bats and other species (Site wide)

Key Views

12. From Bitton Hill and the ski jump weir to St Mary's Church
13. From Mill Lane and Pound Ground to Bitton Hill
14. Into the site along Mill Lane
15. The Bath Road frontage
16. Into the site from Bath Road

Key character areas

Area A - Bath Road Frontage
Potential mixed use

Area B - Open area
Potential green space

Area C - The Mill and Mill Lane
Potential residential with some mixed uses

Area D - The former mill pond
Potential residential

Area E - The River Boyd
Enhanced green corridor.

Area F- The remnant ponds
Retain and manage as green space.

Development potential

The council considers that redevelopment should reflect the historic format of the site.

It follows that as only areas A, C and D have been previously developed they should provide the basis for any built form redevelopment giving a developable area of about 2.9 hectares.

9. Development Principles – Character Areas

Aim 2 - Maintain the overall physical character of the site and its key areas.

57. The council is keen that historic evolution and key features which help to tell the story of the site should be recognised and where possible conserved and integrated into the new development.

A. The Bath Road frontage

58. This 0.3 hectare area provides a strong visual presence to Bath Road. It is of mixed industrial and residential character. At present buildings and vegetation tend to form a visual barrier between the village and mill site to the rear.

59. There is scope for mixed uses in this area. Selected views into the site could be opened up or enhanced. The former Wesleyan Chapel is at a key focal point of the village and could provide for community or commercial use with limited parking. It is of symbolic rather than historic importance.

B. The Open Area

60. This 0.4 hectare area has been free of built form but may have been used in part for parking associated with the industrial use.

61. The area is regenerating to a scrub habitat and is recorded as semi-natural habitat which should be conserved. The area is bounded to the north by the high stone perimeter mill wall. This part of the site has a generally even and gentle gradient towards Bath Road.

62. This area should remain open and become a focal point for the village. Buildings in areas A and C should front on to it to provide informal supervision.

C. The Original Mill and Mill Lane

63. The original mill buildings (1.0 hectare site) were located between the mill wall to the south, the original mill ponds to the north, the River Boyd to the west and Mill Lane to the east. The remaining buildings here are of historic significance.

64. It is assumed that this area will be primarily residential. The aim will be to maintain the industrial character of buildings. There should be distinct change in character between this area and the cleared pond (area D) to the north east.

D. The cleared area of the former mill pond

65. This part of the site (1.6 hectares) was originally covered in mill ponds to the rear of the mill buildings. The site was cleared and lowered in the 1970s to make way for a number of steel framed buildings and concrete circulation areas.

66. It is assumed that this area will be primarily residential but with a more open character than the main mill area. There will be particular issue of visual intrusion if land levels are raised.

67. The Poplars would need to be removed as a matter of safety but replaced with more appropriate native species. This would also open better views towards Bitton Hill.

68. Development in this area should ideally provide a 'soft-edge' to the village rather than continuous frontages. It could also provide for improved footpath links.

E. The River Boyd and lands either side of it.

69. The site ownership includes the river and both banks (including the channel walls). It is about 0.4 hectares in area.

70. Potential public safety, ownership and flood risk issues will need to be resolved. Access will need to be maintained for maintenance. Wildlife interest of the corridor and river bed need to be maintained and where possible enhanced.

F. The remnant ponds

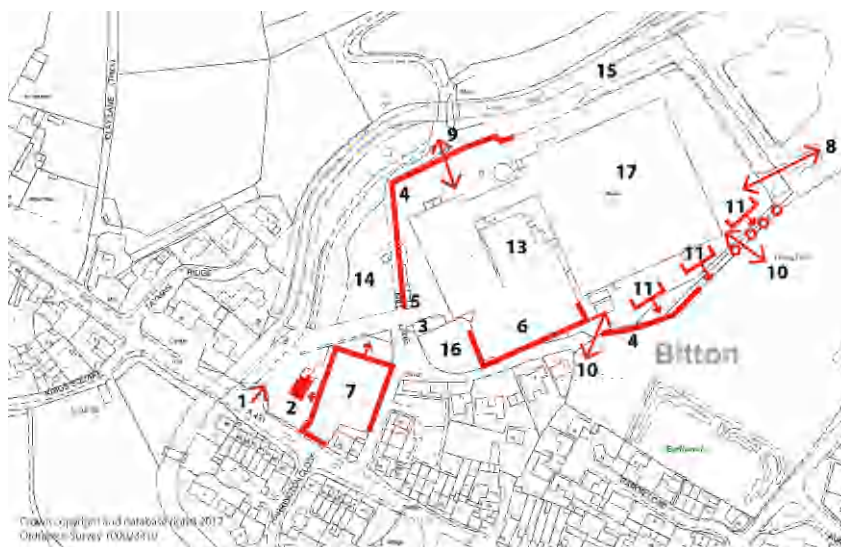
71. The area of remnant ponds is approximately 3.2 hectares in extent but the actual ponds are now limited to small parts. The rest is of regenerating scrub which is of benefit to wildlife. The northern sector is formally recognised as a site of nature conservation interest.

