

Buckover Garden Village: Housing Statement

Introduction

Policy 7.8 of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) sets out the strategic objectives for Buckover Garden Village as a Strategic Development Location. The housing objective for Buckover Garden Village is set out below:

“Provision of around 3,000 dwellings (including affordable homes), to be delivered by a full range of providers and of a wide range of types and tenures, complementing existing predominant house types in the local area. At least 1,500 will be delivered within the plan period. The homes will be innovative, of high-quality design, spacious and well-planned, meeting Nationally Described Space Standards as a minimum.”

This document introduces some thoughts on how the Tortworth Estate, as landowner, and St. Modwen Developments Ltd, as development partner, propose delivering on this policy requirement.

Garden Village Principles

As a Garden Village, Buckover will be ‘*a holistically planned new settlement that enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities.*’

For Buckover, policy requires master planning and detailed design principles to accord with Garden City principles. Key housing principles that we are committed to are set out below –

- *Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.*
- *Attractive, mixed tenure, high-quality homes and public spaces that are accessible across the generations.*
- *Delivering affordable homes based on a robust analysis of need.*
- *Delivering a diverse housing mix from a range of providers such as housing associations, private sector housebuilders and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).*
- *Mixed-tenure homes and housing types.*

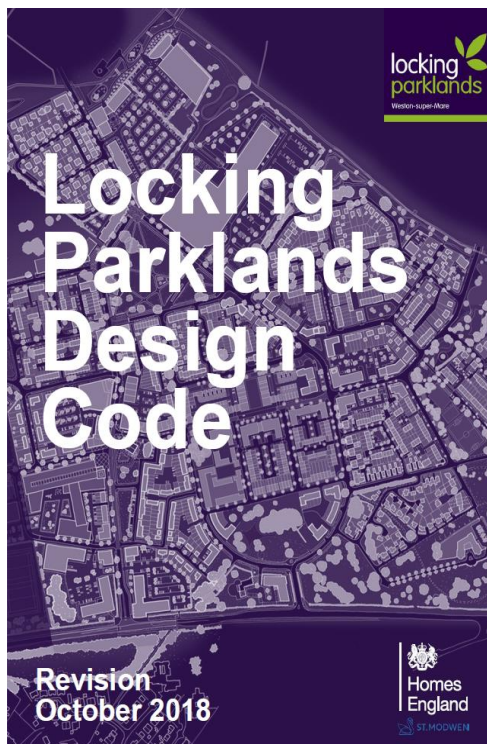
Buckover Garden Village will provide a new, inclusive community that offers the opportunity for a range of people to live, work and play. In terms of housing, the vision for the Village is to deliver mixed-tenure homes and housing types for a wide range of people, which will include both market and affordable housing.

Securing High Quality Design

St. Modwen has a successful track record of delivering developments that include the high-quality design of new homes, coupled with good quality and well managed communal environments.

Where St Modwen acts as Master Developer, as is the case with Buckover Garden Village, it directly delivers the major infrastructure (roads, drainage, utilities and public realm) which allows it control over quality.

As Master Developer, St. Modwen will then either drawdown parcels of land for its own housebuilding division (St. Modwen Homes) or sell serviced land parcels to third party housebuilders.



Example of a Design Code that St Modwen has for its development with Homes England at Locking Parklands, North Somerset.

Regulating design quality in these instances is achieved through partnering with carefully selected third party housebuilders and requiring that housing is delivered according to certain parameters and to agreed standards. This can be achieved through the sales contract but is also commonly achieved through a Design Code. This will be agreed with the Local Authority as a reserved matter to the outline consent and will be there for the use of the Master Developer and Local Authority to ensure that the shared vision for Buckover Garden Village is protected and individual phases are brought forward in accordance with it.

We are proposing that the Buckover Garden Village Masterplan will be made up of a number of "Character Areas", governed by a code which will set specific development parameters such as building heights, uses, forms, materials and elevation treatments. The intention of the Design Code is to govern design standards across the entire development, and to ensure that the high-quality environment is maintained.

St. Modwen Homes

St. Modwen has a wealth of experience in delivering sustainable new communities, and innovative, high quality new homes across the UK. Like many of St. Modwen's residential developments, Buckover Garden Village will also benefit from a proportion of its homes being delivered by its own housebuilding business, St. Modwen Homes. This will include the first phases of development where placemaking and design standards are set at an exemplar level for other third parties to then follow.



St. Modwen Homes work with local architects to tailor their housetypes to respond positively to their context. St. Modwen Homes' designs feature large windows and higher than average ceilings in order to improve the living environment for residents. High quality materials, fixtures and fittings are included within their standard product, which results in a high-quality specification.

St. Modwen Homes are a "challenger" housebuilder who, despite being less than a decade old, have ambitious growth plans and were selling from 27 outlets across the country delivering in excess of 800 homes in 2018/19.

St Modwen Homes – Locking Parklands

After only a few years of operating, the company won Best Small Housebuilder in the UK. The judges commented that St. Modwen Homes demonstrated a commitment to innovation, improvement and excellence and had an imaginative approach to housebuilding.

In 2018, St. Modwen Homes was highly recommended in the Best Large Development category at the First Time Buyer Readers' Awards. The award is judged on the development with the best design and quality to create an affordable, desirable and inspirational environment.



