

This is the town plan bible for planners and developers and will set how Swindon will develop until 2026. Planning permission for Coate has already been granted but there is a draft policy in place for “Commonhead” that is printed out in full below in blue along with an extract diagram taken from the Borough-wide Proposals Map.

Objections must be submitted to Swindon Council by **6pm on Thursday 21st February 2013** and the document can be viewed at Wat Tyler House, in Swindon libraries or online at <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/localplan> where you can also download a form to respond.

The main points to make about the Commonhead Policy NC2 are that it fails to protect the buffer land in perpetuity and fails to include countryside to the south of Coate Water that is also important for its historic (bronze age settlement), literary (Richard Jefferies) and ecological (to link Coate Water SSSI to Burderop Wood North nature reserve, to protect otter streams and the ecological quality of Coate Water) whilst the buffer is only indicated as a non-coalescence area on the Borough-wide proposals map. Request the additional wording **indicated in red** to the Swindon Plan policy NC2 and the justifications in paragraph 5.43 below and ask that the buffer zone is extended to include countryside south of Coate Water Country Park on the Proposals map.

Policy NC2: Commonhead (pages 176-178)

a. Land at Commonhead, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development.

b. The development at Commonhead shall provide:

- a total of 890 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare;
- affordable homes in accordance with Policy HA2;
- 15 hectares of employment land within Use Class B1 and/or B2
- a local centre of a maximum of 1000m² retail floorspace ;
- a primary school (or 1 form-of-entry) incorporating community facilities;
- contributions towards the delivery of 1 form of entry secondary school places off-site;
- temporary accommodation to manage the demographic peak at primary, and contributions as such at secondary schools;
- Green Infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN1 and which connects to the urban area and wider countryside ;
- sport, leisure and community facilities in accordance with Policy CM2;
- high quality public realm;
- a community wide approach to renewable energy; and
- 5.5 hectares of land safeguarded for future expansion of the Great Western Hospital, incorporating provision for emergency services if required.

c. Development at Commonhead shall provide sustainable transport links that integrate with Swindon including:

- public transport links to Swindon Town Centre;
- walking and cycle links to Swindon’s existing communities, Coate Water Country Park and Great Western Hospital; and access to the site from Marlborough Road.

d. Development at Commonhead shall protect, enhance and integrate with existing environmental assets including:

- Coate Water Country Park and Day House Copse;
- views to and from the North Wessex Downs AONB and Coate Water Country Park;
- protection of the existing historic environment, including the setting of listed buildings and on-site archaeological features; and
- habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity.

e. The area between Coate Water and the new development will be protected from development in perpetuity as an area of high landscape, historic, cultural and ecological importance along with countryside to the south of Coate Water Site of Special Scientific Interest, and the function of Day House Lane as a green corridor will be safeguarded.

f. The route for the Wilts & Berks Canal as set out on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded and protected from development.

Part 5: Delivering Sustainable Growth and Change

5.40 The Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 contained an allocation for a mixed-use urban extension incorporating a university campus on land at Commonhead. The scale of residential development associated with the development was required to enable the development of the university and employment land. The rationale behind this allocation related to a specific campus model, which can no longer be implemented. The residential element of the

allocation (without the presence of a university campus) and the economic and social benefits associated with it was re-assessed through the Small Scale Urban Extensions Study. Consequently Commonhead is now re-allocated for a reduced scale of development.

5.41 In April 2012, following an Appeal in December 2011 outline permission was granted for 890 dwellings at Commonhead with employment land and land safeguarded for future expansion of the Great Western Hospital. It is considered necessary to maintain a policy in this Local Plan to guide reserved matter applications or in the event of a revised outline planning application.

5.42 The Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust and Great Western Hospital have identified that there is a need for land adjacent to the hospital to be safeguarded to accommodate future growth needs.

