

*Design Action for South Gloucestershire Council*

# Coalpit Heath Event

**New Local Plan Strategic Development Locations  
Consultation Report – SECTION 2B**

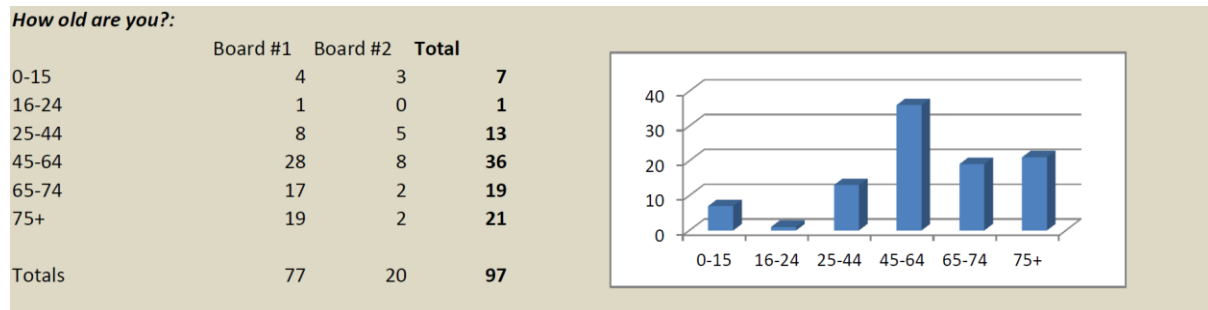


*Mark Pearson (Design Action) – 6th Feb 2018*

## Coalpit Heath Consultation Event

### Profile of the Participants

#### 1. Numbers Attending + Demographic Profile

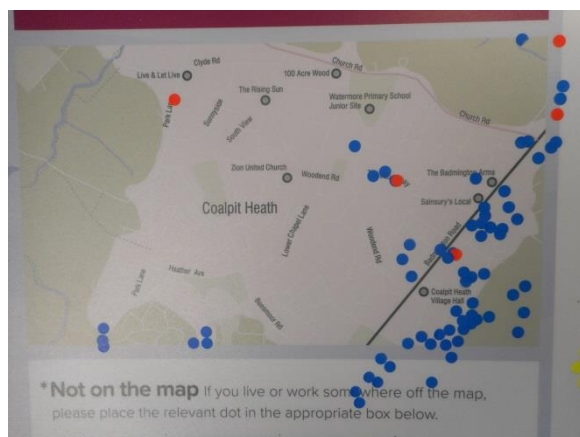
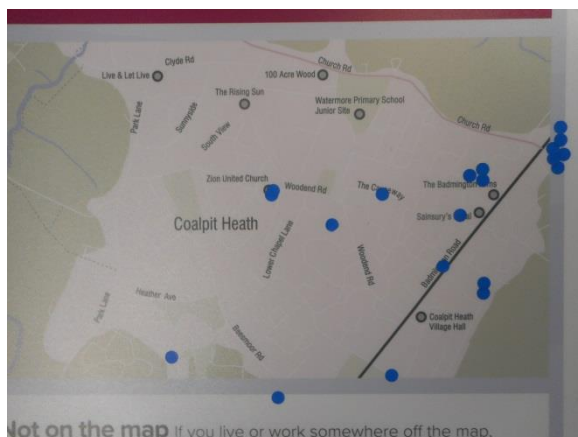


- 1.1 Attendance at the event was dominated by middle and older age-groups – a fairly typical and expected pattern for these types of consultation.

#### 2. Where People Lived

**Where do you live?:**

	Board #1	Board #2	Total
Coalpit Heath	73	18	91
Avonmouth			0
Central Bristol			0
North Bristol	1		1
Gloucester/Chelt			0
Stroud			0
Thornbury			0
Yate			0
Other	3	2	5
Totals	77	20	97



- 2.1 The distribution of blue dots (indicating where people lived) shows that interest to attend was predominantly drawn from the eastern edge of the village – reflecting the area which is likely to be most affected by the potential development.