72. The site is within the green belt and is not suitable for built development. The issue of future use, management and ownership of this area needs to be resolved.

10. Key Diagram 2 – Golden Valley Mill - Key Concepts

This diagram illustrates key development principles for the Golden Valley Mill site which have been identified to date and which reflect national and local policy applicable to the site.

The Council will expect applicants to demonstrate how these principles have been applied and how key assets and character areas will be protected and enhanced.



Key

- | | |
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| <p>1. Main Vehicular Access
To be enhanced</p> <p>2. Former Wesleyan Chapel
Improved focal point for village</p> <p>3. Canteen Building
To be restored and re-used.</p> <p>4. Mill Walls
To be conserved – possibly reduced in height</p> <p>5. Gate House
To be conserved and re-used.</p> <p>6. Key frontage
Subject to detailed appraisal mill buildings to be retained and restored or replicated in the new build to reflect industrial heritage.</p> <p>7. New active frontages
Foundry development to open new views and overlook open spaces.</p> <p>8. New link
Opportunity to provide access to pond area for recreation and maintenance.</p> <p>9. New foot access
To link across the site and to wider path network.</p> | <p>10. New foot access
To link site to playing fields.</p> <p>11. 'Soft Edge' to development
To retain and enhance views across the site to use new buildings to front on to and overlook Pound Ground open space.</p> <p>12. Poplar Trees
To be removed and replaced with native hedgerow trees.</p> <p>13. Higher density development
To retain/reflect mill character</p> <p>14. Village Green
Opportunity to provide green space and focal point linking site to village</p> <p>15. Riverside area
Review opportunities to remodel to enhance public safety, access and vale for wildlife.</p> <p>16. Walled garden
Opportunity to provide courtyard type space.</p> <p>17. Residential core
Main residential area but with scope for some mixed/community uses. Different in character to the main mill area (13) and with particular regard to impact on long distance views and the neighbouring open spaces.</p> |
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11. Key principles – illustrated

The following images highlight principles raised in the text.
Where numbers are given they relate to items in Key Diagram 2.

Site wide principles

Maintain and create key views through and across the site.



Maintain and enhance views to and from the site along Mill Lane and the setting of the former Methodist Chapel.

Mill Lane to be lightly trafficked or emergency only. Priority for pedestrians.



From Key Diagram 2

1. Main Vehicular Access – to be enhanced



2. Former Wesleyan Chapel – Improved focal point for village



3. Canteen Building – to be restored and re-used.



4. Mill Walls – to be conserved – possibly reduced in height



5. Gate House – to be conserved and re-used.



6. Key frontages – subject to detailed appraisal buildings to be retained and restored or replicated in new build to reflect industrial heritage.



7. New active frontage in Area A – to overlook open space in area B.

14. Village Green – opportunity to provide green space and focal point linking site to village



Take opportunities to enhance pedestrian movement and remove unnecessary barriers.

8. New link – opportunity to provide access to pond area for recreation and maintenance.

9. New foot access – to link across the site and to wider path network.

10. New foot access – to link site to playing fields.



11. 'Soft Edge' to development – To retain and enhance views across the site to use new buildings to front on to and overlook Pound Ground open space.



12. Poplar Trees – to be removed and replaced with native hedgerow trees.



13. Higher density development within former mill area – to retain/reflect Mill character



Walled garden – opportunity to provide courtyard type space.



