

**SWT Executive**

**Wednesday, 23rd October, 2019,  
6.15 pm**



**Somerset West  
and Taunton**

**The John Meikle Room - The Deane  
House**

---

**Members:**           **Federica Smith-Roberts (Chair), Benet Allen (Deputy Chair),  
Chris Booth, Ross Henley, Richard Lees, Peter Pilkington,  
Mike Rigby, Francesca Smith and Alan Wedderkopp**

### **Agenda**

**1. Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee.

(Pages 5 - 10)

**3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

**4. Public Participation**

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

**5. Executive Forward Plan**

(Pages 11 - 12)

To receive items and review the Forward Plan.

**6. Corporate Equalities Action Plan**

(Pages 13 - 38)

This report contains the draft Corporate Equality Action Plan which identifies actions we will take to deliver the equality objectives.

The aim of the objectives is to help us better meet the needs of our service users and our staff who are, or could be, disadvantaged or suffer inequality because of their particular characteristics.

**7. Taunton Garden Town Charter and Checklist**

(Pages 39 - 64)

The purpose of the Charter and Checklist is to provide a concise summary of both the Vision and Design Guide. They have been prepared to help the Local Planning Authority assess the quality of proposed developments and to clearly set out the standard expected for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. These have been produced as a 'stop-gap' in the short-term ahead of the Design Guide being adopted, this is important with a number of major developments coming forward. The topics and requirements will set an agenda for discussion between applicants and planning officers and will form the basis for assessment of emerging development proposals.

**8. Somerset Climate Emergency Framework and SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan**

(Pages 65 - 154)

The purpose of the report is to inform Members about the emergence of a framework for developing the county-wide Climate Emergency Strategy and a framework for SWT's own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan, to approve these framework documents for public consultation over November 2019 – January 2020 and endorse proposed arrangements for approval of future draft documents.

**9. Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order - Approval for Public Consultation**

(Pages 155 - 250)

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the public consultation of the Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order (LDO).

**10. Access to Information - Exclusion of the Press and Public**

During discussion of the following item(s) it may be necessary to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 13 13.02(e) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the

Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Executive will need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Recommend that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

**11. SWT Commercial Investment Strategy**

(Pages 251 - 308)

The purpose of the report is to set out the proposed Commercial Investment Strategy for Somerset West and Taunton Council. The Strategy is one of the key pillars that supports the delivery of additional income needed by the Council to meet the targets set within the Financial Strategy that Executive approved on 18 September 2019, which aims to achieve ongoing financial stability.



**JAMES HASSETT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions. There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions. Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 3 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chair will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate. Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chair will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group. These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room. Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: [www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

The meeting room, including the Council Chamber at The Deane House are on the first floor and are fully accessible. Lift access to The John Meikle Room, is available from the main ground floor entrance at The Deane House. The Council Chamber at West Somerset House is on the ground floor and is fully accessible via a public entrance door. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available across both locations. An induction loop operates at both The Deane House and West Somerset House to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)



**SWT Executive - 18 September 2019**

Present: Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts (Chair)  
Councillors Benet Allen, Chris Booth, Marcus Kravis, Mike Rigby and Alan Wedderkopp

Officers: Emily Collacott, Paul Fitzgerald, Christine Fraser, Paul Harding, Clare Rendell and Amy Tregellas

Also Present: Councillors Simon Coles, Hugh Davies and Loretta Whetlor

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

**37. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors R Henley, R Lees, P Pilkington and F Smith.

**38. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive**

(Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 23 July 2019 circulated with the agenda)

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Executive held on 23 July 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

**39. Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke
Cllr H Davies	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke
Cllr M Rigby	All Items	SCC & Bishops Lydeard	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Wedderkopp	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke

Councillor M Kravis further declared a personal interest on agenda item 9, in that his partner had an ongoing complaint registered with Somerset West and Taunton Council.

40. **Public Participation**

No members of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

41. **Draft Corporate Strategy 2020 - 2024**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors were excited to see the Strategy going through the democratic process for approval. They agreed it set the tone for the Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) priorities and the vision for the Council as a whole.
- Councillors queried how the document would be publicised and whether hard copies of the document would be available.  
*The Strategy Specialist confirmed that the Strategy would be publicised via the SWT website and customers would be able to print hard copies from the website and that key stakeholders would be issued with hard copies of the document.*

**Recommended** that the Executive:

- Recommend that Full Council approved the priorities, outcomes and objectives within the attached appendix; and
- Authorised the Head of Communications to agree the final design and publication style for the Strategy.

42. **Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors highlighted the graph on Real Terms Funding Reduction Since 2010 and raised concern that readers of the document might not identify the drop in funding from Central Government and that they might only register the increase in their Council Tax. They were keen to add more information to the document to make it more user friendly.  
*The Section 151 Officer appreciated that the Strategy was a public document and that maybe they had not been very proactive in the past about publicising it. A press release was normally sent out on an annual basis to align with the budget setting process.*
- Councillors queried whether there was a recommended minimum level of reserves set by Central Government.  
*The Section 151 Officer's role was to recommend the minimum level of reserve at the Local Authority level.*
- Councillors requested more detail on the figures reported under the Earmarked Reserves.  
*More detail would be explained in agenda item 7, Finance Monitoring, on page 86 of the agenda.*

- Councillors queried when Central Government would advise on whether the £5.00 increase on Council Tax would be approved.  
*The Section 151 Officer advised that it was normally confirmed around December each year.*
- Concern was raised on the drop from 2.99% to 1.99% increase in Council Tax and the effect it would have on the funds raised due to the lower amount of band D equivalent properties in the District.
- Councillors found the summary of the Financial Strategy on page 64 of the agenda very useful.
- Councillors were glad to see that the Council was no longer dependant on the New Homes Bonus.
- Councillors queried what the Union proposals were and what percentage had been proposed.  
*The Section 151 Officer advised the percentage increase could be as high as 10% and that they possibly could propose changes to annual leave.*
- Councillors queried the figures given under the section on Savings Targets.  
*The Section 151 Officer advised that the Transformation Project had built in several efficiency targets which were included in the original business case in 2015 but some savings were not known at that point and several working practices and resources had changed since then, which included improved technological systems. The targets stated in the table were realistic targets that had been set.*
- Concern was raised that the Transformation Project had assumed that the new technological systems would be able to assist with the staffing loss but those assumptions had not been delivered yet.  
*There had been implications on financial planning and SWT had invested in temporary cover until the benefits had been delivered. The savings target had included contingency to deliver through a challenging time and to minimise risk.*
- Councillors queried the section on commercialism of services and treasury investment.  
*Clarification was given.*

**Resolved** that the Executive approved the Financial Strategy for 2020/21 to 2020/23.

#### 43. **Financial Monitoring as at 31.07.2019**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors thanked the officers for their clear summary and agreed with the recommendation to delegate authority to approve changes to the budgeted spend for all of the HRA capital schemes.
- Councillors queried the figures quoted as Slippage within the Capital Programme Summary.  
*The Finance Specialist gave an explanation.*
- Councillors queried whether all the Hinkley Point C Section 106 money had been spent.

*Yes, it had all been allocated towards many different schemes but might not have been actually spent yet.*

- Councillors queried the information on Right to Buy within the report.  
*The Finance Specialist would find out and report back to the Committee.*
- Councillors queried whether the housing stock in the former Taunton Deane area would be kept or sold on as it had been within the former West Somerset area.

*The Leader confirmed that the housing stock would be kept and that the Portfolio Holder for Housing had already visited sites within the former West Somerset area that could potentially be developed.*

**Recommended** that the Executive:

- Noted the Council's forecast financial performance for 2019/20 financial year as at 31 July 2019; and
- Requested Full Council to approve the Housing Director/Head of Function, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, to have delegated authority to approve changes to the budgeted spend for all of the HRA capital schemes, whilst remaining within the approved capital programme for 2019/20. The reason for that would help address flexible delivery of the programme in year.

44. **Corporate Performance Report and Update on Development of Future Reporting**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised on the red alert for the Planning Service. Councillors were aware that the service was nearly back to a full contingency of staff, however, they did not want to head back into a backlog for applications which could risk Central Government control. They had also noticed that the registration process had recently been streamlined which had resulted in positive outcomes for the application timescales.
- Councillors were happy to see that majority of the indicators were in green.
- Concern was raised on the red alert for Environmental Health and requested an update.  
*The Head of Performance and Governance would request an update be distributed to Councillors from the Head of Customer.*
- Councillors requested whether a performance indicator could be added to monitor the statistics produced by Firmstep.  
*The Head of Performance and Governance was aware that Business Intelligence Specialist distributed a regular report on the statistics but would look into the possibility of adding it to the report. They were aware that each service area had different service level agreements for their targets, so would need to check how the statistics could be compiled.*
- Councillors welcomed comments on performance targets and once officer workloads were back on track, they would look to push the boundaries and set challenging targets.

**Resolved** that the Executive noted that a new report was being developed which would bring together finance information, risk monitoring and performance reporting. The first report would be produced for the end of November (month 8).

45. **Complaints Policy**

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors queried whether they could submit a complaint as a resident of the area.  
*The Monitoring Officer confirmed that yes they could act as a member of the public and use the Policy in the same way a resident would.*
- Councillors were happy that the Council's policies were being updated and kept up to date.
- Councillors queried whether the same section of the Policy that related to 'unwanted attention on staff' was applicable to Councillors.  
*The Monitoring Officer confirmed that was applicable for Councillors as well.*

**Resolved** that the Executive:

Approved the Somerset West and Taunton Council:

- a) Complaints Policy (Appendix A); and
- b) Policy for Unreasonable Customer Behaviour and Vexatious Requests (Appendix B)

46. **Executive Action Plan**

(Copy of the Executive Action Plan, circulated with the agenda).

**Resolved** that the Executive Action Plan be noted.

47. **Executive Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Executive Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillors queried the dates set for Informal Executive as they seemed too far in advance of the Executive meetings.  
*The Governance Team would check the dates and adjust the meetings for the New Year.*
- The Section 151 Officer needed to remove the Medium Term Financial Plan item from the October meeting as it had been covered in the financial reports included in the agenda. He also wanted to add a Budget Progress Report to the December meeting.
- Concern was raised on the amount of reports scheduled for the October meeting.  
*The Monitoring Officer advised that there were a few reports because officers had to give 28 days' notice to add an item and that some of the reports were likely to be pushed to the November and December meetings.*

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

**Resolved** that the Executive Forward Plan be noted.

(The Meeting ended at 7.45 pm)

Draft

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN 2019-20**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>DRAFT AGENDA ITEMS</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
23 October 2019  (next Council 3 December)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden Town Charter and Checklist</li> <li>• SWT Commercial Investment Strategy</li> <li>• Corporate Equalities Action Plan</li> <li>• Climate Change Strategy</li> <li>• Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order – approval for consultation</li> </ul>	F. Webb J. Barrah P. Harding B Cleere and G Thompson  G Thompson
20 November 2019  (next Council 3 December)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan Issues and Options Document</li> <li>• Social Value Strategy &amp; Priorities</li> <li>• Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements (TSFAI) phase 2</li> <li>• SWP Business Plan - partner approval</li> <li>• Fees and Charges</li> <li>• Hinkley Phase 3 – Housing Funding Strategy</li> <li>• Statement of Community Involvement</li> <li>• HPC S106 Tourism Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Otterford Travellers Site</li> <li>• Budget Update Priorities and Options</li> <li>• Monkton Heathfield Phase 2 Master Plan</li> <li>• East Quay Wall</li> <li>• North Taunton Woolaway Project   Phase A Update and Home Owner Acquisition budget</li> <li>• Taunton BID</li> </ul>	L. Higgins M. Leeman A. Rhodes  N. Green Finance M. Leeman P. Browning R. Downes/ N. MacLean  Finance A. Penna C. Hall R. Wiseman L. Redston
18 December 2019  (next Council 26 February)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Design Framework and Design Guide</li> <li>• SWT Prosperity/Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>• Cultural Strategy</li> <li>• Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Citizens Advice Financial Sustainability</li> <li>• Somerset Waste Partnership Business Case</li> </ul>	M. Wathen N. Bryant/ D. Webb H. Bryant and M. Leeman  M. Leeman N. Green/Mickey Green
22 January 2020  (next Council 26 February)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order</li> <li>• Somerset Waste Partnership Annual Business Case</li> <li>• Design Guide for SWT</li> </ul>	N. Bryant
12 February 2020  (next Council 19 February for Budget 26 Feb for others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRA Budget 2020/21</li> <li>• General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Estimates 2020/21</li> <li>• Capital Strategy 2020/21</li> <li>• Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020/21</li> <li>• Investment Strategy 2020/21</li> </ul>	

18 March 2020  (next Council 31 March)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Strategy – Action Plan for SWT</li> <li>• Waterways Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Commercial Acquisition Investment</li> <li>• North Taunton Woolaway Project   Phase B Update and Home Owner Acquisition budget</li> </ul>	M. Leeman D. Webb J. Barrah R. Wiseman
22 April 2020  (next Council TBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Acquisition Investment</li> </ul>	J. Barrah



Report Number: SWT 85/19

# Somerset West and Taunton Council

## Executive – 23 October 2019

### Corporate Equality Action Plan

This matter is the responsibility of the Executive member for Community; Cllr Chris Booth

Report Author: Paul Harding, Strategy Specialist

#### 1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 All public bodies, including the Council, are subject to a specific duty within the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) to prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.
- 1.2 The aim of the objectives is to help us better meet the needs of our service users and our staff who are, or could be, disadvantaged or suffer inequality because of their particular characteristics.
- 1.3 For Somerset West and Taunton (SWT), equality objectives were approved in March 2019 by the Shadow Executive for Somerset West and Taunton Council.
- 1.4 This report contains the draft Corporate Equality Action Plan which identifies actions we will take to deliver those objectives.
- 1.5 Progress against delivering the Plan will be monitored by the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee, commencing in March 2020.
- 1.6 **The draft Equality Action Plan was reviewed by the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee at their meeting held on 25 September 2019. Their recommendations are included within para 4.12 of this report.**
- 1.7 The Action Plan will be a 'living document' which will enable additional actions to be added. Any additions will be brought to the attention of the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee as part of the Plan's review cycle.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Executive are asked to:-

- 2.1 Review, and approve this Plan, with or without the amendments suggested by the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee.

2.2 Adopt the equality objective referred to within para 4.10 of this report.

### 3 Risk Assessment

3.1 This plan helps the Council comply with the public sector equality duty contained within the Equality Act 2010 and thereby mitigate the financial, social and reputational risks associated with non-compliance. It does not however negate the continual requirement for the council to consider the needs of all individuals who share protected characteristics in our day to day work - in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in how we operate as an employer.

### 4 Background and Full details of the Report

4.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) contains general and specific duties with which all public authorities (such as the Council) must comply.

4.2 The general duty requires us not to discriminate against people or groups who share the Protected Characteristics identified within the Act.

4.3 The Act identifies Protected Characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Locally we have also recognised the following characteristics:

- Carers
- Military status
- Rurality
- Low income

4.4 When public authorities carry out their functions, the Act says they must consciously consider, or think about, the need to do the three things set out below. This is known as the public sector equality duty:

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(Some groups of people who share a protected characteristic, like race or sexual orientation, may suffer a particular disadvantage or have particular needs. The public sector equality duty means public authorities must think about whether they should take action to remove or reduce disadvantages suffered by people because of a protected characteristic, meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and/or encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life and other activities).

- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 4.5 Public authorities also have specific duties under the Act to help them comply with the public sector equality duty. These specific duties include the requirement to prepare and publish equality objectives at least every 4 years.
- 4.6 In March 2019, in response to the specific equality duty, the Shadow Executive for Somerset West and Taunton Council approved a revised set of eight corporate equality objectives for SWT.
- 4.7 These are a mixture of objectives that SWT will pursue alone and those which SWT will pursue in partnership with the Somerset Equality Officer's Group (SEOG). This is a group which is made up of County and the Somerset District Councils, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Taunton Musgrove and Yeovil Hospitals, Somerset Partnership and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue. This approach will make the most effective use of Public Sector resources. The hope is that it will also increase the impact of any changes on the community as a whole.
- 4.8 The SEOG objectives were produced following a consultation and engagement exercise that took place between September and November 2018. This included an online consultation form, promotion to 150+ equality organisations and consultation at equality events.
- 4.9 The agreed equality objectives are:

**Objective 1:** Councillors and officers will fully consider the equality implications of all decisions they make. (SWT)

**Objective 2:** Those with protected characteristics feel empowered to contribute to the democratic process and any Council activity that affects them; their input is used to inform the planning and delivery of services.(SWT)

**Objective 3:** Communities with protected characteristics are able to access services in a reasonable and appropriate way. (SWT)

**Objective 4:** Actions are taken to identify and reduce any inequalities faced by our staff or our potential employees. (SWT)

**Objective 5:** Work with communities and voluntary sector groups to address inequalities experienced by low incomes families and individuals. (SWT)

**Objective 6:** Improve the opportunities for integration and cohesion. (SEOG)

**Objective 7:** Improve understanding of mental health and access to support. (SEOG)

**Objective 8:** Work with the Gypsy and Traveller community to improve the provision of pitches. (SEOG)

- 4.10 One of the SEOG objectives was omitted in error from the report considered in March 2019 by the Shadow Authority. This was *'Create an Equality Working Group for Staff in the Public Sector in Somerset'*. We seek to include this now.
- 4.11 This report focuses on the Action Plan, which details the actions the Council intend to take in order to deliver its equality objectives and thereby help us comply with the public sector equality duty.
- 4.12 The draft Corporate Equality Action Plan was reviewed by the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee at their meeting on 25 September 2019. The Committee unanimously recommended that the objective referred to within 4.10 of this report above be formally adopted. Furthermore they also unanimously recommended to the Executive that the draft Equality Action Plan be adopted, subject to the following amendments:
- To ensure that two disability ambassadors (to include one officer and one councillor) were appointed as part of the Action Plan;
  - Page 13. To remove the word 'free' out of the Wacky Wednesday part of the free to attend public events section;
  - Page 10 Item 4.6 To encourage recruitment of apprentices and graduate scheme posts to include roles at the Depot and business administration;
  - Page 7 Item 3.2 To amend the timescale for customer services to be trained in deaf awareness to 2019/20 provided the budget is available.
- 4.13 The Action Plan is at **Appendix A**. It does not include the recommendations of Audit, Governance & Standards Committee. These will be for the Executive to consider as part of their review of the plan.

## **5 Links to Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 Embedding a culture of inclusivity and equality supports Priority Outcome 3 of our emerging Corporate Strategy – *'A Council which informs and engages openly with our stakeholders and which consistently delivers excellent customer service'*.
- 5.2 One of the guiding principles within our emerging Corporate Strategy is to *'Be fair to people who use or would like to use our services and who work for us or who would like to work for us; respecting and celebrating the diversity of our district and our workforce'*.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The functional areas of the Council will be responsible for identifying and addressing inequalities and promoting inclusion. The resource implications of the Equality Action Plan should be considered by service areas as part of their budget setting process. However, by making the process part of everyday work it should not result in the requirement for any additional resources.

## **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Working toward the achievement of the Council's corporate equality objectives will help ensure that SWT is meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 7.2 The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the regulator of compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications**

- 8.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from this report.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

- 9.1 No direct safeguarding and / or community safety implications arising from this report.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 The Action Plan within this report is entirely focused on reducing inequality and promoting inclusion among the communities that make up SWT, our service users and our staff.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

- 11.1 There is an action relating to Social Value within the Action Plan.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 The Actions within the Action Plan will not be achieved by the council alone. We will work with a range of partners including, but not limited to the voluntary sector and the Somerset Equalities Officer's Group (SEOG) - this is a joint officer working group made up of County and District Councils, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Taunton Musgrove and Yeovil Hospitals, Somerset Partnership and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue which shares and develops best practice as well as undertakes collaborative research.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 Removing any discriminatory barriers to services or employment with the Council, for those with protected characteristics, will impact positively on the health and wellbeing of those concerned.

## **14 Asset Management Implications**

- 14.1 No direct Asset Management implications arising from this report.

## **15 Data Protection Implications**

- 15.1 There is an action within the Plan to capture the equalities characteristics of our workforce in order that we can better identify any imbalance between our workforce and the wider community in terms of diversity as well as any particular needs which need to be considered. This exercise will be voluntary and entirely in accordance with the relevant data protection requirements.

## 16 Consultation Implications

- 16.1 The council's equality objectives were considered in public meetings of the Shadow Scrutiny committee meeting of 14 March 2019 and the Shadow Executive committee meeting of 26 March 2019.
- 16.2 A consultation exercise was carried out by SEOG, the County wide group, during September to November 2018 in the production of the joint Corporate Equality Objectives.
- 16.3 The SWT portfolio holder for Community has been consulted on this Action Plan.
- 16.4 The draft Equalities Action Plan was reviewed by the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee at their meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and their comments and recommendations are included within this report.

## 17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)

- 17.1 Not applicable.

### Democratic Path:

- **Audit, Governance & Standards Committee – Yes**
- **Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:** Progress against delivering the plan to be reported to the Audit, Governance & Standards Committee from March 2020.

### List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	Draft Corporate Equality Action Plan
------------	--------------------------------------

### Contact Officers

Name	Paul Harding
Direct Dial	01823 218751
Email	P.harding@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

## Draft Somerset West and Taunton Corporate Equality Action Plan (CEAP)

The Equality Act 2010 imposes the following General Duties on Local Authorities to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

It covers people who share the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Locally we also recognise the following characteristics: Carers, Military Status, Rurality and Low Income.

This Action Plan sets out the actions the council will take in order to deliver its agreed equality objectives, which in turn support one or more aims of the General Equality Duty. **Part A** are Somerset West and Taunton (SWT) specific actions. **Part B** relates to actions in relation to joint objectives across the members of the Somerset Equality Officers Group (SEOG) - this is a joint officer working group made up of County and District Councils, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Taunton Musgrove and Yeovil Hospitals, Somerset Partnership and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue

### PART A

SWT Objective 1	Councillors and officers will fully consider the equality implications of all decisions they make.
<p><b>Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All committee reports contain a section in which equality impacts, relating to proposed policy or service changes, are highlighted to the decision makers.</li><li>• Equality Impact Assessment templates and guidance notes are available to all staff.</li><li>• E-learning on equalities and diversity is a mandatory part of the staff induction process.</li><li>• Equality and Diversity training is a key component of the Member induction programme.</li><li>• 'Lunch &amp; Learn' equalities and diversity awareness event held for staff July 2019.</li></ul>	

	Action	Action Lead	Output	Outcome	Timescale
1.1	All SWT members to be aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010	SWT Governance Manager and Monitoring Officer	Attendance at corporate training events.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	2019/20 and ongoing
1.2	The Performance and Governance team to screen all reports submitted to committee or the Full Council to ensure they are accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) or include clear reasoning <b>why</b> such an assessment is not required, to ensure that protected groups are not further disadvantaged by the policies, strategies, projects or schemes we adopt.	SWT Governance Manager and Monitoring Officer	All Council reports are screened to ensure that they include equality and diversity impact assessments or an explanation provided as to why they do not require one.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	Ongoing
1.3	Agreed sources of the socio economic profile of SWT area to be identified/created, promoted and available for all EIAs to ensure consistency.	SWT Business Intelligence and Performance Manager	There is good quality and consistent equality information available for managers to use for service and policy development.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	2020/21



1.4	Good practice regarding EIAs to be shared within the council.	SWT Strategy Specialist	Managers can confidently and robustly assess the equalities impacts of service/policy change, are able to identify mitigating actions where needed and are able to implement mitigating actions effectively	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	2019/20
1.5	Review Learning Pool e-learning equalities and diversity module	SWT Strategy Specialist	Updated and intuitive and learning tool.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	2019/20

SWT Objective 2	Those with protected characteristics feel empowered to contribute to the democratic process and any Council activity that affects them; their input is used to inform the planning and delivery of services.
-----------------	--

**Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:**

- All council meetings take place in fully accessible buildings.
- Our constitution ensures individual members of the community, or community group, are able to submit a question as part of public question time at any public meeting of the council (and are not compelled to attend personally).
- Agenda and minutes of council meetings are published on our website in a format which is accessible to screen reader technology.
- Council public meetings are voice recorded and a recording on a CD or via an MP3 can be made available to those who would have difficulty accessing the written minutes.

Page 22

	Action	Action Lead	Output	Outcome	Timescale
	Create a publicly available list of equality community and VCS groups in Somerset.	SEOG	Suggestions and concerns can be captured from a broad range of groups which represent people in our communities who share protected characteristics.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc
2.2	Introduce capability to allow for greater participation in council meetings (e.g. live stream meetings).	SWT Governance Manager and Monitoring Officer	More convenient ways for residents who may find attending council meetings (through e.g. through disability, low income, rurality) to participate in council business.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2019/20

2.3	Draft and approve a Statement of Community Involvement for SWT, Stating how SWT will involve all of the community and stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and review of local planning policy and the consideration of planning applications within the Local Planning Authority area., to ensure the specific needs and concerns of particular groups and individuals are captured and considered. This is an important part of the Councils place making and place shaping role.	SWT Strategy Specialist	The views of groups that represent people in our communities who share protected characteristics are captured.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2019/20
-----	--	-------------------------	--	---	---------

<b>SWT Objective 3</b>	<b>People with protected characteristics are able to access services in a reasonable and appropriate way.</b>
<p><b>Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing induction loops are in place at the council's two main offices to assist those customers who have difficulties with hearing.</li> <li>• Computer kiosks in the reception areas of our main offices enabling access to our website and that of partner services such as Homefinder Somerset. (for those without Internet access - possibly through low income or rurality).</li> <li>• Free public wi-fi available at our main offices to enable customers to access services without cost.</li> <li>• Some of our customer services staff are trained in British Sign Language.</li> <li>• We offer alternative formats for our corporate publications (inc Braille, large print and different languages).</li> <li>• Our main offices are fully accessible and meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.</li> <li>• We have introduced a new website (with additional self-services) which contains a number of features to aid accessibility including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The ability for users to change colours, contrast levels and fonts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- zoom in up to 300 per cent without the text spilling off the screen
  - navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
  - navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
  - listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)
  - We have also made the website text as simple as possible to understand,
- We have Undertaken a review of the Council's website in response to the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. On 16 July 2019 the following were tested on our behalf by Sitemorse:
    - Accessibility - checking content against the W3C WCAG 2.1 and Digital ADA accessibility standards
    - Brand - reviewing content and alerting against our own brand rules
    - Code quality - checking the code of the page meets W3C and IETF technical standards
    - Email - testing that email addresses and infrastructure work and can receive mail
    - Function/links - review page content and links to check they are functioning correctly
    - SEO and Metadata - reporting improvements relating to Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
    - Performance - reporting of the web server response time and download speed
    - Spelling - check the spelling of site content against standard and custom dictionaries
  - We visit low income customers in their home, to help them with Council Tax Support and /or Housing Benefit claims where they are unable to access these services in other ways.
  - We are able to respond to text relay calls from people who are deaf, hearing impaired or have a speech impediment.
  - We provide an interpretation service through Language Line for customers who do not speak English.
  - We have produced a range of factsheets available for staff guidance e.g.
    - Armed Forces
    - Dual Sensory Loss
    - Assisting a customer who is Deaf
    - Assisting a customer who is Blind
    - Assisting a customer who is Disabled
    - Assisting a customer who is non-English speaking
    - Gender awareness
  - We financially support the SCC contract for P2I Pathways to independence – a partnership providing housing advice to young people aged 16 to 24.
  - Our operating model, and the One Team partnership working, ensures there are officers based within our most vulnerable communities via whom residents can access services.

- Our housing service provides £300k per year to help fund disabled facility grants to enable our tenants who have a disability to continue to live independently in their council home.
- Changes have been made to our sheltered housing schemes to better meet the needs of our residents and future residents who have a disability - examples include incorporating secure storage and charging points for mobility scooters.

	Action	Action Lead	Output	Outcome	Timescale
3.1	Raise awareness amongst staff and members of our corporate translation service and how to access it.	SWT – Head of Customer	Frontline staff are aware how to access the translation and interpretation service.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2019/20
3.2	Make training available for additional SWT frontline staff (customer services, locality champions etc.) to learn British Sign Language.	SWT – HR Business Partner	An increased pool of frontline SWT staff able to effectively communicate face to face with customers who are deaf.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2020/21
3.3	Increase the number of our services which are available to access online 24/7	SWT – Head of Performance and Governance	More online services available on the SWT website.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Ongoing

3,4	Publish an Accessibility Statement in accord with Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.	SWT Head of Communications and Engagement.	A published accessibility statement.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	September 2019
-----	---	--	--------------------------------------	---	----------------

<b>SWT Objective 4</b>	<b>Actions are taken to identify and reduce any inequalities faced by our staff or our potential employees.</b>
<p data-bbox="100 702 134 861">Page 26</p> <p data-bbox="134 726 1153 758"><b>Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:</b></p> <p data-bbox="134 805 2016 869">We use an anonymised shortlisting process for job applicants, where the personal details of the applicant (e.g. name, gender, ethnicity, age etc.) are not shown to the shortlisting officer until after shortlisting has taken place.</p> <ul data-bbox="134 877 2060 1372" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We provide Council employees with access to in-house Mental Health First Aiders.</li> <li>• Wellbeing Champions are in place to support staff in a confidential way relating for both work and non-work related matters.</li> <li>• A learning and wellbeing staff group has been established which has employee mental health as a key area of focus.</li> <li>• An anti-bullying and harassment policy is in place.</li> <li>• Adjustments are made on a case by case basis for staff who require changes to their working environment in order to meet the physical or mental health needs of the employees concerned.</li> <li>• Care First has been contracted to provide a confidential counselling and advice service for Council employees.</li> <li>• We monitor and publish our gender pay gap every 12 months.</li> <li>• We have flexible working policies in place which in particular support those with caring responsibilities.</li> <li>• We have appointed a Chaplain to provide confidential listening, pastoral and supportive services to our staff of all faiths or none, in order to help reduce worries, stresses and anxieties and improve general wellbeing.</li> <li>• We promote and mark special days such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Pride week, Holocaust Memorial Day as a visible sign of our commitment to reduce discrimination and inequality and to support and value all of our staff.</li> </ul>	

	Action	Action Lead	Output	Outcome	Timescale
4.1	Achieve at least Level 1: 'Disability Confident Committed'.	SWT – HR Specialist	Recognition of our commitment to having leading role in changing attitudes toward disability for the better.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Following review of Recruitment Policy. Q4 2019
4.2	Capture staff equalities information on ITrent to enable workforce profiling by ethnic group, gender, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation, analyse implications of such profiling against community profiling, and publish the results.	SWT – HR Specialist	Allows the Council to understand and recognise our workforce. Align our workforce with the community profile.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Q4 2019
4.3	Provide recruitment training that includes avoiding unconscious bias for all staff who may shortlist or interview applicants for jobs at SWT.	SWT – HR Specialist	Fair and transparent recruitment and selection exercises. Understanding the importance of reaching a diverse audience when advertising and adjustments when selecting applicants.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;	Q4 2019
4.4	Review and sign up to the Somerset Equality Commitment	SWT – HR Specialist	Review and ensure complying with the commitment with relevant areas.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Q4 2019

4.5	Monitor dignity and behaviour in the workplace cases (bullying and harassment) against each of the protected characteristics to establish and trends.	SWT – HR Specialist	Equalities data collected on all casework.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;	Q3 2019 onwards
4.6	Encourage managers to consider apprentices and graduates for all vacancies. Work with other Local Authorities to provide a Graduate Scheme which gives experience in each Authority. Work experience placements	SWT – HR Specialist & People Manager (EW)	Increase in younger staff within the workforce.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Report due Q3 2019
4.7	Mental health support	SWT – HR Specialist	HR representative at Learning and Wellbeing Steering Group. Provide employees with access to Mental Health First Aiders, an Employee Assistance Programme (CareFirst). Mental Health Awareness training.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing
4.8	Equalities and diversity training for all staff / monitoring e-learning	SWT – HR Specialist & People Manager (EW)	Provision of e-learning to all employees, including mandatory courses such as Dignity at Work	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;	Ongoing



4.9	Support SWT staff from the EU through Brexit (e.g. settled status awareness and registrations)	SWT – HR Specialist	Understand the numbers affected by Brexit and provide support.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	Q4 2019
4.10	Staff 'task and finish groups' – menopause, men's mental health etc	SWT – HR Specialist	Working groups considered for all HR policies. Policy development plan compiled	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing.

