

Culm Garden Village Stakeholder Forum

Notes of workshop held on 10 February 2020 at Kentisbeare Village Hall

Green infrastructure

1. Welcome and introductions

Paul Brockway (Project Lead, Hyas Consultants) welcomed the participants and introduced the speakers.

2. Examples and inspiration

A short video from The Landscape Institute was played showing the benefits that can be achieved with green infrastructure: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5v53Dxmc5Q0.

Tina Maryan (Area Planning Officer, MDDC) presented slides on some potential benefits of green infrastructure and gave some examples.

Ed Parr Ferris (Devon Wildlife Trust) gave a presentation on green infrastructure from a wildlife and nature perspective, showing how the area would have changed over the centuries, and some of the wildlife of the area. Inspiring examples of natural spaces in and around urban areas in Bucharest and Singapore were followed by what is currently being done to improve biodiversity in London, Aylesbury and Exeter. Ed explained the current Nature Recovery Networks project and how Culm Garden Village could help provide connected areas for wildlife. He also mentioned the River Otter beaver project and the role beavers can have in shaping the landscape and enhancing habitats.

Paul Brockway outlined the workshop session to follow, and gave some further examples of green infrastructure that might be incorporated into the Garden Village development.

3. Group sessions

Participants were asked to consider what types of green infrastructure they would want to see in and around the Garden Village. They were asked to divide themselves between three themed tables (taken from the draft Vision) and to add stickers, photographs and draw on maps provided. The themes for the tables were:

1. Enhance existing landscape, ecological and biodiversity gains
2. Green features, corridors and connections
3. Destination green and open spaces, recreational and educational resources

Participants were asked to focus on the following aims when adding to the maps:

1. to explore local views on how to develop the proposals for green and blue infrastructure;
2. to understand more fully the types of green and blue infrastructure that local communities would like to see; and
3. to discuss and explore potential approaches, solutions and benefits that could be incorporated into the emerging proposals.

4. Summary of group work ideas

Table 1: Enhance existing landscape, ecological and biodiversity gains

- Creation of lake or reservoir and wetland areas – potential future water supply, hydroelectric generation and wildlife habitat

- Sustainable drainage features to encourage biodiversity – swales can provide corridors, rain gardens can provide habitat, green roofs can be good for pollinators
- Great crested newts in the area – attenuation ponds could be designed as habitat
- Countryside park along the River Culm and River Ken connecting to Willand
- Green corridors
- Add to existing woodland areas and create links between
- Improvement of water management upstream
- Improving or rewilding of watercourse areas depending on location
- Trams connecting to re-opened station
- Green connections into Cullompton town
- Offset paths to one side of green corridors to leave wildlife undisturbed
- Some corridors for wildlife, some for people and wildlife, connecting larger areas of habitat and green space

Suggested features: wild play, sports pitches, orchards, woodland, running trails, sustainable drainage as corridors and features, green roofs and walls, cycling, walking and horse riding, water activities, allotments, community woodland, picnic areas, bird watching, meadows, green performance spaces, camping.

Concern raised with regard to viability if all these green spaces are included.



Table 2: Green features, corridors and connections

- Green corridors to serve wildlife and people and link across the M5, e.g. Crewkerne dormouse bridge, deer bridge
- Some corridors only for wildlife

- Ensure sufficient sites and widths to corridors to serve all
- Management of corridors and green spaces critical
- A park ranger or manager to avoid disconnect of original vision and to manage ongoing interest
- Organisation such as National Trust could be involved
- Direct links between Cullompton and Garden Village
- Ensure green links to east and west of the M5 rather than links across M5
- If connections are nice enough people will use them: once people are in their cars, the opportunity has been missed
- Good bus/shuttle services needed not just pedestrian and cycle
- Street trees for all streets, not just green corridors
- Links for wildlife between the CCA and the Garden Village
- Ensure proper connections between pockets
- Have real wildness, not just managed wild
- Put roads/grey infrastructure under pylons
- Bury power lines so safer
- Ensure wildlife runs through gardens – educating residents
- Parks within allocation should have people at the centre and wildlife outside, linked by corridors – look at London parks
- Sports facilities not in Kentisbeare buffer
- Central sports and recreation facilities
- Facilities for non-sporting residents
- Cycle ways sealed for maintenance and raised in wet areas
- Wheelchair/pram accessible
- Bridleways must join up
- Separate park areas for people and wildlife
- Community owned green space
- Parks to incorporate sustainable drainage features
- Green areas to incorporate areas for flooding