15. Riverside area – review opportunities to remodel to enhance public safety, access and vale for wildlife.



Consider:

- the heritage significance of existing buildings,
- their potential for re-use and/or to inform new design
- their current and potential as habitat for bats birds and other species



12. Further Aims and Objectives

The Council will expect applicants to demonstrate how proposals will achieve the following aims and objectives which apply principles of best practice to the redevelopment of the Golden Valley Mill site.

Aim 3 – Support Community Integration

The site should become an integral part of the village as a whole and:

- *Avoid physical and visual barriers which might limit integration.*
- *Respect the amenities of existing residential properties.*
- *Provide a focal point for the village.*

Aim 4 – Be Viable

Redevelopment will need to be viable in its planning, construction and subsequent management. Proposals should:

- *Demonstrate how all key assets of the site which are to be retained or provided as part of redevelopment will be owned, managed, maintained and viable into the future.*

Aim 5 – Be Vibrant

Redevelopment should provide a strong public realm with variation in built form and should help to maintain and promote an active community by;

- *Providing places for people to meet informally and for children to play safely (a playful environment);*
- *Promote a significant level of activity with people moving around the site and where possible working at, or from, home.*

Aim 6 – Be Diverse

The need is to develop a mixed community with a range of housing and employment opportunities. This can be helped by:

- *Providing a wide variety of housing tenure, type and size to accommodate a range of different households (in line with Core Strategy Policy CS17 – Housing Diversity).*
- *Meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities and with other special needs in a way which integrates with the wider community.*

Aim 7 – Be Attractive

The redevelopment should be informed by a detailed character appraisal of the existing site and wider village and should:

- *Identify and appropriately address key development opportunities*
- *Provide a positive enhancement of the village and conservation area.*
- *Include a mix of building types, styles and densities with some identified opportunities for ‘cutting edge’ modern design and with public art in appropriate locations.*
- *Include appropriate planting strategies to complement the built form and enhance ecological interest.*



Aim 8 – Be Safe

The development should be subject of risk appraisals and remediation strategies to limit risks to an acceptable level.

- *Known risks include:*
 - *Derelict buildings*
 - *Ground Contamination*
 - *The River Boyd Channel, ‘Ski Jump’ and flood risk.*
 - *The existing poplar trees.*
- *Potential risks include:*
 - *Demolition and construction activity.*
 - *Road safety - for all users*
 - *Community Safety – (Crime).*



Aim 9 – Be Healthy

The development should facilitate healthy lifestyles with provision for:

- *access to cycle and walking routes,*
- *informal and formal and open space*
- *space for children’s play*
- *gardens and/or allotment space.*
- *Possible courtyard garden east of the canteen*



Aim 10 – Be Accessible

The proposals should be subject of a transportation assessment including the potential impact of any demolition, landfill and construction phases.

The site must be readily accessible by a range of transport options and should include:

- A bus turn round facility and stop should be provided.
- Contributions to service support
- Vehicular access to Bath Road via the existing main access only.
- No access via the Mill Lane/Bath Road junction except in emergency.



- Improved footpath and cycle links.



- Individual properties and buildings should be accessible to all including those with impaired mobility.
- Provision of parking spaces should be in line with Council policy and conveniently located for use by residents.
- Localised junction improvements and traffic calming measures.

Aim 11 – Be Sustainable

The development should be as sustainable as possible in terms of site clearance, construction and operational phases with:

- Re-use of materials wherever practical and minimise waste.
- Facilitate and encourage sustainable life styles. This implies opportunities for working close to home and for productive garden and/or allotment space.
- Limit dependency on use of cars
- Enhance wildlife interest.
- Incorporate energy efficient design and utilise on site power generation where practical and visually acceptable
- Make provision for storage and collection of domestic (and business) waste in line with Council policy.

Aim 12 – Be appropriate for all ages

Provide an environment which meets the needs of all ages including,

- Provision of family housing
- If a Care Home or similar special form of housing is provided this should have capacity for support services which can also be accessed by the wider community.



Appropriate security but not a gated community.

Aim 13 – Manage Site Constraints

The development will need to identify address and where relevant overcome site constraints including flood risk and contamination.