<b>SWT Objective 5</b>	<b>Work with communities and voluntary sector groups to address inequalities experienced by low incomes families and individuals</b>
<p><b>Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financially support for the work of ENGAGE (<a href="http://www.engagews.org.uk/">http://www.engagews.org.uk/</a>) in the West Somerset and Taunton Deane areas, whose work includes the provision of low cost furniture for people on a low income.</li> <li>• We financially support Citizens Advice Taunton and the West Somerset Advice Bureau to deliver advice (including debt, housing, benefits and employment advice) to our residents.</li> <li>• 'One Team' multi-agency working in Halcon, Wellington and North Taunton regarding supporting accessing training and employment as well as signposting to wider help and support (e.g. benefits, food banks etc).</li> <li>• Financial support for Village Agents Scheme (support for older people, disabilities, isolation, low income, carers etc)</li> <li>• Financial support for CLOWNS West Somerset for provision of toys, craft &amp; resources for low income families</li> <li>• Financial support for Homestart West Somerset to support of low income and families in crisis via home visits &amp; in-house sessions</li> <li>• Financial support for North Taunton &amp; Wiveliscombe Area partnerships, &amp; Taunton East Development Trust to offer community support &amp; advice sessions-low income, debt, unemployment, literacy etc.</li> </ul>	

- We support Priorswood Resource Centre and the Halcon link centre who provide job clubs, literacy/reading clubs etc. to residents within two of our most deprived communities.
- The Council employs dedicated Tenancy Sustainment Case Officers, Debt Management Case Managers and a Vulnerable Persons Specialist which focus on the debt and benefit needs of our HRA tenants.
- We have undertaken a number of initiatives within our housing stock to help tackle fuel poverty, including fitting solar PV panels.

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action Lead</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
5.1	Draft, approve and implement a Social Value policy to secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits as part of the council's procurement activity.	SWT Strategy Specialist (ML)	Consistent consideration of the social good that could come from the procurement of services in order to obtain meaningful Social Value generated from our suppliers	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2019/20

## PART B

<b>Joint SEOG Objective 1</b>	<b>Work with Communities to improve the opportunities for integration and cohesion.</b>
-------------------------------	---

### Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:

- The Council is a signatory to the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant, which is a pledge of support between local residents and the armed forces community in Somerset.
  - The Council promotes and marks special days such as Mental health awareness week, Pride week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day that support groups and individuals who share protected characteristics.
  - Established multi-agency 'One Team' working in Halcon, Wellington and North Taunton – getting to know the community, developing local knowledge - reducing anti-social behaviour and increasing the uptake and completion of back to work schemes.
  - Financially support ENGAGE which is a resource for community groups to obtain advice and support on setting up and running charities and advising on potential funding sources and preparing funding applications.
  - The Council funds and supports the Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group.
- The Council hosts a number of free and inclusive community events such as 'Somerfest'.  
We support local groups hosting community events that are free and inclusive, such as 'Wacky Wednesday' in Wellington and 'Pride in Priorswood' in Taunton.

Page 31

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action Lead</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Public Sector Equality Duty outcome</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
6.1	Continue to support local groups hosting community events that are free and inclusive, such as 'Wacky Wednesday' in Wellington and 'Pride in Priorswood' in Taunton.	SWT – Community Engagement Leads	Free to attend inclusive events open to all groups within the community.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing

6.2	Continue to promote and mark special days such as Mental health awareness week, Pride week, Holocaust Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day that support groups and individuals who share protected characteristics	SWT – Communication and Engagement Specialist	Visible signs or support such as the raising of flags at our main offices, social media posts and /or public ceremonies.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing
6.3	Hold at least 2 meetings per year of the Taunton Deane Disability Discussion Group	SWT – Community Engagement Leads	Meetings held including items presented by SWT officers in particular relating to emerging policies: raising awareness of opportunities for the group to influence the development of SWT policies and plans.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing from Oct 2019
6.4	Work with the Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender community about support that is needed and opportunities that are available for better integration opportunities.	SEOG	Partnership to be in existence and way forward agreed	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	tbc
6.5	Work with the Faith and Belief community about support that is needed and opportunities that are available for better integration opportunities	SEOG	A way forward will be agreed with the community	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	tbc

6.6	Undertake county wide Faith Audit	SEOG	Identification of the various faith groups across Somerset.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	tbc
6.7	Review how Somerset Authorities mark Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). Work with partners to create a larger joint response.	SEOG	A consistent approach across Somerset to honour the experiences of people affected by the Holocaust and genocide.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	tbc
6.8	Support the BME Community around creating a Multicultural Forum in Somerset.	SEOG	Greater insight of, and engagement with, the BME community.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	tbc
6.9	Work with ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) providers in Somerset to create a single website to identify all ESOL provision in Somerset	SEOG	The provision of information for residents, or for our staff on their behalf, identifying all ESOL resources locally.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc

Joint SEOG Objective 2	Improve understanding of mental health and access to support
------------------------	--

**Some of the things we are already doing that support this objective:**

- We have an arrangement in place with MIND to provide confidential emotional support, advocacy and signposting for the Council's housing tenants including help around self-harm, suicidal thoughts and mental health issues.
- Established multi-agency 'One Team' working in Halcon, Wellington and North Taunton enabling early referral and intervention to support individuals with complex needs (including mental health issues).
- We promote and refer clients to the SCC commissioned 'Step Together' service for adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and also have a mix of mental health needs, drug and alcohol problems and behavioural issues

	Action	Action Lead	Output	Public Sector Equality Duty outcome	Timescale	
Page 34	7.1	Signpost sources of mental health support on our website and within our Tenant's Newsletters.	SWT – Communication and Engagement Specialist	The provision of Information to help people who are living with a mental health issue.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing from 2019/20
	7.2	Use Social Media and SWT staff/Member newsletters to promote <i>Mental Health Awareness Week</i> in May and <i>Time To Talk</i> in February	SWT – Communication and Engagement Specialist	Signposting of support for those affected by poor mental health.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	Ongoing from Feb 2020
	7.3	Deliver mental health awareness training to our front line staff	SWT – Strategy specialist	Greater awareness to enable staff to identify where a customer may be struggling with mental health issues and knowledge of support that is available.	<b>Eliminate discrimination,</b> harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;	2020/21

7.4	SWT to undertake Council domestic-violence self-assessment and implement an action plan.	SWT – Strategy specialist	An action plan to strengthen our awareness and responsiveness to domestic abuse within our communities.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	2020/21
-----	--	---------------------------	---	---	---------

Joint SEOG Objective 3		Work with the Gypsy and Traveller community to improve relationships and the provision of pitches				
	Action	Action Lead	Output	Public Sector Equality Duty outcome	Timescale	
Page 35	8.1	Include a positive policy within the emerging SWT Local Plan to support pitches in appropriate locations (criteria based) informed by the GTAA	SWT – Strategy Specialist	Local Plan Policy	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc
	8.2	Work across Somerset to identify pitch/plot provision for Gypsies and Travellers (including temporary and transit pitch provision)	SEOG	Pitch/plot provision for Gypsies and Travellers in SWT and the wider Somerset area.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc
	8.3	Work with support services to create a companion document for the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) focusing on services	SEOG	Companion document	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc

8.4	Work with the Community to create an informed Illegal encampments process for Somerset	SEOG	A consistent agreed process in place across Somerset.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc
8.5	Work with the Community to create briefing sheets for staff around understanding of the community in relation to service delivery	SEOG	Greater staff understanding of the community when delivering or planning service delivery.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	tbc
8.6	Work to find suitable funding to create a Gypsy Liaison role for Somerset	SEOG	Identification of community champions and setting up of Somerset Gypsy and Traveller Forum.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	2019/20
8.7	Work with the community to create a functioning Gypsy and Traveller Forum	SEOG	A way for public agencies, charities, interested individuals/groups and Traveller communities, to talk to each other.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	tbc
8.8	Explore options at Otterford B site	SWT - Strategy Specialist	Additional pitches	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2019/20



8.9	Review the Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Assessment for Somerset	Lead by SDC on behalf of the Somerset Strategic Planning Conference	A robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Somerset.	<b>Advance equality of opportunity</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;	2020/21
-----	---	---	---	---	---------

Joint SEOG Objective 4		Create an Equality Working Group for Staff in the Public Sector in Somerset			
Action		Action Lead	Output	Public Sector Equality Duty outcome	Timescale
9.1	SWT to promote to staff, the pilot staff equality working group made up of multiple public bodies that SCC aim to create.	HR Specialist	Networking with public sector across Somerset, build contacts, share experiences and good practice.	<b>Foster good relations</b> between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Once group created.



*Report Number: SWT 86/19*

## **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

### **Executive Committee – 23 October 2019**

#### **Taunton Garden Town Charter and Checklist**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mike Rigby**

**Report Author: Fiona Webb - Placemaking Specialist**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Taunton Garden Town Charter and Checklist extend from the Garden Town Vision adopted by Executive and Full Council in July 2019. They also link to the National Design Guide and the Council district-wide Design Guide that is being produced, to be available in early 2020 which will illustrate the aims and requirements regarding the general quality of design expected across the whole of the new combined area. It is intended that the Design Guide will be a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.2 In the interim, the Checklist and associated Charter provides a concise summary of both the Vision and Design Guide. They have been prepared to help the Local Planning Authority assess the quality of proposed developments and to clearly set out the standard expected for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. These have been produced as a 'stop-gap' in the short-term ahead of the Design Guide being adopted, this is important with a number of major developments coming forward. The topics and requirements will set an agenda for discussion between applicants and planning officers and will form the basis for assessment of emerging development proposals.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Executive resolves to:
  - a) Recommend that Full Council formally adopts the Taunton Garden Town Charter and Checklist as Council policy and technical guidance for development control purposes to help the Local Planning Authority assess the quality of proposed developments and to clearly set out the standard expected for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods in the Garden Town area.
  - b) Authorise the Head of Strategy, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to make any necessary editorial corrections and minor amendments to the document, and to agree the final publication style.

#### **3. Risk Assessment**

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Failure to adopt the Garden Town Charter and Checklist may reduce the certainty for developers of the standard expected for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods and reduce the Local Planning Authority effectiveness in negotiating and assessing the quality of proposed developments in the Garden Town.	4	5	20
The mitigations for this are the proposed changes as set out in the report	4	4	4

### Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

#### 4. Background and Full details of the Report

Taunton is one of the designated Garden Towns in England. As such, the Council is committed to ensuring that new development should contribute towards a carbon neutral future through sustainable forms of development, healthy neighbourhoods and distinctive places.

The document, 'The Vision for Our Garden Town' (approved by Executive and Full Council in July 2019) expands on these aims and should be consulted by all those wishing to undertake development projects within the Garden Town area.

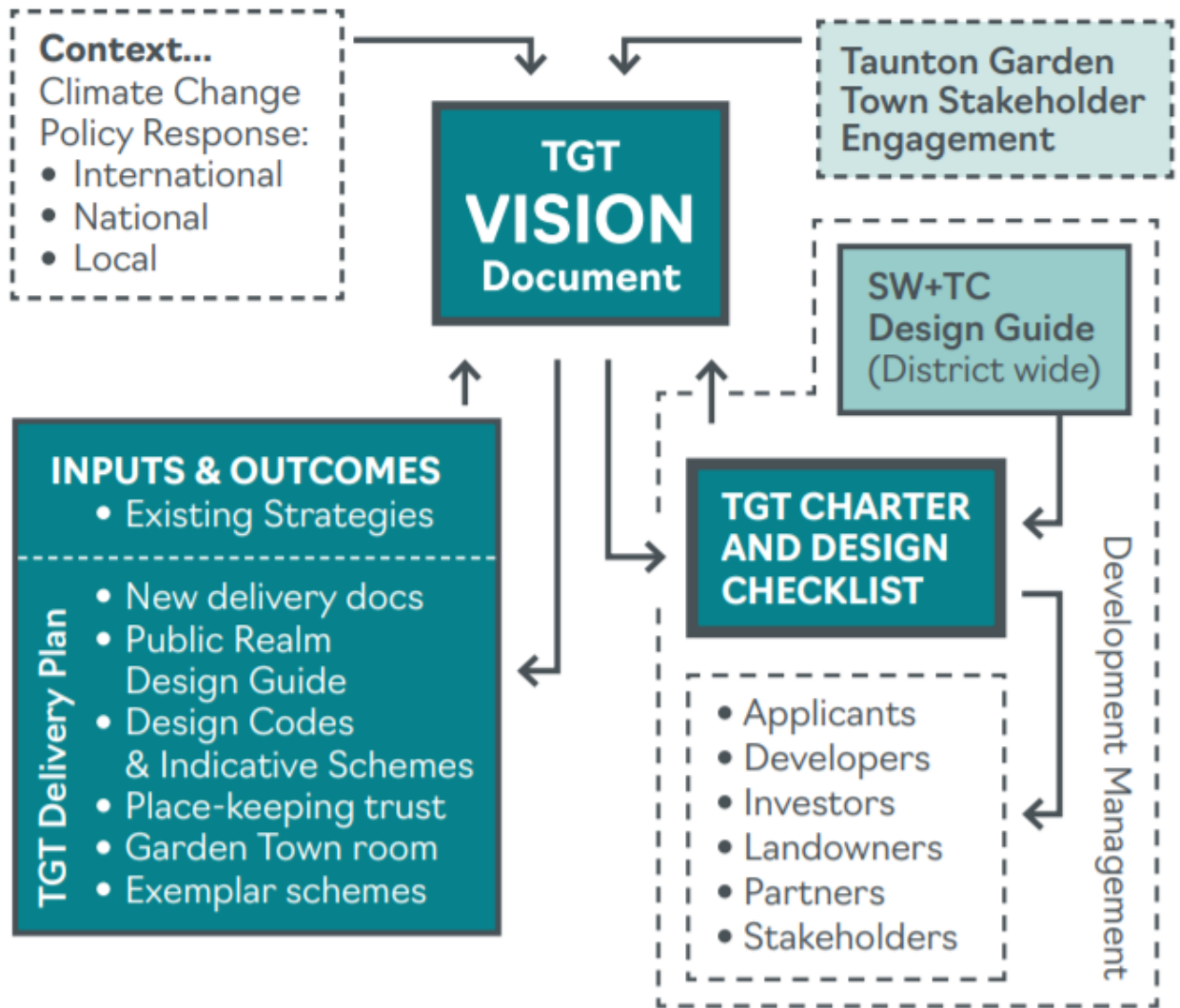
Additionally, a district-wide Design Guide is being produced (draft to be reported to Executive in early 2020 for approval for the purposes of public consultation). This will illustrate the Council's aims and requirements regarding the quality of design expected and will indicate how these aims can be achieved. The purpose of the guide will be to encourage developers and designers to be creative and responsive in the achievement of the Taunton Garden Town Vision. It is intended that the Design Guide will be a Supplementary Planning Document.

In the interim, the Charter and associated Checklist (shown in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this report) have been prepared to help the Local Planning Authority assess the quality of proposed developments and to clearly set out the standard expected for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. It is intended that the Garden Town Charter and Checklist will be technical guidance for development control purposes by the council and as such provide an agenda for discussions between applicants and planning officers for assessment of major development proposals which are coming forward ahead of the Design Guide. The diagram on the next page shows the relationship between the Vision for Our Garden Town, Design Guide, Charter and Checklist and proposed Garden Town Delivery Plan. During the preparation of the Charter and Checklist a 'soft testing' workshop was carried out with developers and their agents to encourage buy-in and support for the documents.

The Checklist and Charter provide a concise summary of both the Vision and Design Guide. The documents will be applicable to all Garden Town neighbourhoods, but will be particularly important within those places that are being newly-created. The Checklist and Charter have been produced as a 'stop-gap' in the short-term ahead of the Design Guide being adopted due to the number of major development sites coming forward. Local communities, architects, agents and developers will be encouraged to use the Checklist and sign up to the Charter in order to guide discussions about creating good places to live.

The Charter and Checklist have been based on the Building for Life 12 framework, and its methodology in use, which is a government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed places and has been tailored for the Garden Town. They reflect the National Planning Policy Framework's commitment not only to build more homes, but better homes, such as can be achieved in the place-making process, they will also help identify how development can be shaped to accommodate both new and existing communities. Officers have also added a strand of objectives for good development around 'Planet Positive': planning for the climate emergency.

The Charter and Checklist are the sign of a good (or better) place to live and the ambition of the Council to encourage developments built in Taunton Garden Town to use this standard for their design. It is envisaged that those exemplary developments that are then delivered will be conferred with a local 'Garden Town Quality-Mark' award – allowing projects to demonstrate a commitment to the Garden Town initiative and celebrate their achievement to potential purchasers and other key audiences.



## 5. Links to Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 The new Corporate Strategy was adopted by Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October. Theme One of the Corporate Strategy: Our Environment and Economy includes the objective of 'Shape and protect our built and neutral environment, supported by a refreshed Local Plan and develop our heritage, cultural and leisure offer including a clear vision and delivery plan for the Taunton Garden Town'.

## 6. Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 An Earmarked Reserve for 'Garden Town' work has been established following receipt of external Government funding through its Garden Town Capacity Fund. This funding provides budgets for ongoing work on the Garden Town programme, such as:
- Masterplanning alongside detailed design and delivery work, to inform the updated Taunton Garden Town Plan
  - Specialist support/officer roles to inform/assist a Garden Town Delivery Team e.g. urban design, community engagement, expertise/assistance with legal, acquisition, financing and land assembly issues. This support will also need to explore and outline the options for ensuring long term stewardship of the Taunton Garden Town programme.

## 7. Legal Implications

7.1 None at this stage.

## **8. Climate and Sustainability Implications**

8.1 The Garden Town Charter and Checklist are predicated on the need to mitigate climate change through the creation of quality sustainable places and neighbourhoods. This is based on the adopted Garden Town Vision and is the first deliver step in making this happen through the decision making process of the Local Planning Authority. The Design Charter and Checklist provides more detail on the standards of design and sustainability aimed for within the Garden Town area through the following themes:

- Grow our town greener – giving our town a green makeover, joining up our green spaces, waterways, parks and play spaces, planting more street trees and woodlands and managing our water more imaginatively with wetlands and rain gardens
- Moving cleaner and smarter – integrating our transport network with much improved bus and appropriate vehicle links to our main destinations and make much better prioritised provision for walkers and cyclists encouraging healthier and more sustainable journey choices as attractive alternatives to travelling by car
- Creating a quality town centre, new and existing neighbourhoods - delivering an outstanding built environment focused on places and spaces with high quality neighbourhoods, green streets and public spaces and with homes and buildings that are distinctly local in appearance. Our houses, offices, employment areas, public services and road infrastructure will embrace innovation, will be energy efficient and will exploit the latest sustainable technologies.
- Providing a dynamic and prosperous community - nourishing partnership, prosperity and growth in social value, germinating and growing sustainable arts and cultural venues as hubs that foster excellence. Pursuing low carbon and digital infrastructure that connects businesses and markets well, drawing on our University Centre and growth industries in digital, land, marine informatics, health and nuclear.

## **9. Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

9.1 The Garden Town Charter and Checklist are guidelines for the design of new development as well as the refurbishment of existing places. Designing for community safety is integral to the Garden Town Charter and Checklist since these requirements need to be considered at the beginning of the design process to achieve well designed buildings and places that minimises the opportunity for crime. The checklist adheres to the principles relevant to crime prevention – natural surveillance (spaces around buildings open to public view from adjoining properties, front entrances clearly visible from the street, well used illuminated routes); access and movement (direct routes, choice of routes, clear routes, permeability); activity (levels of activity provide natural surveillance together with a mix of uses); sense of ownership (clear definition of public/private space, activity in public spaces, sociable places, perception of space); defensible space (buffer zones, spill out spaces, restricting access to private areas); physical protection (boundaries sensitive to context, building materials and security features); management and maintenance (allocated resources, design quality and detail, community management).

## **10. Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 None at this stage, however as projects and initiatives are developed and implemented, full consideration to Equality and Diversity impact will be given at that time.

## **11. Social Value Implications**

11.1 The Garden Town Charter and Checklist is intended to have a positive influence on the quality of life, resulting in economic, social value and environmental benefits for the community.

## **12. Partnership Implications**

12.1 As part of the development and preparation of the Garden Town Charter and Checklist 'soft testing' has taken place with a sample of developers and agents in order to ensure that these documents are fit for purpose.

## **13. Health and Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 The Garden Town Charter and Checklist is intended to have a positive influence on the quality of life, resulting in health and wellbeing benefits for the community.

## **14. Asset Management Implications**

14.1 None at this stage, however the Council will consider opportunities for use of its assets to contribute to the delivery and promotion of the Garden Town Vision.

## **15. Data Protection Implications**

15.1 None at this stage.

## **16. Consultation Implications (if any)**

16.1 As part of the development and preparation of the Garden Town Charter and Checklist 'soft testing' has taken place with a sample of developers and agents in order to ensure that these documents are fit for purpose.

## **17. Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)**

17.1 Not applicable.

### **Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – Yes**

Reporting Frequency:  Once only       Ad-hoc       Quarterly  
 Twice-yearly       Annually



**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Taunton Garden Town Charter
Appendix B	Taunton Garden Town Checklist
Appendix C	

**Contact Officers**

Name	Fiona Webb – Place-making Specialist
Direct Dial	01823 219458
Email	f.webb@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

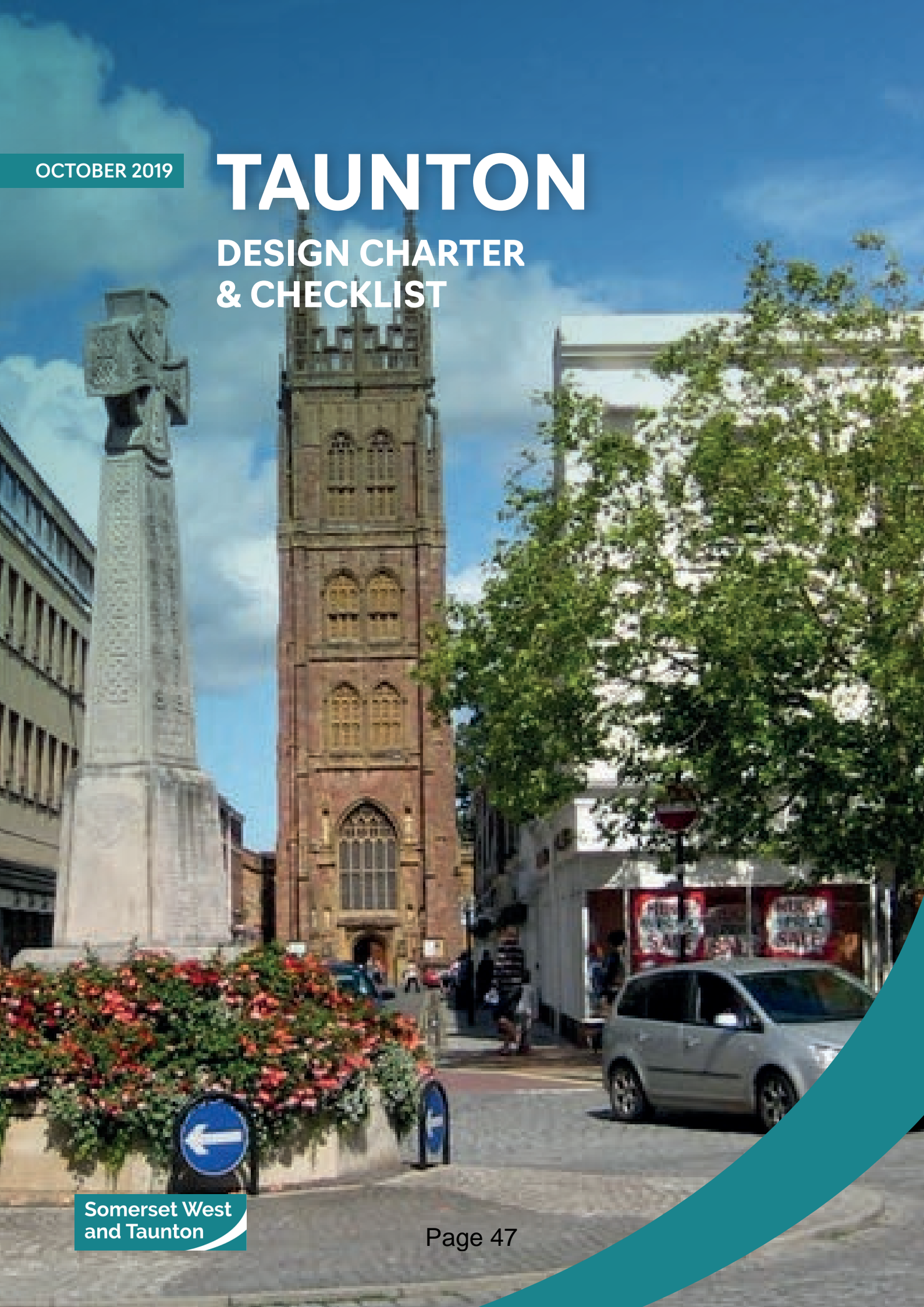
Name	Nick Bryant – Head of Strategy
Direct Dial	01823 219529
Email	n.bryant@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk



OCTOBER 2019

# TAUNTON

## DESIGN CHARTER & CHECKLIST





# Background

Somerset West and Taunton takes good design seriously. It welcomes the stronger emphasis provided to design through revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraphs 125 and 126 of the NPPF state that:

***“Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable.”***

***“To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design.”***

It continues:

***“...their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place.”***

Authorities should consider:

- Making use of tools for review like Design Panels; and,
- Assessment tools like BfL

The involvement of the local community is also highlighted:

***“Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”***

The guidance also encourages the highest quality design, noting:

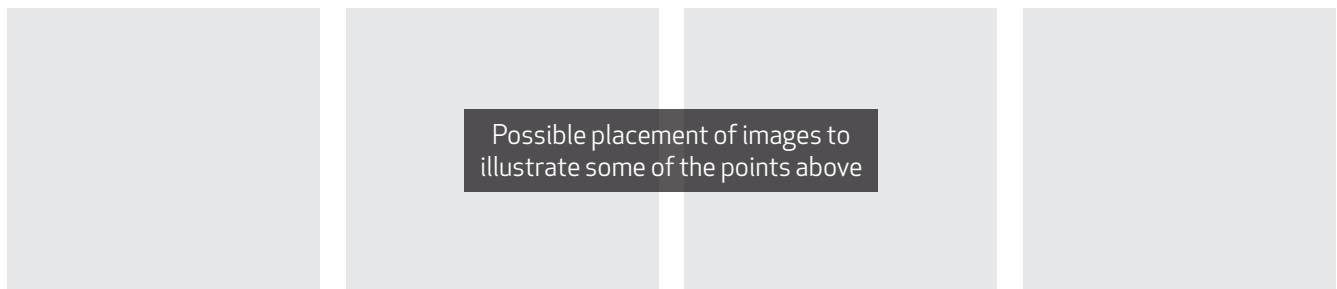
***“...great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”***

The new National Design Guidance (published October 2019) now usefully expands on all aspects of good practice and sets out a common framework to which all projects must respond.

At a local level and specifically through the Taunton Deane Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) a suite of design policies have been adopted. Specifically Policy D7 Design quality of the SADMP states:

**New housing and commercial developments shall create a high standard of design quality and sense of place by:**

1. *Creating places with locally inspired or otherwise distinctive characteristics and materials;*
2. *Reflecting the site and its context, including existing topography, landscape features and the historic environment;*
3. *Integrating into their surroundings through the reinforcement of existing connections and the creation of new ones, and creating legible, connected street networks; and*
4. *Ensuring that buildings define and enhance the streets and spaces, and that buildings turn street corners well.*



Possible placement of images to illustrate some of the points above

### Image Caption

Image Caption/Description

In early 2017 Taunton was designated as a Garden Town. This designation reflects not just the Council's commitment to transformational levels of growth but also to strive for a higher standard of new development.

The Taunton Garden Town Vision was adopted in July 2019, our Vision is:

***“Taunton, the County Town of Somerset, will be flourishing, distinctive, and healthy – and the country’s benchmark Garden Town. We will be proud to live and work in a place where the outstanding natural environment, diverse and thriving economy and inspiring cultural offer, contribute to an exceptional quality of life and well-being.”***

Four themes have been identified against which the Garden Town activity will be structured:

1. *Grow our town greener – transforming our open spaces and streets;*
2. *Branching out – moving cleaner, moving smarter;*
3. *Growing quality green places to live – town centre, new and existing neighbourhoods; and*
4. *New shoots and blossom – a dynamic and prosperous community founded on knowledge, culture and business*

Our Garden Town status and the commitment made through the Garden Town Vision places quality design at its heart but the Vision itself is necessarily high level. It needs to be complemented by a suite of more detailed plans, policies, guidance that will ensure we deliver against our aspirations.

Our Council became one of the first in the country to declare a ‘climate emergency’ in March of this year, setting itself the ambitious target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This ambition has now been articulated as the number one priority within the Council’s new Corporate Strategy. We expect new development to take account of the need to plan positively for a carbon neutral future.

**“...provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design.”**



## Purpose of the Charter & Checklist

The purpose of the Taunton Garden Town Design Charter and Checklist is twofold. This document sets the Council's expectations in terms of design of key sites within the Garden Town and also provides a framework against which prospective developers, communities and the Council as planning authority can assess relevant planning applications.

Much of the large scale new development planned for Taunton Garden Town benefits from Outline Planning Permission. Reserved Matters applications will be expected to comply with those outline consents, but we want to use the Charter and Checklist to further influence the thinking of developers and housebuilders in the evolution of the detail design of their proposals.

The Charter and Checklist will be incorporated within and endorsed by the wider Somerset West and Taunton District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Further, as part of the Local Plan review, we will consider how good design can be fully incorporated into the statutory development plan and consequently carry the fullest weight within the planning decision-making process.

Guidance published by the Town and Country Planning Association sets out a Garden City 'Design Ethic':

***"The original Garden Cities of Letchworth and Welwyn have strong design associations, from tree-lined streets to Arts and Crafts architecture, and this is an important factor in their enduring popularity. However, these visual associations almost obscure a deeper philosophy rooted in the pursuit of beauty – embracing everything from co-operative working to connection with the natural world."***

***"New Garden Cities are unlikely to look like Letchworth or Welwyn, but applying the design ethic behind these places is essential to realising the Garden City principles today. The philosophy that should underpin the design approach to new Garden Cities can be considered under five key themes:***

- ***innovation and imagination;***
- ***marrying town and country;***
- ***co-operation in design and place-making;***
- ***character, distinctiveness and harmony; and***
- ***room to breathe."***

The Charter and Checklist sets out how the Council expects that this ethic can be interpreted and embraced in order to realise the Taunton Garden Town Vision. It identifies good design process and then some specific design outcomes that should provide particular character and quality to the neighbourhoods of the Garden Town. These espouse and extend the fundamental principles of 'good design' that must underpin all new development, which have usefully been articulated in the Government's new National Design Guidance (NDG).

The Charter and Checklist will therefore encompass and add to the policy and guidance that is already in place to ensure developers and those looking to deliver inward investment are influenced by consistent and clear advice.





Possible image placement to avoid blank pages and visually separate the sections



# Design Charter – What We Expect

**Achieving excellent outcomes in completed projects relies heavily on all parties adopting a good process and working collaboratively. Adherence to The Charter will require partners to commit to the following stages:**

## ***Skills and Engagement – Preparing to Succeed***

The design process should be multi-disciplinary, inclusive and draw on all the appropriate professional skills and expertise necessary to deliver high quality results. An integrity needs to be pursued from concept through to detail and if different design personnel and teams contribute at each stage then this can be lost – processes and systems need to be in place to counter this potential leaching away of quality, but ideally those key individuals that lead and direct the design process should remain in charge throughout. A ‘lead consultant’ responsible for coordinating briefs and managing inputs from all disciplines within the design team should be appointed.

Engagement with public and community stakeholders and interest groups should be carefully planned alongside formal consultation and negotiations with the local planning authority. The Garden Town projects will consult with stakeholders at each stage of the planning process, quite possibly over and above statutory requirements.

