

Frequently Asked Questions

Bourton Meadow, Buckingham

The Proposals

Where is development proposed?

Development is proposed on land on the east side of Buckingham. The site lies on the east side of the A413 on land known as Bourton Meadow. The site includes the land between the A413 and the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal and also land between the Canal and the River Great Ouse. Land to the east of the Canal is not proposed for development.



Who is proposing the development?

The development is proposed by Manor Oak Homes, who are working closely with the Buckingham Canal Society.

Manor Oak Homes are being assisted by a team of consultants, including planning consultants (Phase 2 Planning and Development Ltd) and masterplanners (BluePencil Designs). Specialist consultants are advising on matters such as trees, ecology, transport, drainage and landscape.

What do the Town Council think about the proposals?

Manor Oak Homes originally presented their vision for Bourton Meadow to the Town Council in 2022 and we then participated in the consultation stages of the Neighbourhood Plan, including attending the Developers Roadshow. The Neighbourhood Plan group chose to allocate the site and we worked with the Group to develop Policy CLH2 of the Neighbourhood Plan which sets the requirements for a planning application on this site.

We have recently attended a Town Council meeting where we updated Members on the application progress.

What is being proposed?

We are proposing to submit an "Outline" planning application for up to 90 residential properties and a visitor centre of up to 225 square metres, along with all of the necessary servicing, landscaping and infrastructure.

What is an outline planning application?

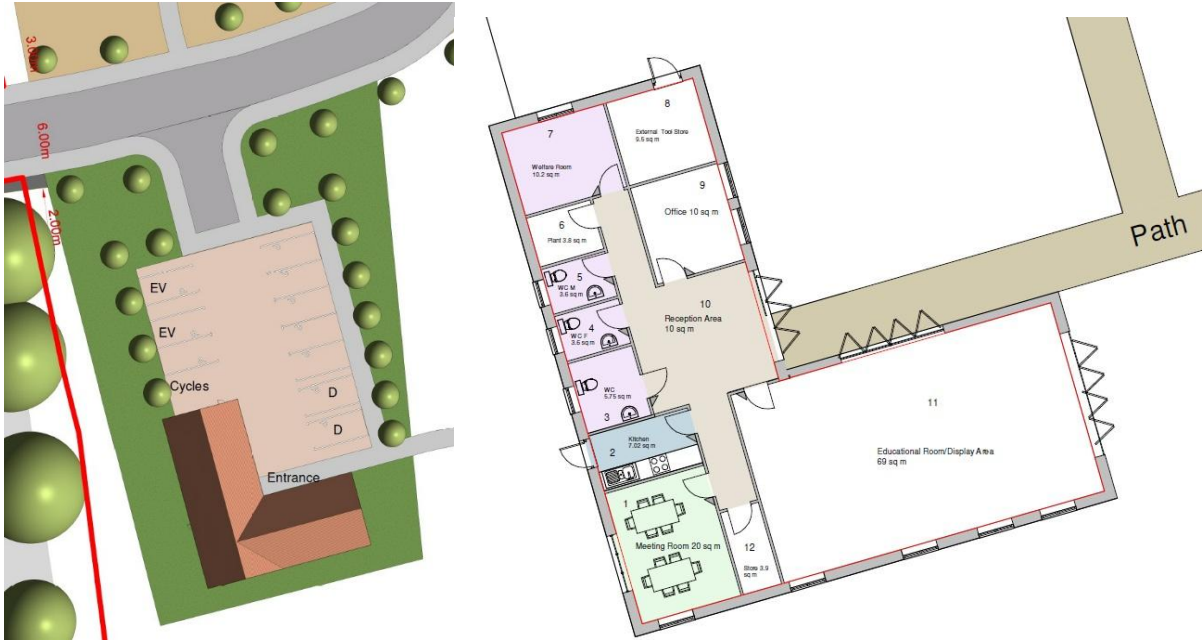
An Outline application means that we are seeking to establish the principle of a development that accords with the Neighbourhood Plan, with all matters of detail (layout, appearance, design, landscaping etc) being reserved for future applications.

However, there are two aspects of the development where we intend to provide fuller details, which are:

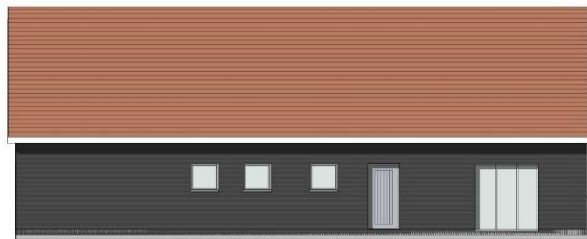
- The means of vehicular access into the site – we recognise that how cars (and pedestrians/cyclists) enter and leave the site will be of particular interest, and therefore the design for the vehicular access and the proposed crossing of the A413 at this point are shown in a detailed design. We will be seeking approval for the detail of this access as part of the Outline planning application.