- **Flood risk** – The current designation is flood Risk 3a - High probability - Defined as having 1% or greater (1 in 100 year or greater) probability of fluvial flooding each year and a 0.5% or greater (1 in 200 year or greater) probability of tidal flooding each year.
- **Contamination** – The Mill area is covered with extensive areas of buildings and concrete which may some hydrocarbon and other pollutants below. This need to be assessed and the site 'cleaned' before redevelopment.

Aim 14 - Meet Planning Obligations

Subject to any review of overall site viability the development will need to make appropriate contributions to offset the impact of development including in line with council policy:

- Transportation
- Highway adoptions
- Affordable Housing
- Education – current indications are of shortage in primary age school places.
- Conservation
- Public Open Space adoptions
- Community Facilities

See Developer Guide for more detail at:

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/Pages/Article%20Pages/Planning%20Transport%20-%20Strategic%20Environment/Development%20Services/Section-106-planning-agreements.aspx>

13. The concept statement and development process

The council anticipates a process along the lines indicated below.

Concept Statement

- 1. Baseline surveys**
Survey work undertaken to inform the planning process.
The extent to which this will require a 'Fresh Start' or updating of earlier survey material. This is in part dependent on what earlier material the site owners will make available.
- 2. Workshop**
An event held with a cross section of local interests to introduce and test ideas for the site.
An initial workshop was held in December 2008 there have been a number of subsequent meetings. Council Officers led a further review session on 31st May 2012.
- 3. Prepare Draft Concept Statement**
On the basis of ideas considered at the May 2012 workshop this draft Concept Statement has been prepared.
- 4. Public Exhibition and Consultation**
There have been previous exhibitions for this site and as this version of the concept statement is a consolidation of earlier work. Further consultation will focus on the content of this document.
- 5. Review Feedback and Amend Concept Statement**
The Council will review any relevant existing or new public feedback before formally considering whether to confirm the Concept Statement as policy. At this stage it is not intended to adopt the Concept Statement as a supplementary planning document but that option remains open.
- 6. Council consider formal endorsement.**
The Council will consider whether or not to formally endorse/adopt the Concept Statement as a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications for the site.

The developer will not be expected to provide a new concept statement for the site providing the principles of this version are followed.

Planning Application(s)

- 1. Prepare Planning Application**
Planning applications will need to be prepared in draft.
- 2. Pre-application Consultation**
The landowner/applicant will be encouraged to discuss emerging plans with the local community.
- 3. Amend and Submit Planning Application**
Amongst other things the applications(s) will need to identify site assets to be retained or removed and proposals for replacement buildings.
The supporting Design and Access Statement should explain how concept statement principles are proposed to be taken forward in the detailed design.
- 4. Council consult on application**
The Council will consult on the planning application in line with its normal process.
- 5. Council determine application**
Assuming that plans are satisfactory when assessed against planning policy the Council would resolve to grant planning permission subject to any legal agreements being signed e.g. to cover planning obligations.

It is anticipated that the landowner/developer will indicate viability issues in developing a fully policy compliant scheme. It is normal practice for the council to commission independent advice where viability issues are raised. At this stage it is not possible to anticipate the shortfall in viability and where any compromises may be met.
- 6. Site Development**
Once legal agreements are signed and the decision notice served the developer can progress to clear the site, remediate any contamination and start conversions and any new construction.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Golden Valley Mill - Heritage Assets

Heritage Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the Government's overarching objectives of valuing and utilising the historic environment as part of creating sustainable places. It recognises that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource which can contribute positively to local character and a sense of place. In accordance with policies contained within Chapter 12 of the NPPF there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation and re-use of heritage assets.

Of particular relevance to the Golden Valley Mill site are paragraphs 131 – 138 of the NPPF which are reproduced below.

Extracts from the National Planning Policy Framework

131. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

132. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

133. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

134. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

135. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

136. Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

137. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

138. Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

The Golden Valley Mill Site Heritage Assets and Policy

The former Intier site is located within Bitton Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. Buildings within the site are not formally Listed as buildings of architectural or historic interest. Some are locally listed but this does not necessarily reflect a full understanding of the sites history or significance.