## ***Context Appraisal***

To build an understanding of the existing place in which the project is located the strengths, weaknesses and existing planning policy within the context surrounding the site should be explored:

- *The setting of the site within the Garden Town and wider landscape. Analysis of its special landscape relationships, water, critical skylines, rooflines and landmarks, with view corridors to these. Approaches to the site (pedestrian, cycle, bus, other vehicles). Walking distance to local facilities and services. Demonstrate early discussions with bus providers, car club and sharing providers, etc.*
- *Appraisal of adjacent/nearby land uses. Assessment of likely change and relationship to the proposals. Condition.*
- *Appraisal of adjacent townscape; grain, scale, heights, spaces and places, built form typologies, age/period, materials/colours/details, vegetation significance. Degree of useful cues. Assessment of response (egs. (a) Deference: setting of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, other Heritage Assets, assets of community value, etc (b) Positive Intervention: area of decline and/or poor quality or layout, etc).*
- *Appraisal of the nature and significance of nearby landscapes, green and blue spaces, topography and accessibility, habitats/ biodiversity and waterscape, flood risk.*
- *Appraisal of the evolution of the site morphology within its setting; sequence of historic maps. This will indicate previous street and building layout, uses, boundaries, significant names. Possible archaeological interest and contamination risks.*
- *Any culturally significant associations, eg; significant people who lived in the area, literary or artistic associations, locally distinctive place names.*





**Image Caption**  
 Image Caption/Description

### Site Appraisal

The constraints and opportunities of the site that is being developed should be examined in full detail with supporting surveys:

- *Boundaries and Access/Connectivity. Nature and condition of the boundaries; sensitivities on boundaries (privacy, view). Determine points of vehicular access to the site. Determine 'desire lines' for pedestrian and cycle links to nearest bus stops, facilities, primary/secondary school etc.*
- *Topography and Landscape. Contours on and adjacent to the site; slope analysis as appropriate. Tree survey including height, species, spread, age, condition, (as per standard practice); TPOs; potential for increased planting. Hedgerows; condition, Ecology/biodiversity. Critical gradients. Drainage and percolation characteristics.*
- *Orientation; sun's path; shelter exposure; prospect/aspect.*
- *Existing buildings and structures; these can help to 'anchor' the proposed development to its locality.*
- *Services/utilities crossing the site. Establish the route/s of underground services and related wayleaves. Overhead lines, sub-stations.*

### Development of the Design Concept

Before proceeding to an outline or detailed design stage, an appropriate concept needs to be developed and agreed:

#### The basic questions that the concept should address are;

- *What is the character of the proposed development? (formal/informal, uniform/varied, density range, areas of character, etc). It may be appropriate to divide the site into character areas, each with its distinctive identity.*
- *How does it respond to its context? (contrast/integrated, character of interface, etc)*
- *How does it incorporate the vision and the principles of Taunton Garden Town in a way that demonstrates it to be a step change from conventional approaches to development design? (character and quantity of greenspaces, water-sensitive urban design, green buildings, opportunities to grow food, design prompts for social interaction and cooperation, integration with bus/bike routes to counter dependence on car usage, etc).*
- *What additional strategies and studies will be required to inform the design process in further stages?*



# The Special Characteristics of Garden Town Projects – What We Aim to Achieve

Projects within the Garden Town will comply with the established principles of good architectural, urban and landscape design that should apply to all developments. In addition, there are some measures and particular emphases that will make the Garden Town projects distinct.

These are set out in more detail in the Checklist but, to summarise here, they include:

## **Grow our Town Greener**

- 1. We expect green infrastructure to be fully-integrated into the design of new residential developments, whilst re-establishing connections to our landscape, and connecting up our green corridors and watersides**

**WHY?** This is in order to promote health and well-being; biodiversity; improved air quality; urban cooling; opportunities for cultivation and communal food production. To provide a joined-up network, easily accessible and convenient to use, a pleasure to look at and experience – to promote physical activity, play and social interaction, fostering healthy and communal lifestyles.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *The use of street trees and hedges*
- *Recreational walking and cycling routes*
- *Pocket parks and community orchards*
- *Swales and rain gardens,*
- *Micro-allotments*
- *Green walls and roofs*

- 2. Improve our water and air management and habitat creation.**

**WHY?** To minimise flooding, facilitate irrigation, naturally filter and improve water and air quality, and promote a diverse range of habitats resilient to flooding and climate change and rich in biodiversity.

Potential design responses for each neighbourhood, its streets, parks and buildings should consider how surface water can be managed intelligently and in combination with techniques that enhance the environment, for example:

- *Wetlands,*
- *Rain gardens*
- *Withy-beds in our green spaces*
- *Permeable hard surfaces*
- *Restoring and enhancing neglected green spaces*
- *Urban trees and structural planting*

- 3. Significantly reduce energy consumption and harness individual and site-wide renewable or low-carbon energy solutions, whilst promoting the use of recycled and locally sourced materials**

**WHY?** The Climate Emergency requires new development to aim to be zero-carbon and energy-positive.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *Passive design solutions for individual buildings (shading, natural lighting, heating/cooling)*
- *Solar masterplanning, providing good orientation for roof-mounted solar PV collectors and passive management of micro-climates through urban tree planting and permeable layouts*
- *Fabric first approach to energy conservation*
- *Passiv-haus techniques*
- *Neighbourhood renewable energy and combined heat and power / energy centre solutions*
- *Low carbon heat networks for larger/denser projects*
- *Private wire renewable energy distribution*
- *Self-sufficiency in water for irrigation and gardening*
- *Off-site construction techniques that maximise efficiency / minimise waste*
- *Specification of materials which have low embodied energy*

## Branching Out

### 1. We expect that the design and layout of the neighbourhoods of the Garden Town will promote sustainable and active modes of travel over all others

**WHY?** Transportation by private vehicles increases congestion and reduces air quality, whilst movement by walking, cycling and public transport has benefits for the health and well-being of individuals and for the vitality of the wider urban environment.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- Street layouts and cross-sections that prioritise comfortable and convenient movement for pedestrians, cyclists and buses
- Highway designs that recognise the place value of good streets alongside their movement functions
- Safe walking routes to school as part of the urban layout
- Direct and swift cycle routes for commuters to key centres of employment and the town centre
- Urban form and typologies that concentrate dwellings and populations along public transport corridors and in the vicinity of stops
- Convenient, distinctive and attractive shelters provided for those using public transport

### 2. Provisions to facilitate the use of cycles and electric vehicles will be exemplary

**WHY?** Movement for regular journeys that are beyond comfortable walking distance by low-emission transport modes need to be encouraged.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- Secure and convenient cycle storage in a location accessible from the front of dwellings
- Electric charging points provided for each parking space
- Generous cycle parking at local centres, schools and other key destinations
- Charging infrastructure for public parking at the key destinations within the neighbourhoods

### 3. Town 'Gateways' will be upgraded with greenery

**WHY?** First impressions of the Garden Town are important and should be positive and memorable.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- Distinctive landscape design
- The use of innovative lighting and public art to further enhance the identity of arrival places
- Coordination and de-cluttering of signage

## Growing Quality Green Places to Live

### 1. The Town Centre will be made more attractive and accessible

**WHY?** The Town Centre is the 'heart' of Taunton and should be an excellent urban environment with a high-quality public realm which is inclusive and welcoming to residents and visitors, in order to engender civic pride and encourage inward investment.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- Implementation of the Public Spaces project in accordance with the public realm design guide, including the introduction of new urban street trees / planting
- Prioritisation of access for only those vehicles that must enter for essential needs
- Removal of 'blockages' that impede cycling and accessible pedestrian routes into and within the Town Centre

### 2. Vitality and Diversification of the Town Centre will be encouraged

**WHY?** The Town Centre needs to respond to current trends, challenges and opportunities in the retail, commercial and leisure sectors

Examples of potential design responses include:

- Developments that encourage flexibility and can promote a greater mix of uses, including residential accommodation / small commercial workspaces
- Major regeneration sites designed to be mutually supportive of the existing uses and enhance the evening economy
- Sensitive and creative re-use of historic buildings to capitalise on their contribution to the identity and character of the Town Centre
- New buildings that are of the highest quality and that bring a considered contemporary and distinctive contribution to the townscape.
- Proposals for temporary and meanwhile/pop-up uses where voids and vacant sites persist

### **3. New Garden Neighbourhoods will be created that are well-designed places with a clear identity**

**WHY?** The new neighbourhoods should respond to the local character of the area and also embrace the 'design ethic' of the Garden City movement.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *A distinctive local identity that is a sympathetic response to the landscape setting and character of the context*
- *A legible layout that has strong townscape qualities utilising key building groupings, landmark and focal buildings and well-composed street elevations*
- *Creation of a mixed-use 'walkable neighbourhood' providing essential facilities and open spaces*
- *A mix of dwelling types and tenures for all stages of life / type of household*
- *A clear compositional approach with the adoption of good proportions that might achieve a harmonious and cohesive architectural language*
- *Modest decorative effect and pattern-making by allowing constructional detail to add interest, texture and richness to the architectural aesthetic*

### **4. New Garden Neighbourhoods should be designed to promote community cohesion and resilience**

**WHY?** The Garden City ethos promoted social interaction and cooperation alongside closeness to nature and engagement with cultivation. The well-being and happiness of residents is an important pre-requisite in facilitating the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles and choices.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *Adaptable dwellings that are robust enough to provide a 'lifetime home' or accommodate a good place within to 'work from home'.*
- *Legacy and stewardship arrangements for active participation of the community in managing shared community assets, infrastructure and spaces.*
- *Generously-sized windows and doors in dwellings that are welcoming - having a human scale, with porches, thresholds and opportunities for informal seating providing 'prompts' for residents to occupy and colonise space near to the entrance of dwellings.*
- *Opportunities for micro-allotments, door-step play and public art within the public realm creating a stimulating inter-generational environment.*

### **5. Rejuvenated Neighbourhoods should be carefully planned with the close cooperation of existing residents to improve the efficiency, amenity and character of their place**

**WHY?** The thorough and effective involvement with the people that live in a neighbourhood is essential if all the opportunities are to be identified and seized.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *More efficient use of brownfield land to provide more housing and create better streets and spaces.*
- *Improvements to the energy performance of the dwellings.*
- *Provision of new open space and planting (including street trees).*
- *Improved mix of dwelling types and tenures.*
- *Improved legibility and better public realm making it easier and more attractive to walk and cycle.*
- *Enlightened parking strategy with good integration of the vehicles within the streetscene.*

## **New Shoots & Blossom**

### **1. Development should help to facilitate a new dynamism and prosperity that draws on and supports the knowledge, culture and business communities of Taunton**

**WHY?** Creativity and enterprise can bring innovation and resilience to both new and regenerated neighbourhoods and the general quality of life is strongly linked to the economic performance of the wider town.

Examples of potential design responses include:

- *A good range of flexible employment space including incubation, innovation and 'grow on' accommodation / types.*
- *Superfast Fibre-optic broadband infrastructure designed in from the outset.*
- *Engagement of the creative sector in influencing and shaping the built environment and public realm.*
- *Flexible ground floor spaces in residential premises adjacent to new local centres that could potentially be used for commercial or retail use in the future.*





**Image Caption**  
Image Caption/Description



Possible placement of an image/  
images to illustrate points above



**Image Caption**  
Image Caption/Description



**Image Caption**  
Image Caption/Description



# Design Checklist

## – How We Will Measure Success

**The Checklist is in the form of a series of four spreadsheets that can be actively used by all parties in pre-application negotiations or, indeed, in later stages of the development process through to the post-completion auditing of final built quality.**

In order to make the measurement process efficient and effective, the content of the Building for Life 12 framework will be enhanced in scope to include a new section which covers the ‘Climate + Planet Positive’ topics. And then, the familiar assessment methodology of BfL 12 will be adopted throughout the Checklist - whereby, a ‘traffic light’ system of red, amber or green scoring is applied to each measure:

- *Green shows the design of the scheme has responded positively to the question.*
- *Red elements identify aspects of proposals that need to be changed and where the scheme design at the time of assessment fails to respond to the question positively.*
- *Amber is used where there is clear evidence of local constraints on the scheme beyond the control of the design team that prevent it from achieving a green.*

The ambition should be to achieve ‘green’ against as many of the questions as possible. Adherence to the Charter compels all parties to work towards avoiding ‘red’ scores and to constructively and creatively explore modifications to the proposals in order to convert ‘amber’ into ‘green’ scores wherever this is feasible.

In making an assessment then the requirements of each question in relation to national and local policy and guidance will be taken into account in addition to the specific interpretations which are prompted by the Garden Town design ethic as set out in the Checklist.

(A blank Checklist is appended as a separate document and/or available for download at - <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/garden-town/>)



## Garden Town Charter-mark – What You Can Expect From Us

**A Garden Town ‘Charter-mark Award’ will celebrate and reward those developers that are performing well against the Checklist.**



TAUNTON GARDEN TOWN  
CHARTER-MARK

The Council will recognise successful projects and this will allow prospective purchasers and investors to identify good quality design and place-making. It is hoped that knowledge and display of the Award will become a powerful marketing tool for the promoters of new and forthcoming projects. The Council will also endeavour to independently promote and celebrate the award-winning projects.

By using the Building for Life 12 framework as the basis of our Checklist, then successful projects will also be well-placed to apply for a national Built for Life award. The local, and unique Charter-mark recognition will signal the exceptional quality that we expect projects in the Garden Town to achieve by both meeting the requirements in the additional Climate + Planet Positive chapter in the Checklist and the more stringent interpretations of the questions from the standard BfL 12 framework.

### ***Using the Charter (a guide for officers and stakeholders):***

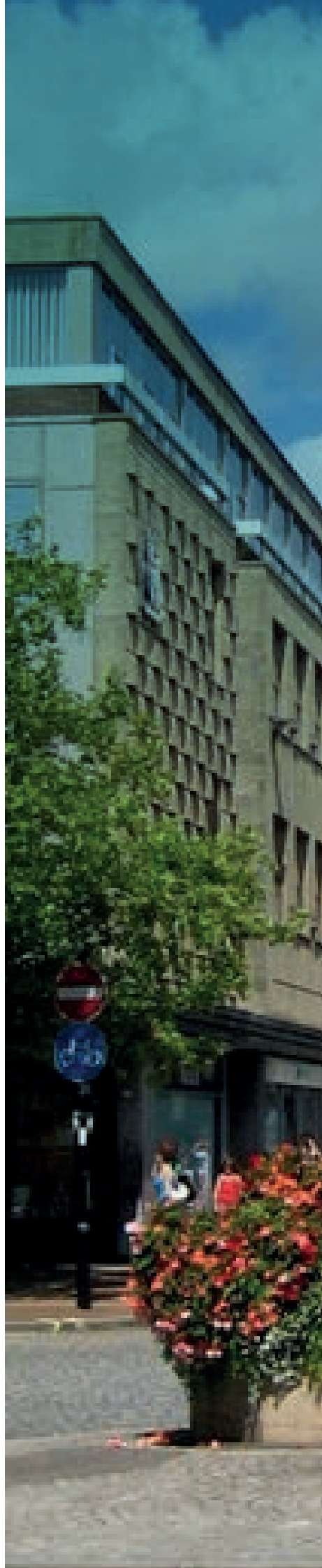
Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) are expected to be established for each major project that contributes to the Garden Town and should set out the key requirements of all parties to achieve an effective and positive working relationship during the pre-application and later project phases. The preambles to these agreements should recognise the acceptance of this Charter and the agreement to adhere to its principles. The performance targets required for the Climate + Planet Positive questions should be explicitly identified in the PPA.

Community engagement is another key topic for the PPA and the likely content/format of this and the stages at which key consultations are to take place should be set out alongside the project programme. The PPA may need to ensure levels of engagement that go beyond statutory requirements.

Once that the ‘Garden Room’ facility has been established in the Town Centre, then public display/exhibition to wider audiences can also be agreed – to promote the Garden Town projects to the whole community of Taunton, not merely those stakeholders that are local to each site.

Design Review is a complementary tool for lifting design quality and will be used alongside the Checklist – both to establish guidance from an independent perspective and to gauge relative success against the aims of the Checklist in relation to wider experience and practice. Design Review is most effective when used early in the development of each design stage. A first review should be anticipated soon-after the development of the Design Concept, with a further review arranged well in advance of the submission of the master-planning and design work associated with an Outline Planning submission. Further reviews, as the Detailed or Reserved Matters information begins to be prepared, can be expected. These will be dependent on the specific circumstances of each project, but certainly where design codes and/or neighbourhood masterplans and guidance is called for by planning condition, then these need to be subject to the independent scrutiny of a design review panel. Feedback and guidance from the design review reports will then be used to inform on-going negotiations within the Charter and Checklist framework.

The design process and the outcomes generated in responding to the Charter and Checklist and the wider Garden Town Vision should be captured as an Appendix to the Design and Access Statement for the project. This will then be submitted with the planning application as clear evidence of ‘Garden Town compliance’ for all the key sites.



With:  
Richard Guise, David Orr, James Webb



**Taunton**  
The South West's first Garden Town



# Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist:

## Integrating into the Neighbourhood

Vision Theme

BfL 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Branching Out

<b>1 Connections</b> Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones whilst also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site?					The new and regenerated neighbourhoods of the Garden Town should be well-connected and integrated yet respectful neighbours to adjacent sites - encouraging movement by sustainable modes as a priority.
1a Where should vehicles come in and out of the development?					BfL 12 advice applies
1b Should there be pedestrian and cycle only routes into and through the development? If so, where should they go?					The Garden Town should have streets suitable for all modes of travel, but to encourage commuting and other essential journeys by active travel (cycling + walking) then specific direct routes may be considered, where these are safe, well-overlooked and lit.
1c Where should new streets be placed, could they be used to cross the development site and help create linkages across the scheme and into the existing neighbourhood and surrounding places?					The wider movement network within the context of the development site should be recognised and responded to in the layout of the Garden Town project.
1d How should the new development relate to existing development? What should happen at the edges of the development site?					The 'integration of town and country' is a crucial characteristic of the Garden Town. Private drives rarely provide an appropriate edge condition and Edge Lanes that are public and link together to provide continuous perimeter access and a positive recreational route for active travel are strongly endorsed. Developments that contribute to forming a new threshold or gateway into and out of Taunton alongside a major route will need to promote a strong visual quality.

Growing Quality Places

<b>2 Facilities and Services</b> Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?					Garden Towns should wherever possible reduce the need to travel long distances to gain access to essential everyday facilities. Full fibre broadband connectivity is required.
2a Are there enough facilities and services in the local area to support the development? If not, what is needed?					BfL 12 advice applies
2b Where are new facilities proposed: Are these facilities what the area needs?					BfL 12 advice applies
2c Are these new facilities located in the right place? If not, where should they go?					BfL 12 advice applies
2d Does the layout encourage walking, cycling or using public transport to reach them?					The networks for walking and cycling need to be explicitly considered/illustrated and well-conceived, reflecting the needs of local and longer-distance trips by these 'active-travel' modes. Networks that assure strong access to Taunton Town Centre, any new local centre, schools and other 'destinations' (such as employment sites + public transport stops) need to be provided.

Branching Out

<b>3 Public transport</b> Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?					Development form (layout and density) and transportation should be considered to be interdependent within the Garden Town.
3a What can the development do to encourage more people (both existing and new residents) to use public transport more often?					The location of stops needs to be fully integrated with the design approach to localised density and character of urban form in order to create a series of clear and legible 'places' within the neighbourhood where public transport can be readily accessed.
3b Where should new public transport stops be located?					Ideally, radial streets and paths would place stops in the centre of a strong local network of walking routes.

Growing Quality Places

<b>4 Meeting local housing requirements</b> Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?					The ambition for all Garden Town Communities is to create a good mix and broad range of good quality housing types / sizes in order to promote a mixed community which has a varied and diverse demography.
4a What types of homes, tenure and price range are needed in the area (for example, starter homes, family homes, or homes for those downsizing)?					Optical fibre broadband infrastructure should be provided. Homes shall include types that are suitable (possibly after minor adaptation) to provide good home-working conditions.
4b Is there a need for different types of home ownership (such as part buy or part rent) or rented properties to help people on lower incomes?					Garden Town neighbourhoods should have a range of tenures / ownerships that might encourage a diverse demographic amongst residents.
4c Are the different types and tenures spatially integrated to create a cohesive community?					The careful assembly of building groupings that combine different dwelling types within good architectural and urban compositional principles should be a key characteristic.

# Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist: Creating a Place

Vision Theme

Bfl 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing Quality Places	<b>5 Character</b> Does the scheme create a place with a locally-inspired or otherwise distinctive character?				The primary generator of appropriate character will be a sensitive understanding and response to the underlying landscape character of the site.
	5a How can the development be designed to have a local or distinctive identity?				Analysis and appraisal of positive examples of vernacular / local buildings should inform the architectural approach, which may therefore be grounded but innovative. Urban form should, similarly, be created that has reference to some key characteristics drawn from the surrounding context but respond to contemporary lifestyle demands/needs.
	5b Are there any distinctive characteristics within the area, such as building shapes, styles, colours and materials or the character of streets and spaces that the development should draw inspirations from?				Anonymous national housetypes and standard palettes of materials / details are not supported - simple, honest, well-constructed buildings should be aimed for. Modest patterns and textures which are derived from the constructional techniques employed are endorsed. Architectural design should pursue and share common proportions and be well-ordered, with elements (doors / windows / porches / etc) that clearly celebrate human scale and occupation.
Growing Quality Places	<b>6 Working with the Site and its Context</b> Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate?				See 5 above - it is vital that the key characteristics and assets are recognised and celebrated.
	6a Are there any views into and from the site that need to be carefully considered?				Long distance impacts on views from Quantocks and Blackdown Hills, as AONB, are very important considerations.
	6b Are there any existing trees, hedgerows or other features, such as streams that need to be carefully designed into the development?				Retained vegetation and other ecological assets need to be able to be carefully maintained - inclusion within the layout as rear private boundaries to gardens will not normally be acceptable.
	6c Should the development keep any existing building(s) on the site? If so, how could they be used?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing Quality	<b>7 Creating well-defined Streets and Spaces</b> Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?				New Garden Town Neighbourhoods should have layouts that allow for the inclusion of significant building groupings which are memorable as 'set piece' compositions within the general arrangement.
	7a Are buildings and landscaping schemes used to create enclosed streets and spaces?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	7b Do buildings turn corners well?				House types fulfilling this role need to be specifically designed - standard types merely adapted will rarely be acceptable.
	7c Do all fronts of buildings, including front doors and habitable rooms face the street?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing Quality	<b>8 Easy to find your way around</b> Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?				The Garden Town should have excellent legibility.
	8a Will the development be easy to find your way around? If not, what could be done to make it easier to find your way around?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	8b Are there any obvious landmarks?				Specimen trees, when mature (not just significant buildings) can provide good focal incidents within the layout.
	8c Are the routes between places clear and direct?				Bfl 12 advice applies

# Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist: Street + Home

Vision Theme

Bfl 12 primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing Quality Places	<b>9 Streets for All</b> Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?				In the Garden Town, the place quality of streets will be as equally important as their movement function.
	9a Are streets pedestrian friendly and are they designed to encourage cars to drive slower and more carefully?				The design principles of Manual for Streets 1 + 2 shall be fully applied - pedestrians and cycles should always take priority and the 'place quality' of streets should be fully considered alongside their functionality.
	9b Are streets designed in such a way that they can be used as social spaces, such as places for children to play safely or for neighbours to converse?				Doorstep play and other informal stimulation for younger children to interact with the street environment should be provided within the public realm, in addition to formal play provision elsewhere. Threshold spaces and boundary conditions mediating between the private and public realm and engaging with the approach to smaller groups of dwellings should be included to promote social interaction between neighbours/residents.
Growing Quality Places	<b>10 Car parking</b> Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well-integrated so that it does not dominate the street?				The relationship between the public realm / main pedestrian route and the individual front door to each dwelling shall not be impeded or hidden from view by vehicles.
	10a Is there enough parking for residents and visitors?				Electric car-charging must be provided for each dwelling / allocated space and ducting should be installed to allow visitor spaces in the public realm to be retro-fitted with a supply, if not immediately provided. Car-charging at local centres and other public 'destinations' should be provided.
	10b Is parking positioned close to people's homes?				Bfl 12 advice applies
	10c Are parking courtyards small in size (generally no more than five properties should use a parking courtyard) and are they well overlooked by neighbouring properties?				Parking Courts are not generally supported in any form and should only be used in exceptional circumstances, Parking Squares may be an acceptable alternative in certain locations.
	10d Are garages well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene?				Bfl 12 advice applies
Growing our Town Greener	<b>11 Public and Private Spaces</b> Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?				The quality of public, shared and private open space are a key determinant of the character of the Garden Town. In general terms, the use of public art/craft dispersed throughout the public realm is endorsed rather than a few major interventions in specific locations.
	11a What types of open space should be provided within the development?				The inclusion of open swales, rain gardens and other sustainable urban drainage features should be celebrated as part of the public realm and landscape design. Allotments should be located in order to promote maximum use and be well-integrated with the urban layout, not located in an inaccessible distant position on the edge of the site. Opportunities for informal edible landscaping / micro-allotments should be provided as part of private threshold spaces and within the public realm wherever possible.
	11b Is there a need for play facilities for children and teenagers? If so, is this the right place or should the developer contribute towards and existing facility in the area that could be made better?				The Garden Town will provide strong and appropriate provision for all age groups. Doorstep play for young children should be integrated within the design of the public realm.
	11c How will they be looked after?				Management arrangements that have the capacity, over time, to involve and empower the future residents are strongly endorsed.
Growing Quality	<b>12 External Storage and Amenity Space</b> Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?				Secure cycle storage is best located in close proximity to the front / approach to the dwelling. Cycle stores in rear gardens will not be adequate to strongly promote cycle use.
	12a Is storage for bins and recycling items fully integrated, so that these items are less likely to be left on the street?				Where storage solutions are proposed in rear gardens then specific attention needs to be paid to the layout of the front curtilage of those dwellings in order to deter their use as alternative casual storage, wherever possible. Well-designed enclosures at the front of dwellings are endorsed and certainly necessary in terraced typologies with limited access to rear amenity space.

# Taunton Garden Town - Design Checklist:

## Climate + Planet Positive

Vision Theme

TGT primary + secondary questions

assessment



Garden Town Characteristics

Growing our Town

<b>13. Building with Nature</b>					
Have the Core Standards been met?					This is essential as a base standard
Have the Wellbeing Standards been met?					Accessibility to good quality greenspace is a key characteristic of the Garden Town.
Have the Water Standards been met?					Water quality within the landscape of the Garden Town should be excellent.
Have the Wildlife Standards been met?					Bio-diversity increases are an essential theme

Growing our Town Greener

<b>14. Energy Conservation + Carbon Reduction</b>					
Is energy demand minimised across the development?					Garden Town project are expected to significantly reduce energy consumption
Does the development achieve a carbon reduction improvement of at least 19% over Part L of the Building Regulations 2013?					Garden Town projects are expected to be consistently performing better than the national standards for carbon reduction.
Is energy demand minimised within the buildings?					A 'fabric first' strategy for energy conservation is strongly encouraged including 'passiv-haus' standards where appropriate.

Growing our Town Greener

<b>15. Renewable Energy</b>					
Are opportunities for site-wide energy solutions being effectively harnessed?					Where reasonable and opportunities exist for site-wide energy solutions (e.g low carbon heat networks, private wire renewable energy generation etc.) then these should be explored and pursued unless more effective and viable solutions exist.
Does the development maximise opportunities to meet energy demands from renewable or low carbon sources?					Any remaining carbon reduction requirements should be met by on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation (e.g. roof-mounted solar PV panels).
Does the development perform as expected?					Post-occupancy evaluation and monitoring is expected.

Growing our Town

<b>16. Resources + Resilience</b>					
Is there evidence of recycled / locally-sourced materials being used?					Specifications should fully explore whether alternative low-environmental impact options are available without reducing build quality.
Can rainwater be actively conserved?					The Garden Town should attempt to be self-sufficient in terms of water used for irrigation / gardening purposes.
Has whole life-cycle material performance influenced the specification?					Robust and resilient / durable materials are encouraged, or where these have a limited lifespan, that they can be obtained from renewable sources.
Are systems in place to minimise landfill waste during construction?					The process of construction should be carefully controlled to be as efficient in resource use as possible and may include off-site construction techniques, MMC, etc.

Report Number: SWT 87/19

## **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

### **Executive Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019**

#### **Somerset Climate Emergency Framework and SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Cllr Peter Pilkington**

**Report Author: Graeme Thompson, Strategy Specialist**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To inform Members about the emergence of a framework for developing the county-wide Climate Emergency Strategy and a framework for SWT's own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan, to approve these framework documents for public consultation over November 2019 – January 2020 and endorse proposed arrangements for approval of future draft documents.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the comments of Scrutiny Committee and the Climate Change Member Working Group included in the appended minutes of each meeting.
- 2.2 To note the timeline for delivery of both documents, and high level comments in relation to funding and resources going forward.
- 2.3 To endorse the Draft SWT Framework as a driver for stakeholder engagement and public consultation activities over November 2019 – January 2020..
- 2.4 To delegate authority to agree and endorse the future Draft SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan due in early Spring 2020 to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change (Cllr Peter Pilkington) in consultation with the Climate Change Member Working Group, noting that the final draft strategy will come to Executive and Full Council for approval.
- 2.5 To endorse the Draft Somerset-wide Framework as a driver for stakeholder engagement and public consultation activities subject to potential amendments to be discussed with the Joint Task and Finish Group and agreed by the Joint Cabinet / Portfolio Holders Group, in line with the agreed governance arrangements.
- 2.6 To delegate authority to agree and endorse the future Draft Somerset-wide Strategy due in early Spring 2020 to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change (Cllr Peter Pilkington) in consultation with the Joint Task and Finish Group, noting that the final strategy will come to Executive and Full Council for approval.

### 3 Risk Assessment

- 3.1 The climate emergency is a major existential risk for human-kind and our planet. Risks are both global and local. The Framework documents propose a direction of travel for us to take in preparing a strategy and action plan to mitigate and adapt to this and ultimately deliver against our targets of carbon neutrality and climate resilience.
- 3.2 There are risks associated with over-promising and under-delivering – in terms of timescales for Strategy and Plan production, in delivery, and in target achievability. By trying to move too quickly in terms of strategy/plan production there is a risk of missing out on important issues including secondary/unintended consequences and potential co-benefits of action. The framework tries to highlight the importance of coherent strategy/plan production in this regard, and also the importance of wider community buy-in and lobbying of Government to take relevant actions to help us achieve our targets.
- 3.3 Equally, there are risks associated with over-strategising and delaying action – the Draft SWT Framework takes account of this and now includes a section detailing immediate actions and commitments that we can be getting on with alongside strategy and action plan production.
- 3.4 Failure to resolve to note / endorse / delegate in line with the above recommendations will result in delays to the timeline for delivery of the documents. Specifically in relation to the Somerset-wide document, this may cause particular issues with partner authorities on agreeing a co-ordinated way forwards.

### 4 Background and Full details of the Report

#### Background

- 4.1 In 2019 the five Somerset Local Authorities recognised a climate emergency and agreed to collaborate in producing a joint Climate Emergency Strategy. Whilst each declaration is slightly different, all aspire to achieving carbon neutrality in their own operations and to work towards achieving this across the geography of their administrative area.
- 4.2 At the same time, SWT committed to producing a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan. The [report to Scrutiny Committee in July this year](#) explained the relationship between the county-wide and SWT-specific work and the Governance arrangements being set up.

#### Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework

- 4.3 A group of officers representing Somerset County Council, the four district authorities, Exmoor National Park Authority is guiding and shaping the development of the County-wide framework within which the detailed investigation needed will be undertaken. This group – the Strategic Management Group - will have a critical overseeing role in shaping the desired outcomes that emanate from that work. SWT's representation on that group is Graeme Thompson, Strategy Specialist.
- 4.4 Feeding into the Strategic Management Group will be the detailed work undertaken by operational experts and stakeholders within nine work streams:
  - Built Environment
  - Natural Environment

- Energy
- Farming and Food
- Industry, Business and Supply Chain
- Transport
- Waste and Resource Management
- Flood water and adaptation
- Communications and Engagement

- 4.5 Each of these work streams is working to a detailed brief and has a nominated lead. They will be researching and prioritising key issues, identifying possible actions to mitigate and understanding the full life cycle of decisions to implement these actions.
- 4.6 SWT has representation on all of these work streams, where we are able to support with appropriate subject-matter expertise and ensure two-way dialogue between workstream development across the county and in relation to our own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.
- 4.7 The work of officers is overseen by a group of portfolio holders from across the districts, which includes Cllr Peter Pilkington, and by the Leaders and CEOs, with Brendan Cleere and Michele Cusack (SCC) acting as the conduit between these groups. The work of all groups is scrutinised by a Joint Task and Finish Group; SWT’s representation on that group is through Cllrs Dave Mansell and Loretta Whetlor.
- 4.8 Members are asked to note the proposed timings for delivery of the Climate Emergency Strategy, which includes provision for consultation during November and December 2019.