- The Visitor Centre – to help people visualise what up to 225 sq m means in practice, we intend to submit the design that we have been working on with Buckingham Canal Society. These plans will still be illustrative, but will be a good indication of what the visitor centre will comprise.



South Elevation
1:100



West Elevation
1:100



North Elevation
1:100



East Elevation
1:100

The application will be supported by a Design and Access Statement providing the design rationale for the proposals and including details of the sustainability measures that will be incorporated into the scheme.

Details of the Development

What will the visitor centre be used for?

The proposals include for a visitor centre which is proposed to be run by the Buckingham Canal Society and will include flexible space that could be used to promote tourism, heritage and local flora and fauna.

Plans have been provided to show how the building could look and how it could be configured.

We welcome your thoughts on the proposed visitor centre.

How many homes will be provided?

The precise number of homes will be dependent on the detailed design of the site. However, site analysis has determined that the site has capacity to provide up to 90 homes.

Will there be affordable housing?

Yes, 35% of the homes will comprise affordable housing. This meets the requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan. The details of the affordable housing will be subject to agreement with the Council as the proposals progress.

Will the homes be suitable for those with limited mobility?

In accordance with the Council's requirements, all of the homes will be designed to accord with at least Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. This means that they will be "accessible and adaptable, designed to ensure that they are useable by a wide range of people, including older and disabled individuals.

In addition, at least 15% of the affordable homes will be designed to Part M4(3) which is the highest accessibility standard for new dwellings and means that they are fully wheelchair accessible and adaptable for people with significant mobility needs.

How many bedrooms will the homes have?

The development will provide homes which range in size. The mix of houses provided will broadly reflect the housing needs of the area, which means that the majority will be smaller homes, with less than four bedrooms.

Will there be any flats?

It is anticipated that the majority of homes will be houses. Consideration will be given as to whether a small number of apartments should be included when the detailed design is prepared in due course.

We welcome your thoughts on the proposed housing. Please let us know if there is a particular type of housing that you would like to see.

Will there be open space?

Yes. The proposals have been designed to provide open space within and around the area to be developed. The land to the east of the canal will remain undeveloped and it is proposed that this area may include some footpaths for informal recreation.

The Planning Application

When will the planning application be submitted?

It is anticipated that the planning application will be submitted in late spring/early summer 2026.

When will the application be determined?

The Council attempts to determine larger planning applications, such as this one, within 13 weeks, although sometimes this process takes longer.

What plans will be provided as part of the application?

The following plans will be provided as part of the planning application:

- Site location plan – this plan will show where the proposals are. The site location plan shows the site outlined in red. The site includes part of the A413 so that the access to the site can be established along with a new pedestrian crossing into to link the site to the existing development and ensure that the development is not isolated. Since the proposals to the east of the Canal will be located away from the River, to ensure that it is not impacted, the eastern boundary is set back from the River by 15m.
- Parameters plan – this is a plan that will establish where the development will be located:
 - It seeks to fix the area within which the visitor centre will be located by identifying 0.2 hectares to the south of the access road.
 - The area proposed for residential development will be located to the north of the access road and will be mostly limited to two storey.
 - There is a limited area of development in the north-western corner of the site which is capable of accommodating development up to 3 storeys.
 - The residential areas will include incidental open space, paths and roads.
 - An area of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) is proposed in the north-eastern part of the site.
 - The parameters plan shows the broad location of the existing Public Right of Way and bridleway within the site. The route of these will not be altered through the planning application.

- New pedestrian and/or cycle connections will be provided. The locations will be fixed in due course.
- Details of the proposed new access for the site will be provided on a plan as part of the application. This will show a new site access from the A413, coupled with a new pedestrian toucan crossing. The pedestrian crossing will be located just to the south of the northern of the two entrances to Burleigh Piece, with the site access around 40 metres further south.
- Plans of the visitor centre – these will be provided as part of the planning application to show how it could be configured. The final decision in terms of the exact configuration of the visitor centre will be informed by feedback received.

What documents will be provided as part of the application?