The paper mill, which was operational in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, was the longest and most successful use of the site. Judging from the scale of production during this period, the level of expansion and the Government contract, it is likely that the paper mill would have been one of the largest in the country. It is this period of the sites history which is considered most significant and for this reason the structures associated with the former paper mill are considered to be some of the most significant on the site.

Therefore, based on assessments carried out to date, the Council is of the view that the site contains a number of features which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets of significance, and which contribute positively to the conservation area.

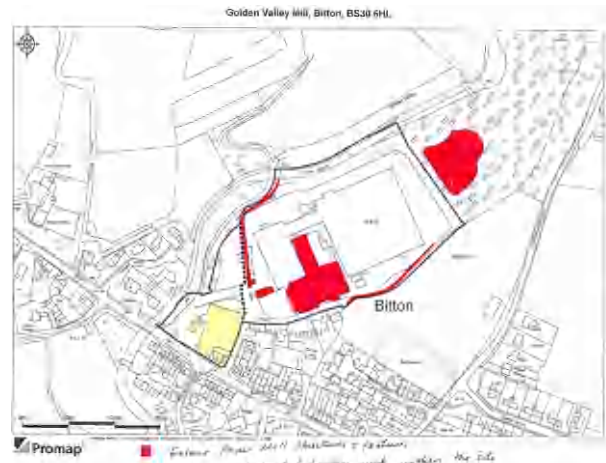
As a group, and within their landscape context, the extant paper mill structures (identified on plan in RED) are surviving evidence of the village's industrial heritage - the mill being a significant aspect of life in Bitton for over two hundred years - and which the Council feels is of significance worthy of their retention.

The only remaining evidence of the earlier brass mill is the now much reduced mill pond, and possibly part of the pond wall. The mill pond is a feature of historic and landscape importance which should be protected. The structures form an important element of the conservation area and have potential to contribute greatly to the redevelopment of the site. Whilst some of the buildings have been the subject of modern alterations and lack of maintenance, it is considered that with imagination and creativity they could be adapted to new uses and assist in providing an integrated, distinctive and unique development which is anchored to Bitton's past.

There are a number of traditional buildings towards the front of the site, including the buildings of the former Phoenix foundry site, the former Wesleyan and Methodist Chapels, Ash House and Heather House. These buildings are considered to on the whole possess historic interest and contribute positively to the conservation area, and represent the diversity of historic uses within the village.

There are therefore both designated and undesigned heritage assets at the site.

The LPA will expect the redevelopment of the Golden Valley Mill site to meet the requirements of policy 131, 132 and 137 of the NPPF and also take account of relevant Practice Notes (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/>)



Loss of traditional buildings and structures on the site would be considered against policies 132, 133, 134, 135 or 138 depending on the level of loss, the redevelopment proposals and the justification provided.

The wholesale or substantial loss of the extant traditional paper mill buildings and features would be considered to cause substantial harm to the conservation area by virtue of their irreversible loss, and would therefore be considered against policy 133.

With regard to any proposal for demolition within the conservation area of buildings the application would have to demonstrate that redevelopment serves to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. It would need to be demonstrated that their loss is clearly justified and that the proposed redevelopment adequately mitigates against their loss, considering the special character and distinctiveness of this part of the conservation area, in accordance with national and local policy.

Policy 137 recognises that where elements of a Conservation Area do not contribute to its significance, opportunities can be taken for enhancing or better revealing the significance of the Conservation Area, where appropriate, through development of that element. This should be seen as part of the process of place-shaping. It is considered that where modern alterations and development have taken place on the site, such as the 1970's sheds, and levelled concrete ground, there is an opportunity for replacement development to better reflect and enhance the historic use of the site, for example through the form and detail of the replacement buildings, the restoration of traditional mill buildings, the variety and distinctiveness of new development and the re-establishment of the sites historic relationship with the mill pond.

Policy 136 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that where any loss of significance to a heritage asset occurs as part of development, that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred, and thus the Council will require that any application for conservation area consent for the demolition of buildings on the site which contribute to significance, is properly linked to a proposal for redevelopment.

Appendix 2 - Relevant Planning Policies And Key Consultees

This concept statement and any planning applications for the site will be guided by a number of national and local planning policies including:

National Planning Policy Framework – (NPPF - March 2012).