Date	Stage
Sept 2019	Framework Strategy through joint T&F, Leaders & CEOs, Cabinet Members Group
Oct-Nov 2019	Framework Strategy through individual Council Scrutiny and Cabinets / Executive Committees
Nov 2019 - Jan 2020	Consult on Framework Strategy to include Climate “Summits” in December 2019
Feb 2020	Draft Strategy and action plan through joint T&F, Leaders & CEOs, Cabinet Members Group
Feb-Mar 2020	Consult on Draft Strategy and action plan
Apr 2020	Final Strategy and action plan through joint T&F, Leaders & CEOs, Cabinet Members Group
May-Jun 2020	Final Strategy and action plan through individual Council Scrutiny and Cabinets / Executive Committees
July 2020	Final Strategy and action plan to full Councils for adoption

- 4.9 Consultation activities are in the early stages of development, but are expected to include an online consultation aimed at secondary school-aged children 11-18 years, preceded by school visits to encourage participation. They will also include an online consultation aimed at all residents, communities and businesses in Somerset and a series of Summits, one per district, which will take the form of a full day, face-to-face consultation event, open to all.
- 4.10 The Draft Somerset-wide Framework was considered by SWT’s Scrutiny Committee



on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019. A number of members identified concerns in relation to specific points within the document. These points have been raised with the Strategic Management Group and will be discussed with the Joint Task and Finish Group on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 alongside points raised at other authorities. The Framework will then be amended as appropriate taking account of these discussions and then be circulated for agreement by the Joint Cabinet / Portfolio Holders Group in consultation with the Chair of the Task and Finish Group.

#### Draft SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan

- 4.11 A Draft of SWT's own Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan has also been produced alongside the Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework. Its purpose is to spark a conversation about how we will (collectively as a community) look to develop and ultimately deliver our district's action plan. It has been prepared to have clear synergies with the county-wide framework, building on the workstreams and key themes identified within, to identify directions of travel and key early tasks.
- 4.12 At this stage the Draft Framework is quite deliberately not getting into too much detail. This means we are able to better engage with our communities on the issues at hand, and avoid making rash decisions on action without adequately thinking through the secondary and unintended consequences and potential co-benefits that might be possible. Having said this, and in response to comments raised by the Climate Change Member Working Group (minutes attached) and Scrutiny Committee (draft minutes can be circulated ahead of Executive), the Framework has been strengthened to include an up-front list of commitments to immediate action that can reasonably be taking place alongside production of the strategy and action plan. The SWT Framework and subsequent Plan will be an iterative, "live" document that will need to evolve as actions and projects develop and our understanding of issues and risks improves.
- 4.13 The Framework sets a level of ambition but does not commit the Council to deliver on any specific task or to any specific actions at present, beyond those identified near the front of the document. It does, however, give an idea of where we think things need to head and some ideas about early tasks that might be necessary to get things started. Some of these tasks will be for us as a Council to take forward, some might be for others. Importantly, the Framework makes it clear that success in delivering on our carbon neutrality and climate resilience targets is dependent on garnering wider public and partner support and ownership of the Plan and actions/projects arising. The Council cannot, should not and will not be able to be responsible for everything, but will look to deliver, support and enable a range of actions as a facilitator.
- 4.14 In order to develop the Framework, the Council's Climate Change Programme Board (consisting of Brendan Cleere as Head of Function / Senior Responsible Officer, Erica Lake as PMO, Robert Downes as Programme Manager and Graeme Thompson as Strategy Specialist) has enlisted the support of key officers with relevant expertise around the Council to act as workstream leads. These workstream leads have played a vital part in developing thoughts around each of the workstreams to feed into this Framework. These workstream leads will act as the main officer-level conduit between the county-wide workstream groups and our own workstream action plan and project development.
- 4.15 The Draft Framework document has been considered by both the Climate Change Member Working Group and Scrutiny Committee. It has subsequently been amended and the draft attached for endorsement by Executive Committee takes account of relevant and appropriate comments by the Working Group and Scrutiny. The Working



Group will continue to play a key role in shaping the action plans and projects for the Draft Strategy and Plan.

- 4.16 If any further non-substantive amendments arise through discussion at Executive Committee or minor textual or visual issues are identified otherwise ahead of publication for consultation, then we will work on the assumption that such minor amendments can be made by officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder. This includes fleshing out and including the consultation details in the “What’s next?” section of the document.
- 4.17 Once the Framework has been endorsed by Executive Committee, we will embark on a period of engagement and consultation centred around themes identified in Framework document. This may include business and community roadshow events across the district as well as school and college events and direct stakeholder engagement to ensure that the Draft Plan is well informed by the views and experiences of our communities and to raise awareness of the need for action and how we are working to co-ordinate this. Officers are working on detailed arrangements and materials (e.g. a short format summary leaflet) for these engagement and consultation events and will seek input from the Member Working Group as appropriate.

#### What’s next?

- 4.18 A Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy and Draft SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan will be produced following the period of consultation and engagement on the framework documents. Produced in February 2020, these documents will take account of the feedback from consultation and engagement activities referred to above and set out our first draft of the county-wide Strategy and SWT action plan themselves.
- 4.19 In order to fit with Member expectations to deliver a “final” Somerset-wide Strategy and SWT Plan by Summer 2020, it is important to streamline the process between now and the final documents being approved by the Councils. However, it is important that the final documents are adequately informed by public consultation. On this basis, it is recommended that responsibility to agree and endorse the Draft documents in February 2020 is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change – Cllr Peter Pilkington in consultation with the Climate Change Member Working Group (for the SWT Plan) and the Joint Task and Finish Group (for the Somerset-wide Strategy). This avoids the need for the Draft documents to come back through each individual council Scrutiny and Cabinet / Executive Committees, thereby saving six to eight weeks whilst retaining member scrutiny and oversight through the agreed governance arrangements.
- 4.20 The final Strategy and Plan will be considered by the Member Working Group, Joint Task and Finish Group, Scrutiny and Executive alongside consultation responses ahead of adoption by Full Council.

## **5 Links to Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 Development of the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy and SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan will have links into all of the newly approved Corporate Strategy themes in one way or another. However they will directly complement the “Our Environment and Economy” theme of the newly approved Corporate Strategy, with the objective to work towards making our District carbon neutral by 2030 embedded within that theme. These Framework documents set out the

first steps on how we will work towards this target.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 In February, SWT committed £25k of budget for 2019/20 to support development of a climate strategy/action plan and early project delivery. Of this, £10k has been committed to support the development of the county-wide strategy; largely to permit the Strategic Management Group to access appropriate external expertise, including execution of the consultation plan.
- 6.2 All authorities have already committed considerable resource to development of the county-wide framework to date and, as a result of our activity so far, it is becoming apparent that future development would be better served by securing county-wide project management expertise. This is likely to incur an additional cost but will be supported by a detailed costing plan and brought forward for approval through appropriate channels.
- 6.3 The SWT Framework identifies a number of key early tasks and commitments. Some of these will be for the Council to take forward, some of which are part of operational plans already, some of which will be in addition.
- 6.4 Precise budgets for specific tasks and projects are not possible to establish in detail at this stage. However, the principle of earmarking an initial sum in the 2020/21 budget to support delivery of the Council's climate change commitment has been identified and will be subject to further discussion as part of the budget setting process. Budget setting for specific projects and commitments will be refined alongside approval and implementation of the final strategy, from July 2020 onwards.
- 6.5 To date, work developing the Framework documents, initial workstream briefs, and setting up programme management and governance arrangements has been carried out by approximately 2.6 FTE, spread across 11 different officers. The next phase of developing up the action plans and projects for inclusion in the Draft and Final documents will require inputs from a wider range of officers. Some of this will be part of business as usual, some things will be additional tasks. On this basis it is important to recognise the importance of the fact that the SWT Plan will be a "live" and iterative document that evolves over time, and it will not be possible to identify every single action and project that will be required in the time allowed. However, this model will ensure that climate action begins to permeate business as usual across all functions of the Council, rather than being the preserve of a single specialist officer.
- 6.6 As we move towards finalising and ultimately delivering action plans and projects, this will inevitably in some cases lead to further financial and resource implications, however, these will be dealt with separately nearer the time.

## **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications to consider at this stage. This will be reviewed as we move from the current Framework documents to a more detailed strategy and action plan in 2020.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications**

- 8.1 Development of the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy, together with SWT's own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan are integral to setting out how we

respond to the climate emergency and how we can achieve our target of carbon neutrality.

8.2 There may be emissions associated with communities travelling to consultation events including the proposed Summits – officers will seek to embed the need to reduce the need to travel and facilitate sustainable travel into the planning of these events and their location.

8.3 There are also potential emissions and impacts associated with production of consultation materials – as such, the majority of materials will be delivered online, with paper copies of the Framework itself limited to communal copies in libraries and made available purely on request or where necessary due to specific needs.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

9.1 There may be a need for SWT officers to visit schools and otherwise engage with young people through consultation events, specific details of which are still being worked out. Any proposals and any subsequent staff interaction with young people will follow safe working practices.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 There are no specific implications at this stage. However, as the strategy, action plans and projects are developed and implemented, there will be a need to fully consider the equality and diversity implications in relation to them. The Framework refers to the need to achieve a ‘just transition’, and this will form an important part of the strategy, action plan and project development.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

11.1 Developing our response to the climate emergency will link heavily with social value. The Framework explains the concept of ‘co-benefits’ and their importance within developing the strategy, action plan and projects.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

12.1 This Framework has, and the subsequent Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy will be developed in partnership with the four other Somerset local authorities as well as other key stakeholders. There are obvious challenges associated with partnership working, however, project oversight by the Strategic Management Group, Joint Task and Finish Group, Joint Cabinet / Portfolio Holders Group and Leaders and Chief Executives seeks to minimise and mitigate issues as they may arise.

12.2 There will be a need for much more and stronger partnership working with other bodies, businesses and our communities in order to develop and deliver on the strategy.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 Developing our response to the climate emergency will link heavily with health and wellbeing. The Framework explains the concept of ‘co-benefits’ and their importance within developing the strategy, action plan and projects. It also specifically singles out public health as a priority focus for all workstreams.

## **14 Asset Management Implications**

14.1 The Framework implies that the strategy will need to consider ways to improve and build on opportunities presented by land and assets within our ownership. For instance, the energy workstream identifies potentially exploring use of council owned land for renewable energy generation. Further specific implications may arise as the strategy, action plans and projects are developed.

**15 Data Protection Implications**

15.1 All consultation and engagement on the Framework will pay due regard to the GDPR and ensure that a Data Protection Impact Assessment is completed where necessary.

**16 Consultation Implications**

16.1 Consultation and engagement on the Framework will directly feed into production of a Draft Strategy.

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny Committee – Yes**
- **Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:**  **Once only**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework
Appendix B	Draft SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan – v.2
Appendix C	Minutes of the Climate Change Member Working Group – 30/09/2019

**Contact Officers**

Name	Graeme Thompson	Name	Brendan Cleere
Direct Dial	01823 219504	Direct Dial	07816 277404
Email	G.Thompson@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk	Email	b.cleere@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

## **Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework**

### Table of Contents

1: Introduction .....	2
2: The Declarations .....	2
3: Contextualising Climate Change .....	3
3.1: Global .....	3
3.2: United Kingdom .....	3
3.3: Somerset .....	3
3.4: Net Emissions in Somerset.....	4
3.4a: Emissions.....	4
3.4b: Sequestration.....	5
4: The Climate Emergency Strategy Scope .....	5
5: Opportunities.....	6
6: Challenges to Delivery.....	7
7: Strategy Development .....	8
8: The Workstreams.....	9
8.1: Workstream Function .....	9
8.2: Built Environment .....	10
8.3: Energy .....	11
8.4: Farming and Food .....	13
8.5: Industry, Business and Supply Chain .....	15
8.6: Natural Environment .....	16
8.7: Transport.....	18
8.8: Waste .....	19
8.9: Water .....	21
8.10: Communications and Engagement.....	22
9: Climate Emergency Strategy Delivery.....	24
10: References .....	26
11: Appendix .....	29

## **1: Introduction**

This framework document has been produced by the five Somerset Local Authorities (Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton District Council, and South Somerset District Council). It aims to summarise and outline the work currently co-ordinated by the Local Authorities to meet our targets for carbon neutrality. A brief account of the current situation in Somerset and issues associated with climate change is provided, highlighting why we are undertaking this work.

This framework is intended to spark a conversation with our communities, interest groups, businesses and other relevant stakeholders in order to generate true community engagement and strategy co-development, ensuring that everyone in Somerset feels a sense of ownership of the full Climate Emergency Strategy and the actions that arise from it. This initial document will provide some high-level detail explaining the expected directions of travel required to address the various issues that have been identified. However, it is essential that the detailed Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plans derived from it are informed by listening to the communities that will be affected by any changes, whilst we learn from initiatives, projects and actions already planned and implemented within our communities. The final Climate Emergency Strategy produced by this work will not simply be a Council document; it will be recognised and owned by everyone in Somerset and be held as a collective response to the Climate Emergency.

The Climate Emergency Strategy will contain more detailed analysis of the changes required for Somerset to become carbon neutral and increase resilience to the risks posed by climate change locally. The Strategy will aim to detail programmes and projects to address these issues, with estimated costs, carbon emissions reductions and cost-benefit analysis included. Actions will be split over short-, medium- and long-term timescales to enable prioritisation and effective planning.

Individual Local Authorities will produce Action Plans supplementing the Climate Emergency Strategy. These Action Plans will specifically identify how the overall Strategy is relevant to each district, how projects will be delivered and funded, and detail the response to area-specific issues. To maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the mitigation and adaptation responses implemented by the Local Authorities, these Action Plans will be dynamic and flexible in nature, continuously adapting to the most up to date evidence, methodologies, funding sources and ideas. Engaging with communities throughout the life-cycle of these Action Plans will be essential as the Plans evolve to meet new challenges or opportunities.

## **2: The Declarations**

In 2019, the five Somerset Local Authorities passed resolutions to declare or recognise 'Climate Emergencies' and have since agreed to collaborate to produce and deliver an ambitious, joint Climate Emergency Strategy encompassing the county of Somerset.

Each declaration is slightly different, but all aspire to achieving carbon neutrality and ensuring that we are adapted to the effects of climate change within each administrative area. The appendix contains the individual motions of each Council in full.

### **3: Contextualising Climate Change**

#### **3.1: Global**

A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report highlights the importance of taking immediate action to limit global warming to a 1.5°C threshold, compared to temperatures from the pre-industrial period<sup>1</sup>. Whilst achieving this limit is a challenge, requiring 'rapid and far-reaching transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport and cities' to meet the required net-zero carbon emissions targets, it is certainly possible and requires action to meet these targets immediately<sup>1</sup>.

The risks associated with missing this 1.5°C threshold are significant: global warming reaching 2°C has considerable implications for sea level rise, Arctic Ocean sea ice coverage, and prevalence of extreme weather, whilst 99% of all coral reefs would be lost<sup>1</sup>.

#### **3.2: United Kingdom**

In response to the IPCC report, the Committee on Climate Change (the UK Government's independent advisor on Climate Change) published *Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming*<sup>2</sup>, which suggested that the UK should set a national target for carbon neutrality by 2050, and recommended numerous 'core', 'further ambition' and 'speculative' options, policy changes and projects for the UK to pursue. Since then, the UK Government has declared a climate emergency and set a legally binding target for carbon neutrality in 2050 through amendments to the Climate Change Act<sup>3</sup>. However, Government policy continues to lag behind this target and the recommendations of the CCC.

Nationally, the UK has reportedly made significant progress, reducing emissions by approximately 40% since 1990. However, the majority of progress derives from changes made in the power, waste and industry sectors. Key sectors, such as the built environment and transport, have made little progress – transport emissions have remained steady with little reduction since 1990. The importance of achieving net-zero carbon emissions is highlighted within legislation; the UK's 2050 net zero target is legally binding<sup>3</sup> and offers an opportunity for the UK to be an exemplar case study in inspiring other countries to legislate for and meet ambitious carbon neutrality targets.

#### **3.3: Somerset**

The tangible impacts of climate change will be particularly visible in Somerset. Due to the topography of the region, rising sea levels will significantly impact coastal flooding in low-lying regions such as the Somerset Levels and Moors, whilst increases in extreme weather events will increase river and surface water flood risk. Coastal communities are likely to become more vulnerable to coastal erosion and shoreline retreat.

Additionally, temperatures are likely to increase in excess of the global average. Even if the global temperature increase is limited to 2°C, Somerset is likely to experience temperature change higher than this<sup>4</sup>. The latest projections (UK Climate Projections 18, produced by the Met Office) indicate that summers will be hotter, with increases by 3.7°C to 6.8°C, depending on how carbon emissions are managed, by 2070<sup>5</sup>. Hot spells, defined as consecutive days reaching temperatures in excess of 30°C, will increase in likelihood by almost 20 times<sup>5</sup>. This increases risk to drought, heat-waves, water stress and pressures to existing water infrastructure, which can become major issues disproportionately impacting those most

vulnerable in society. Current rates of heat-related mortality reach around 2,000 premature deaths per year; by 2020 this figure could increase to 3,400 and approach 11,000 in 2080<sup>6</sup>.

Ensuring local businesses are prepared for these projected climatic changes is important to consider for Somerset, due to the prevalence of small-medium sized enterprises in the region. If implemented incorrectly, a transition to a greener economy more resilient to the impacts of climate change could harm the most vulnerable in society. In order to avoid this, bottom-up engagement and co-development is essential to ensure a fair transition and provide adequate support, up-skilling and re-training for the necessary workforces at risk where industry is required to adjust to meet emissions reductions targets.

Changes to the natural environment, driven by increases to temperature and precipitation profiles, can mean existing ecosystems are vulnerable to die-back or different pest species; ensuring that the rich biodiversity found in our landscapes is preserved is of considerable importance. These changes will impact farming and agriculture, and so developing detailed and evidence-based strategies to mitigate these impacts and provide support to farmers within the industry is important.

### **3.4: Net Emissions in Somerset**

Work has been undertaken to baseline the current net carbon emissions picture within Somerset. Quantifying both emissions and sequestration in the present-day is fundamental to evidence-based strategy development. Understanding sources of emissions in each district is important due to both the geographical and demographical variation within Somerset and a singular action plan is unlikely to be successful. Highlighting key areas of focus to identify maximum benefits and prioritisation of areas for concentration will increase the success of the Strategy and relies upon accurate baselining and monitoring of changes implemented.

#### **3.4a: Emissions**

In 2017, a total of 3,285 kt (kilotons) of CO<sub>2</sub> were emitted in Somerset<sup>7</sup> from industrial, domestic and transport-related sources. For context, a kiloton of carbon is emitted by 200 average cars in 1 year. In fact, the majority of emissions in Somerset derive from the transport sector - 46.7%, compared to 29.5% from industry and 23.8% from the domestic sector.

The relative contributions of each sector vary by Local Authority: in Sedgemoor, 54.1% of emissions derive from transport (with the majority of these sourced from the M5 motorway), compared to only 38.6% of emissions in Mendip. For this reason, specific analysis of emissions sources within each overall sector is required.

Whilst the dataset used to calculate emissions at a high-level separates data at an overall District level, utilising other sources can provide a more detailed picture of emissions sources in Somerset. For example, using the Energy Performance of Buildings database<sup>8</sup>, emissions produced by individual houses can be analysed. Work going into further detail will be carried out by the Energy and Built Environment workstreams.

Calculating emissions produced by industries and businesses is more difficult, primarily due to emissions from their supply chains. Not all emissions have to be disclosed by businesses to the public, so there is a lack of data available online to assess the emissions of individual



organisations. The Industry, Business and Supply Chain workstream will work to assess these emissions.

### **3.4b: Sequestration**

Carbon sequestration is the natural process of capturing and storing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. Long term storage of CO<sub>2</sub> through plants, soils and geological formations can mitigate the effects of climate change by offsetting carbon emissions produced by human activity.

Using data from the National Forest Inventory (NFI) it was calculated that approximately 66.1 kt of CO<sub>2</sub> is removed from the atmosphere each year by trees in Somerset<sup>9</sup>. This is equivalent to the domestic emissions of Sedgemoor alone – the lowest contributor to domestic emissions in Somerset – or 2.0% of the total emissions produced directly within Somerset in 2017 alone<sup>8</sup>.

Data from the NFI is updated annually, meaning any changes to tree cover can be tracked and monitored. It is important to note that sequestration rates vary between different tree species and age of trees – the figure provided is an estimate but gives a simple foundation for tracking the progress of Somerset to carbon neutrality. In comparison to the emissions produced in Somerset, the total volume of CO<sub>2</sub> removed is relatively low; this highlights the importance of emissions reduction at the source, rather than prioritising offsetting, which supports the foundational concept of the Strategy to take direct action to reduce total emissions and in situations where this is not possible, offset emissions.

Additional work will be undertaken by relevant workstreams to quantify the net sequestration rates of crops, hedgerows and soils (such as peatlands). Specific research is required due to the variation in management practices used by farms contributing to different net emissions totals.

## **4: The Climate Emergency Strategy Scope**

The Climate Emergency Strategy, co-ordinated by the Somerset County and District Councils in conjunction with relevant partners, will identify ways in which Somerset could become carbon neutral by 2030. This will undoubtedly include overcoming a number of issues that will require legislative change and we will actively lobby for the necessary amendments to legislation to be implemented. For the purposes of this Strategy, carbon neutrality is defined as:

*'Carbon neutrality, or having a net zero carbon footprint, refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset'<sup>10</sup>*

The primary objective for the Strategy will be to identify ways that carbon emissions can be directly reduced or avoided. Offsetting and sequestration of emissions will be supplementary actions for situations where direct reduction is not possible, reasonable or cost-effective. It is important to note the distinction between *carbon neutrality* (the aim of the Strategy) and *zero carbon*; emissions will be reduced as much as feasibly possible, but any remaining emissions will be offset to the same quantum.

In this regard, the Strategy will uphold 'responsible research and innovation principles'<sup>11</sup>; offsetting of emissions will be implemented as close to the emissions source as possible. This

will increase the local relevance of the projects undertaken, whilst increasing the likelihood of adequately managing the primary and secondary impacts and effects of delivery.

As well as working to reduce emissions, the Strategy will identify the adaptations required to ensure Somerset is resilient to predicted environmental changes induced by climate change, such as increased temperatures, more varied precipitation profiles, extreme weather events and sea level rise. Secondary impacts associated with these changes, such as increased pest prevalence impacting the natural environment, will be also be identified, evaluated and mitigated within the Strategy.

## **5: Opportunities**

Immediately taking proactive steps to mitigate and adapt to these inevitable changes can offer numerous opportunities to improve the local communities we live in and living standards for all in Somerset. Projects and proposals can provide significant socio-economic, non-environmental 'co-benefits' and reduce costs to society in other places whilst contributing to increased standards of living of all residents of Somerset.

For example, changes implemented to reduce emissions from transport contribute to many health co-benefits, which can reduce healthcare costs and improve the quality of life for many – increasing rates of cycling or walking can contribute to reductions in heart disease rates or obesity-related risks and lower rates of urban and noise pollution<sup>12</sup>; whilst transport systems prioritising rapid transit can improve access for vulnerable groups improving equality and access to healthcare<sup>12</sup>.

Similarly, whilst tree-planting schemes are intended to increase the rate and volume of CO<sub>2</sub> removed from the atmosphere via natural sequestration, increasing tree coverage in urban areas can deliver public and mental health benefits for residents in the communities as well as serving to improve biodiversity in urban or natural regions.

Within the energy sector, actions intended to reduce reliance on fossil fuels or decrease energy consumption have numerous associated co-benefits. Construction of community renewable energy generation and storage projects can provide greater energy security, lower energy bills, revenue opportunities as well as jobs for both local communities and the wider region. Delivery of retrofit schemes, intended to reduce energy consumption and increase energy efficiency within domestic or other buildings, can contribute to reductions to energy bills and fuel poverty rates whilst decreasing health concerns associated with cold and damp homes for those in vulnerable communities.

Whilst the Climate Emergency Strategy will primarily focus on climate change and its associated impacts, delivery of projects intended to reduce carbon emissions or adapt to predicted changes are likely to have co-benefits relevant to other environmental issues. Issues relating to single-use plastic consumption, biodiversity and health and well-being of local communities are not the primary focus of the Strategy. However, in some situations individual workstreams may develop responses, action plans and projects relevant to these areas where there is a significant overlap with climate change and clear opportunities to meet the primary objectives of carbon neutrality and adaptation are present.

Although initial costs of project implementation may be high, it is undoubtable that these costs are minimal compared to those that will be incurred if a 'business as usual' approach is continued. For example, the 2013-2014 winter floods cost Somerset up to £147.5 million with £20 million to residential property alone<sup>13</sup> – climate change will increase both the frequency and severity of flooding, making similar events more likely in the region. Taking proactive steps to adapt to the impacts of climate change can considerably reduce these costs derived from flooding alone; long-term impacts to the economy associated with other changes, such as drought or reductions to water quality, can also be avoided.

## **6: Challenges to Delivery**

Whilst the direct contribution of the five Local Authorities to Somerset's total emissions has not yet been calculated it is likely to be a small proportion overall. Work commissioned by Manchester City Council indicated that they only produce 3% of the total emissions within their administrative area<sup>14</sup>. The immediate influence that we have in reducing the net emissions of Somerset is limited to internal infrastructure or contracts, such as making changes to the estates owned by the Authorities or to services delivered, supplied and procured.

However, the policies, strategies and other regulatory powers of the Authorities can influence reductions to net emissions externally across Somerset. For example, planning policies setting carbon reduction targets for new developments can influence the emissions picture county-wide as opposed to continuing a business as usual approach. In addition, the role that the Local Authorities play in encouraging action by stakeholders, businesses, partners or communities that can directly reduce emissions themselves is essential. By working with an array of groups, the Local Authorities can empower, encourage and support the strategic actions required by these parties to achieve carbon neutrality and act as a catalyst towards a carbon neutral Somerset. This underlines why it is essential to build consensus and ensure everyone in Somerset feels a sense of ownership of the Strategy and in delivery of its actions.

Other challenges associated with delivery are less simple to overcome. The composition of Somerset, in both environment and demographics, can add to difficulties associated with delivery. For example, whilst the beauty of the natural environment and rurality of the region makes Somerset a special place to live, reducing emissions from the transport sector is less simple than in an urbanised city region with a more concentrated, less dispersed population. In total, there are 6,604km (4,104 miles) of roads in the county with a total of 4.31 billion miles travelled in 2018<sup>15</sup>; whilst urban centres like Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater are well connected, accessibility is an issue in rural areas due to the limited local road network located in regions like the Mendip Hills or Exmoor. Additionally, the presence of the arterial roads spanning Somerset (M5 and A303) contributes to a large proportion of transport emissions with journeys not necessarily originating or terminating within the county – 26% of Somerset's total transport emissions derive from the M5 alone<sup>15</sup>.

Furthermore, the abundance of protected landscapes, such as Exmoor National Park and the four Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), add to the natural capital within Somerset, yet may prove problematic when identifying areas suitable for renewable energy generation and storage or climate change adaptation projects.

Initial scoping work has highlighted the need for retrofit or replacement of a large proportion of existing domestic and commercial buildings in Somerset to improve energy efficiency, decarbonise heat and power, and ensure buildings are resilient to the impacts of climate change. To meet the national net-zero target it is estimated that 27 million properties across the UK will require deep retrofit by 2050; this equates to 20,000 properties per week, yet currently only 20,000 per year are in receipt of energy efficiency measures<sup>16</sup>. The lack of disposable income and prevalence of fuel poverty in some of our communities, as well as the limited opportunities for Local Authorities to influence existing properties, presents more barriers to project implementation.

With the current economic climate and lack of resources available for Local Authorities to deliver projects or infrastructure change, prioritising resource allocation is essential. Due to the limited availability of funds, identifying opportunities providing the optimal cost-benefit (e.g. carbon emissions savings per £) is essential and requires in-depth analysis. Producing an extensive evidence-base will enable the Local Authorities to prioritise where resources are concentrated and ensure optimal projects are delivered in Somerset.

This issue is made worse by the national policy gap - to reach net-zero emissions for the UK as a whole, further legislation and strategy needs to be delivered to prioritise investment and provide funding to enable delivery of the extensive projects required to achieve this target. In these circumstances, it will be most appropriate for the combined Local Authorities to lobby Central Government for increased national policy and action, funding, local regulatory powers, or all of the above. Identifying situations in which we will require further support – from stakeholders, Central Government, or other relevant parties – forms a crucial aspect of this work.

Overcoming these barriers will be important for the success of the Climate Emergency Strategy.

## **7: Strategy Development**

It is important that an overarching Strategy is developed to co-ordinate Somerset's response to the climate emergency and ensure actions are taken to achieve carbon neutrality. Without an aligned strategy, ad-hoc or piecemeal action is likely to result in higher costs, incompatible projects running in parallel, and potentially undesirable and/or unintended outcomes and consequences.

To produce the Strategy, we will collaborate with sector and industry experts to develop joint approaches in tackling climate change whilst sharing resources to maximise the benefits of projects implemented. Additionally, we will identify ways for the Local Authorities to assist businesses, industry, communities and individuals in making the necessary changes required for Somerset to achieve carbon neutrality, whilst ensuring that the most vulnerable within society are not disproportionately affected by these changes.

Traditionally 'co-developed' projects are more successful: we will be engaging with individuals, young people, the elderly, communities, interest groups, businesses and industry, educational institutions, wards, town and parish councils, and other relevant sectors. All sectors of society will have the opportunity to help us develop the strategic responses, action plans and projects

produced from this work. We will work with these groups to identify projects and proposals, and then provide support in assessing the wider benefits or unintended consequences of each action and assist in the delivery of projects.

Whilst the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy will include higher level actions and projects that are relevant across Somerset, all individual Authorities will supplement the Strategy with their own Action Plan. These will outline the necessary policies, projects and actions required to meet the strategic targets and identify resources required to enable the delivery of the Strategy. These will be dynamic and evolve as our evidence-base grows, ensuring that the most up-to-date projects are prioritised and funding opportunities identified.

## **8: The Workstreams**

### **8.1: Workstream Function**

Climate change will impact every aspect of society. To make the task more manageable, work will be separated into nine workstreams:

- Built Environment
- Energy
- Farming and Food
- Industry, Business and Supply Chain
- Natural Environment
- Transport
- Waste and Resource Management
- Water
- Communications and Engagement

Due to the co-benefits associated with project delivery, public health will be important for consideration by all workstreams and will be a priority focus for all workstreams, with health experts contributing to project research, development and implementation for all workstreams.

Each workstream will contain sector and subject-matter experts. They will:

- Research and prioritise key issues
- Develop mitigation and adaptation strategies
- Evaluate costs, benefits and unintended secondary consequences
- Work together where appropriate

Work has been undertaken to identify key areas for further research. These are presented as initial themes within this framework, but to ensure the success of the overall Climate Emergency Strategy wider stakeholder engagement and input is crucial to provide feedback and alternative ideas for consideration to the workstreams. We are keen to draw on ideas, expertise and enthusiasm from all to ensure that the actions to be delivered are appropriate and informed by a wide cross-section of the people and organisations of Somerset.

This research has highlighted some potential projects for delivery over short-, medium-, and long-term timescales. These, and other ideas emerging from engagement and consultation

events, will be explored and evaluated in further depth to ensure that the Strategy and Action Plans are evidence-based.

Actions taken intended to mitigate or adapt to climate change often come with co-benefits, defined as 'the positive effects that a policy or measure aimed at one objective might have on other objectives'<sup>17</sup>. In many cases, these can help to meet the statutory duties of Local Authorities and other public-sector bodies. Evaluating these co-benefits will support business cases and enable us to access increased funding. Also, it is true that climate change may not be a priority for everyone in Somerset – by identifying the co-benefits, we can clarify how action taken to address the climate emergency can improve other aspects of life in Somerset<sup>18</sup>.

The broad range of stakeholders identified for engagement, as well as experts included within each workstream, will ensure that the views, ideas and concerns of relevant parties are considered and accounted for within the Strategy.

## **8.2: Built Environment**

32% of the UK's emissions derive from the business and residential sectors<sup>19</sup>, and 45% of energy use occurs in houses, offices, shops and public buildings<sup>20</sup>. In Somerset in 2017, total domestic emissions are greater than the national county average (783 kt CO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> compared to 539 kt CO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>), although domestic emissions per capita are comparable to the national county average<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore, minimising and decarbonising energy consumption in buildings will be crucial to meeting carbon neutrality targets by 2030. Through planning, local authorities have the power to influence location and type of development, materials used in construction, carbon reduction, building design and low carbon and renewable energy generation in relation to new development. However, the majority of buildings that will be standing by 2030 and beyond to 2050 are likely to have already been built and influencing how these are retrofitted and improved is more complex.

Both new developments and existing buildings and communities will need to be resilient to projected climatic changes.

### **Theme 1: New Developments**

The workstream will explore ways to ensure that new developments reduce carbon emissions. This can include minimising the need to travel, reducing energy consumption of homes and businesses, facilitating low carbon and renewable energy generation, encouraging sustainable behaviours, and ensure that they are adapted to the projected future climate of Somerset.