Suggested features: cycle link to Willand, green bridge for wildlife, pedestrian and cycle links into transport hub across bridge next to J28, street trees, link across M5 to join Rull Lane/Goblin Lane into the top end of the country park, good bus/shuttle services, bridleways, wild areas, woodland walks, sports pitches, wild play, dry runs through culverts, green roofs

Potential conflict between humans/lighting and wildlife

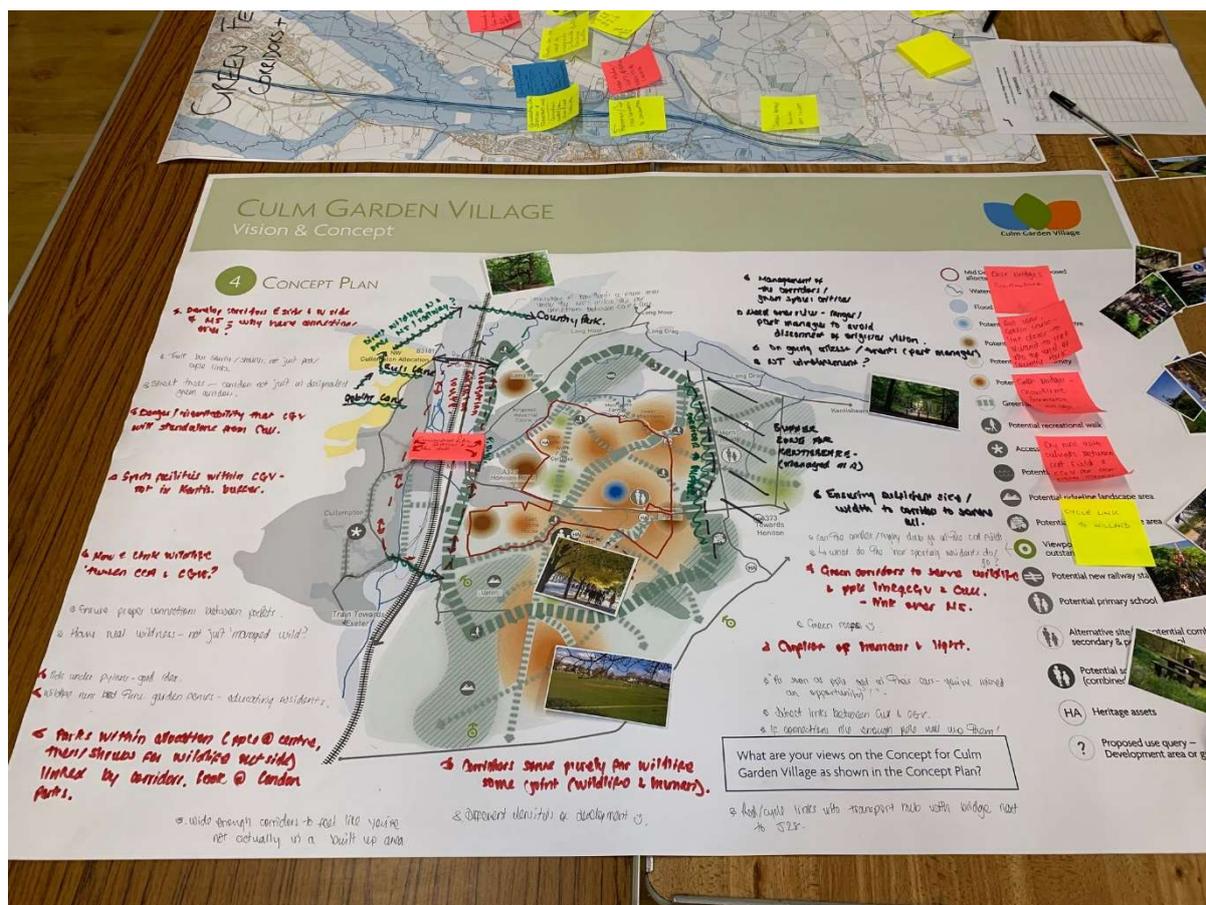
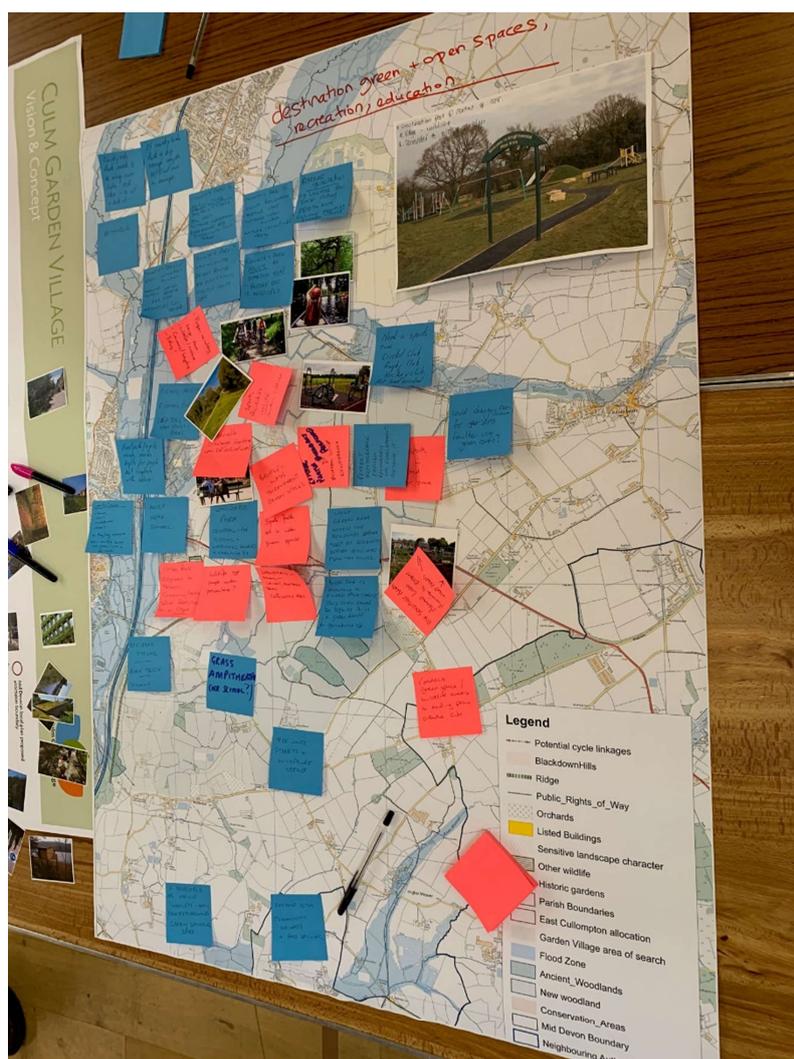