This seeks to secure sustainable development. Of particular relevance are:

- Paragraph 17 - Core planning principles
- Section 7 – Requiring good design
- Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- Section 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – (Paragraphs 128 -137 address the conservation of heritage assets in development - more detail at Appendix 1)

South Gloucestershire Local Plan

(Adopted January 2006).

South Gloucestershire Core Strategy

(Revised December 2012 and subject of public examination in June 2012). Adoption anticipated early 2013.

Relevant policies include:

CS1 – High Quality Design

CS2 – Green Infrastructure

CS6 – Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

CS9 – Managing the Environment and Heritage

CS13 – Non-Safeguarded Economic Development Sites

CS16 – Housing Density

CS17 – Housing Diversity

CS18 – Affordable Housing

CS23 – Community Infrastructure and Cultural Activity

CS24 - Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation Standards

CS34 – Rural Areas

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

South Gloucestershire Council – (Adopted May 2008). This sets out the Council's expectations for planning related public engagement.

Supplementary Planning Policy

- Bitton Conservation Area Leaflet -SPG December 1994
- Biodiversity and the Planning Process SPG - November 2005
- Trees on Development Sites - SPG November 2005
- Planning and the Forest of Avon - SPG November 2005
- Sustainable Drainage Systems - SPG September 2005
- Waste Audits - SPG July 2002
- Affordable Housing - SPD December 2008
- Design Checklist - SPD August 2007
- Landscape Character Assessment - SPD August 2005

These documents can be viewed at:

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/Pages/Topic%20Pages/Planning%20Transport%20-%20Strategic%20Environment/Planning%20Environment/Planning-policy.aspx>

Relevant consultees for this site include:

- **English Heritage** – the statutory consultee for proposals affecting listed buildings and conservation areas.
- **Environment Agency** – the statutory consultee for main river and flood risk issues. (Comments at Appendix 3)
- **Bristol Water Company and Wessex Water** – Concerned with water supply and sewerage issues.
- **Bitton Parish Council** – The parish has been consulted in the drafting of this concept statement.
- **Bitton Parish Plan Group** – This is a community led plan for the parish of Bitton. It reflects consultations and surveys of those who live and work in the Parish. It incorporates an action plan which is intended to pave the way for local aspirations and preferences to be met. Extracts at Appendix 4.
- **Bitton Village Residents Association (BVRA)** - a group of residents who are resident within the village and who have taken a keen interest in development of the site. (Appendix 5)

Appendix 3 – Environment Agency Comments

The Environment Agency has reviewed the skeleton draft Concept Statement for Golden Valley Mill, Bitton, received on 29 May 2012 along with information provided by Bitton Village Residents Association on 07 June 2012. We welcome the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Concept Statement and to this end we have provided a summary of our flood risk requirements for the re-development of this site.

The majority of the site currently falls within Flood Zone 3 and considered to be at high residual risk of flooding from the adjacent River Boyd (main river). Therefore the Sequential and Exception Tests and a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment will form a major part of how the future development of this site is designed and delivered.

Flood risk

The land behind the sheet pile flood defence is currently vulnerable to flooding from the River Boyd and therefore inappropriate for development unless appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. Through our previous discussions with the former owners of the site, we agreed to the principle of raising ground levels to return the land to its original level and thus mitigate the flood risk. A reduction in flood risk to the site would then be reflected on our flood map through a developer-led Flood Map Challenge using revised topographic information and hydraulic modelling.

Riparian maintenance duties

The sheet piles along the River Boyd fall within the red line boundary of the site. We would expect any forthcoming developer to produce a condition assessment of the sheet piles if there is an intention to raise land behind them. We consider this justified to assess the impact of the potential additional loading on the sheet piling.

If the land is raised behind sheet piling, they will no longer perform a flood defence function. However they will remain an important structure as solely an erosion control measure and therefore it will be important to monitor its condition. To this end we would expect the developer to produce an Operations & Maintenance manual.

Further to this, we would expect to see a clear 8.0m access along the bank of the River Boyd to enable the developer to undertake regular maintenance works and for Environment Agency operatives to undertake infrequent inspections. This requirement will therefore affect the site layout. Any works within this 8.0m buffer requires our prior written consent.