Initial directions of travel for this workstream are to:

- Identify opportunities to ensure that all new residential and commercial developments consider sustainable travel and transport links to lessen the impact of the scheme.
- Ensure that all new developments consider projected climatic changes and encourage planners to incorporate sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS), urban trees, and waste management.

- Highlight building designs that reduce the carbon footprint throughout the life cycle of homes and work towards all buildings achieving zero carbon accreditation as soon as possible.
- Review the effectiveness of existing planning policies against minimum standards for new housing development and identify opportunities to improve the delivery of those policies. This is likely to include the requirement to lobby Central Government to improve minimum building regulation and energy performance criteria, as well as implement changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **Theme 2: Existing Buildings and Communities**

Whilst changes to planning policy improving the efficiency and resilience of buildings are essential to ensure that future developments are fit for the climate future, many improvements to the performance of existing buildings are required. Identifying priority buildings or communities, as well as projects intended to deliver improvement, is essential. Overcoming the issue of funding is likely the primary barrier to delivery of wide-scale changes across Somerset; lobbying Central Government for increased investment will be required.

This workstream will:

- Identify sources of funding, investment or subsidy for retrofit opportunities, in conjunction with the Energy workstream.
- Highlight priority buildings and communities requiring retrofit or improvements to resilience and develop high-level strategies for delivering the required changes. This will include specific focus on council-owned buildings and retained housing stock to ensure the Local Authorities set an example within Somerset, as well as identifying opportunities to incentivise and enable change in privately-owned properties.
- Explore the potential to simplify, encourage and de-risk action to deliver retrofit to existing buildings and communities via planning or other means.

### **8.3: Energy**

Somerset has significant potential for renewable energy generation, ranking highly in both a national and European context. In 2017, Somerset possessed installed renewable energy capacity of 506MW, of which 90% was attributable to photovoltaic technology<sup>22</sup> – but there is still a considerable amount of untapped renewable energy source. Increasing total renewable energy capacity and generation is crucial to meet carbon neutrality targets, yet changing the source of energy supply exerts significant pressure on the electricity grid. However, implementation of renewable energy technologies can contribute to a range of societal benefits, including: socio-economic development; increased energy access; a more secure energy supply and a reduction to negative environmental and health impacts associated with large-scale combustion of fossil fuels<sup>23</sup>.

37% of UK emissions derive from heating<sup>24</sup>; reducing end-user emissions totals, via retrofit and improvements to insulation, is important – yet only a start. Decarbonising heat, via innovative solutions such as decentralised heat networks or implementation of hydrogen or biogas technologies to green the gas grid, is cited as being essential to meet zero-carbon targets by 2050<sup>25</sup>. Whilst potentially difficult to implement in Somerset, due to the rurality and prevalence

of fuel poverty in some regions, developing projects that can overcome these barriers is crucial to meet the aspirations of carbon neutrality by 2030.

### **Theme 1: Reducing and Shifting Energy Demand**

Working with the Built Environment workstream, opportunities will need to be identified to reduce energy consumption within buildings in Somerset. This will include delivering retrofit projects to improve the performance of existing building stock whilst working to increase minimum energy standards and requirements for planning proposals to reduce energy consumption in new developments.

Priority tasks for this workstream are to:

- Identify existing houses or communities with high energy consumption and develop strategies to overcome these issues via retrofit.
- Research and develop mapping of identify existing/ potential major heat sources or loads.
- Liaise with planning departments and developers to produce a uniform, Somerset-wide approach to reducing energy consumption and increasing energy efficiency in new developments.

### **Theme 2: Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Technologies**

The workstream will develop a co-ordinated strategy to increase the prevalence of low carbon technologies and renewable energy generation and storage in Somerset. Reducing emissions derived from heating in the domestic, industrial and commercial sectors will require development of decarbonised heat infrastructure. Working with relevant stakeholders - such as the Built Environment working group, energy providers and developers - opportunities identified by this workstream are likely to positively influence public health and reduce the impacts of fuel poverty on top of reducing carbon emissions.

This will include:

- Liaising with local community groups and relevant stakeholders to overcome issues relating to capital investment and grid infrastructure.
- Lobbying Central Government to incentivise uptake of such technologies, like photovoltaic energy generation or electric vehicle infrastructure and to change national policy to release the potential for onshore wind.
- Identifying sites suitable for renewable energy generation and storage projects.
- Explore opportunities for low carbon technology, like electric vehicle infrastructure or projects intended to decarbonise heat production, across Somerset.

### **Theme 3: Own Estate and Operations**

Whilst influencing external parties to minimise energy usage and carbon emissions may be difficult for Local Authorities, the ability to reduce internal emissions derived from estates and operations is more significant as direct action can be taken to increase the efficiency of internal infrastructure. The workstream will identify how to cost-effectively implement these proposals and then develop business cases ready for project implementation.

The workstream will:



- Explore utilising council owned land to generate renewable or low carbon energies to decrease reliance on fossil fuels and generate revenue for alternative climate-related projects.
- Develop an Energy Policy and Energy Management Plan for each Local Authority to minimise energy waste, mitigate future energy price rises and ensure responsible stewardship of public money.
- Initiate internal communications campaign to encourage best practice by staff and highlight the exemplar actions taken by the Local Authorities to external businesses and organisations.
- Identify current and historic activity implemented by Local Authorities and promote upscaling of similar projects county-wide.
- When contracts allow, look to collaborative procurement strategies in purchasing energy from renewable sources.

#### **8.4: Farming and Food**

The agricultural industry will be significantly impacted by climate change. Rising temperatures, rainfall patterns and variations to atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations will impact operations and productivity, as well as pest prevalence, within the UK<sup>26</sup>. Impacts to global food production could influence UK markets and the food industry<sup>27</sup>.

With the considerable importance of agriculture to Somerset's economy and livelihood of many residents, ensuring the sector remains resilient to these predicted climatic changes will be an important aspect of the Climate Emergency Strategy.

Working to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector will contribute to mitigating some of the impacts of climate change. The IPCC have highlighted the importance of reducing red meat and dairy consumption<sup>28</sup> and encouraged a transition to the consumption of more fruit and vegetables. However, we recognise the importance of agriculture within Somerset and the fact that the carbon efficiency of British farms is amongst the best in the world<sup>29</sup>; ensuring there is a balance between responsible consumption and prioritising locally sourced, high quality produce will be carefully considered within our Strategy.

The contribution of agriculture to the total emissions of the UK has been recognised by industry and sector experts, such as agricultural trade bodies or the NFU, and pathways to making the industry carbon neutral (e.g. via responsible land management practices and further reductions in emissions from livestock) have been identified<sup>30</sup>.

#### **Theme 1: Reducing Net Emissions**

Net greenhouse gas emissions can vary significantly between farms, dependent on many factors. Variations to land usage or management practices, such as quantity, timing or type of fertiliser used by arable farms or type of feedstock used for livestock on pastoral farms, can greatly influence total emissions production by a farm. Often, changes made to management practices intended to reduce the net emissions are more cost-effective than existing practices and come with associated economic benefits for farmers.

To work towards reducing the net emissions of farms in Somerset, this workstream will begin to:

- Identify and increase awareness surrounding best practice relating to emissions for both arable and pastoral farms.
- Explore opportunities to incentivise or provide subsidy to encourage best practice for both arable and pastoral farms.
- Produce a baseline for the net emissions picture of Somerset to monitor progress and identify optimal project delivery.

### **Theme 2: Carbon Storage**

By conserving and enhancing naturally existing hedgerows, woodlands or carbon-rich soils, and improving land management practices, higher volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> can be removed from the atmosphere. To encourage these changes, incentivising positive practices relating to carbon storage, via ecosystem service payments or similar schemes, may be required.

This workstream will:

- Explore methods to incentivise farmers to implement positive management practices.
- Identify restoration schemes, such as peatland or wetland restoration projects, to increase carbon storage, in conjunction with the Natural Environment workstream.
- Increase awareness of more innovative land management practices, such as silvopasture, intended to increase carbon sequestration and storage rates.

### **Theme 3: Climate Change Adaptation**

Many existing agricultural strategies, including crop selection and management, are not well adapted to predicted climatic changes, such as increased temperatures, variations to weather patterns and increasing prevalence of extreme events like floods and droughts. Improving the resilience of existing farmland ecosystems is important to minimise impacts of climate change and provides opportunities to enhance crop productivity. Additionally, changes to the climate are predicted to increase the prevalence and biodiversity of pest species. Co-benefits associated with the delivery of projects, intended to increase preparedness for the impacts of climate change, include supporting pollinator species and biodiversity.

In order to assist farmers in adapting to these changes, this workstream will:

- Model current farmland ecosystem and specific crop responses to climatic changes and classify regions by vulnerability.
- Identify crop species and management strategies that are adapted to predicted climatic changes and suitable for implementation within Somerset.
- Develop a strategy to implement and deliver 'ecosystem resilience improvement' projects.
- Develop education strategies to highlight the economic and environmental benefits associated with transitioning to more resilient management practices.

### **Theme 4: Food Consumption**

Reducing the demand for high-emissions livestock products has been highlighted as significantly important by both the IPCC<sup>31</sup> and CCC<sup>32</sup>. Increasing awareness surrounding the issues associated with carbon intensive products, such as beef or dairy, can lead to more balanced consumption practices and reduced environmental impacts. Eating more balanced diets can contribute to positive health impacts. Encouraging consumers to select locally sourced, ethically produced products, with lower carbon footprints - as opposed to foreign meat or dairy - can decrease the carbon footprint associated with the sector with a less radical change than eliminating meat or dairy products entirely.

Initial directions of travel for this workstream will be to:

- Produce education and engagement strategies highlighting the impacts of high-carbon food production and consumption, and suggest alternative foods with lower carbon footprints.
- Identify opportunities to reduce high-carbon food consumption within the respective Local Authority workplaces and operations.
- Encourage reductions to high-carbon food consumption externally within the wider community.

### **8.5: Industry, Business and Supply Chain**

Industry and businesses in Somerset contribute to approximately 29.5% of Somerset's emissions. Whilst many organisations have taken steps to reduce their carbon footprint, exploring strategies to reduce supply chain emissions is cited as the next step to reduce emissions further and mitigate some of the impacts of climate change<sup>33</sup>. Supply chains can contain between 60-80% of greenhouse gas emissions associated with both the production and consumption of goods and services<sup>34,35</sup>.

Despite the potential direct and indirect benefits for businesses associated with demonstrating best practice and minimising supply chain emissions, legislation is identified as a key driver to enable pro-environmental behaviour within organisations<sup>36</sup>. Working to incentivise and increase awareness of the benefits associated these changes will drive changes in industries and businesses in Somerset.

Specific engagement strategies will be required in order to appeal to these organisations and ensure engagement of SMEs and larger groups in Somerset. Highlighting the co-benefits of taking steps to reduce carbon footprints, which are often economic in nature, will comprise an important part of the work carried out by this workstream.

### **Theme 1: Emissions Reduction and Stakeholder Engagement**

Due to the minimal influence the Local Authorities have in reducing the emissions of private sector bodies, we require specific strategies for engaging with industries and businesses to encourage net emissions reduction. These strategies will highlight the economic and financial benefits often associated with actions intended to mitigate impacts related to climate change.

To do this, the workstream will:

- Explore ways to reduce supply chain emissions for industry and businesses in Somerset whilst encouraging sustainable material manufacture, processing and usage.

- Encourage the transition by corporations, industries and businesses to renewable energy providers or generation of on-site renewable energy.
- Incentivise positive behaviour change and showcase examples of best practice within Somerset with an environmental awards scheme.
- Create a peer network for engagement and collaboration to share knowledge and best practice regarding the shift to a low carbon, clean growth economy.
- Provide support and platforms for knowledge sharing and feedback between businesses and industries in Somerset.
- Hold business-specific Climate Summits during Strategy consultation stages.

### **Theme 3: Data Collection and Analysis**

Whilst large amounts of data are available for assessing domestic emissions at a high resolution, data quantifying emissions produced by individual businesses and industries is not available publicly. In order to track the progress of businesses in Somerset toward carbon neutrality, additional monitoring of data will be required.

To overcome this barrier, the workstream will:

- Incorporate monitoring of progress on emissions into the Somerset Local Economic Assessment (LEA).
- Present this data on the new LEA website (called Somerset Trends) in order to ensure a centralised online data resource for partners to use and evaluate their own progress to reducing emissions.
- Design a generic methodology or 'toolkit' to assist businesses and industries in quantifying, and then reducing, supply chain emissions.

### **Theme 4: Business and Workforce Resilience to Climate Change**

Ensuring business and industry in Somerset remains resilient to the projected impacts of climate change is important for the local economy. Additionally, a change to a low carbon society or greener economy must be delivered fairly in order to ensure a 'just transition' and ensure workforce skills and employability are preserved.

In order to achieve these goals, the workstream will:

- Design research to better understand the local skills and employment challenges relating to the climate change agenda and shift to a low-carbon economy
- Identify employment in at-risk sectors or businesses and undertake a skills gap assessment
- Develop guidance for re-skilling for training providers and relevant support bodies.
- Highlight businesses or industry susceptible to the projected impacts of climate change and aid in developing mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of these impacts.

### **8.6: Natural Environment**

Projected meteorological changes as a result of climate change, such as warmer temperatures, increasing variability and intensity of precipitation and extreme weather events (like flooding and droughts)<sup>37</sup>, will exert pressure on ecosystems adapted to present-day conditions. Increasing the resilience of Somerset's Natural Environment to predicted impacts is essential

– yet should be a minimum requirement, due to the potential for innovative projects to provide emissions mitigation and cross-sector benefits.

### **Theme 1: Sequestration and Land Usage Change**

The workstream will explore opportunities to increase the volume of CO<sub>2</sub> removed from the atmosphere by trees and plants via sequestration, whilst ensuring that existing carbon stocks contained in the natural environment - such as in soils, peatlands and existing trees - are preserved and managed responsibly.

To achieve this, the workstream will:

- Identify and designate land classification scenarios to provide an evidence-base for what is required to achieve a zero-carbon county.
- Liaise with the Built Environment workstream to ensure new developments minimise impacts to the environment. For example, adapting planning policy to ensure new developments produce Environmental Net Gain of minimum thresholds (e.g. 20%). This could follow the case study of Manchester with a clear mitigation hierarchy.
- Embed Natural Capital consideration into all planning and major investment decisions to minimise the declining condition of Natural Capital assets.
- Support schemes to increase tree cover in Somerset, such as the Urban Tree Challenge Fund or the Parish Tree Policy produced by the Re-Imagining the Levels programme.
- Work to stop peat extraction and increase peat restoration schemes in Exmoor to restore wetlands and coastal habitats.

### **Theme 2: Landscape Resilience**

Existing ecosystems are not well adapted to predicted climatic changes, such as increased temperatures, variations to weather patterns and increasing prevalence of extreme events like floods and droughts. These changes are likely to increase both the prevalence and biodiversity of pest species and impact pollinators. This workstream will utilise the latest climatic projections to identify vulnerable ecosystems and develop opportunities to increase the resilience of the Natural Environment.

### **Theme 3: Co-ordination and Data Collection**

Whilst all workstreams are required to identify key issues requiring a collaborative approach, co-ordination between the Natural Environment, Farming and Food, and Water workstream is particularly important. This workstream will develop a communications and implementation strategy between appropriate working groups ensuring relevant information, analysis and findings are shared.

Key objectives for this workstream are to:

- Bring together existing datasets to establish repeatable monitoring of Somerset's baseline as an ecological network for the county.
- Identify key opportunities for collaboration based upon the above science and evidence-base to ensure a targeted approach to the natural environment between relevant stakeholders.

- Engage with, or merge with, the Local Nature Partnership to ensure collective delivery is a priority and avoid duplication of work.

### **8.7: Transport**

Emissions from transport are the largest contributor to emissions across a range of scales, from locally in Somerset (45%, with Sedgemoor and Taunton-Deane >50%)<sup>7</sup> to the UK (27%)<sup>38</sup> and to Europe<sup>39</sup>. Since 1990, emissions totals have steadily declined across all sectors – other than transport, indicating the inherent difficulties associated with implementing wide-scale changes to sector<sup>7</sup>.

Whilst reducing transport emissions in Somerset is a challenge due to the rurality of the region, meaning it is difficult for public transport schemes to connect dispersed communities, the European Commission Strategy for low-emission mobility highlights the roles that local authorities can fulfil<sup>39</sup>. With the diversity of Somerset and variation in access to public transport, it is unlikely for there to be a singular solution appropriate for all areas. However, the Local Authorities encouraging a modal shift to more active or public transport where appropriate and seek investment to develop, improve or upgrade existing transport links.

#### **Theme 1: Public Transport**

Increasing both the frequency and quality of service provided by public transport is important to encourage a modal shift from personal vehicle usage. Whilst active travel is carbon zero, we recognise that not all journeys are appropriate for walking or cycling. Improving the public transport provided in Somerset whilst transitioning to lower emissions vehicles can significantly reduce emissions derived from Transport.

To achieve this, the workstream will:

- Amend evaluation criteria and contract terms for passenger transport contracts awarded by SCC in the DPS review in March 2021 to encourage usage of lower emission vehicles.
- Develop an innovative rural transport pilot project following on from work currently investigated in South Somerset.
- Commission a data analytics study to identify potential demands for bespoke passenger transport for clusters of working age people who may be attracted to a quality service.
- Develop a detailed proposal for mass-movement rapid transport on the A38 supporting existing priority infrastructure proposals; this could provide an opportunity for a testbed for electric fleets or CAV trials in the long term.
- Explore expanding Demand Responsive Transport Provision, potentially developing additional routes in the morning/afternoon for college students.

#### **Theme 2: Personal Transport**

Reducing the demand for car travel is essential for minimising transport emissions. Enabling active travel, via improvements to walking or cycling infrastructure or subsidising the cost of cycling equipment, can eliminate the need for car journeys. Increasing awareness surrounding the impacts associated with short car journeys may contribute to a modal shift in travel; however, under many circumstances car usage is unavoidable. Popularising car sharing schemes can eliminate repetition of similar journeys.

To reduce the demand for car travel and incentivise a modal shift to active travel, some examples of work to be undertaken include:

- Develop a detailed countywide travel behaviour change/travel demand management proposal, focusing on community action and individual responsibility, learning from previous and current activity in Bridgwater.
- Agree walking and cycling capital programme funding allocation.
- Submit Department for Transport (DfT) Pinch Points bid focused on walking and cycling.
- Develop feasibility designs and costed schemes from current Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) while commissioning additional LCWIPs for other towns.
- Lobby Central Government for a dedicated walking and cycling fund.
- Increase awareness of the impact short car journeys can have and highlight the benefits associated with active travel via numerous engagement schemes, such as the 'Think Travel' web portal to access travel-related information.

### **Theme 3: Logistics, Planning and Innovation**

Engaging with relevant communities, stakeholders and organisations is crucial to promote sustainable transport. With new developments, planning strategies can be implemented to minimise the need for travel and thus reduce emissions. A holistic approach to development can reduce emissions derived from logistical operations, such as 'last-mile' deliveries or HGV freight. With the considerable lack of progress made in reducing transport emissions since 1990 across the UK, innovative ideas and concepts are required.

Some objectives to explore for the workstream include:

- Liaise with parish/town councils to produce a list of high priority/biggest difference actions that could be taken relating to transport.
- Organise a commission to ensure engagement with academic experts and industry leaders to identify opportunities to reduce transport emissions.
- Understand logistics patterns, HGV vehicle movements and employee personal vehicle use to develop programs to reduce associated emissions, such as via car or freight share.
- Identify locations suitable for electric vehicle charging points.
- Work with planners and the Built Environment workstream to ensure new developments are designed to reduce the demand for car travel.
- Launch a digital competition to design an app enabling people to reduce demand for car travel.
- Upscale the agile-working Programme used in Shepton Mallet to other district council offices, enabling work from home for all staff within Somerset Local Authorities. Highlighting the benefits from this scheme can incentivise uptake of similar programmes by private sector organisations.

#### **8.8: Waste**

Recent research highlights the potential for the UK Waste Management sector to drive reductions to greenhouse gas emissions<sup>40</sup>. Since 1990, emissions have decreased by 70% with an acceleration in annual average abatement between 2012 and 2016 of 10%.

In Somerset, household and non-household waste contributes to a significant proportion of the region's carbon emissions – the majority (>90%) derive from methane produced by the decomposition of biodegradable waste<sup>41</sup>.

Somerset's domestic waste and recycling is managed by Somerset Waste Partnership. Somerset is independently ranked as a 'high flying' (top 10%)<sup>42</sup> area in England in carbon saving from its household waste and recycling services, saving 103kg of a carbon equivalent per person<sup>43</sup>.

Major progress in the Waste Management sector will only be achieved if waste is considered as a resource whilst increasing management of industrial and commercial waste. The workstream will look at opportunities to move towards a more circular economy and increase consideration of the relationship between Waste Management and other economic activities.

### **Theme 1: Commercial Waste and the Circular Economy**

Nationally, commercial recycling rates are low (30%) and minimal source segregation of waste or separate food waste collection is undertaken. Targeting this sector, in conjunction with the Business, Industry and Supply Chain workstream, can provide potential for considerable emissions reductions and show Somerset's national leadership on the climate agenda.

The workstream will:

- Identify how the Local Authorities can celebrate and share best practice, whilst avoiding 'greenwash' (or the deceptive promotion of an organisation's environmental policies).
- Work with local businesses and relevant partners to identify the support and guidance they require to improve waste management.
- Seek to pilot collaborative procurement for recycling and waste – reducing costs for businesses, improving environmental outcomes and aligning with local needs.
- Create a route-map identifying the steps required to create a more circular economy in Somerset.
- Explore opportunities to ensure that Somerset has the recycling reprocessing industry needed to match its ambitions for the future.

### **Theme 2: Residential Waste and Behaviour Change**

The workstream will explore opportunities to encourage behavioural change across a variety of sectors, such as minimising household waste in the domestic sector and increase recycling 'on the go'. This will be supported by identifying ways to ensure adherence to adequate planning standards for waste management within new housing developments.

This will include:

- Improving domestic waste recycling opportunities by adding in additional recycling to the existing weekly kerbside collection (Recycle More). This will result in reductions to waste by 15% and increase recycling by 20-30%, and improve on our already 'high-flying'<sup>42</sup> carbon saving performance.



- Introducing more stringent controls that ensure even more waste is processed within the UK and not exported elsewhere. Currently over 90% of Somerset's recycling remains in the UK.
- Roll-out a behavioural change campaign ('Slim my waste, feed my face') in early 2020. This scheme intends to encourage reducing food waste within homes.
- Working with the Built Environment workstream and planning departments to ensure new development planning proposals consider resource management, waste storage, and waste disposal.
- Moving away from landfill by Spring 2020. Whilst reduction, reuse and recycling always remain better, this transition will ensure that the little waste that is leftover is mostly used to generate electricity rather than going into landfill.

### **Theme 3: Public Sector Waste**

The public sector is a major employer in Somerset and can lead by example with how it deals with its own waste. There is potential for considerable improvement within the sector; for example, the current recycling rate in schools is only 25% and recycling across the Local authority's own buildings is patchy. Using the scale of the sector provides an opportunity to shape the market for commercial waste services in Somerset and instigate significant changes within the industry.

The workstream will:

- Develop a joined-up approach across the public sector in Somerset to maximise reuse, separate recycling and minimise waste arising from the public sector.
- Utilise the buying power across the public sector in Somerset to create a viable commercial market offering environmentally optimal commercial waste recycling.
- Identify if there are any stakeholders in Somerset who may need additional support in order to recycle effectively seek to develop a cost-effective pilot which improves recycling and reduces waste.
- Expand the Schools Against Waste programme and incentivise schools to recycle more (including though rolling out additional services to them such as plastic pots, tubs and trays, cartons/tetrapak recycling).

### **8.9: Water**

Climate projections predict increasing precipitation intensity and variability in the UK, leading to increased risks of flooding, drought and extreme weather events<sup>44</sup>. Flood risks in Somerset are exacerbated by sea level rise, with low-lying regions such as the Levels and moors particularly vulnerable to these changes<sup>45</sup>.

Additionally, predicted climatic changes impact current water management practices and adaptation schemes, which are unlikely to be robust enough to cope with these added pressures<sup>44</sup>. Ensuring future developments consider the most recent climatic projections is required to minimise flood risk and other issues.

The requirement for the Water workstream to be cross-sector in approach is significant; alterations to land usage and management practices in both the natural environment and agricultural ecosystems are likely to impact flood risk, water quality and other aspects of the

hydrological cycle. Ensuring these issues are both accounted for and minimised will be crucial to minimise the secondary consequences associated with project implementation.

### **Theme 1: Strategy and Policy**

Improving existing strategies and policies relating to water will ensure co-ordinated response by all partner organisations, provide long-term risk assessment for predicted climatic changes, and enable access to increased sources of funding.

Examples of reviews and updates to be explored by this workstream are:

- Update internal and statutory strategies to ensure the inclusion of most recent climate change projections and associated risks
- Support the establishment of the Somerset Rivers Authority to deliver adaptation schemes to address projected risks

### **Theme 2: Data Collection and Analysis**

Detailed modelling of changes to the flood, drought and extreme weather profile of Somerset is required to inform evidence-based project development, business cases and feasibility studies.

Initial tasks for this workstream will be to:

- Map changes to flood risk caused by climate change.
- Map changes to coastal erosion caused by climate change.
- Develop integrated flood investment strategies from predicted changes.
- Map priority regions suitable for sustainable drainage (SuDS) projects.

### **Theme 3: Schemes and Initiatives**

Developing projects to adapt to the projected risks of climate change is crucial to ensure the communities of Somerset remain resilient to these predicted impacts.

The workstream will:

- Continue to deliver adaptation schemes to minimise the risks of flooding, drought and coastal erosion.
- Assess pre-existing adaptation schemes and infrastructure to ensure they are resilient to the most recent climate projections.
- Identify opportunities and potential funding to develop water processing infrastructure for future resilience.

### **8.10: Communications and Engagement**

Substantial levels of communication and engagement will be crucial to the success of all the workstreams and delivery of the overall Climate Emergency Strategy. As well as facilitating changes within the areas under the direct control of the five Local Authorities, the success of the Strategy will be underpinned by encouraging action to be taken by the many individuals, communities and other stakeholders.

Whilst many groups and communities are actively engaged with the climate change agenda currently experiencing considerable coverage within the media, some groups prioritise the issue to less of an extent. Receiving feedback from these groups and individuals and encouraging them to engage with the development of the Strategy is a vital action for this workstream.

### **Theme 1: Engagement and Consultation**

Ensuring that everyone in Somerset feels a sense of ownership of the Strategy is fundamental to its success; therefore ensuring as many people as possible from a cross section of society have an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Strategy is essential.

To achieve this, the workstream will:

- Develop Climate Summits in each district in conjunction with Somerset Climate Action Network (SCAN).
- Produce an online forum for on-demand engagement with the Strategy development.
- Organise specific engagement with young people through school and college events.
- Explore further opportunities for ongoing feedback and suggestions for the Strategy and subsequent Action Plan development.
- Work with local communities, towns, wards and parish councils to ensure local interest and community buy-in with the Strategy and associated Action Plan development.

### **Theme 2: Internal Communications**

The five Local Authorities and partners have well-established internal communications channels. These can all be immediately used to engage and inform a significant workforce and seek to develop a significant body of ambassadors for the strategy and source of good practice case studies.

This workstream will:

- Highlight the importance of best practice, encompassing suggestions from all workstreams, within internal communication channels such as employee email and online newsletters.
- Explore opportunities to incentivise partner employee best practice and behaviour change.

### **Theme 3: External Communications**

An appealing online presence will be a major component of the external communications and engagement strategy. Developing a central repository or hub for information, case studies, progress updates, resource packs and relevant materials will be critical in informing the wider community of the climate emergency whilst ensuring community buy-in and contribution to Strategy development. More traditional forms of media, such as press releases, news features or specific events, will supplement the external communications strategy to ensure accessibility for all.

Initial components of this work will include:

- Developing a uniform communications strategy to be implemented at all levels from all five Local Authorities.
- Utilising the Councils' established communications channels, such as traditional PR, in conjunction with the combined social media presence and reach, to maximise engagement opportunities.
- Ensure that documents and resources are available in other, accessible formats.

### **9: Climate Emergency Strategy Delivery**

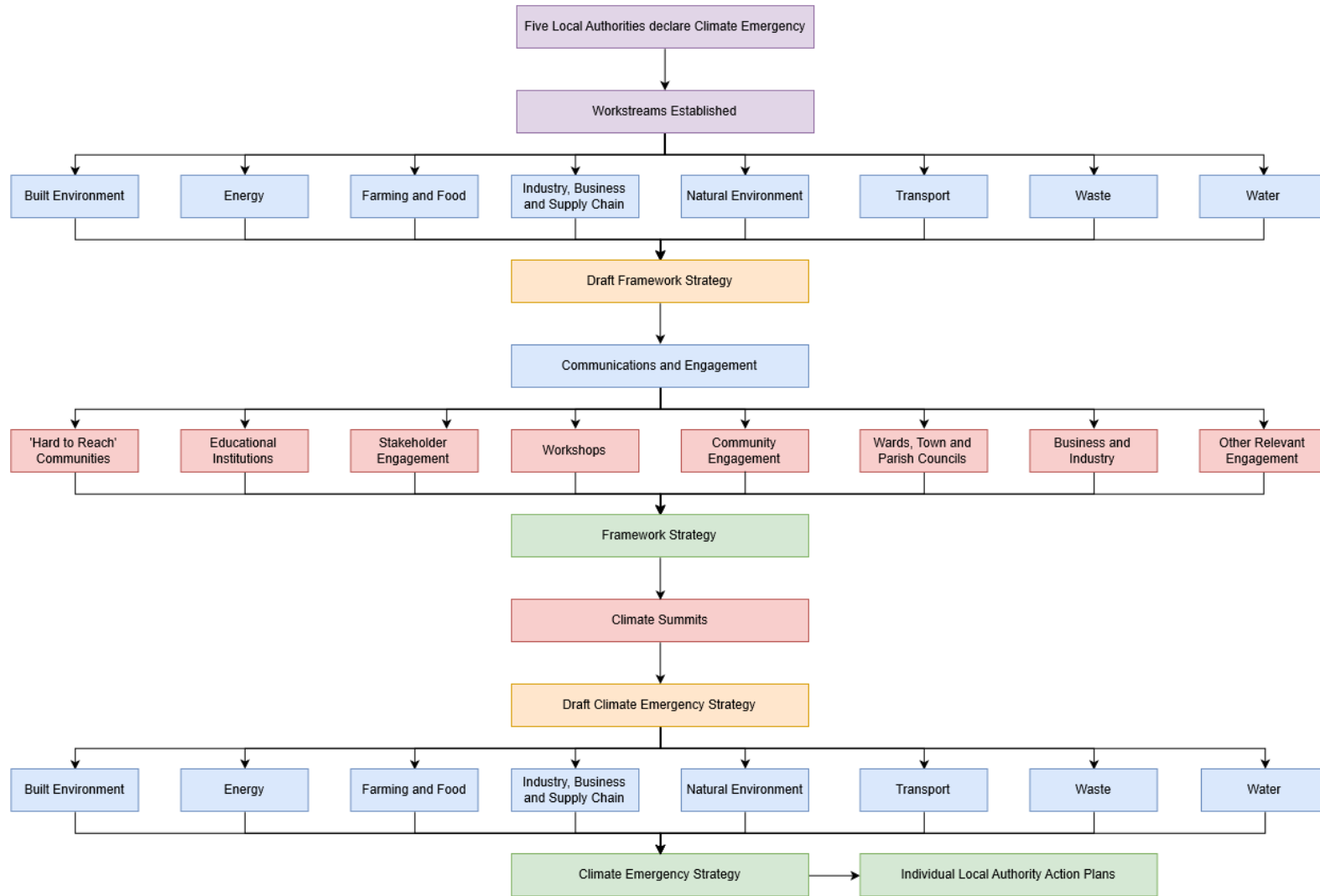
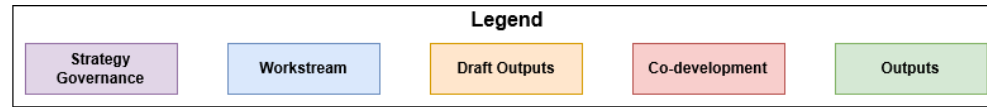
The flowchart below aims to simplify the steps that will be taken in order to develop and deliver the final Climate Emergency Strategy.