### 3. Where People Worked

<b>Where do you work?:</b>			
	Board #1	Board #2	Total
Coalpit Heath	4	2	6
Avonmouth			0
Central Bristol	3	6	9
North Bristol	7	2	9
Gloucester/Chelt	2		2
Stroud			0
Thornbury			0
Yate	6	1	7
Other	11	4	15
Carer			0
Disabled			0
Retired	30	3	33
Unemployed			0
Student			0
Totals	63	18	81

- 3.1 Of the 97 people that attended (see numbers recorded above) then it will be noted that 16 declined to answer this question. When considering the age group responses, then it would seem most likely that those not answering would have been retirees – adding to the 33 that declared that to be their status. Of those that responded then this figure represents a little over 40%.
- 3.2 Central and North Bristol were, unsurprisingly the strongest locations for a place of work, but with also a reasonable contingent working closer to home in Coalpit Heath itself (6 persons) or nearby Yate (7 persons).

## **Commentary on the Written Feedback**

### **4. Good Points about the Existing Place**

- 4.1 Most respondents admired the open space and access to the countryside that living in Coalpit Heath currently provided. Many regularly walked across the fields and several were dog-owners and exercised their pets across the site.
- 4.2 The value of this physical activity to health and well-being was recognised by a strong number of respondents and also linked to this was the enjoyment of spotting and encountering wildlife.
- 4.3 The strong community spirit and sense of identity of those that lived in the village was regarded by many as a very positive characteristic.
- 4.4 A significant number of people felt that the 'green gaps' between Coalpit Heath and other villages was an important and valued quality.

### **5. Negative Points about the Existing Place**

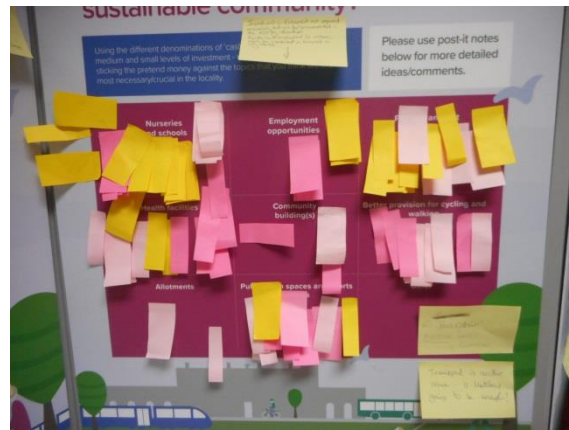
- 5.1 Turning to negative aspects of Coalpit Heath, the single largest problem identified was the main road through the village. This was reported to be very congested at peak times and difficulties experienced in trying to pull out from side roads onto it. People also expressed regret that it was a strong barrier to pedestrians wishing to cross – it effectively divided the village when the road was busy.
- 5.2 The general infrastructure of the village in terms of primary healthcare (small GP surgery) and education (primary school) were often clear concerns with long waiting times to obtain an appointment to see a doctor and the school reported to be 'at capacity'.
- 5.3 Public transport was not thought to be very strong with journey times to useful destinations being too long or inconvenient trips in terms of linking with connecting services being cited as problematic.
- 5.4 The loss of green space also was registered as a (potential future?) negative aspect.

### **6. Aspirations for the Future Place**

- 6.1 Unsurprisingly, the safeguarding of greenspace was therefore a key priority for any future vision.
- 6.2 A concern that Coalpit Heath should avoid 'becoming a town' was expressed by another group of respondents and this was related to the feared loss of a 'sense of community' that an enlarged settlement might bring? Some thought that there simply should be no more houses proposed.

- 6.3 The location for new employment land was considered by some to be problematic – it was shown at the ‘gateway’ to the village from the north and it was anticipated that its appearance would provide an unattractive identity / first impression as one approached. The inclusion of employment opportunities within the proposals was, however, believed to be important and a few people thought that a ‘mixed use’ approach – combining residential with small scale employment uses was a better prospect.

## 7. Priorities for Investment



- 7.1 Investment in education and healthcare were seen to be important on both boards, with public transport fully prominent on only the second board. Public open spaces and sports facilities were also favoured for improvement.

## ‘Drawing on’ Coalpit Heath...

8. Ideas and Thoughts generated by the ‘Table-top Workshops’. The images that follow show the outcomes of conversations and sketches that were explored ‘live’ with participants. This allowed ideas to be plotted spatially, as an overlay to the concept diagram. Some of the key points that arose are noted below each image:



8.1 Substantial public park suggested opposite housing on eastern edge – resource for new and existing communities and preserves good outlook. This connects with strong network of green infrastructure based on existing hedgerows and their reinforcement – providing green walking links to the wider landscape. Concern for housing mix/affordability. Interest in mining heritage to be celebrated. Questions over location of employment allocation and its nature – small-scale office/workshop accommodation favoured over ‘industrial sheds’.