Surface water drainage

The surface water drainage strategy for the site should be based on sustainable drainage (SUDS) principles. As the site is brownfield, post-development run off rates should be reduced by a minimum of 20% compared to pre-development rates.

We would be happy to provide further comments on this site as options progress.

Please quote the Agency's reference on any future correspondence regarding this matter.

RICHARD BULL
Planning Liaison Officer

Appendix 4 - Bitton Parish Plan

Bitton Parish Plan has been produced by local volunteers for the whole Parish area. It results from consultations and surveys and incorporates an Action Plan extracts from which are reproduced below. It represents the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Council.

The full Parish Plan can be viewed at Bitton Parish Council and South Gloucestershire Council web sites: www.bittonparishcouncil.co.uk or <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/Resources/Publications/COS/12/0200/COS-12-0001>

Bitton Parish Plan - Extracts relevant to the Golden Valley Mill Site

Focus	Issue	Action	Potential Partners
Community	1. Lack of sense of community as whole, linked to a lack of places to meet.	a) Develop partnerships to find ways to increase community action and publicity of events. b) Tackle problem across the Parish.	Scouts etc., notice boards, Post Office, public houses, papers, publications, word of mouth, Women's Institute, Mothers' Union, shops, clubs, SGC, Parish Council, providers of meeting facilities, local clubs and churches, local Safer and Stronger Community Groups.
	2. Closure of White Hart PH (now re-opened) and Post Office in Bitton.	a) Explore alternatives, e.g. satellite Post Office at White Hart PH. b) Lobby relevant authorities to put on hold further closures. c) Establish whether freeholders have total control/trying to install a tenant at PH. d) Establish whether local PO proprietors would agree to an outlet facility, then approach owners of business premises.	Developers of Golden Valley Mill site, Government (<i>via</i> MP), BVRA, Oldland Common PO.
	3. Need for multifunctional green spaces with access to all.	a) Develop collaborative initiatives, e.g. develop "Pound Ground" in Bitton and a play park in Aubrey Meads. b) Approach local organisations, schools and Bitton Rec. c) Approach SGC with details of shortfall.	Parish Council, BVRA and Bitton Recreation Ground, local Safer and Stronger Community Groups.
	4. Communication.	a) Ensure full circulation of Parish News Letter, e.g. do all church magazines go to all? b) Make more use of the Parish Council website. c) Develop a community "Directory", leaflets, email, website.	Churches, Parish Council, magazine editors.
Young People	1. A seating facility in parks especially for young people.	a) Look at the possible siting of a youth shelter in one of the parks.	SGC and Parish Council to consult with young people and Friends Groups.
	2. Lack of sufficient play facilities for children.	a) Approach churches and schools. b) Develop facilities at Bitton Recreation Ground, e.g. Children's Gardening Club. c) Provide a skateboard ramp. <i>See also Actions 3.a) and 3.c) in "Focus: Community".</i>	SGC, Parish Council, BVRA, Bitton Recreation Ground, Bitton Gardening Club, churches and schools. Section 106 Agreement – Golden Valley Mill site.
	3. Lack of provision generally for young people. Teenagers need clubs and something to do.	a) Co-ordinate activity to combat problem. b) Involve young people in community initiatives, e.g. community theatre, film/media presentations. c) Make use of church and school halls, community halls and clubs.	SGC, Parish Council, School Governors, Scouts and Forum of young people, Church Trustees, BVRA, Bitton Recreation Ground, St Mary's Church "Living Stones", other church organisations, community initiatives.
	4. Increase physical activity in schools.	a) Discuss with Education Authority and schools. b) Combine physical activity initiatives with	SGC, School Heads and School Governors. Local sports celebrities and celebrity