Community engagement will be a priority throughout Strategy development. We have chosen to deliver a 'Climate Summit' in each district to provide the opportunity for as many individuals and communities to engage with the development of the Strategy. However, this is only one strand of the engagement strategy. We will also be seeking feedback from an online platform as well as events at local schools and colleges to engage with the young people of Somerset. Each workstream will identify issues requiring stakeholder or sector-specific expertise and look to engage with the relevant academic or industry experts throughout Strategy development. It is hoped that through this engagement and consultation additional or alternative themes will be identified as priority issues for individuals and communities requiring action from the Climate Emergency Strategy.

Whilst workstreams appear independent in the flowchart below, it is important for these groups to work together. A collaborative approach is required to reliably evaluate key issues and develop projects encompassing a range of issues.

Additionally, development of the Individual Local Authority Action Plans is occurring simultaneously to the Climate Emergency Strategy. This means the Action Plans will be implemented alongside the final Strategy, ensuring that action is taken as soon as feasibly possible, once specific evidence-based projects are prioritised and developed following feedback from the public.

However, actions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change are already in progress across Somerset. Whilst time is being taken to develop an evidence-based Strategy, it is key that the actions being undertaken already are not slowed down by this process. Many projects will continue to be delivered throughout Strategy development, such as those intended to increase Somerset's resilience to flood risks and the continuation of preparation for the roll-out of the Somerset Waste Partnership's Recycle More scheme in 2020.



## 10: References

1. First, Plenary Julia. "Global warming of 1.5 C An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty." (2018).
2. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-becomes-first-major-economy-to-pass-net-zero-emissions-law>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained>
5. UKCP 18 Summary Findings:  
<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp-headline-findings-v2.pdf>
6. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/371103/Health Effects of Climate Change in the UK 2012 V13 with cover\\_accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371103/Health_Effects_of_Climate_Change_in_the_UK_2012_V13_with_cover_accessible.pdf)
7. BEIS Dataset: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-2017>
8. <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/>
9. <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/national-forest-inventory/about-the-nfi/>
10. UN Environment (2018) *Business unusual: the shift to "carbon neutral"* available at <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/business-unusual-shift-carbon-neutral>
11. <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation>
12. [https://www.who.int/hia/green\\_economy/transport\\_sector\\_health\\_co-benefits\\_climate\\_change\\_mitigation/en/](https://www.who.int/hia/green_economy/transport_sector_health_co-benefits_climate_change_mitigation/en/)
13. <https://www.somersetdriversauthority.org.uk/floods-cost-somerset-up-to-147-5-million-report-reveals/>
14. Local Authority Climate Emergency Declarations: Strategic and practical considerations for climate emergency declarations, targets and action plans, Published by APSE, June 2019.
15. <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/local-authorities/5>
16. <https://www.sciencemediacentre.org/expert-reaction-to-report-on-clean-growth-and-net-zero-policy/>
17. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/syr/>
18. CDP Webinar: Climate Action Co-Benefits Toolkit
19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-2017>
20. DECC (2012). Renewable Energy Roadmap 2012 Update. Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).
21. <https://energy-ts.com/the-true-cost-of-going-zero-carbon-by-2050/>

22. BEIS 2017, Regional Renewable Electricity Statistics.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics>
23. <https://www.unclearn.org/sites/default/files/inventory/ipcc15.pdf>
24. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/766109/decarbonising-heating.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/766109/decarbonising-heating.pdf)
25. <https://www.cibsejournal.com/technical/plymouths-5th-generation-heating-network/>
26. <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/POST-PN-0600>
27. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjV6qelre7jAhWrUxUIHZs8AT4QFjADegQIBBAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Frandd.defra.gov.uk%2FDocument.aspx%3FDocument%3DCCRASummaryAgri%2Fculture.pdf&usq=AOvVaw2e5wIDKF9iXHTuCOAKiGZI>
28. <https://www.nfuonline.com/news/latest-news/achieving-net-zero-meeting-the-climate-change-challenge/>
29. <https://www.countrysideonline.co.uk/food-and-farming/protecting-the-environment/how-are-british-farmers-helping-to-tackle-climate-change/>
30. <https://www.nfuonline.com/news/latest-news/achieving-net-zero-meeting-the-climate-change-challenge/>
31. Mbow, H.O.P., Reisinger, A., Canadell, J. and O'Brien, P., 2017. Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems (SR2).
32. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-reducing-emissions-and-preparing-for-climate-change/>
33. <https://www.carbontrust.com/media/84932/ctc616-carbon-footprints-in-the-supply-chain.pdf>
34. Supply Chain Leadership Collaboration (SCLC) Pilot Results and Findings Report, Carbon Disclosure Project, London (2008)
35. Huang, Y.A., Weber, C.L. and Matthews, H.S., 2009. Categorization of scope 3 emissions for streamlined enterprise carbon footprinting.
36. <https://www.supplychainonline.co.uk/article/walkers-crisps-uses-solar-powered-sensors-for-a-greener-supply-chain/>
37. Bates, B., Kundzewicz, Z. and Wu, S., 2008. Climate change and water. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Secretariat.  
<http://www.taccire.suanet.ac.tz:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/552/climate-change-water-en.pdf?sequence=1>
38. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-2017>
39. [https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport_en)
40. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/faculty-of-natural-sciences/centre-for-environmental-policy/Veolia-report.pdf>
41. BEIS, 2018. BEIS 2017 Updated Energy & Emissions Projections. "Web figures": Charts and their underlying data from the report text. v1.0 05-Dec-2017. Available from:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/updated-energy-and-emissions-projections-2017>
42. <http://www.eunomia.co.uk/carbonindex/report.php?authority=Somerset+Waste+Partnership>

43. <https://www.eunomia.co.uk/carbonindex/>
44. Bates, B., Kundzewicz, Z. and Wu, S., 2008. *Climate change and water*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Secretariat.  
<http://www.taccire.suanet.ac.tz:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/552/climate-change-water-en.pdf?sequence=1>
45. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/663885/Future\\_of\\_the\\_sea\\_-\\_sea\\_level\\_rise.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/663885/Future_of_the_sea_-_sea_level_rise.pdf)

DRAFT



## **11: Appendix**

### **Somerset County Council**

Full Council resolves to:

- a) affirm the Council's recognition of the scale and urgency of the global challenge from climate change, as documented by the latest Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and declares a climate emergency; and
- b) mandate the Policy and Place Scrutiny Committee to review and recommend what further corporate approaches can be taken through a SCC Climate Change Strategy and to facilitate stronger Somerset-wide action through collaboration at a strategic, community and individual level; and
- c) pledge to work with partners, including the Heart of the South West LEP, individuals and community action groups across the county to identify ways to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3); and
- d) write to the Secretaries of State for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy, Transport, Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Housing, Communities & Local Government calling for the creation, provision or devolution of powers and resources to make achievement of the 2030 target possible here in Somerset; and
- e) report to Full Council before the end of 2019 with the actions the Council has and will take to address this emergency; and
- f) allocate £25,000 from the Council's 2018/19 contingency budget and authorise the Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure to utilise this funding to resource the work necessary to support Scrutiny Committee for Policies and Place and to assess any specific recommendations and financial implications. Any unspent allocation will be carried forward into 2019/20 to continue the work.

### **Somerset West and Taunton District Council**

Shadow Full Council resolves:

1. To declare a climate emergency.
2. With partners across the district and region, to start working towards making Somerset West and Taunton carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account emissions from both production and consumption (7).
3. To call on the UK Government to provide guidance and the powers and resources to make carbon neutrality possible by writing to local MPs, the Secretaries of State for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy, Transport, Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Housing, Communities & Local Government.

4. To develop a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan, starting from July 2019, with a cross party working group and the necessary officer support to assist with investigative work, drafting the plan and the delivery of early projects.

5. To report to Full Council before the end of 2019 with costed proposals for projects for the Council to effectively start addressing the climate emergency, which could include:

a) Enabling more cycling, walking and use of shared and public transport.

b) Providing electric car charging points in car parks and other suitable locations, including for use by council tenants and council vehicles.

c) Adopting high energy efficiency standards and providing for the effective use of recycling services in new buildings through the planning system.

d) Demonstrating and developing a programme for retrofitting high standards of energy saving and insulation in existing council buildings, including housing, and assets; initially focusing on where the greatest benefits could be gained.

e) Promoting waste reduction, reuse and recycling on the go, and supporting community projects.

f) Sourcing electricity used by the council from renewable energy suppliers and providing support for smart energy infrastructure, including demand management and storage.

g) Supporting green businesses and social enterprises.

h) Review of planning policies and investment opportunities for local renewable energy and infrastructure and environmental markets, as well as divestment from fossil fuels.

i) Adaptation for flooding, coastal erosion and other impacts of climate change.

j) The appointment of a specialist officer to develop and champion the delivery of the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.

6. To provide an annual review and update of the plan thereafter.

7. A provisional budget of £25,000 to be allocated to allow this work, including early projects agreed by the working group, to be undertaken either through resources already available or through commissioning. This sum to include £15,000 as a supplementary budget allocation from the General Fund in 2019/20, to be taken from general reserves and returned if able to be undertaken from already available resources, and £10,000 to be prioritised from the proposed HRA Maintenance Budget in 2019/20.

## **South Somerset District Council**

*The Council have agreed to:*

1. Note the background information above.
2. Declare its recognition of a 'Climate and Ecological Emergency'.
3. Develop a Strategy by the Full Council meeting on 19th September 2019\*, that sets ambitious targets to protect the environment and ecology; to reduce Carbon Emissions; and for a) South Somerset District and b) the Council to become carbon neutral
4. Develop a delivery plan that sets out the necessary policies, projects and actions to deliver the targets, and identifies the resources necessary to enable the delivery of the strategy.
5. Work with councils and other partners in Somerset to develop collaboration, joint approaches and share resources in tackling climate change and protecting the environment

\*Now Autumn 2019

## **Sedgemoor District Council**

Proposed Climate Change Motion that Council:

- a) Affirms the recognition of the scale and urgency of the global challenge from climate change, as documented by the latest Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- b) Pledges to work with partners, including the HoTSWLEP, Somerset County Council, Somerset Districts, individuals and community groups to identify ways to make Sedgemoor and Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions
- c) Joins with the County Council and Somerset Districts in writing to the Secretaries of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, Transport, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Housing, Communities and Local Government calling for the creation, provision or devolution of powers and resources to make achievement of the 2030 target possible here in Sedgemoor and Somerset
- d) Allocates up to £25,000 from the Council's Community Development Fund and authorises the Strategic Director (Doug Bamsey) to utilise this funding to resource the work necessary and develop a strategy and actions
- e) Will receive a report before the end of 2019 with the actions that have been and will be taken to address this target.

## **Mendip District Council**

Full Council calls on Mendip District Council to:

1. Declare a 'Climate and Ecological Emergency';
2. Pledge to make the district of Mendip carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3);
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
4. Work with other councils and governments to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C;
5. Continue to work with partners across the district and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;
6. Submit a bid as part of the Council's budget setting process for an additional £100,000 to fund a 'Sustainability' Officer Post for a two-year period to champion the scoping and delivery of the District Council's Climate Emergency 2030 commitment.
7. Report to Full Council every six months with the actions the Council will take to address this emergency.

# **Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan**

***Draft Framework Document***

DRAFT

<b>Version</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Draft Framework for Climate Change Member Working Group and Scrutiny Committee Agenda	27/09/2019
2	Draft Framework for Executive Committee Agenda taking account of comments from Member Working Group and Scrutiny Committee	14/10/2019

DRAFT

# **Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan**

## **Draft Framework Document**

### **Contents**

Terminology used in this document.....	3
Our Climate Emergency Declaration .....	5
Immediate projects and commitments.....	6
Context.....	8
Purpose and Scope .....	11
Developing the Action Plan .....	14
Taking action.....	35
What next?.....	37

DRAFT

## Terminology used in this document

This document refers to a number of terms and phrases that may not be familiar to many people, or which differ from terminology that has been used previously.

For instance, people will generally be familiar with the terminology of "climate change" and "global warming", however, in line with other organisations looking to take a lead in this field, the Council is keen to shift the language used in relation to this topic to reflect the urgency of the situation and need for action now. Therefore this document uses the phrases "**climate emergency**" to refer to the situation that our climate now finds itself, primarily as a result of the "**global heating**" caused and exacerbated by human activity.

**Carbon emissions** are referred to throughout this document. Carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is the principle contributor to global heating due to the sheer volume of it that exists and its long lifespan. However, a number of other greenhouse gases contribute including methane, nitrous oxide and f-gases. Some of these are far more significant in terms of their potency measured in carbon equivalent, but they exist in much smaller volumes and have shorter lifespans. Therefore, all greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced and we will produce action plans to take action on all of them. Carbon emissions will be the major focus for action due to their prevalence and the opportunities for reduction that exist, but reducing methane in particular can have much quicker effects due to its shorter lifespan, so this must also be explored.

**Carbon Neutrality** means "*achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset*"<sup>1</sup>.

**Climate Resilience** means ensuring that our communities are adapted to cope with the projected impacts of global heating locally.

**Mitigation** essentially refers to actions which will lead to the avoidance or reduction of emissions or will reduce the projected impacts of global heating.

**Adaptation** refers to actions which are necessary to deal with the impacts that cannot be mitigated.

**Offsetting** is a way of mitigating emissions, by taking action elsewhere. For instance, it may not be possible, feasible or viable to actually reduce emissions from a particular source any further, so instead money would be diverted to deliver additionality in mitigation projects elsewhere to make up for the emissions that will remain.

**Sequestration** is the process of capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and the long-term storage of it in trees and plants, soils and geological formations and the ocean.

**Co-benefits** are secondary or ancillary benefits of an action that are also a relevant reason for that action in their own right. Many actions to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency will have co-benefits such as improving health and wellbeing, improving air quality and building biodiversity.



DRAFT

# Our Climate Emergency Declaration

## ***In February 2019, the then shadow Council resolved:***

1. To declare a climate emergency.
2. With partners across the district and region, to start working towards making Somerset West and Taunton carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account emissions from both production and consumption (7).
3. To call on the UK Government to provide guidance and the powers and resources to make carbon neutrality possible by writing to local MPs, the Secretaries of State for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy, Transport, Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Housing, Communities & Local Government.
4. To develop a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan, starting from July 2019, with a cross party working group and the necessary officer support to assist with investigative work, drafting the plan and the delivery of early projects.
5. To report to Full Council before the end of 2019 with costed proposals for projects for the Council to effectively start addressing the climate emergency, which could include:
  - a) Enabling more cycling, walking and use of shared and public transport.
  - b) Providing electric car charging points in car parks and other suitable locations, including for use by council tenants and council vehicles.
  - c) Adopting high energy efficiency standards and providing for the effective use of recycling services in new buildings through the planning system.
  - d) Demonstrating and developing a programme for retrofitting high standards of energy saving and insulation in existing council buildings, including housing, and assets; initially focusing on where the greatest benefits could be gained.
  - e) Promoting waste reduction, reuse and recycling on the go, and supporting community projects.
  - f) Sourcing electricity used by the council from renewable energy suppliers and providing support for smart energy infrastructure, including demand management and storage.
  - g) Supporting green businesses and social enterprises.
  - h) Review of planning policies and investment opportunities for local renewable energy and infrastructure and environmental markets, as well as divestment from fossil fuels.
  - i) Adaptation for flooding, coastal erosion and other impacts of climate change.
  - j) The appointment of a specialist officer to develop and champion the delivery of the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.
6. To provide an annual review and update of the plan thereafter.
7. A provisional budget of £25,000 to be allocated to allow this work, including early projects agreed by the working group, to be undertaken either through resources already available or through commissioning. This sum to include £15,000 as a supplementary budget allocation from the General Fund in 2019/20, to be taken from general reserves and returned if able to be undertaken from already available resources, and £10,000 to be prioritised from the proposed HRA Maintenance Budget in 2019/20.

## **Immediate projects and commitments**

The following are key projects identified within this Framework Document which we to commit to immediately pursuing alongside strategy and action plan development:

### ***North Taunton Woolaway Regeneration Scheme***

We are working on a major estate regeneration project in North Taunton that will see 186 existing defective Woolaway homes redeveloped or refurbished, resulting in warmer, more energy efficient and better quality homes than already exist, as well as 44 net additional council homes. Lessons learned from this scheme will be applied to future estate regeneration projects.

### ***Council house retrofit pilots***

Building on the success of the Wellington Warmer Homes pilot and the experience already gained in relation to the North Taunton Woolaway Regeneration Scheme, we are currently auditing and exploring further opportunities to improve our retained Council housing stock and commit to delivering further innovative Council house retrofit pilots over the next year which will improve the energy and carbon performance of the buildings and improve the health, wellbeing and vulnerability of residents.

### ***Council-owned development / regeneration sites***

We are currently planning and procuring partners for the delivery of multiple development and regeneration sites, particularly in Taunton. The Council commits to ensuring that these sites are all low carbon and energy efficient, but also exploring where we can make the most of technological and design innovations to develop specific exemplar schemes to showcase the art of the possible. These requirements will need to be carefully balanced against other demands and requirements placed on these sites to ensure they remain viable.

### ***Urban Tree Retrofit Project***

We commit to working with communities and partners to develop and deliver tree planting projects across our urban areas to improve tree cover, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, health and wellbeing, access and connection to nature, passive cooling and combatting the urban heat island effect.

### ***Corporate Emissions and Environmental Impacts***

We have already commissioned external support to help us to baseline the Council's corporate carbon and environmental footprint and recommend ways to improve it. We commit to exploring options identified and taking forward recommendations as appropriate. In addition to this, we are already actively looking at how we might transition our corporate electricity use to renewable sources where possible.

### ***Corporate vehicle fleet***

We commit a gradual switching of Council-owned vehicles to EV/Hybrid/ULEV at the most appropriate points. It is not always the low carbon solution to wholesale switch fleets to EV all at once because of the embodied carbon within existing and new vehicles.

### ***Food sales in Council outlets***

We commit to improving the carbon and environmental impacts of the food sold in Council-owned outlets such as our leisure centres and in corporate refreshments.

### ***Low carbon business awards***

We commit to ensuring that the 2020 Somerset Business Awards and Taunton Deane Business Awards include low carbon and sustainability criteria, and a specific low carbon business award category is identified so that businesses making a difference are celebrated and encouraged.

### ***Wildflower planting, habitat creation and tree planting pilots***

Within the next year we will initiate 3 or 4 flagship pilot schemes on public sector land to showcase the possibilities, benefits and opportunities that such schemes can have to pollinators, wider biodiversity, carbon sequestration, health and wellbeing of residents, and land management costs and practices.

### ***Woodland creation***

We will work with partners and communities across the district over the next year to identify, promote, fund and deliver major tree planting and woodland creation schemes including Somerset Wood to the north of Monkton Heathfield.

### ***Cycling and Walking Infrastructure***

We commit to working with SCC to include projects arising from the Taunton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan including the priority Vivary Park-St James Street-Firepool-Station and Taunton-Wellington projects in a bid to the Local Pinch Point Fund in January 2020, then moving towards project delivery as soon as feasible. We also commit to working with Trull Parish Council and communities to realise ambitions for a walking and cycling link between the Comeytrowe-Trull Garden Community and Vivary Park/South Road in Taunton.

### ***Car clubs and pool bikes***

We commit to working with partners to create a local car club and pool bike scheme within the district, utilising EVs, bikes (and e-bikes) as appropriate, starting with trials in key locations such as transport hubs in early years.

### ***EV charge points***

We will deliver on our commitment already begun through the Community Charge Point Fund, to improve access to public EV charging infrastructure across the district. We also commit to delivering charge points on a number of Council-owned car parks and other public sector holdings across the district to lead by example.

### ***Corporate recycling***

We commit to improving recycling options in our offices and operations.

### ***Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation***

We commit to working with partners to deliver identified early projects that help adapt the town and our communities to the effects of climate change as well as delivering wider benefits such as increased biodiversity, public amenity and access.

## Context

### **Introduction**

Somerset West and Taunton Council has declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards making the Council and the area which we cover carbon neutral by 2030. Alongside this, it is recognised that it is essential that we prepare our communities, businesses and buildings to ensure they are resilient to the climate change which is already in motion. In preparing a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan for the district, the Council aims to take a leadership role in starting the conversations on how things need to change, taking action where it can, supporting and enabling others to play their parts, and lobbying Government and other actors to make necessary changes.

This Framework Document is the first step in the process – it begins to identify the core issues for the Plan to cover, the key risks to the district, and what our action/delivery plan might look to cover. Crucially, however, this is a starting point for meaningful engagement with our communities, businesses, interested parties and other key stakeholders, designed to start a conversation about how we can collectively own the issues, the necessary actions and ultimately delivery against the 2030 target. We want to hear your thoughts on what the issues are, how we should tackle them, who could deliver on the actions, and develop ground-up solutions to make a difference.

*“We want to hear your thoughts on what the issues are, how we should tackle them, who could deliver on the actions, and develop ground-up solutions to make a difference”*

The Somerset West and Taunton Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan sits alongside a county-wide Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy which is being developed simultaneously. Rather than each of the Somerset districts developing their own strategies covering similar issues requiring potentially similar approaches, we feel it is better to consider the overall strategic approach to tackling the climate emergency collectively, enabling us to identify opportunities for achieve things together, share costs, share ideas and learning, and grow our power and influence with Government and others. The Somerset West and Taunton Plan will add detail to the approaches identified by the county-wide Strategy, and dealing with risks, issues and opportunities specific to the district.

### **Why tackling the climate emergency matters**

*“Climate change is moving faster than we are... If we do not change course by 2020, we risk missing the point where we can avoid runaway climate change, with disastrous consequences for people and all the natural systems that sustain us”*

2

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>3</sup> identifies that human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1°C of global heating above pre-industrial levels. Based on current rates, the IPCC conservatively project that this is likely to reach

1.5°C globally somewhere between 2030 and 2052. The IPCC also identifies that “*Without increased and urgent mitigation ambition in the coming years, leading to a sharp decline in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, global warming will surpass 1.5°C in the following decades, leading to irreversible loss of the most fragile ecosystems, and crisis after crisis for the most vulnerable people and societies*”<sup>4</sup> and that limiting global heating to 1.5°C implies reaching global carbon neutrality in around 2050<sup>5</sup>.

However, based on current levels of commitments worldwide, we are on track to actually experience in the order of 3°C of heating globally. This will lead to catastrophic changes in global climatic conditions including major sea level rise due to polar ice cap melt – which is well documented as already occurring faster than was predicted to be the case. But the impacts will be felt differently in different parts of the world. The global impacts will be felt to different levels in different parts of the world. This matters locally here in Somerset West and Taunton, with a vulnerable coastline and particularly low-lying areas of land on the Levels and Moors. Limiting global heating to 1.5°C has been shown by the IPCC report to significantly limit the impacts that will be experienced globally.

The Committee on Climate Change (the UK Government's independent advisor on climate change) advised earlier this year that the UK should look to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, explaining that this target would align with the country's commitments under the Paris Agreement and be capable of being met broadly within the same cost envelope as the previous 80% target<sup>6</sup>. The UK Parliament subsequently declared a climate emergency and legislated to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 to legally bind the UK to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

However, as the fifth largest economy worldwide<sup>7</sup>, the UK might be considered more capable than most to achieve the 2050 carbon neutrality target recommended by the IPCC and therefore take up some of the strain of those that are less capable.

Considering the projected impacts of global heating locally and globally, and the need for significant progress globally by 2030, Somerset West and Taunton Council feel that it is important to strive towards a more ambitious target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. We must, however, be clear, that this more ambitious target is not informed by detailed evidence of what can be achieved locally. Without significant changes in wider society and national Government regulation, policy, funding and action, achieving this target will be near impossible. The target is therefore a signal of intent, a call to action and a commitment that locally we will do everything that we can to take action and lobby others to do so too.

### ***What is the role of the Council?***

It is vital that the Council acts as a community leader in responding to the climate emergency – to set an example, encourage and influence others and enable us to require action with the conscience that we are doing our bit. “Getting our own house in order” is a key part of this as Council operations and processes result in range of direct and indirect emissions. This Framework includes a number of early tasks for the Council to undertake to better understand the sources of these emissions and start taking action.

The Council is also uniquely placed to act as a co-ordinator and facilitator of action within the district. It has a key role in taking specific actions as well as enabling and supporting others. However, it is important to note that the Council only has limited



powers, responsibilities, resources and finances, and that many of the changes that will be required to achieve carbon neutrality and climate resilience must be the responsibility of others including public, private and third sectors and individuals. It is therefore important that the Somerset West and Taunton Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan is widely owned and delivered by everyone living, working, carrying out business etc. within the district, and that it is evidence-based and built upon ground-up engagement with these groups.

This Council commits to use all of its powers to action, enable and support everyone to work towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030. Will you join us by making a similar commitment and tasking yourself, your friends and family, your employer or business to make the changes necessary to achieve it?

*"This Council commits to use all of its powers to action, enable and support everyone to work towards achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030. Will you join us by making a similar commitment?"*

### **Making changes**

It is reasonable to suggest that awareness of the climate emergency is at an all-time high. However, this should not be mistaken to mean that everyone is on the same page. For many, new scientific discoveries, the media, high profile campaigns and changing weather patterns have all helped to grow understanding. Recent world climate summits and government policies have also helped to focus the mind on the need for action and specifically the target of carbon neutrality.

Many residents and businesses across the district have begun to take action, largely in small incremental ways: car sharing, recycling and eating more local produce. Yet tied to this are issues (such as reducing the need to fly, buying the latest tech, and the buying of plastic wrapped foods) that for many people are considered either 'too hard to tackle', or that lead to perceptions that 'only governments can sort it out'. This can lead to the proliferation of myths and inactivity. Some might argue that they don't have enough time, or if tested, they might admit to a lack of confidence in knowing what to do.

Accepting change can be difficult. Yet, there are examples of changes in society that we can draw upon: don't drink and drive campaign, the ban on smoking and paying 5p for a plastic bag. These are all commonly accepted social norms now.

Change can also be difficult to make. Particularly for the most vulnerable in society including those on low incomes. Meeting the targets of carbon neutrality and climate resilience will require major societal shifts and changes to be made from all sectors of society. However, the most affluent in society contribute significantly more emissions than those on the lowest incomes, yet are more able to change habits and make different choices. Ensuring that the most able and least vulnerable in society shoulder more of the burden, and protecting the most vulnerable from unreasonable burdens and impacts is important to achieving a just transition to a low carbon economy. This Framework recognises the need for a just transition and this will influence the development of action plans and projects as part of the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.

## Purpose and Scope

### ***What is the purpose of the Plan?***

The Somerset West and Taunton Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan will provide a community-owned plan of action for how we respond to the climate emergency locally. It will identify the projects, plans, schemes and initiatives that we commit to locally pursuing in order to work towards carbon neutrality and climate resilience in 2030.

It is not solely a Council-owned plan. It is a vehicle to galvanise support and action across the district. It is a prospectus for seeking funding and investment. It will be a living delivery plan that evolves and updates regularly as things are delivered and our understanding of the issues and consequences of the climate emergency improves.

It will also identify the barriers to achieving this target which are posed by issues outside of our control as a local authority and as a local area. It will form a platform for us to lobby Government and other parties to take the necessary actions to change policies, investments, funding and powers so that the targets can be achieved.

The purpose of this initial Framework Document is to spark a conversation and engage with our communities and stakeholders over what direction our Plan should take, what projects and activities are already taking place out there, and ultimately ensure that the Plan itself is well informed and owned by the people, businesses and communities of the district.

### ***What is the Scope of the Plan?***

So what do we mean by "Carbon Neutrality"? We are taking it to refer to "*achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset*"<sup>8</sup>. Essentially, that means 100% of our emissions are reduced or offset through processes that will sequester (absorb/remove) what is left.

Our primary goal will be to develop solutions to reduce carbon emissions wherever they can be directly mitigated (avoided or reduced). But this will not always be possible or viable and we will need to offset some of our emissions. To help us prioritise our offsetting actions and control the secondary impacts of these actions, we propose to

**"Carbon neutrality means achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset"**

prioritise offsetting at or as near to the source for the emissions as possible, before widening out the locations for offsetting projects to the district, county, region, UK, EU then rest of the world (with this being an absolute last resort).

We are working towards achieving carbon neutrality across the district – not just across the Council in its operations and functions, but across the entire geographical extent of the district and all of the activities taking place within it. We are also looking to measure our progress both in terms of the emissions produced within the district



(territorial emissions) and the emissions associated with goods and services consumed within the district (consumption emissions).

And what about "Climate Resilience"? This refers to ensuring that our communities are prepared, adapted and able to cope with the changes to our climate that will result from the global heating which is already in motion.

### ***What will be needed to achieve carbon neutrality?***

The Committee on Climate Change identifies the options on the table for deep decarbonisation in the UK in its *Net Zero*<sup>9</sup> report published earlier this year. These options are divided into Core, Further Ambition, and Speculative – and they can help to prioritise action. The Net Zero report admits that "*it is impossible to predict the exact mix of technologies and behaviours that will best meet the challenge*", but recommends a set of scenarios to meet the UK target of carbon neutrality in 2050. As we develop our Plan we will need to take heed of the direction that the Net Zero report recommends the UK takes nationally, but bear in mind that achieving this same target by 2030 may require a slightly different mix of options due to local circumstances and wider embedded assumptions, and certainly ramping up of ambition. The scenarios identified for meeting the UK target of carbon neutrality in 2050 are (paraphrased):

- **Improvements in resource and energy efficiency** to reduce demand for energy and to minimise the amounts of additional low carbon power, hydrogen and carbon capture and storage (CCS) that will be needed;
- **Changes in societal choices** to lower emissions associated with our activities, e.g. shifting to healthier diets with reduced consumption of beef, lamb and dairy;
- **Significant electrification**, particularly of transport and heating, with all power produced from low carbon sources (compared to 50% today);
- **Increased hydrogen production and combustion** to meet demands for some industrial processes, long-distance land and sea-based logistics, and for electricity and heating in peak periods;
- **Carbon capture and storage (CCS)** as a necessity for industry, bioenergy and very likely for hydrogen and electricity production; and
- **A major shift in farming and land use** that would see a fifth of UK agricultural land used for tree planting, energy crops and peatland restoration to improve carbon sequestration and biomass production.

Other publications have also been produced by different bodies and organisations recommending different mixes of options and solutions to achieve similar and more ambitious targets for carbon neutrality. Almost all of these publications refer to the need for the following in different variations of ambition:

- High energy efficiency standards in new buildings;
- Retrofitting of existing buildings;
- Electrifying our reduced energy use;
- Significant expansion of low carbon and renewable energy generation and energy storage including on-shore wind;
- Moving to more plant-based diets;
- Improving agricultural processes and land use;
- Planting trees, restoring peatlands and 're-wilding' areas;
- Reducing how much we travel and changing how we travel to less carbon and energy intensive modes;

- Investing in public and active transport (walking, cycling etc.) infrastructure;
- Reducing the amount that we fly;

As we develop our Plan we will need to take account of the above, evidence our local approach and develop projects, policies and initiatives to deliver on many of these.

### ***What are the co-benefits of taking action?***

Taking action to combat the climate emergency can have major ancillary or co-benefits in relation to jobs and the economy, health and wellbeing, food/water/energy security, biodiversity and many other issues. For instance, planting trees can also increase biodiversity, transition to electric vehicles can also reduce air quality issues and effective insulation of homes can also reduce adverse health conditions in residents. Understanding these co-benefits is an important reason for taking a strategy-led approach to action.

By maximising the co-benefits of action, rather than simply delivering piecemeal and one-dimensional responses to issues, we can potentially deliver far greater outcomes for the environment, society and the economy. It can also help to identify where climate action can meet statutory duties and reduce costs of service delivery across the public sector which are not immediately apparent. This can help to build business cases for funding and resourcing, and can help to sell the benefits of action to individuals, businesses and partners who do not see climate action as such a priority. Therefore, our action/delivery plan will be developed taking account of these co-benefits.

### ***Target setting and monitoring***

As we develop the Plan we will need to identify a number of sub-targets or performance indicators (below the overarching carbon neutrality and climate resilience targets) on which to monitor our progress. Work is ongoing to identify what these indicators should be, how they should apply, and how and when they will be measured, but we would welcome views on this point. The "direction of travel" for each workstream theme suggests headline goals that such targets and indicators might be organised around.

### ***Funding and resourcing delivery***

Achieving carbon neutrality and climate resilience will require significant investment and resourcing by central Government, councils, businesses and in some cases communities. In the context of local government cuts, existing council budgets and staff resources can only stretch to cover a tiny fraction of the costs and resources needed to take action and work towards achieving these targets. Lobbying central Government to appropriately fund and resource local authorities and make changes to legislation, policy, funding and taxation at a national level is an essential pre-requisite to being able to deliver on our target. Collectively, the Council and our partners and communities will need to look at innovative ways to fund and resource action, and co-ordinate funding bids and work programmes.