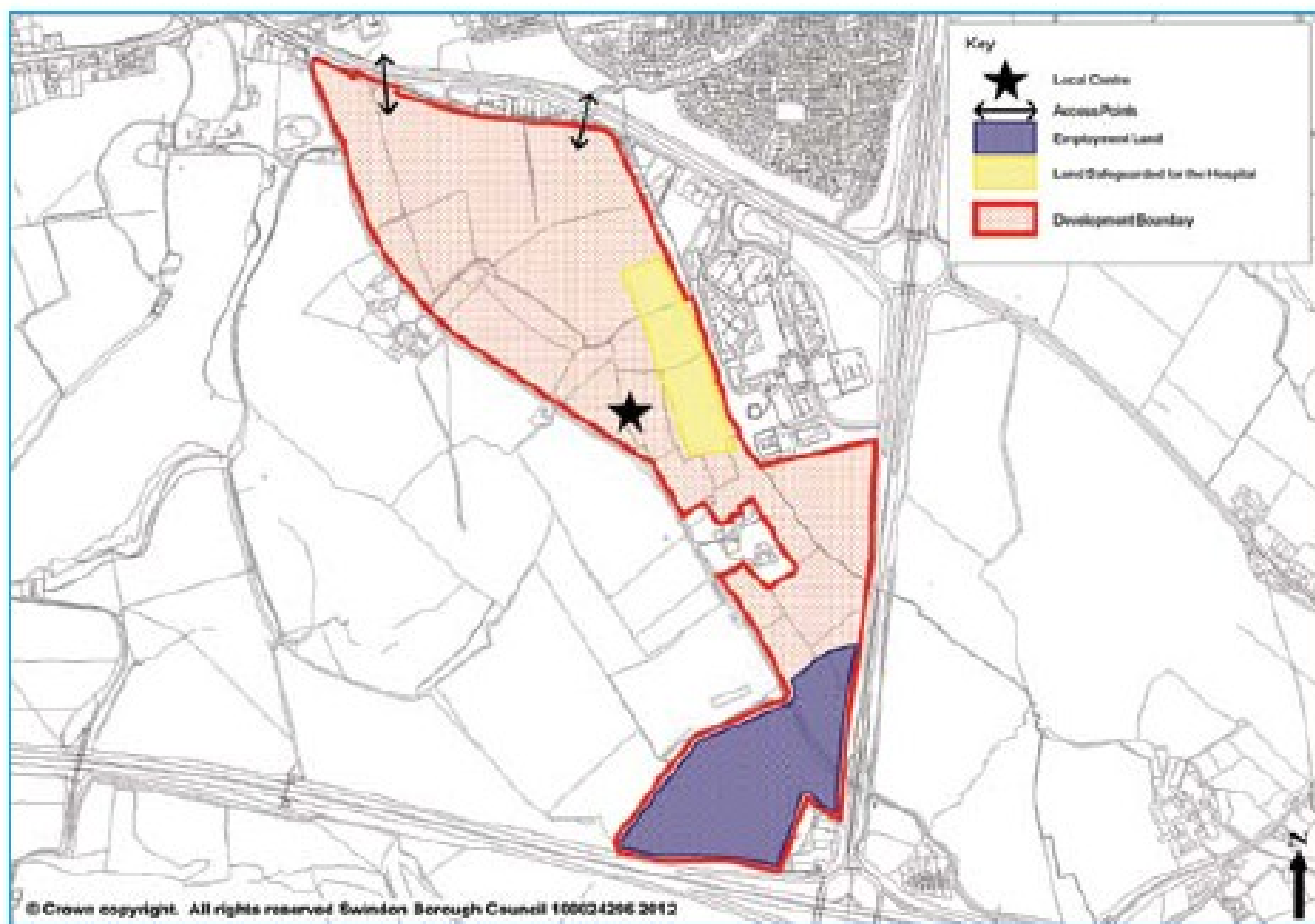
5.43 Given its status, there is a requirement to protect the Day House Copse County Wildlife Site, Coate Water Site of Special Scientific Interest and the streams that feed it, Coate Water Nature Reserve and Burderop Wood North County Wildlife Site. It is important that the setting and role of Coate Water Country Park is protected over the long-term and therefore the land between it and the Commonhead allocation is safeguarded from development in perpetuity along with the countryside to the south of Coate Water. This area may also aid the local interpretation of the literary associations of the area, the archaeological importance of the area, and safeguard the route for the Wilts & Berks Canal through open countryside.

5.44 Commonhead will be a sustainable community in terms of design, transport, construction, energy and waste management in accordance with other policies in this Local Plan.

