

Hicks Gate Workshop Report

Bath and North East Somerset Council

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council was successful in achieving a funding bid from West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to commission Strategic Planning work to assist in the formulation of its new Local Plan. AECOM has been commissioned to undertake the strategic planning commission for the Hicks Gate area.
- 1.2 There are two phases of the studies, the Strategic Place Assessments which are high level and cover a broad area of search looking at character and capacity issues such as ecology, landscape, transport, historic environment, and the development potential of particular locations. The second phase will produce updated or new Strategic Planning Frameworks for identified development areas. These are more detailed and place specific and provide the basis for allocating sites within the Local Plan.
- 1.3 B&NES stakeholder workshops were held in January and February 2023 to inform the Strategic Planning Frameworks for the key study areas.
- 1.4 This Stakeholder Workshop Report will outline the key findings from the workshop, broken down into themes, to ensure all views have been accurately recorded.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 A stakeholder workshop was held on the 26th of January 2023 to cover the areas of Keynsham and Saltford, with the inclusion of Hicks Gate, with various stakeholders including representatives from Saltford Parish Council, Keynsham Town Council and Compton Dando Parish Council.
- 2.2 The purpose of this workshop was;
 - Baseline: to outline and validate the teams understanding and assumptions on the context of area.
 - Future: to share and agree on the key priorities that the strategic place assessment should focus on and establish development objectives.
 - Synthesis: to share and agree on the key priorities.
- 2.3 The session started with a welcome and introduction from B&NES, followed by area context and technical analysis.
- 2.4 The participants were asked to discuss the following questions: “what do you value about the area?”, ideas on some key questions per placemaking themes (the questions are noted below under each theme heading) and “what are the key priorities for your area?”.
- 2.5 As per B&NES request following the internal workshop, the five placemaking themes were adjusted to separate ‘Thriving, Healthy and Inclusive Homes and Communities’ into ‘Housing and Shared Prosperity’, and ‘Healthy and Inclusive Communities’. Therefore, six placemaking themes were used at the stakeholder’s workshop. Two-three questions were posed per theme:
 - Zero Carbon and Climate Resilience;
 - What changes would you like to see to support you to live low carbon lifestyle?
 - What kinds of changes could create green jobs and are there barriers to businesses becoming more sustainable?
 - Moving Around;
 - What would enable you to walk, wheel or cycle and use public transport more?

- What activities, opportunities and services does your community need to access nearby?
- Natural Spaces and Biodiversity;
 - Are there any barriers to accessing nature, public space and high-quality green space?
 - How could the natural spaces be improved for people and wildlife in this area?
- Identity and Belonging;
 - What would the future community be like in the Keynsham and Saltford area? How do they live?
 - What is the future character and identity of this area?
- Housing and Shared Prosperity;
 - What is the housing need in this area and how can this be met?
 - What are the strengths of the local economy and what could be the new economic opportunities?
 - How has Covid-19 and the shift to greater levels of homeworking affected your area? Has it affected housing demand and/or local employment?
- Healthy and Inclusive Communities
 - How can communities in Keynsham and Saltford area be supported for better health and wellbeing?
 - What would an inclusive and healthy place look and feel like in future?

2.6 The workshop participants gave feedback on their discussions and next steps were discussed.

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 Participants were asked to include Hicks Gate in their discussion as it is within Keynsham Parish, however, due to its small size, low population and, hence, lack of significance to many attendees, it was often left out of the discussion and only a couple of points were spoken of. These points mainly relate to theme 5, Housing and Shared Prosperity, and are as follows. As a result of the low existing local population there are relatively limited opportunities for capturing the views of the community.
- 3.2 As Hicks Gate is currently a very small community, it was suggested that the area could be used for **student accommodation** due to its proximity to all four universities in Bristol and Bath.
- 3.3 Given the quiet area, but decent links to the cities, it was stated that postgraduate or older students, or neurodivergent students, who want to attend the high-ranking universities but also wish to remain in a fairly calm environment, could be ideal residents.
- 3.4 Another idea was that the area could provide the opportunity for development to become a **new community for young professionals and families**. People priced out of other locations in the area, such as Bath and Bristol, but who work in those locations, could locate at Hicks Gate and be in an accessible commuter location along a **public transport and active travel** corridor.
- 3.5 If these options were to be viable, public transport connections to surrounding areas would have to be improved to **reduce reliance on cars**.

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