## Developing the Action Plan

### **Workstreams**

Responding to the Climate Emergency will require changes to business as usual across all aspects of society. This can be overwhelming to some, and understandably so. For this reason and in the interests of simplifying and breaking down task and project ownership, as well as communicating things and engaging with the public we have taken the decision to break the issue and tasks down into more manageable workstreams through both our own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan and the County-wide Climate Emergency Strategy. Despite this, taking a holistic approach, identifying the co-benefits of action and working together to maximise these is the most likely way to be successful in accessing funding and ultimately delivery. This highlights the importance of strategy, rather than just piecemeal action. The workstreams are:

1. Built Environment
2. Energy
3. Farming and Food
4. Industry, Business and Supply Chain
5. Natural Environment
6. Transport
7. Waste and Resource Management
8. Water
9. Communications and Engagement

“We want to know what you think needs to be done here in Somerset West and Taunton, who should take ownership for this, and where the funding to deliver on your ideas might come from”

This initial Framework takes a lead from research across the county into key issues and objectives for each workstream and the priority themes that have been identified. It then builds on these to outline the direction of travel and an early indication of tasks and commitments related to each workstream to take forward within the district of Somerset West and Taunton. Direction of travel, tasks and commitments are all intended to be indicative early thoughts and we expect to supplement, amend and replace as appropriate through public engagement and consultation over the coming months. We want to know what you think needs to be done here in Somerset West and Taunton, who should take ownership for this, and where the funding to deliver on your ideas might come from. The key early tasks and commitments are essentially where we think action might need to start over the next few years. In some cases they might be specific projects that we are either already committing to, or think might be required. In other cases they might be tasks that we think are necessary as precursors to being able to identify specific projects, such as researching, evidence gathering and exploring options.

## **1. Built Environment**

The Built Environment workstream essentially considers how our towns and villages, buildings and communities, existing and new are constructed, located, powered, heated, function, how resilient they are to the expected local impacts of the climate emergency, and how they need to change in order to align with and contribute towards the Plan's targets. The Built Environment interacts with other workstreams (for instance energy efficiency of buildings under the Energy workstream or access to active travel infrastructure and public transport under the Transport workstream). It is also an area within which Local Authorities can potentially exercise a fair amount of influence and control, through town and country planning, transport planning, regeneration and other development opportunities and council-owned buildings, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies two priority themes for the Built Environment: New Development and Existing Buildings and Communities. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **1.1 New Development**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that all new developments are located in sustainable locations and minimising the need to travel and enabling active and sustainable transport as the primary means of transport;
- Ensure that all new buildings achieve zero carbon by as early a date as reasonably possible and that they are constructed to be resilient to the climate change that is already in motion (considering wider demands placed on development, viability etc.);
- Ensure that all new developments incorporate wider climate resilience and sustainable behaviour encouraging features including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), urban trees, appropriate materials in public realm, cycle storage, waste management etc.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Reviewing implementation and performance of existing planning policies,
- Incorporating strong policy and guidance on development location, transport planning, carbon reduction targets, energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and sustainability requirements into the Local Plan Review Issues and Options document due for consultation later this year as well as other emerging design guides etc.;
- Lobbying Government to change national planning and other policies, in particular responding to the Government's current consultation on proposed changes to Building Regulations to encourage greater national action at an earlier date and/or retaining the ability for local authorities to go above and beyond the minimum standards of Building Regulations;
- Incorporating a specific award category into the proposed Taunton Garden Town Awards Scheme in relation to development that exemplifies action to tackle the climate emergency;
- Ensuring that proposed Council-owned development / regeneration sites currently being planned showcase the art of the possible and are developed as exemplars.

### **1.2 Existing Buildings and Communities**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that pathways for the retrofitting of existing buildings and communities with the above are explored and delivered;
- Ensure that existing buildings are more effectively and efficiently utilised; and
- Ensure that a strategy is developed to address and eradicate fuel poverty issues, particularly prevalent in rural parts of the district.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Researching, categorising and mapping buildings (of all ownerships) with a view to identifying high level retrofit strategies and specific projects for groups/types of buildings/communities;
- Auditing condition, energy and carbon performance of Council-owned buildings including retained housing stock, and committing to delivering further innovative retrofit pilots on Council-owned housing stock over the next year;
- Developing a fuel poverty strategy with partners across the County;
- Exploring potential to simplify, encourage and de-risk action to deliver retrofit to existing buildings and communities through planning and other means for instance through Local Development Orders;
- Identifying empty homes and under-utilised buildings within our existing settlements that could be brought back into use;
- Identifying priority locations and opportunities for delivery of retrofitted SUDS;
- Identifying opportunities for urban tree planting projects, focusing on projects that can deliver on multiple co-benefits for the urban area, preparing bids for grant funding opportunities and delivering on early pilot projects in 2020.

## **2. Energy**

The Energy workstream looks at how we generate, store and consume energy smartly in terms of both heat and power. It considers how we can deliver greater levels of low carbon and renewable energy generation, store this energy so that it is available for use when we need it, improve our levels of energy security, reduce levels of fuel poverty, and improve energy efficiency across all aspects of society. Energy interacts with other workstreams (for instance energy efficiency of buildings under the Built Environment workstream or proliferating Electric Vehicles (EVs) under the Transport workstream). Again, it is an area within which Local Authorities can potentially exercise a fair amount of influence and control, through town and country planning, transport planning, council procurement and operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Energy: Reducing and Shifting Energy Demand; Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Technologies; and Own Estate and Operations. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **2.1 Reducing and Shifting Energy Demand**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that domestic, industrial and transport energy use is reduced and minimised;
- Ensure that where possible, energy use is shifted to periods of peak supply and away from periods of peak demand; and
- Engage the public about the importance and co-benefits of action to reduce and shift energy consumption and how to go about it.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Developing energy efficiency, reduction and usage campaigns to promote which can help signpost people and businesses to relevant support;
- Researching and engaging with key stakeholders such as Western Power Distribution to understand when peaks of electricity supply and demand are expected to be, and what can be done to help people shift times away from periods of peak demand; and
- Incorporating planning policies on reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency in new developments into the Local Plan Review.

### **2.2 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation and Storage Technologies**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that the energy (heat and power) consumed within the district is decarbonised as much and as quickly as possible;
- Identify ways to ensure we maximise and realise the potential for low carbon and renewable energy generation and storage across the district, whilst taking account of major constraints to deployment such as the National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Ensure that local communities benefit directly from new installations by supporting community energy initiatives; and
- Ensure that grid capacity constraints can be overcome or bypassed by exploring opportunities for decentralising supply.

Key early tasks and commitments:



- Working with utilities, developers, community energy companies, town and parish councils and neighbourhood planning groups to raise awareness and interest in developing community energy projects and taking local action, and signposting to potential funding sources (e.g. Rural Community Energy Fund);
- Researching and mapping renewable energy resources (e.g. suitable wind speeds) across the district, conducting a renewable energy 'call for sites' alongside the Local Plan Review consultation, overlaying constraints mapping and re-visiting mothballed renewable energy projects to understand potential generation capacity then collating this and other information into community energy resource packs;
- Exploring potential for heat networks through opportunity mapping;
- Working with Western Power Distribution to fully understand the local electricity grid constraints and opportunities for overcoming; and
- Working with partners across the county to develop an electric vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy and to install and trial charging infrastructure and network innovations across the district.

### **2.3 Own Estate and Operations**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that direct and indirect emissions arising from the Council's own operations are decarbonised as quickly and effectively as possible/viable; and
- Ensure that we use our powers and influence to encourage action by elected members, staff, tenants, suppliers, and partners.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Conducting an assessment of our own corporate energy use to better understand the infrastructure, processes, policies and procurements that contribute and where we best focus efforts;
- Researching the efforts of other local authorities who have taken action to reduce and decarbonise their energy use;
- Launching an internal communications campaign to encourage action to reduce energy demand and promote energy efficiency amongst elected members and staff.
- Immediately switching our own corporate electricity use to renewable sources where possible and exploring longer-term opportunities to decarbonise our energy supply, including within current contracts, opportunities for wider collaborative procurement across the county, power purchase agreements and on-site generation;
- Committing to switching the existing corporate fleet to EV/Hybrid/ULEV at the most appropriate points considering the embodied carbon of new vehicles; and
- Overlaying land and asset ownership mapping with renewable energy and heat opportunity mapping referred to above to identify potential opportunities on Council-owned land and develop specific projects for delivery.

### **3. Farming and Food**

The Food and Farming workstream looks at the environmental impact and both carbon and methane emissions in particular arising from food production and consumption and land management practices. It considers how we look to reduce the impacts arising from the food we consume such as in relation to food miles and livestock emissions, but also how farmland across the district can be managed better to be less carbon intensive, secure environmental enhancements, store more carbon and deliver ecosystem services. Farming and Food interacts with other workstreams (for instance building natural capital and delivering ecosystem services under the Natural Environment workstream or changing land use/management to help slow the flow and reduce downstream flood risk under the Water workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have a relatively small amount of influence and control through statutory processes, though opportunities do exist through town and country planning, council procurement and operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Food and Farming: Reducing Net Emissions; Carbon Storage; Climate Change Adaptation; and Food Consumption. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

#### **3.1 Reducing Emissions**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that emissions associated with farming are reduced whilst simultaneously improving and increasing farming productivity and efficiency.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Researching and engaging with the farming community to identify best practice, raise awareness, build up a picture of current practice and issues and better understand what could incentivise farmers to take more action.

#### **3.2 Carbon Storage**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that the carbon storage potential of farmland within the district is maximised whilst balancing this with the need to produce food and ensure farms remain viable.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Researching and mapping potential opportunities to plant trees, widen and re-connect hedgerows, and change land management practices to improve the carbon storage capacity of farmland in the district;
- Researching and mapping potential opportunities to re-wild and re-instate major carbon sequestering features such as saltmarshes, peatlands and wetlands;
- Lobbying Government to ensure that future iterations of the national Environment Plan and any replacement subsidy systems encourage more sustainable land management practices to reduce carbon emissions, encourage sequestration and deliver wider ecosystem services;
- Engaging with landowners and the farming community on what measures they are already undertaking, raise awareness and support them to take action on their land; and
- Exploring potential to incorporate policies into Local Plan Review supporting rural diversification where it will enable landowners and farmers to change practices to more viably deliver ecosystem services.



### **3.3 Climate Change Adaptation**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that the agricultural sector, farmland and food production are prepared, adapted to and resilient to the climate change that is projected to occur;
- Ensure that opportunities to deliver wider adaptation improvements on farmland is realised, whilst balancing the need to produce food locally, protect our local environment and landscapes and biodiversity and ensure that farms remain viable.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Identifying specific crop types that are well adapted to projected climatic conditions;
- Researching and evidencing the economic and co-benefits case for transitioning and diversifying current practice into more resilient and lower impact practices;
- Engaging with the farming community to raise awareness, celebrate best practice and build resilience into their future plans.

### **3.4 Food Consumption**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure greater public understanding and knowledge about the carbon and environmental footprints of their diets and food choices;
- Ensure that all sectors of society are given reasonable and realistic opportunities to reduce the carbon and environmental footprints of their diets without financially or otherwise overburdening the most vulnerable; and
- Ensure that wherever possible, the carbon and environmental footprints of food produced, packaged and/or sold in the district is minimised.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Engaging with the public and businesses to understand levels of existing knowledge, and the barriers people face to reduce meat consumption and adopt more balanced, locally-sourced and environmentally conscious diets;
- Researching tools and incentives to help communicate impacts and encourage more sustainable behaviours around food;
- Exploring opportunities to develop new allotments and orchards and enable community use of appropriate waste and under-used land to grow food;
- Committing to auditing and improving the carbon and environmental impacts of food sold in Council-owned outlets (e.g. leisure centres) and in corporate refreshments;
- Launching an internal communications campaign to educate and encourage action to reduce meat consumption and carbon and environmental impacts of food choices amongst elected members and staff.

## **4. Industry, Business and Supply Chain**

The Industry, Business and Supply Chain workstream looks at the carbon emissions and wider environmental impact of industry and businesses across the district, including the Council's own corporate processes. It considers how businesses can make changes to their own operations, but also become an influencer through their supply chains, encouraging employees and by become catalysts for change within their sector and community, whilst building workforce resilience. Industry, Business and Supply Chain interacts other workstreams (for instance switching corporate energy supplies to renewables or developing on-site generation under the Energy workstream or switching corporate fleets to EV under the Transport workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have a reasonable amount of influence and control through economic development and inward investment strategies, council procurement and operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Industry, Business and Supply Chain: Emissions Reduction and Stakeholder Engagement; Data Collection and Analysis; and Business and Workforce Resilience to Climate Change. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **4.1 Emissions Reduction and Stakeholder Engagement**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that businesses based and operating within the district are able to view tackling the climate emergency as opportunities to innovate, enhance productivity and mitigate risks going forward, and are actively exploring or taking action to reduce direct emissions and combat supply chain emissions;
- Ensure that best practice action by businesses is recognised and shared; and
- Ensure that businesses act as ambassadors for action with their employees, consumers and partners, showcasing the commercial and productivity opportunities arising out of innovation and change.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Developing a communications plan and peer network to engage with businesses on how they can reduce their direct and supply chain emissions, why it is important to do so, what barriers they face in doing so, what the benefits of doing so can be, and to showcase best practice;
- Integrating low carbon and sustainability criteria, and a specific low carbon business award category into existing business awards schemes to celebrate and recognise business action to tackle their direct and supply chain emissions;
- Identifying large business energy users and exploring ways to manage demand, reduce energy consumption, tackle supply chain emissions and green their energy supply;
- Holding multiple local business "Summits" to engage businesses and identify best practice already being delivered;
- Working to encourage and adopt a "design for sustainability" approach, in which new products are designed to minimise waste and to be broken down for reuse or recycling;
- Conducting an assessment of our own corporate emissions and environmental impacts to better understand the processes, policies and procurements that contribute and where we best focus efforts; and
- Building the need to provide evidence of climate action into the Council's procurement processes, funding agreements and contracts.

#### **4.2 Data Collection and Analysis**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that sufficient business emissions data is available, reported and verified to enable effective monitoring of progress.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Working across the county to design an environmental management and audit toolkit to help businesses assess and reduce their direct and supply chain emissions.

#### **4.3 Business and Workforce Resilience to Climate Change**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure transition of the local economy to a low carbon future, both in terms of boosting business specifically involved in the green economy, and by enabling and encouraging all businesses to be compatible with a low carbon local economy.
- Ensure that businesses understand potential future impacts associated with the climate emergency, and that they are supported in efforts to become more resilient to the effects; and
- Ensure that workforces are protected, skills and employability are preserved, and a 'just transition' is delivered.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Providing certainty to the green economy over potential project pipeline (e.g. renewable energy and sustainable construction, environmental consultancy and technologies, including sustainable construction) through incorporation of strong policies into Local Plan Review;
- Seeking to develop our local technology research and development sector by encouraging inward investment in relation to green innovation that can help the local area to deliver mitigation and adaptation opportunities and solutions for use locally and export to other areas to help address the climate emergency globally;
- Identifying and working with businesses likely to be particularly susceptible to projected climatic changes to reduce risks and build resilience;
- Working across the county to research and understand the local skills and employment challenges relating to the transition to a low carbon economy and the specific businesses and sectors in which the greatest skills gaps will exist;
- Engaging with local businesses to understand the impacts that reducing emissions and implementing climate action could have on workforces and business viability and working with businesses likely to see greatest impacts to find appropriate solutions;
- Understanding how different business models (such as adopted by businesses responding to digital economy opportunities) might support the transition to a low carbon economy; and
- Identifying the staff resource capacity of the Council to effectively deliver and implement the Council's responsibilities identified across all workstreams in the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.

## **5. Natural Environment**

The Natural Environment workstream looks at the land, water, air, trees, plants and wildlife that make up the natural world around us. It considers how human activity is impacting on these elements and how predicted changes in climate could impact them. It also explores how we can protect and enhance our natural environment to increase sequestration, improve air quality, strengthen biodiversity and improve land management. Natural Environment interacts other workstreams (for instance identifying areas for tree and woodland planting and changing land management practices under the Farming and Food workstream or exploring potential for biodiversity or environmental net gain from new developments under the Built Environment workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have some influence and control through town and country planning, council assets and operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Natural Environment: Sequestration and Land Usage Change; Landscape Resilience; and Co-ordination and Data Collection. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **5.1 Sequestration and Land Usage Change**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that across the district, opportunities for tree and woodland planting, natural regeneration, environmental protection, habitat creation and climate adaptation are maximised and potential realised;
- Ensure that, working with partners, a consistent new approach to land management practices is agreed and delivered across the district to build on the above and deliver against the Pollinator Action Plan; and
- Ensure that the Council provides leadership by ensuring our own actions and operations are as environmentally friendly as possible and empowering residents to take responsibility for managing areas of land appropriately.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Progressively changing how we manage our parks and open spaces towards less intensive practices that align with and respond to the climate emergency and increase biodiversity;
- Preparing a community 'call for sites' to empower residents to manage open spaces on behalf of the Council and partners in line with the Pollinator Action Plan;
- Mapping and quantifying opportunities for wildflower meadows, habitat creation and tree planting schemes across the district, overlaying Council and other public sector land ownerships to identify potential early deliverable projects. Initiating 3 or 4 flagship pilot areas in year one;
- Building on the above mapping exercise, prepare bids for round 2 of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund and other available tree planting and woodland creation grants in 2020 and taking opportunities for early delivery;
- Building on the 'Green Makeover' ideas identified in the Taunton Garden Town Vision including promoting a scheme for residents to plant apple trees in every garden and increase tree cover;
- Transforming our Council-owned horticultural nurseries into best practice facilities to grow our own trees, reduce the costs and potentially emissions associated with transporting trees to be planted in the district from elsewhere,

and support the move to less intensive and lower carbon management practices; and

- Exploring potential to incorporate proposals for biodiversity or environmental net gain and protection of soil quality into Local Plan Review.

### **5.2 Landscape Resilience**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure our landscape and ecosystems are adapted and resilient to projected climatic changes; and
- Ensure that an appropriate balance is found between the mitigation and adaptation benefits and local landscape and visual amenity and other short/medium/long term environmental impacts of emerging projects and proposals.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Factoring landscape sensitivity and biodiversity and habitat vulnerability in to proposed renewable energy and tree planting opportunity mapping exercises in particular;
- Incorporating appropriate policy wording in relation to striking the balance between landscape impacts and wider mitigation and adaptation benefits into Local Plan Review; and
- Committing to identify a Member Champion for trees and deliver Member and officer technical training in order to raise knowledge and awareness within the Council.

### **5.3 Co-ordination and Data Collection**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that a coherent, complementary and holistic approach to mitigation and adaptation is taken across the Natural Environment, Farming and Food and Water workstreams and all potential partners.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Collating and sharing relevant data and evidence across the workstreams and with partners to ensure all projects and proposals can be grounded in the same evidence base;
- Engaging and working with internal and external stakeholders across these workstreams collectively in order to avoid duplication and divergence;
- Building on existing working relationships and partnerships with other organisations and community groups to collectively develop and deliver projects.

## **6. Transport**

The Transport workstream looks at how we move and travel and considers ways to create an accessible, efficient and fit for purpose carbon neutral transportation system for the people and businesses of the district. It explores how we can reduce the need to travel, increase active travel and levels of public, shared and community transport, and decarbonise personal and logistics transport. Transport interacts other workstreams (for instance exploring strong transport planning policies under the Built Environment workstream or development of an electric vehicle (EV) charging strategy under the Energy workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have a good level of influence and control through transport planning, town and country planning, regeneration and other development opportunities, council operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Transport: Public Transport; Personal Transport; and Logistics, Planning and Innovation. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **6.1 Public Transport**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure the district is well served by an efficient and fit for purpose public and community transport system to make it the easier option for residents and business people for both short and long journeys;
- Ensure that public and community transport is decarbonised; and
- Ensure that barriers to the use of public and community transport are overcome and encouragements and incentives enable public and community transport to become the default choice for most people where active travel is not possible.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Continuing and redoubling efforts to re-open Wellington train station and reinstate effective local services;
- Re-visiting Taunton Bus Rapid Transit proposals and exploring potential for a wider mass rapid transit system along the A38;
- Exploring opportunities to transition bus fleets to electric/hybrid/ULEV with bus companies;
- Explore further proposals for a "liberteen" bus pass for 16-18 year olds in Further Education;
- Exploring ways to electrify, improve the attractiveness of, and supplement the viability of the Taunton Park and Ride service;
- Exploring how technology and subsidy could be used to enable public or community transport services to be viably enhanced or reinstated to rural communities;
- Reviewing the strategy for public, workplace and private parking spaces and charges in our town centres to ensure that they support the push to public and community transport;
- Lobbying Government and operators to electrify the mainline rail network running through the district;
- Engaging with Somerset County Council, the Peninsula Transport Shadow Sub National Transport Body and public and community transport companies to collectively work through barriers to use of public transport and identify solutions.

### **6.2 Personal Transport**

Direction of travel:



- Ensure that active travel (e.g. cycling, walking, running) is the default choice for shorter journeys, with public, community and shared transport all being preferable to personal vehicle use for all other journeys;
- Ensure that infrastructure is well thought through, funded, delivered, improved and transformed to enable this to be the case, with active travel infrastructure being coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive;
- Ensure that barriers to active travel are minimised and that the public are informed and incentivised to choose active travel for suitable journeys;
- Ensure that the public and businesses are well informed about EVs (benefits and impacts) and that EV charging infrastructure is delivered in appropriate locations across the district to support transition; and
- Ensure the public and businesses are well informed about the impacts of their transport choices generally, and in particular air travel.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Incorporating the transport hierarchy alluded to above into policies of the Local Plan Review, project development, regeneration developments and funding decisions, and exploring potential for reduced and car-free developments in appropriate locations;
- Researching and evidencing the specific local physical, mental, and perceived barriers to active travel in different circumstances and in different parts of the district in order to more effectively target and support engagement, education, incentives and interventions;
- Working with Somerset County Council, Taunton Area Cycle Campaign and other partners to develop detailed and costed designs for projects identified in the Taunton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and explore potential to develop LCWIPs for other towns in the district. Ensuring that relevant and costed projects are included in any SCC bid to the Local Pinch Point Fund in January 2020;
- Exploring opportunities for further walking and cycling routes such as between Wellington and Taunton and between the Comeytrowe-Trull Garden Community and Vivary Park/South Road in Taunton;
- Building on the 'Moving Cleaner, Moving Smarter' ideas identified in the Taunton Garden Town Vision including prioritising cycling and walking schemes for all abilities and giving more street space to buses and cyclists and improving the walking experience of the town;
- Working with partners to develop car club and pool bike/e-bike schemes in both urban and rural parts of the district, particularly centred around transport hubs;
- Looking into ways to encourage and incentivise staff to commute and conduct business mileage by walking and cycling;
- Working across the county to develop an EV Charging Strategy for Somerset, incorporating appropriate policies relating to EV charge points into the Local Plan Review, and leading by example by working with partners to install charge points in Council-owned car parks and other public spaces across the district;
- Delivering projects funded through the Council's Community Charge Point Fund;
- Exploring ways to reasonably deter personal car use, whilst protecting the most vulnerable in society and ensuring they are not the hardest hit;
- Exploring the potential effects and impacts of reducing speed limits in our town centres and on key approach roads; and
- Progressively moving our own fleet of vehicles to EV/hybrid/ULEV taking account of research into full life-cycle impacts;
- Exploring the potential to influence EV take-up in taxi companies via licencing and other measures.

### **6.3 Logistics, Planning and Innovation**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that the need to travel to access services and employment bases is reduced;
- Ensure innovative low carbon solutions are developed to address rural poverty associated with transport and accessibility;
- Ensure that technological advances and innovations support and enable cleaner and smarter use of the transport network, public modal choice and logistics;

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Actively working to further improve the coverage, speed, resilience and reliability of digital connectivity across the district, including full fibre broadband and 5G networks;
- Incorporating digital connectivity requirements and requirements for new homes to be within a reasonable proximity of basic services into policies of the Local Plan Review;
- Building on the 'Moving Cleaner, Moving Smarter' proposal in the Taunton Garden Town Vision for transport in the town to be smart, connected and electrified;
- Delivering on existing and emerging plans and proposals for Taunton town centre pedestrianisation schemes, and exploring opportunities for further schemes in relevant locations around the district;
- Exploring ways to use technology to inform and incentivise the public to make more sustainable travel choices such as through real time information and gamification;
- Actively working to reduce the corporate need to travel for work-related meetings and operations and to enable shared travel options where necessary; and
- Exploring opportunities for smart, shared and active last-mile delivery solutions in feasible locations around the district.



## **7. Waste**

The Waste workstream looks at the waste produced across the district and considers how best to improve management within the waste hierarchy of refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover. It explores how we can build the value of certain waste materials to develop a more circular economy and how we can use our position of community leadership to change habits and practices within our communities. Waste interacts other workstreams (for instance building a more circular economy and engaging with businesses over their waste management under the Industry, Business and Supply Chain workstream or requiring best practice waste management in new developments under the Built Environment workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have a good level of influence and control through statutory waste responsibilities, town and country planning, council operations, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Waste: Commercial Waste and the Circular Economy; Residential Waste and Behaviour Change; and Public Sector Waste. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **7.1 Commercial Waste and the Circular Economy**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure businesses across the district are more aware of the impacts of their commercial waste and are working to reduce waste and improve recycling rates;
- Ensure considerable improvements are made in the level of commercial waste recycled and reused across the district; and
- Ensure significant steps are made towards development of a circular economy across the district/county/region.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Engaging with businesses through Locality Leads and Business Improvement Districts to identify current waste management practices, celebrate and share best practice and identify what support and guidance they need to improve;
- Exploring the development of a collaborative procurement pilot with businesses in Taunton town centre to secure greater levels of recycling and separated waste collections for associated businesses more akin to domestic collections;
- Continuing to engage with the University of Exeter-led ExeMPLaR research project in building a regional circular plastics economy, and identifying opportunities to trial and showcase proposals arising from this work; and
- Exploring potential for trials of Deposit Return Schemes and Extended Producer Responsibility with local businesses.

### **7.2 Residential Waste and Behaviour Change**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that we continue to support the direction of the Somerset Waste Partnership and the high level ambitions identified through the Somerset Climate Emergency Framework including improving our already very good levels of domestic waste recycling, reducing domestic food waste and diverting residual waste away from landfill to generate energy;
- Ensure that forthcoming changes in recycling and refuse collections are effectively communicated and our residents understand why they are required and support them; and
- Ensure new development fosters sustainable waste management behaviours.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Communicating forthcoming changes to domestic refuse and recycling collections to be brought in by "Recycle More", and the "Slim my waste, feed my face" food waste reduction campaign;
- Engaging with residents to improve understanding of the waste hierarchy and how their waste is managed;
- Incorporating requirements for sustainable waste management to be built into new developments into the Local Plan Review and emerging design guides;
- Publicising existing and exploring opportunities for new community reuse and repair shops and engaging with the public to raise awareness; and
- Working to decarbonise waste operations (collection, haulage, processing and energy recovery).

### **7.3 Public Sector Waste**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that Council controlled waste is effectively reduced and all remaining waste is appropriately redirected to reuse, recycling or energy production;
- Ensure that the Council removes single-use items from Council operations by as early a date as reasonably possible;
- Ensure that the Council leads by example as a role model to other local authorities and local businesses; and
- Ensure waste does not enter the wider environment (in particular watercourses).

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Baseline Council internal service waste streams, single-use items and end uses, and committing to specific measures to reduce the amount of waste we produce, improve our levels of reuse and recycling and diverting residual waste away from landfill to energy generation;
- Exploring ways to reduce waste from deliveries and improve waste management in supply chains;
- Incorporating improved public recycling and litter bins into Council regeneration developments and Public Space Improvement Projects in Taunton town centre and exploring opportunities for rollout in other parts of the district; and
- Setting up a community of practice with other public sector bodies and local businesses to work collectively towards improving public sector and commercial waste management across the district.

## **8. Water**

The Water workstream looks at how we mitigate and adapt to the water-related risks posed by climate change (such as increased flood risk, drought risk and water stress). It also considers our impacts on water quality as well as the significant energy demands associated with water and waste water treatment and how we can reduce demand. Water interacts other workstreams (for instance identifying opportunities to plant trees and manage land differently to slow the flow under the Natural Environment and Farming and Food workstreams or requiring new developments to incorporate water efficiency measures under the Built Environment workstream). It is an area within which Local Authorities have a good level of influence and control through statutory risk management authority and coastal protection authority responsibilities, health and wellbeing responsibilities, town and country planning and council land ownerships, as well as acting as an enabler and supporter for others. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Water: Strategy and Policy; Data Collection and Analysis; and Schemes and Initiatives. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **8.1 Strategy and Policy**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that all Council strategies and policies are informed by, reflect and align with up to date flood risk and coastal change data including the most recent climate change projections and associated risks;
- Ensure that flood and coastal change mitigation and adaptation strategies are in place for areas of the district that are at most risk;
- Ensure that new development does not adversely impact water quality;
- Ensure that energy required to treat water and waste water locally is reduced and decarbonised and opportunities to generate energy from water and treatment are harnessed where suitable and viable; and
- Ensure that strategies and policies are developed to reduce water demand and losses across all sectors.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Incorporating appropriate and necessary policies regarding flood risk, sequential test, coastal change management, water quality protection and water efficiency into the Local Plan Review;
- Incorporating guidance on managing water and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in developments into emerging design guides drawing on experiences and schemes delivered through the SPONGE 2020 project amongst others;
- Endorsing and publishing the Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements (TSFAI) Project Delivery Plan in November 2019 and committing to working with partners to deliver identified early projects;
- Exploring potential necessity for further flood mitigation and adaptation plans (including frameworks for monitoring and managing retreat) to be developed for other parts of the district as identified to be at high risk through the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) or otherwise;
- Working with the Natural Environment workstream to identify and develop tree planting opportunities which can directly reduce runoff and improve flood management;
- Completing the Taunton Waterways Action Plan;

- Incorporating projects and proposals from the TSFAI and Taunton Waterways Action Plan into the Taunton Garden Town Delivery Plan;
- Committing to identify a Member Champion for water and deliver Member and officer technical training in order to raise knowledge and awareness within the Council; and
- Exploring how water and waste water treatment processes can improve energy efficiency, carbon intensity and renewable energy generation with key stakeholders.

### **8.2 Data Collection and Analysis**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure resilience to flooding by understanding and mapping the risks of fluvial, coastal, ground and surface water flooding across the district and ensuring they are up to date and incorporate the latest climate projections;
- Ensure resilience to water emergencies by understanding the risks of drought, water stress, storms and peak water locally, incorporating the latest climate projections; and
- Ensure effective management, monitoring and forecasting of flood risk, water quantity and quality, and water usage underpins our strategies, policies and projects.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Publishing the recently completed Level 1 SFRA and developing the Level 2 SFRA as the Local Plan Review progresses;
- Analysing and publishing the projected localised impacts of climate change; and
- Exploring opportunities to improve local data gathering and monitoring through partnership working and trialling innovative new technologies as part of intelligent solutions.

### **8.3 Schemes and Initiatives**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure projects identified in strategies are delivered in priority order;
- Ensure that opportunities to extend and build on successful projects are explored and taken;
- Ensure that existing schemes and infrastructure are resilient to the most recent climate projections and kept under review;
- Ensure that schemes and initiatives are developed in partnership with multi-agency stakeholders;
- Ensure that we reduce water usage and management across Council operations; and
- Ensure that public and businesses across the district are aware and actively working to reduce water demand and losses.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Progressing projects identified in the TSFAI in line with the recommended priority order;
- Exploring opportunities for further SUDS retrofit schemes around the district, building on the SPONGE 2020 project;
- Exploring opportunities for cost-effective natural flood management and land management solutions building on the FWAG Triple C project;
- Auditing existing schemes and infrastructure to ensure that they are compliant with latest climate projections;

- Baseline water use and management within our Council operations and processes with a view to identifying ways to improve our current performance;
- Identifying large water users across the district and working with these businesses and sectors to develop water saving initiatives and develop best practice;
- Researching and mapping major water quality influencers across the district with a view to developing appropriate solutions; and
- Engaging with the public and businesses to raise awareness of the energy and carbon footprint associated with water, how they can reduce water usage and losses and the benefits of doing so.

DRAFT

## **9. Communications and Engagement**

The Communications and Engagement workstream ultimately looks to deliver carbon neutral lives with confidence by embarking on a mission to help shape new climate behaviours. It looks at how we get the message about the need for climate action out to the public, how we grow confidence and knowledge in the public to take action and ensure that our plans and projects are palatable to, informed by and owned and actioned by our communities. Communications and Engagement interacts with all other workstreams in one way or another and will be vital to the success of delivering action. It is an area within which Local Authorities have a good level of influence as we have interactions with almost all persons in the district to different degrees through our various services. The County-wide Framework identifies three priority themes for Communications and Engagement: Engagement and Consultation; Internal Communications and External Communications. The SWT Framework builds on these themes to identify directions of travel for each theme and key tasks which could help to see early progress and support more detailed action and project development.