St. Modwen Homes - Locking Parklands

Housing Types and Ranges

In line with Policy 7.8 of the Joint Spatial Plan, Tortworth Estate and St. Modwen have aspiration to deliver an exemplar development that is accessible to a variety of people. The development process includes community engagement at its core, in order to shape the new development into a place where people want to live.

Housing at Buckover will be well planned, and each phase of development will come forward on a phased basis and in line with design parameters set by the Outline Planning Application and the associated Design Code.

Housing densities will vary across the site and will be regulated by the design code. High density housing will be offered at the core of the development and there will be lower density housing towards the edge of the settlement.

A variety of house types will be offered for both the affordable and market housing, which could include townhouses, semi-detached housing, detached housing and apartments as a minimum, and housing mix will vary across the character areas of the development.

We explore some of the housing tenures and types that we are specifically looking into at this early stage and our approaches to each sector:

- (1) Providing affordable housing is a key garden village principle and a commitment of Buckover Garden Village. It will be delivered according to policy requirements (which in turn are driven by local needs) and will include a range of tenures (social rent, affordable rent, intermediate housing) and unit types (flats, houses).

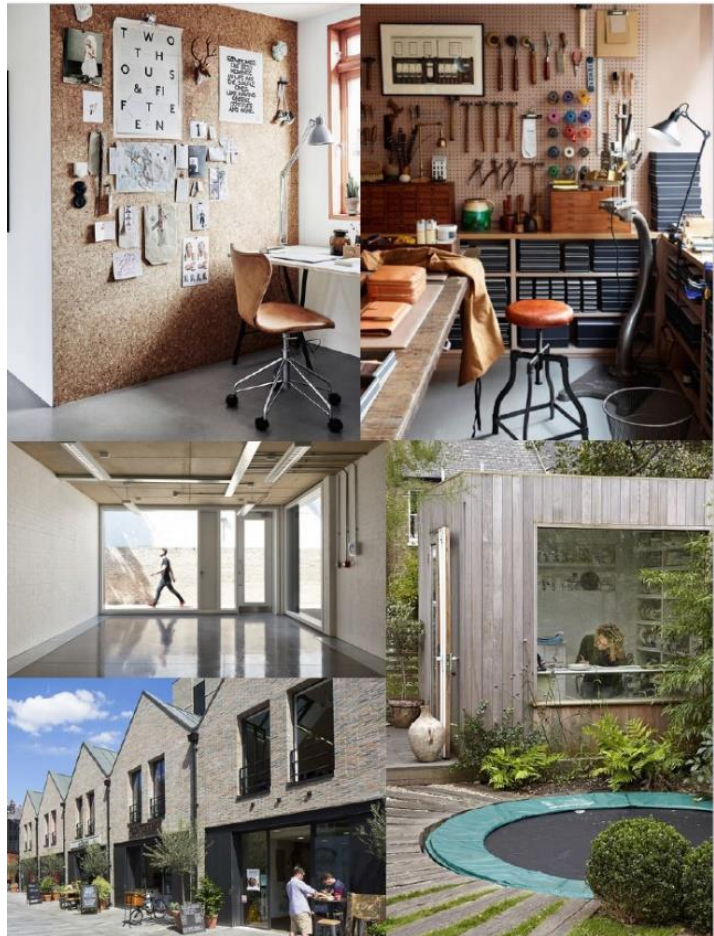
Each phase of development that is brought forward will include a mix of both market and affordable homes so that the two types of housing are indistinguishable.

We are proposing to deliver the affordable housing by creating a shortlisted panel of affordable housing providers who understand and are willing to actively contribute to the garden village principles.

- (2) Elderly Care housing – both C2 (Care Home) and C3 (Age Restricted Housing with Car/Support offering) will also form part of the residential offering at Buckover Garden Village, which ensures that the new development caters for a wide range of different needs and helps tackle some of the social issues around social isolation. Discussion with a number of operators have already begun and input is being sought from these specialist operators during the course of the masterplanning exercise.
- (3) A full range of housing providers - another means of delivering housing that is affordable to people and meets garden village principles that we are exploring is setting aside a phase of development for self- and custom-build alongside smaller private sector developers. In addition, the Tortworth Estate is also likely to retain and manage some of the homes for rent, which has been successful for the Estate elsewhere within South Gloucestershire.

(4) We will look to encourage housing design that is flexible to encourage home working and encourage micro-businesses and entrepreneurs who start in the home by providing:

- Roof design with fully-glazed top-floor workspaces to maximise natural light
- Street-facing flexible workspace / work-homes in the centre
- Garden Offices' as an option at purchase point, creating well-insulated, serviced garden spaces for growing ideas and recreation
- Space for studies including offices over garages



Finally, as a business with a housebuilding arm we continue to monitor modern methods of construction and will continue to assess their suitability for the delivery of Buckover Garden Village. Innovative methods of construction such as the use of spandrel panels and smart roofs are already being used by St. Modwen Homes on their existing developments, but it could be that by the time Buckover Garden Village is delivered that prefabricated or modular construction methods are more commonly place and can be employed. Discussions are ongoing with organisations such as the University of West England around research and how advances in technology will affect the way that we build and bring forward new developments.