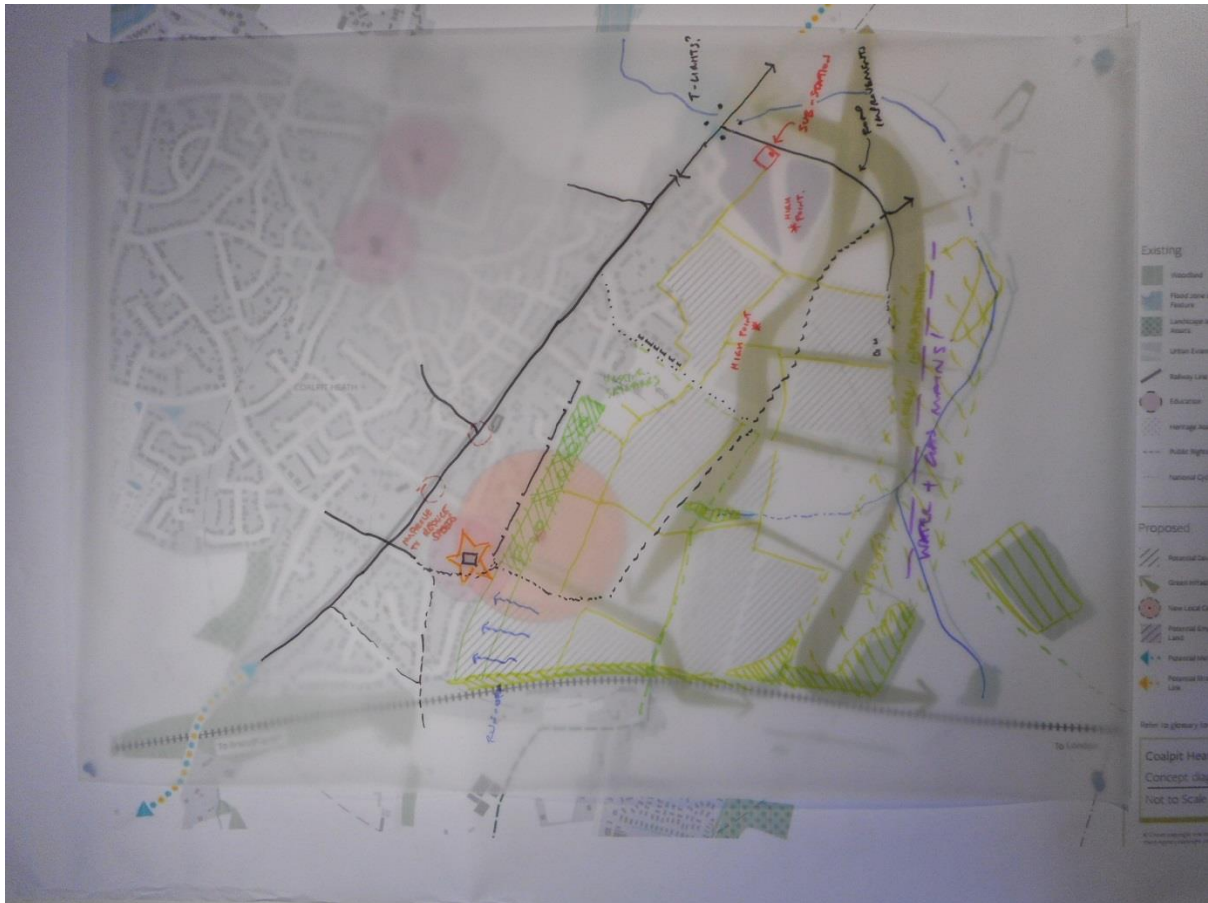


- 8.2 Possible options for integrating small-scale employment sites within the centre of the layout (including re-use of farm buildings)? Concern about employment allocation as 'gateway' to village? Walking links to existing services / facilities on other side of main road important influence on layout of new neighbourhood.