		healthy eating. c) Local sports clubs e.g. providing facilities where schools don't have them.	chefs.
	5. Concern over underage drinking.	a) Education campaign plus police action.	Parish Council (publicity), SGC, Health Authority, School Heads and School Governors.
Parks, Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation	1. Inadequate access to sports facilities. Lack of or availability of reasonably priced facilities locally.	a) Investigate and promote local facilities. e.g. new sports hall at SBL. b) Discuss with providers.	School Heads, Trustees, School Governors, Facility Managers, SGC, sports clubs and voluntary groups, Bitton Sports Club Trustees and BAFC.
	2. Desire for greater access to countryside.	a) Check signing of footpaths and bridleways. b) Promote and publish countryside walks and rambles.	SGC Specialist Officers, Parish Council, Ramblers Association and other walking groups, Avon Valley Railway, BVRA.
	3. Limited access to cycle path.	a) Create a network of cycle paths, footpaths and bridleways. b) Provide links between existing facilities.	SGC and Parish Council.
	4. People do not know where the facilities are.	a) Better signage and publicity through newsletters.	SGC and Parish Council.
	5. Need for further improvements to Bitton Recreation Ground Clubhouse.	a) Identify funding to carry out the second phase rebuild of the clubhouse.	Section 106 Agreement with Golden Valley Mill developers. Community action.
	6. More seating needed in parks and shopping areas.	a) Provide further seating in all parks and in Oldland Common, North Common and Bitton Village.	SGC, Parish Council and Friends groups.
	7. Better play facilities needed in all parks.	a) Work to improve play facilities throughout the Parish, especially adventure style equipment.	SGC and Parish Council and Friends Groups and funders.
	8. A potential new open space at Golden Valley Mill site.	a) Use „Planning Gain“ under present legislation. Consider adventure play equipment, fitness trail, allotments and bowling facility.	Section 106 Agreement, SGC and Parish Council and funders.

The Parish Plan Group has also noted that there is no bus service between Bitton and Keynsham (other than the once a week 684 service). If any re-development of the Intier site could provide the capability for buses to turn then it would seem feasible to route the 532 through Bitton to provide a suitable service. It would also seem feasible to extend the 42 service into the centre of Bitton rather than terminating at Cherry Gardens.

Appendix 5 - Bitton Village Residents Association – Vision for the site

Residents' views as previously submitted to the Council.

This note represents the views of the Residents Group and not necessarily those of the Council.

1. Vision of new, enlarged Bitton includes:

- a. A vibrant and attractive place to live blending the 1,000 year history of the older parts of the village together with the high quality newer buildings- a whole community
- b. One village with a village green on the Bath Road at its heart
- c. Vernacular architecture with density, style, consistent across the whole village
- d. Pedestrian friendly and cycle friendly village with cycle link to Avon cycle track
- e. Community centre/hall suitable for the new enlarged village
- f. High quality recreational and sport facilities available locally
- g. A village in tune with its setting within an area of outstanding natural beauty
- h. Small retail / commercial facilities with parking (e.g post office, cafe)
- i. Good and safe access to river, wild areas and countryside
- j. Views out to countryside from within site
- k. Improved outlook for those residents living immediately next to the factory site
- l. Safe open areas on the site for dogs, children, etc on the site
- m. Retention of all trees, including the poplars, and more added
- n. Allotments, fruit trees etc on the site
- o. Low rise buildings throughout... especially on the higher/raised parts of the site

2. Points that the Concept must include

- a. At least Grade 5 (Code for Sustainable Homes) environmental and Building for Life gold quality housing (including a visual representation of the vernacular style of buildings in the concept)
- b. Housing density of residential area of less than 30 dwellings per hectare with space for front and back gardens and no requirement to take wheelie bins through the house
- c. Realistic off road car parking based on true expectation of number of cars owned by residents
- d. Retention of Refectory, Gatehouse and Wesleyan Hall as living symbols of the village history
- e. A Village Hall / Community Centre big enough for the whole village with parking
- f. Improved access to recreational facilities for the village (Pound Ground)
- g. Village Green facing onto the Bath Road incorporating the Wesleyan Hall, possibly open at both ends as a shelter
- h. Traffic, speeding and queuing on the Bath Road no worse than it is today
- i. North/South bus route into the middle of Bitton
- j. Good building and pedestrian layout
- k. A sewerage system that does not overflow
- l. Minimum raised levels subject to Environment Agency flooding rules
- m. Minimum number of dwellings consistent with business case for the project...certainly less than 150
- n. Economic use of renewable resources – hydro electric, solar, ground source heat pump
- o. Sufficient pre-school and school places available locally
- p. Protection of the wide variety of local wildlife (kingfishers, otters, bats etc)

3. Things we would like to comment on, but do not yet have the information to make an informed comment