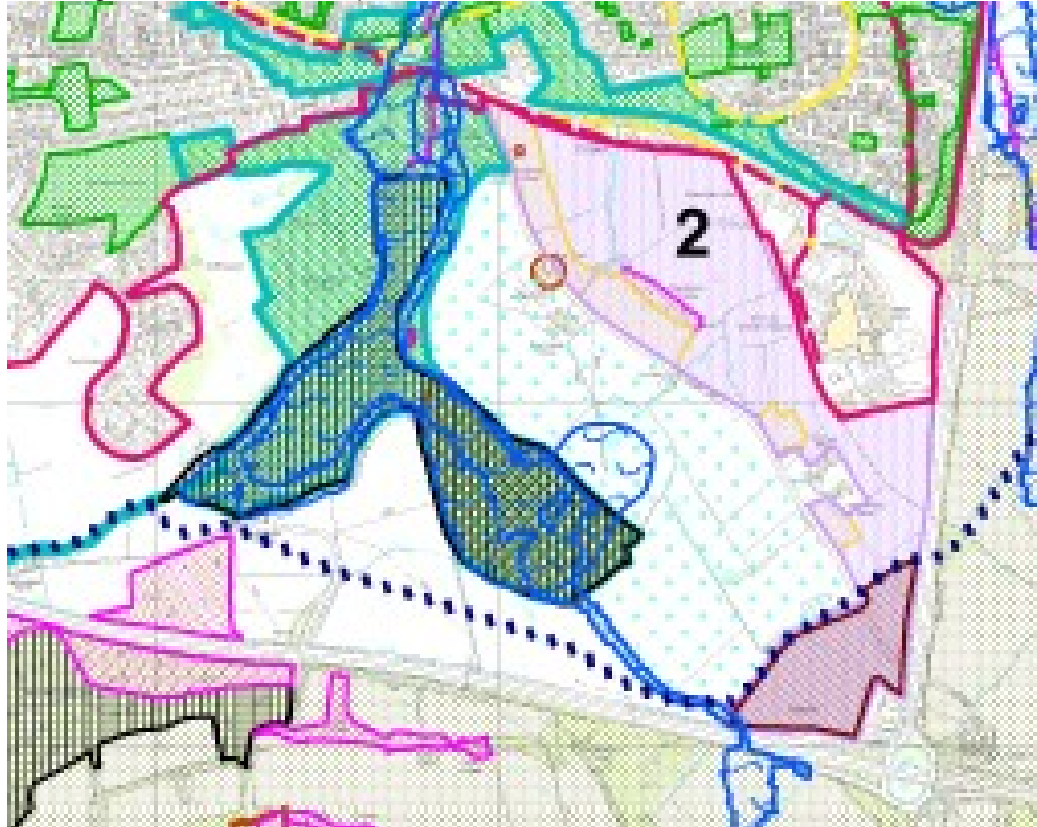
5.45 Key Design Principles include:

- To protect Coate Water Country Park and the landscape context of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- To ensure that the employment offer complements Swindon town centre

Figure 9: Commonhead Inset Diagram



Extract from the Borough-wide Proposals map



**Indicative Non-Coalescence
Area (NC1, NC2, NC3 & NC5)**

..... route for the canal

Object to the Borough-wide Proposals maps and ask that:

- the indicative non-coalescence area between the Commonhead development area and Coate Water is marked as an area of high landscape, historic, cultural and ecological importance and
- the buffer area should be extended to the south of Coate Water Country Park to the M4 motorway to protect the ecological value of Coate Water Nature Reserve, Coate Water Site of Special Scientific Interest, Burderop Wood North County Wildlife Site and the other streams that feed Coate Water; to protect the bronze-age settlement area; to safeguard the route for the Wilts & Berks Canal through countryside and protect the literary heritage of the area.

You can email your views to forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk, visit www.swindon.gov.uk/localplan or send your reply form to:

Planning Service
Freepost SCE5251
Swindon Borough Council
Wat Tyler House West (5th Floor)
Beckhampton Street
Swindon
SN1 2JH

All respondents must provide their name and full address. You must make it clear which part of the Plan you are objecting to (i.e. Policy number, paragraph or map), explain why it needs changing and provide suggested wording that would resolve your objection.