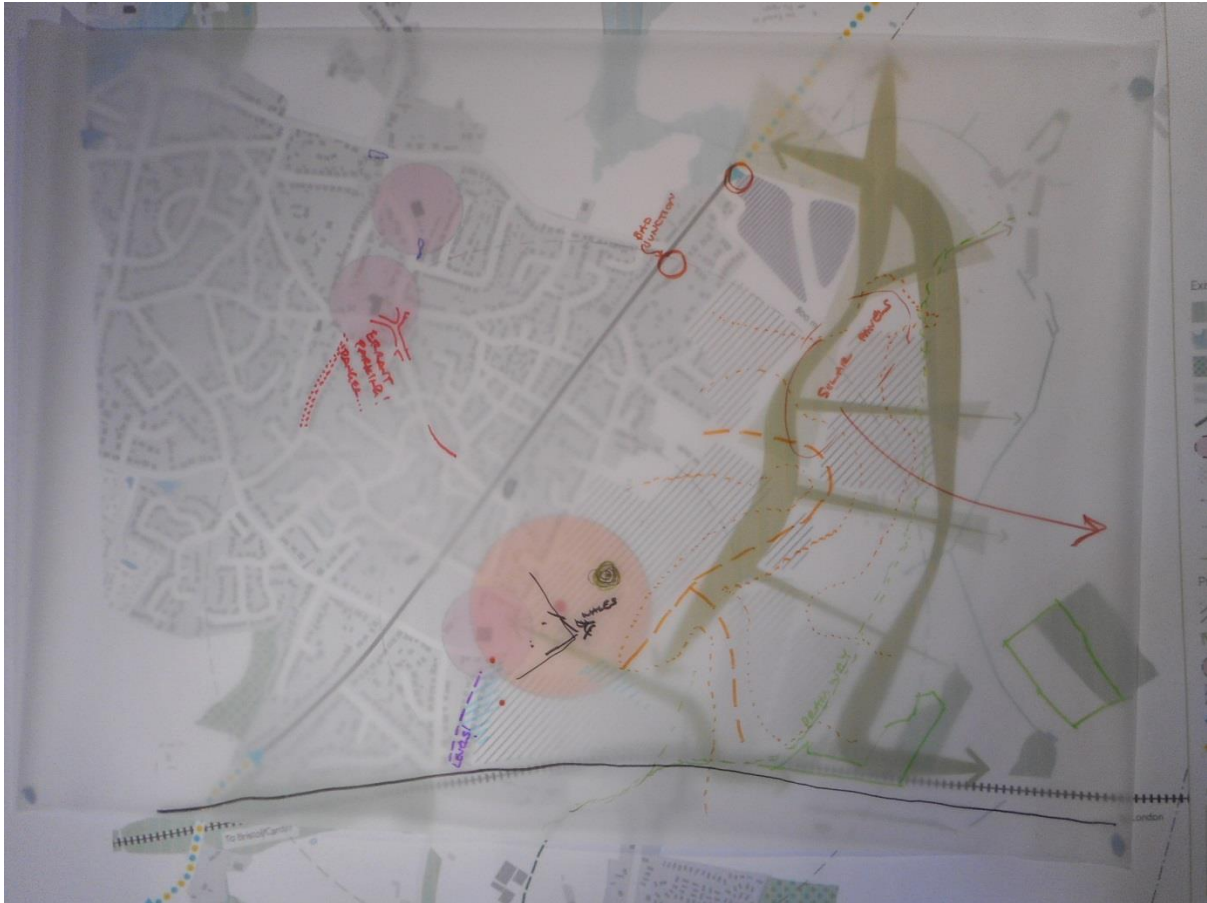


- 8.3 Employment land set back from main road? Crossing points / road junctions along main road need to be re-considered / improved. Measures to decrease vehicular permeability from new neighbourhood westwards (broken lattice street structure + bus gate?) considered in order to prioritise use of new highway access and preserve residential amenity. Include for better parking for existing school within new masterplan area? Calls to re-open former railway station...