Table 3: Destination green and open spaces, recreational and educational resources

- Connect green space/wildlife areas to existing public rights of way outside site
- Use sensitive areas around listed buildings to extend wild areas
- Incorporate green roofs on sports facilities such as clubhouse and changing rooms
- No development beyond Kentisbeare Parish boundary
- Sports facilities not in Kentisbeare buffer
- Large green space within the urban area must be designed before building the houses
- Development could be various hamlets centred around green gathering space and linked by green space
- Wildlife not people under power lines
- Sports fields set in wider green space connected to wildlife corridors
- Central destination park with sports close to school and sports facilities
- Sports and other facilities on green roofs
- Cycle routes need to be lit but conflict with nature
- Country park must be started as soon as possible before rest of the development is delivered
- Country park should have an events programme, meeting space, outdoor team building
- Revenue generation, e.g. licences for horse riding, BBQ areas to hire, fishing licences, meeting rooms and events
- Sustainable drainage features can be educational
- Proper rewilding – large area for wildlife/nature
- Country park needs to be long the river Culm with lakes to sit and look at

- If country park is big enough maybe an organisation like the National Trust can own and manage

Suggested features: sports zone (cricket, rugby, hockey), tree lined streets and wildflower verges, outdoor gym, community orchards, food growing, allotments, tennis, sports fields, grass amphitheatre (near school), bridleways, central landscaped park for sitting, watching flowers and the world go by, MUGA, green roofs, outdoor gym, water activities (canoeing, kayaking), running trails, wild play, picnic areas, fishing, seating, nature/sculpture trails, meeting space, off road cycling, BMX, Segway, visitor centre and café, assault course, dog agility area, dog wash, outdoor classrooms, picnic tables, permanent BBQs, woodland, meadows, nature reserve, bird hides, adventure playground, petanque.



5. Next steps

The ideas generated by the workshop will be collated by the Project Team and fed into the masterplanning process for the Garden Village.

The next workshop scheduled for 17 March 2020 on blue infrastructure will focus on the Connecting the Culm project and add to the green infrastructure work carried out to date.