The following documents will be provided as part of the planning application:

- Agricultural Land Quality Report
- Design and Access Statement
- Ecological Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report
- Arboricultural Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Sustainable Drainage Statement
- Energy Statement
- Noise Assessment
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Utilities Statement
- Foul Drainage Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Minerals Assessment
- Planning Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Waste and Recycling Strategy
- Water Environment Assessment
- Open Space Assessment
- Sustainability Statement
- Lighting/Crime Prevention Strategies

These documents will be available to view on the Buckinghamshire Council's website once the planning application has been submitted.

Can I comment on the planning application?

Yes. This current consultation is being carried out by Manor Oak Homes and their team of consultants, who are inviting your views, before a planning application is submitted to the Council. When the application is submitted to the Council, they will publish the application on

their website and anyone can submit their comments in relation to the proposals directly to the Council. These comments will be taken into consideration when the Council determine the planning application.

How will I know when the planning application has been submitted?

We will update the consultation webpage to let you know when the planning application has been submitted. This update will include the planning application reference number.

Planning Policy

Is this site allocated for development?

The site is allocated in Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan (2026) for a new small scale visitor centre and an enabling residential development of approximately 90 homes under Policy CLH2: 'Development of the Canal Area'.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that this land has the potential to enhance the green and blue infrastructure and the historic significance of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal and supports its potential as a tourist attraction. It supports development that delivers these aims. The Neighbourhood Plan includes an Illustrative Concept Plan:



Key Considerations

Transport

What are the proposed access arrangements?

A new access point will be provided off the A413, providing the principal entrance for vehicles. There will be footpaths two metres wide either side of the access.

A toucan crossing will be provided over the A413.

What will be the impact in terms of the roads and congestion?

Transport consultants have assessed the impact of the additional vehicle movements that would arise as a result of the development. They have concluded that the number of trips will not result in a significant adverse impact.

How many car parking spaces will there be?

The parking for the homes and also the visitor centre will need to accord with the Council's standards in terms of the number and size of spaces. The parking details will be known once the development is designed in detail at the reserved matters stage.

Will the people living in the new homes be able to get to places that they need to by public transport?

Once the proposed site access and associated pedestrian crossing has been implemented, the site will benefit from good access from a frequent bus service, as the bus stops on Stratford Road are located 450 metres from the site entrance.

Will we be able to walk to the site and surrounding countryside?

Yes, the new toucan crossing will make it easier to cross the A413 and reach the site. It is proposed that new footpaths will be provided on both sides of the canal and the towpath will be enhanced.

Ecology

Is the site of ecological value and how will species be protected?

An ecological assessment of the site is underway and the findings will be provided within the planning application. The report will need to identify and predict any ecological impacts and set out requirements for any further assessments and mitigation.

Due to the sensitive nature of the river, the site boundary has been set back from the river's edge. So whilst ecological improvements are proposed to the area to the east of the canal, there will be no changes to the river.

What opportunities are there for enhancing ecology?

Ecologists have identified that the site presents a number of opportunities for meaningful ecological enhancements. These could include:

- Habitat improvements to the land to the east of the canal, such as creation of wet woodlands or carr habitats through planting of native trees and shrubs;
- Design of drainage basins and swales to provide additional opportunities for wildlife;
- Creation of habitats/features within areas of public open space; and
- Enhancing hedgerows and tree belt boundaries with supplementary planting.

Flooding and Drainage

Is the site liable to flooding?

Previously there has been flooding on the eastern side of the canal, however there is no built development proposed for this part of the site.

The proposed development area is located within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding. Therefore, development of this area is appropriate from a flood risk perspective.

How will the surface water drain away, and will it increase the risk of flooding?

Specialist consultants have reviewed the proposals and identified that the best solution for surface water drainage is to provide a piped network to the River Great Ouse with a detention basin in the north-eastern corner of the site. The detention basin will be designed to accommodate water in periods of heavy rainfall. This approach has been calculated with an allowance for future changes, in accordance with the Council's requirements.

When the application is submitted, the Council's drainage specialists will assess the drainage proposals and their findings will be taken into account.

Landscape and Visual Assessment

What will the visual impact of the development be?

A landscape assessment of the site has been carried out which has concluded that the views of the site are relatively localised and are, in part, screened by vegetation. New planting will be provided to further screen views from the open countryside to the north and east. Given these factors, new development will not appear intrusive or out of character with the scale and form of development within the neighbouring area.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which assesses the impact of the development, will be submitted with the planning application.

What are the landscape enhancements that are proposed?

Landscape enhancements of the site will include substantial new native trees, thicket and reed beds, with a generous new woodland belt planted in the northern-northeastern edge of the field. The land to the east of the canal will be retained as semi-natural open space with wet woodland and reed bed planting, as well a recreational footpath providing access to the riverside.