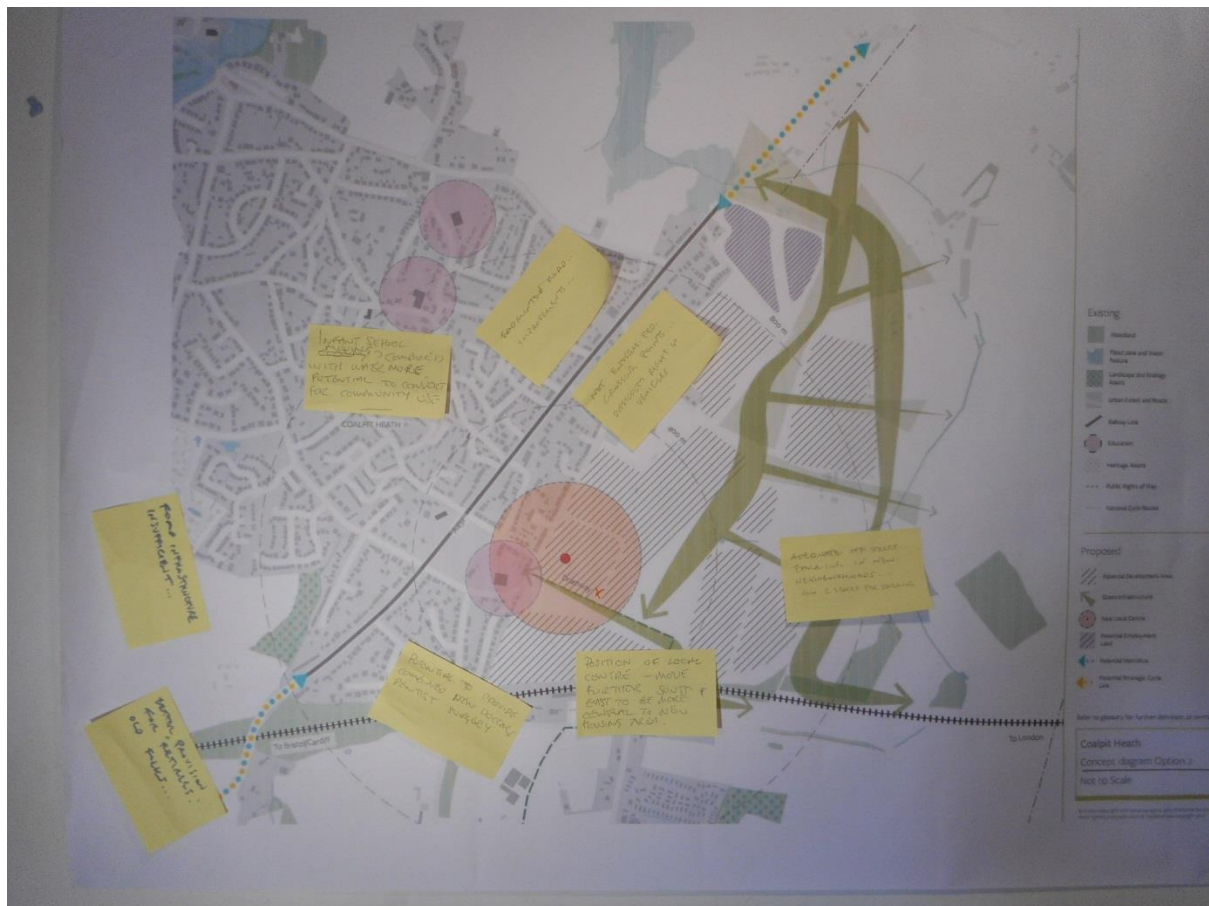
- 8.4 Basic plotting of some site features – surface water run off in south western corner of the site noted. Topography in relation to green infrastructure / structural landscape important for silhouette / skyline. Green buffer to southern edge – noise from railway line would make this problematic for housing? Linear Park idea plotted.



- 8.5 View westwards (to Wales) noted. Complex topography – ridgelines need careful plotting. Junction improvements necessary on main road.

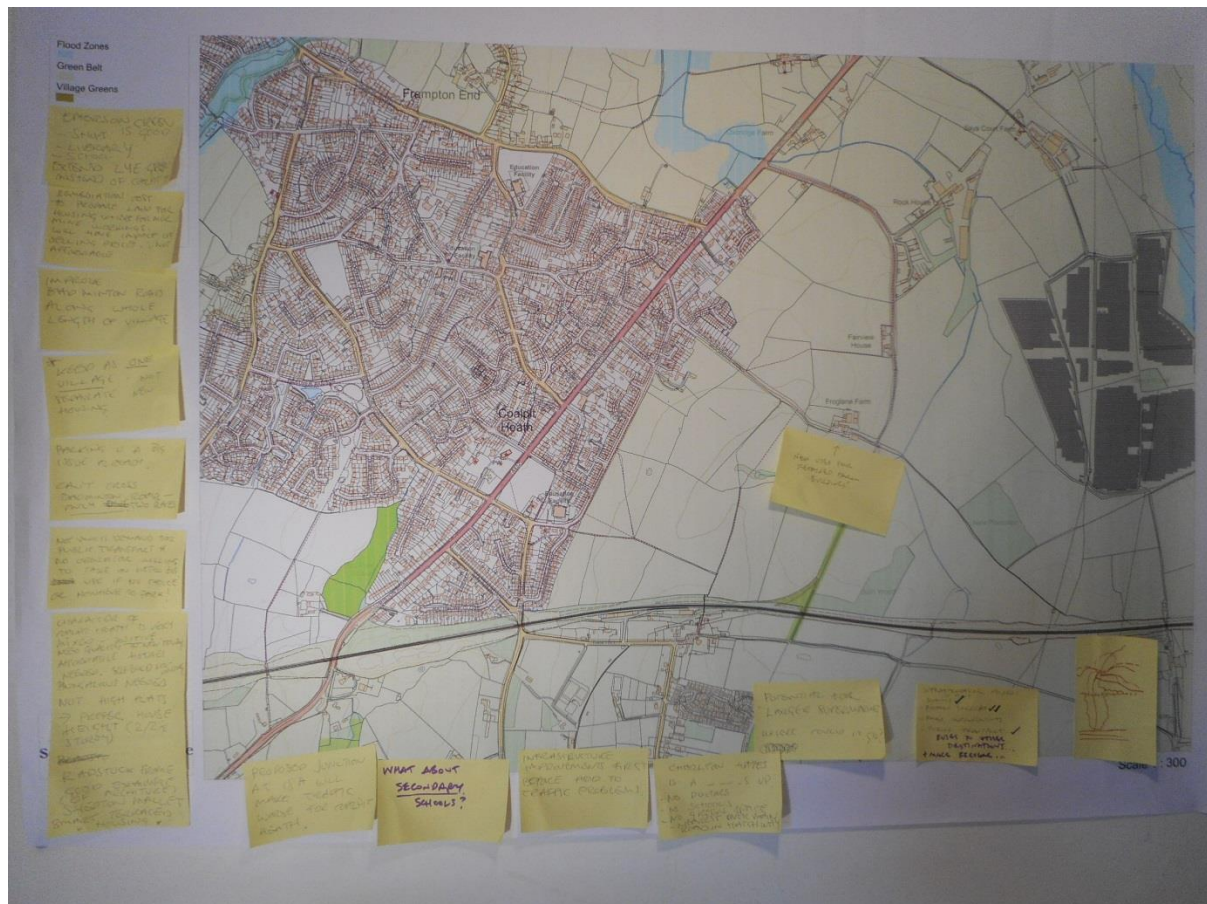


- 8.6 Wildlife / habitats noted. Option to locate new school close to new highway access (to the north?). Calls for good variety and mix of housing – not just 4/5 bedroomed properties.



- 8.7 Various notes – Badminton Road improvements necessary. Is highway infrastructure capable of dealing with additional development? Make new local centre more clearly a neighbourhood centre and locate more centrally? Improved parking standards for new development. Relocate and expand local surgery (to include dentist?).





- 8.8 Various notes – Improve Badminton Road throughout village. Concern over remediation costs of land making housing less affordable? Doubts over promotion of public transport. Has secondary school provision been considered? New uses for retained farm buildings. Support for improved doctors surgery as part of the development. Potential for larger supermarket? Infrastructure improvements to be delivered first. Impact of M4 junction 18A on Coalpit Heath?



## Recommendations

The broad themes of public opinion that we have analysed and recorded above should generally influence future actions but, at a technical level, the following recommendations are put forward:

### 9. Evolving the Concept Diagram / future Framework Plan

- 9.1 Reconsider 'local centre' location (and whether one, or (perhaps more?) smaller 'neighbourhood centres' might be more appropriate?).
- 9.2 Show optional strategy for employment land in different location(s).
- 9.3 Green infrastructure need to reach back to existing residential areas and out into wider landscape.

### 10. Further Key Points for a future Master-planning Brief

- 10.1 A network of green routes needs to be included within the Masterplan to provide and safeguard links from existing residential neighbourhoods out to the wider landscape for recreational walking and exercise.
- 10.2 Consider the feasibility of introducing bespoke planning policy specially associated with the Masterplan that might be able to more successfully influence the type/mix of new housing provided.
- 10.3 Include linear public park (subject to further testing).

### 11. Other Important 'Early Actions'

- 11.1 Develop a design brief and commission scoping study to investigate feasibility for options to improve Badminton Road (the main street) as a better and safer environment for all users/modes of transport. Enlightened highway design essential.
- 11.2 Habitat and wildlife surveys need to be undertaken to understand assets that may need to be conserved / incorporated into the green infrastructure network.