### **9.1 Engagement and Consultation**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that we enable collective action and collective solutions to be developed; and
- Ensure that our engagement and consultation is inclusive.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Publishing this Framework document and future iterations of the Plan both online and in a small number of public locations in hard copy;
- Delivering an online survey to support consultation;
- Organising a Climate Summit in Taunton;
- Organising a Business Climate Summit in Taunton;
- Working closely with stakeholders including town and parish councils to organise multiple business and community roadshow events across the district;
- Organising engagement events with schools and colleges across the district;
- Engaging directly with key identified stakeholders; and
- Exploring opportunities for ongoing engagement with communities and stakeholders.

### **9.2 Internal Communication**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that we enable, inspire and grow confidence in abilities for action with staff and Members both in work and at home;
- Ensure officers and Members are equipped and empowered to disseminate the need for action and what people can do to their own personal networks;
- Ensure that officers and Members not directly involved in production of the Plan, actions or projects get the opportunity to effectively influence and input to their development.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Developing the Plan, actions and projects with the Climate Change Member Working Group;
- Organising Member and staff briefing sessions and learning and development sessions; and

- Communicating on issues, action and solutions via the Member and staff intranet, emails and newsletter.

### **9.3 External Communication**

Direction of travel:

- Ensure that we are open and transparent in all communications with the public;
- Ensure we use our position of influence across the district to communicate key messages about the need for action, how we and others are taking action and ultimately inspire and build confidence in the public about how they can make a difference to achieving our target;
- Ensure we use a wide range of communication methods to improve the spread of the community that we reach;
- Ensure that we effectively foster the need for collective and individual responsibility and action, and communicate the extent of the Council's role and influence;
- Ensure that we are aware of and consider carefully the mental health impacts of both actions and communication of the impacts of inaction in relation to growing concerns around "eco-anxiety"; and
- Ensure that we coherently and effectively communicate the need for national legislative, regulatory and policy change to central Government in close co-operation with other local authorities and partners.

Key early tasks and commitments:

- Launching a dedicated webpage within the Council's website to host updates, key documents, consultations, surveys, case studies and other materials;
- Launching a communications campaign to support consultation on each iteration of the County-wide strategy and SWT Plan; and
- Developing and launching a clear and simple awareness raising communications campaign focused on providing people with inspiration and ideas for action and raising awareness of the consequences of different activities.



## **Taking action**

Our best chance of achieving carbon neutrality lies in taking co-ordinated action aligned to a well thought through strategy. This enables us to maximise any co-benefits, achieve economies of scale, improve attractiveness to investment, and ensure we are more aware of secondary consequences and any conflicting ideas/projects.

However, it is action (and early action) that really matters. It is important that we don't stifle projects that are clearly good ideas and which will contribute to meeting our target. We have already taken action that contributes towards achieving our target, and we are continuing to develop and deliver other actions alongside production of the County-wide Strategy and SWT Plan. Some more recent actions are briefly summarised below.

### ***Taunton Garden Town Vision***

Our target to achieve carbon neutrality and climate resilience featured heavily in the Garden Town Vision document which we adopted in July, and will continue to shape the Garden Town Delivery Plan, Charter and Checklist and Public Realm Design Guide.

### ***Disclosure***

In July we disclosed the district's emissions and the Council's current climate action to CDP – a not-for-profit charity which collates, aggregates and publishes data from companies and cities/authorities across the globe, tracks progress in reducing emissions and wider environmental impacts and evaluates and benchmarks performance against peers. We have not yet received the evaluation of our submission.

### ***Climate Emergency governance***

Over the last few months we have set up internal and cross-authority governance arrangements to oversee and agree development of the County-wide Strategy and SWT Plan which will enable us to work effectively to deliver the strategy documents and ultimately deliver the actions identified.

### ***Financial support for Taunton Park and Ride***

In July we agreed to provide additional financial contributions to support the viable delivery of Taunton's Park and Ride service until March 2020 and explore options to improve its ongoing viability.

### ***Local Plan Review***

We recently announced the timetable for our Local Plan Review, which will see us consult on an Issues & Options document later this year. The Local Plan represents an important opportunity to deliver on some important tasks set out in this Framework.

### ***Frack Free Declaration***

In July Full Council passed a motion to declare Somerset West and Taunton a Frack Free Zone, oppose unconventional onshore oil and gas exploration on land we own or have an interest in, avoid investment in companies involved with these activities, call on Somerset County Council and Exmoor National Park Authority to pass similar motions and put planning policies in place to include a presumption against such operations and to lobby Government to ban the practice.

### ***Community Charge Point Fund***

In August we wrote to town and parish councils across the district inviting them to submit funding bids to install community EV charge points in publicly accessible locations. The Council has set aside a £20,000 pot to deliver successful proposals.



### ***Strategic Flood Risk Assessment***

In July we completed a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment covering Somerset West and Taunton and South Somerset districts. This provides an important baseline of current and future flood risk across the district and is the basis upon which we will need to develop future mitigation and adaptation strategies and projects.

### ***Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements Project Delivery Plan***

In October we will be publishing the Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements PDP which provides a framework and costed programme of works to deliver protection to Taunton against fluvial flooding.

### ***SPONGE 2020***

Somerset County Council and Westcountry Rivers Trust have led on development of this European funded project which works with local people to develop innovative, nature-based solutions to address surface water flood risk. This summer, raingardens and sustainable urban drainage systems have been installed with community help to Middleway, Lyngford Park Primary School and Holway Park Primary School.

### ***St James Street pedestrianisation***

In May we worked closely with Somerset County Council to close St James Street in Taunton to traffic as part of a 12 month pedestrianisation trial to improve public space in the town centre. Monitoring of impacts is ongoing.

### ***Committee reports***

We have recently added requirements to assess and summarise the climate and sustainability implications of recommendations to Council committees, specifically referencing the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and carbon neutrality target. This will help to ensure that Members and officers are cognisant of how the decisions being made will impact on this commitment.

### ***Procurement***

We are in the process of incorporating wording into our procurement processes that will aim to ensure that our suppliers and partners are actively working towards reducing their carbon and environmental footprints.

### ***Council house solar panel installations***

In 2015/16, we installed solar panels on 247 council houses at a cost of around £1.5 million. The panels now provide renewable electricity, and generate an income for the Council through Feed in Tariff receipts. Initial projections suggest that the panels might save in the region of 11,015 tonnes of carbon over a 20 year period.

### ***Wellington Warmer Homes***

In 2016, the Council began a pilot scheme to identify and tackle some of the most energy inefficient and fuel poorest of its retained housing stock. The project focused on 111 non-traditional homes in Wellington which were collectively subjected to a fabric first upgrades including new windows, external wall insulation, positive input ventilation systems and in some cases air source heat pumps. The scheme has been branded a complete success and all of the properties increased their EPC ratings from E/F up to C.

## What next?

Over the next 9-12 months we will be working up the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan. This Framework document represents the first step of that process and proposes a direction of travel for us to work around as we develop action plans and identify projects to help us meet and monitor progress against our targets.

This document sets out where we think we need to head on a variety of issues, but we want to hear what you think and listen to your proposals for action. We want to know what you are already doing and if it is something that could be rolled out to other areas and communities.

We want the Plan to be influenced by but also owned by the people, businesses and communities of the district, so over November and December we will be consulting on this Framework document.

You can send us your thoughts and comments on the Framework document by responding to our online survey at [redacted], by emailing [redacted], or by writing to [redacted] or by talking to us at one of the engagement events planned across the district:

Insert arrangements for engagement events here...

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

Hard copies of the Framework can be viewed at Deane House in Taunton and West Somerset House in Wilton, as well as at the following libraries:

[redacted]

Following our initial consultation and engagement on this Framework we will be developing a Draft Plan. The Draft Plan will begin to identify specific actions and projects which are required to achieve our targets. We expect the Draft Plan to be completed in early Spring 2020, with a view to further consultation and engagement, before completion of the final Plan in Summer 2020.

## References

---

- <sup>1</sup> UN Environment (2018) Business unusual: the shift to "carbon neutral" available at <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/business-unusual-shift-carbon-neutral> [accessed 06/08/2019]
- <sup>2</sup> UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the 2018 UN General Assembly available at <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-10/secretary-generals-remarks-climate-change-delivered> [accessed 05/09/2019]
- <sup>3</sup> IPCC (2018) *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*, available at [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/SR15\\_Full\\_Report\\_Low\\_Res.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/SR15_Full_Report_Low_Res.pdf) [accessed 05/09/2019], p.4
- <sup>4</sup> IPCC, p.vi
- <sup>5</sup> IPCC, p.33
- <sup>6</sup> The CCC (2019) *Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming*, available at <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/> [accessed 05/09/2019]
- <sup>7</sup> World Bank (2018) *Gross Domestic Product 2018* available at <https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf> [accessed 26/09/2019]
- <sup>8</sup> UN Environment (2018) Business unusual: the shift to "carbon neutral" available at <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/business-unusual-shift-carbon-neutral> [accessed 06/08/2019]
- <sup>9</sup> The CCC (2019) *Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming*, available at <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/> [accessed 05/09/2019]



## Climate Member Working Group Minutes

### Meeting

4.30pm to 5.45pm, 30 September 2019 in The Ground Floor Conference Room at The Deane House in Taunton

**Cllr Attendees:** Peter Pilkington, Federica Smith-Roberts, Loretta Whetlor, Dave Mansell, Brenda Weston, Dixie Darch, Chris Morgan and Gwil Wren.

**Programme Team Attendees:** Brendan Cleere, Graeme Thompson

**Democratic Services Attendees:** Andrew Randell

### Apologies and minutes.

An apology was received by Robert Downes.

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted as a correct record.

**1. Housekeeping** (Brendan) Expectations and processes for feedback and influencing the final documents.

- Following the declaration of the Climate Change Emergency in February, there were challenges experienced with the limited amount of time the framework had taken.
- Early projects were requested to be put into the budget process and how these projects would fit into the priorities.
- A Commitment was made for the working group to be involved on the proposals and the budget process so that key tasks would be explored and budgets assigned.
- Concerns were expressed about the timescales of fitting climate change projects into budget setting processes.
- NALC - Save the planet conference agenda was being held on October 28th 2019
- The Heart of the South West and LEP meeting was being held in November focusing on Climate Change, as a result of this, it likely that all authorities would pen a letter to Central Government as a result of this.
- The need to consult with adjoining authorities was emphasised and concerns were expressed over potentially underplaying role of the natural environment.
- There were implications for planning committee members along with the need for specific training.
- The group were in favour of having a key member for each workstream – this would be considered.

**Resolved** that:- The working group looking forward to considering more details projects and proposals once the Framework had been considered at Full Council.

## **2. Somerset Climate Emergency Framework** (Graeme/Brendan/All)

Presenting the County-wide Framework document and then group discussion

- Land use, Land use change and forestry was requested to be mentioned on page 4.
- It was requested for consumption vs territorial emission mentioned and checked.
- Page 8 was considered too negative leading to paralysis by analysis. The need was understood but the balance is wrong. Trialling was important to show people why change isn't always that bad...
- Further concerns were expressed that this felt too Council-centric and not focusing about what everyone can be doing.

**Resolved** that:- the update be noted.

## **3. SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan Framework Document**

(Graeme) Presenting the Somerset West and Taunton Framework document and then group discussion.

- The Next Working Group were to have the discussion about specific things the Council could and are doing now including about retrofitting of council housing stock.
- An aim was to focus on blazing a trail on the Built, Natural Environment and Transport but realised the difficulties that would be encountered.
- Councillors were keen to be interacting with the public on this.
- The group were keen on resourcing a dedicated climate change officer. Wider recognition that budget issues, re-prioritisation of existing resources, and potentially monitoring how the Mendip officer role worked
- The group agreed the amendments to remove "immensely" and "everyone" from top of page 8 - and add "widely" before owned.

**Resolved** that:- the update be noted.

## **4. AOB and next meeting**

- The Group agreed for the next meeting to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

## **6.00pm - Close**

If you have any queries about the agenda please contact Robert Downes from the Programme Team by phone on 01984 635 190 or by email at [r.downes@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:r.downes@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk).

## SWT Scrutiny Committee - 9 October 2019

Present: Councillor Gwil Wren (Chair)

Councillors Libby Lisgo, Ian Aldridge, Sue Buller, Dixie Darch, John Hassall, John Hunt, Sue Lees, Dave Mansell, Hazel Prior-Sankey, Nick Thwaites, Danny Wedderkopp, Simon Coles, Caroline Ellis and Vivienne Stock-Williams

Officers:

Also Present: Councillors Marcus Kravis, Janet Lloyd, Federica Smith-Roberts, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Loretta Whetlor and Peter Pilkington

(The meeting commenced at 6.15pm)

### 33. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Cavill, Stone and Wheatley.

The following attended as a substitutes:- Stock-Williams, Ellis and Coles.

### 34. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee

(Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4 September circulated with the agenda)

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4 September be confirmed as a correct record.

### 35. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr L Baker	All Items	Cheddon Fitzpaine & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Barr	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Blaker	All Items	Wiveliscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr P Bolton	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr N Cavill	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Davies	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Ellis	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Govier	All Items	SCC & Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Herbert	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Hunt	All Items	SCC	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Lees	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr J Lloyd	All Items	Wellington & Sampford Arundel	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Mansell	All Items	Wiveliscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Milne	All Items	Porlock	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Morgan	All Items	Stogursey	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Nicholls	All Items	Comeytrove	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Peters	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All Items	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Prior-Sankey	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Rigby	All Items	SCC & Bishops Lydeard	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr V Stock-Williams	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr T Venner	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr A Wedderkopp	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Wedderkopp	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter	Personal	Spoke and Voted



		Trustee		
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

36. **Public Participation**

Alan Debenham invited all Councillors to an all-day seminar at Somerset Cooperative Services (10 East Reach) setting up green energy cooperatives on 5th November between 10am and 4pm.

Roger House provided a statement to the Committee summarised below:-

- The Council should enable all Somerset young people from 16 to 21 years a big discount card for travel in our local area for travel to work, college and courting. To help social mobility and combat the high cost of cars for younger people. Similar to Cardiff and the campaign by Citizens UK for 16 to 25 year olds.
- Support private coaches and meet the Confederation of Passenger Transport to achieve coach friendly status for towns within the district.

37. **Somerset Climate Emergency Framework and SWT Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan. Report of the Strategy Specialist (attached).**

In 2019 the five Somerset Local Authorities recognised a climate emergency and agreed to collaborate in producing a joint Climate Emergency Strategy. Whilst each declaration was slightly different, all aspired to achieving carbon neutrality in their own operations and to work towards achieving this across the geography of their administrative area.

At the same time, SWT committed to producing a Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan. The report to Scrutiny Committee in July this year explained the relationship between the county-wide and SWT-specific work and the Governance arrangements being set up.

Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework

A group of officers representing Somerset County Council, the four district authorities, Exmoor National Park Authority were guiding and shaping the development of the County-wide framework within which the detailed investigation needed will be undertaken. This group – the Strategic Management Group - would have a critical overseeing role in shaping the desired outcomes emanating from that work.

Feeding into the Strategic Management Group would be the detailed work undertaken by operational experts and stakeholders within nine work streams:

- Built Environment
- Natural Environment
- Energy

- Farming and Food
- Industry, Business and Supply Chain
- Transport
- Waste and Resource Management
- Flood water and adaptation
- Communications and Engagement

Each work stream was working to a detailed brief and had a nominated lead. They would be researching and prioritising key issues, identifying possible actions to mitigate and understanding the full life cycle of decisions to implement these actions.

SWT had representation on all of these work streams and were able to support with appropriate subject-matter expertise and ensure two-way dialogue between workstream development across the county and in relation to the Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan.

The work of officers was overseen by a group of portfolio holders from across the districts, which included Cllr Peter Pilkington, and by the Leaders and CEOs, with Brendan Cleere and Michele Cusack (SCC) acting as the conduit between these groups. The work of all groups was scrutinised by a Joint Task and Finish Group; SWT's representation on that group was through Cllrs Dave Mansell and Loretta Whetlor.

Members noted the proposed timings for delivery of the Climate Emergency Strategy, which included provision for consultation during November and December 2019.

Consultation activities were in the early stages of development, but were expected to include an online consultation aimed at secondary school-aged children 11-18 years, preceded by school visits to encourage participation. They included an online consultation aimed at all residents, communities and businesses in Somerset and a series of Summits, which would take the form of a full day, face-to-face consultation event, open to all. A provisional date for the SWT Summit was 16th November but remained still to be confirmed.

#### Draft SWT Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan

A Draft of SWT's own Framework Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan had been produced alongside the Draft Somerset Climate Emergency Framework. Its purpose was to spark a conversation about how the community could look to develop and ultimately deliver the district's action plan.

The Framework set a level of ambition but did not commit the Council to deliver on any specific task or to any specific actions at present. It provided an idea of where things needed to head and some ideas about early tasks that might be necessary to get things started. Some of these tasks would be for the Council to take forward, some might be for others. Importantly, the Framework made it clear that success in delivering on

carbon neutrality and climate resilience targets were dependent on garnering wider public and partner support and ownership of the Plan and actions/projects arising.

Once the Framework had been endorsed by Executive Committee, there would be a period of engagement and consultation centred on the Framework document. This included business and community roadshow events across the district as well as school and college events and direct stakeholder engagement to ensure that the Draft Plan was well informed by the views and experiences of our communities and to raise awareness of the need for action and how we are working to co-ordinate this. Officers were working on arrangements for these events and wider consultation on the Framework.

The Draft and Final Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plans were proposed to be developed alongside and to the same timetable as the Draft and Final Somerset Climate Emergency Strategies. Whilst the Strategy produced for adoption in Summer 2020 would be badged as “final”, the SWT Plan would be an iterative, “live” document that would need to evolve as actions and projects develop and understanding of issues and risks improves.

The Framework documents would be taken to Executive Committee later in October, amended in response to / accompanied by the comments of the Working Group and Scrutiny Committee. The report to Executive, accompanying the Framework documents will request that authority to endorse the future Draft County-wide Strategy and SWT Plan is delegated to Cllr Peter Pilkington (as Portfolio Holder) in consultation with the Climate Change Member Working Group. However, the final Strategy and Plan will come back to Scrutiny ahead of consideration by Executive and Council. Assuming Executive endorsement of the Framework documents and this approach to delegation, we will then begin consultation and engagement as well as working on some of the identified key early tasks.

The intention is to have a Draft Strategy and Plan completed by February 2020, ready for consideration by the Member Working Group and Portfolio Holder to endorse for further consultation in the New Year. Following the second period of consultation, the “final” Strategy and Plan will be brought back to Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee before being taken to Council for adoption.

### Debate

SWT Framework - discussion took place around the following areas, with some points applying to both SWT and Somerset Frameworks:-

- It was requested for a greater focus was given to Methane and Nitrous Oxide emissions, including in relation to the food and farming section.
- Additional mention of Fracking should be added and the further lobbying of County Council on this point was requested.

- Reduction of meat be a priority rather than solely an emphasis environmentally friendly food.
- More details around divesting from fossil fuels, and stipulating around the licensing if possible around all new taxis.
- Growing food with allotments and urban farms on waste land to be a priority.
- Definitions for carbon neutrality to be clear on the objectives of reducing and mitigating emissions being the focus.
- The IPCC was cautious in its predictions/projections, which was another reason for a 2030 target.
- The section around offsetting was potentially confused and we should be very careful in supporting offsetting elsewhere, as the whole world needed to decarbonise.
- Consumption should be included too, although more difficult to measure, as moving production abroad for products consumed in the UK displaced, rather than reduced, emissions.
- Early tasks around the Built Environment should be more explicit about energy efficiency standards and renewable energy on new development.
- Work around renewable energy generation and storage should be undertaken with utilities and others as well as with community energy groups.
- The strategy should be more explicit about installing Renewable Energies on assets and land owned by the Council.
- Aviation, as a major polluter was missing as part of the transport section.
- Waste section is good and we are strong already in this area, but reducing carbon emissions should be added from operations in waste (collection, haulage, processing, and energy recovery - Avonmouth).
- Further input from Councillors and how they could be a part of the Climate agenda was encouraged.
- Public engagement was key to the strategy but conversations were needed, to ensure they didn't lose sight of rural poverty - domestic and transport.
- The committee encouraged Lobbying with GWR/Network Rail over electrification of the network.
- Monitoring of performance of the strategy and targets were needed along with funding for delivery of projects.
- Lobbying government on national policy was essential.
- There was a need to apply pressure in relation to changing taxation and costs of different fuels. As an example Gas should be taxed more to tackle emissions.
- Hinkley would need to be mentioned and a major CO2 source
- Holistic thoughts on planning policy to include further options to tackle climate change - not just about PV on roofs.
- Introducing more efficient and better flues for wood burners to minimise issues and tackle rural poverty.
- Working and engaging with farmers needed to be done to work with communities and organisations to improve their supply chain pressure.
- Electric bike hire between transport hubs was requested.

- Lobbying Government on national policy and guidance was considered important. A parking review would be required to tackle emissions in the town.
- The consultation would need to be different to normal consultations. These would need to include further details on proposed activities; with a communications plan and Executive report.
- As part of the framework Councils should lead by example on EV charge points at Deane House and in council car parks included in a more committed revised task.
- Members needed to ensure the framework should be on the agenda for electioneering and how to inform the public.
- Elements such as the Town centre pedestrianisation and e-buses should be included in the framework.
- The front section of the report should set out commitments to areas that can be addressed immediately.
- Greater emphasis on Technology and R&D was requested to maximise the input into a global emergency.
- All Councils needed to make better use of existing building stocks.
- Better communication was required for the public on the carbon impact of food.
- The committee were of the view that the framework needed to be the priority document dictating all other policy documents.
- Cross-party support was required to ensure document is not undermined by elections and any change of ruling group going forward.
- The framework would need to outline best practice and what might be possible for others.
- There was a requirement to ramp up the communications message about the debates going on and the actions being taken.

Somerset Framework - discussion took place around the following areas:-

- Concern was expressed that the county-wide Task and Finish group had not met to discuss this document and whether future work timetables allowed for this .
- Clearer communications was requested with all Members and not just the working group
- There were levels of confusion about CO2 and carbon emission rates in the framework documents at 3.4a not comparing correctly.
- Consumption emissions needed to be added.
- Monitoring with targets and measuring performance and progress towards these would be needed.
- The Committee on Climate Change Net Zero reports provide a national guide on action required.
- Sections 6 and 7 were too negative in places. Good assessment was important, but building an extensive evidence base and undertaking optimal cost benefit analysis risked delay and inaction. We also need to start doing and learning.
- The committee requested clarity in relation to how levels of emissions from the M5 were included where the Councils had very little control.

- Electrification as the main method for decarbonisation of heating, alongside much higher insulation standards, needed to be included.
- Aviation needed to be included in the transport section and this was too weak on encouraging walking, cycling and public transport. In particular, it should add making these more convenient options over car use.
- The same comments as for the SWT document needed to be included on reducing carbon emissions from waste operations and investing in renewable energy and storage.
- Taunton not being parished as an area was requested to be reflected in the consultation.

All members of the committee were encouraged to provide any further specific additional comments following the meeting for consideration.

38. **Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

**Resolved** that the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan be noted.

(The Meeting ended at 20:24).

*Report Number: SWT 88/19*

## **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

### **Executive – 23 October 2019**

#### **Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order – Approval for Public Consultation**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mike Rigby**

**Report Author: Sarah Povall, Strategy Specialist**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the public consultation of the Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order (LDO).

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Recommendations are that Executive resolves to:
- 1) Approve the undertaking of a consultation exercise on the possible adoption of a Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order in the Somerset West and Taunton Area, with a further report to be brought to a subsequent meeting of the Executive once the consultation exercise has been completed.
  - 2) Approve the contents of the draft consultation document for the consultation exercise on the possible adoption of a Small Scale Industrial Space Local Development Order.
  - 3) Delegate authority to the Head of Strategy to agree any necessary final amendments prior to its publication in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation.

#### **3 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 The potential risks that might impact on the timely delivery of the LDO, relate to: the availability of experienced personnel; and competing work priorities.

#### **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 This draft Local Development Order (LDO) seeks to enable the development of small scale B1 development within Somerset West and Taunton. The Council is looking to

develop this LDO to de-risk the planning process, support and enable increased delivery of small-scale industrial space. As such, the LDO will grant planning permission for development which is found by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) to be in compliance with the LDO, Technical Informative and Design Code.

- 4.2 Officers will work in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to finalise some of the details of the LDO, which is made up of three separate documents:
- The **Development Order**, which provides the purpose, procedure, context and legal conditions for all LDO development;
  - A **Technical Informative** to help LDO users understand whether technical assessments will be required to support their submission dependent on an individual site's circumstances; and
  - The **Design Code** sets the acceptable parameters and principles for development which should be evidenced within a compulsory Design and Access Statement submission.
- 4.3 Somerset West and Taunton, (though especially Taunton and Wellington) has experienced significant housing growth over the last few years, and is expected to continue this growth trajectory for the foreseeable future as the remaining housing allocations of the Taunton Deane [Core Strategy](#), [Site Allocations and Development Management Plan](#), and [Town Centre Area Action Plan](#) and the [West Somerset Local Plan](#) are built out. However, employment development and the associated jobs the build out of these sites brings have not kept pace.
- 4.4 In 2018, Taunton Deane Borough Council adopted a new [Local Development Order \(LDO\) for the Nexus 25 strategic employment site](#). The development of this strategic employment site will see some of that balance redressed, primarily through provision of B1(a) Offices, B1(b) Research and Development and B1(c) Light Industry uses, with B2 General Industrial and B8 Distribution and Warehousing uses being secondary. However, the SWT [Employment, Retail and Leisure Study](#) completed later in 2018 identified latent demand for small flexible industrial units, with strongest demand for B1(c) uses. A lack of available, serviced plots and marginal viability issues make meeting demand difficult even in prime locations. De-risking the planning process and enabling easier development of such units could help realise this latent demand. The Taunton Deane [Scrutiny Task and Finish Group reported](#) to TDBC's Scrutiny Committee in November 2018 on the issue of affordable employment land and recommended that:

*“TDBC, and the subsequent Council, must identify the means by which the supply of affordable, starter-type employment units can be delivered. There are two suggested means by which this can be undertaken:*

*i. Planning-based approaches boosted through allocation, a streamlined Local Development Order identifying suitable sites or, a more criteria-based Local Development Order that sets the broader locations and parameters subject to which*



*starter units can be delivered...*

4.5 This LDO covers the administrative boundary of Somerset West and Taunton District Council, but does not apply to any of the following site locations:

- Within Taunton’s adopted settlement boundary.
- Within Wellingtons adopted settlement boundary.
- Within a conservation area.
- Within the curtilage of a Listed Building.
- Within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Within a location judged as likely to affect environmental designations.
- Within a functioning flood plain (flood zone 3b).

4.6 It is a legal requirement that LDOs are the subject of proper consultation. Consultation will be in line with the LDO consultation procedures set out in article 38 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

4.7 The consultation will take place for a period of at least 28 days.

4.8 Following the consultation exercise, SWT will consider what modifications need to be made to the draft LDO or whether such an order should be adopted or take into account any other representations made in relation to the order.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

5.1 “Theme 1: Our Environment and Economy” of the Corporate Strategy sets out the objective to, “encourage wealth creation and economic growth throughout the District by attracting inward investment, enabling research and innovation, improving the skills of the local workforce and seeking to ensure the provision of adequate and affordable employment land to meet different business needs.”

5.2 The purpose of this LDO is meet this objective, by helping to support the development of small scale B1 development within Somerset West and Taunton

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

6.1 The costs associated with the LDO are met from existing budgets. There are no further financial implications.

## **7 Legal Implications**

7.1 The LDO is drafted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015. The consultation process, which follows, will follow the requirements prescribed.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications**

- 8.1 Underpinning this LDO is the need to encourage employment uses close to where people live. With this shift from a daily commuting pattern to working locally, the LDO hopes to have a positive impact on reducing traffic and associated issues across the District.
- 8.2 The Design Guide sets out sustainable approaches, which are encouraged within any new employment unit and surrounding landscaping works under this LDO.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

- 9.1 None at this stage.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 None at this stage.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

- 11.1 This LDO is intended to have a high social value, by supporting the delivery of small-scale industrial and employment space by removing the need for a planning application by the developer. The LDO and accompanying Design Code will create a straightforward system for potential applicants to understand and interpret potential development opportunities.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 As part of the Duty to Co-operate requirement (Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012), we will be expected to work with other public bodies, particularly neighbouring planning authorities and the County Council on any cross boundary issues.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 None at this stage.

## **14 Asset Management Implications**

- 14.1 None at this stage.

## **15 Data Protection Implications**

- 15.1 With permission from the consultee in line with the GDPR, personal data will be collected as part of the consultation on the Issues Document.

## **16 Consultation Implications**

- 16.1 The consultation on this document will be in line with the emerging Statement of Community Involvement and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015. Following the consultation exercise, SWT will

consider what modifications need to be made to the draft LDO or whether such an order should be adopted or take into account any other representations made in relation to the order.

**17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s) (if any)**

17.1 None at this stage

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:**     **Once only**                     **Ad-hoc**     **Quarterly**  
 **Twice-yearly**                     **Annually**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Draft LDO
Appendix B	Draft Technical Informative
Appendix C	Draft Design Code

**Contact Officers**

Name	Sarah Povall
Direct Dial	01823 219733
Email	s.povall@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk



# Local Development Order

## Local Development Order (LDO) for B1 Uses

Somerset West  
and Taunton

DRAFT

# Contents

- 1 Introduction ..... 1**
  - 1.1 Purpose ..... 1
  - 1.2 LDO Principles..... 1
  - 1.3 Legislative Framework Governing the LDO Process ..... 1
  - 1.4 Scope ..... 1
  - 1.5 Consents ..... 1
  - 1.6 Structure of this LDO ..... 2
- 2 Consultation Process ..... 3**
  - 2.1 Background ..... 3
  - 2.2 Statutory Consultation ..... 3
  - 2.3 Public Consultation..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3 LDO Boundary ..... 4**
  - 3.1 LDO Boundary ..... 4
  - 3.2 Area Exclusions ..... 4
- 4 Development Considerations ..... 5**
  - 4.1 Design Code ..... 5
  - 4.2 LDO Application for Compliance Submissions..... 5
- 5 Statement of Reasons..... 6**
  - 5.1 Purpose of the LDO ..... 6
  - 5.2 Justification for Creating the LDO ..... 6
  - 5.3 National and Regional Strategies..... 6
  - 5.4 Planning Policy Context ..... 7
- 6 Local Development Order ..... 12**
  - 6.1 Description of Development Permitted by the LDO ..... 12
- 7 Conditions..... 13**
- 8 Process and Procedures ..... 16**
  - 8.1 Confirmation of Compliance ..... 16

# Figures

- Figure 1. LDO Boundary Plan. .... 4

# Tables

- Table 1. TDCS Development Management Policies ..... 8
- Table 2. SADMP Development Management Policies. .... 9
- Table 3. Relevant WSLP (2016) and WSDL (2006) Development Management Polices. .... 10
- Table 4. Development Permitted by the LDO..... 12

**Appendices**

Appendix A Application for Compliance Form

DRAFT

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This draft Local Development Order (LDO) will, when adopted, enable the development of small scale B1 development within Somerset West and Taunton. The LDO will grant planning permission for development which is found by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) to be in compliance with the LDO, Technical Informative and Design Code.
- 1.1.2 Any grant of planning permission will be subject to the planning conditions contained within this document.

## 1.2 LDO Principles

- 1.2.1 The creation of this LDO will provide independent entrepreneurs and SMEs a mechanism to create or expand their businesses outside of SWT's established centres for employment. There is a clear rationale for the use of an LDO to promote minor scale freehold employment units as an LDO can provide clarity and certainty while reducing the administrative costs and burdens involved in a full planning application.

## 1.3 Legislative Framework Governing the LDO Process

- 1.3.1 LDOs are locally focussed planning tools that Local Planning Authorities (LPA) can use to grant planning permission for specific types of development within a defined geographical area. They are designed to help streamline the planning process by removing the need for preparing and submitting a planning application.
- 1.3.2 Detailed legislative provisions on LDOs are contained in sections 61A to 61D and Schedule 4A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and article 38 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, as amended (DMPO). Importantly:
- an LDO can be used by an LPA to grant planning permission for either a specific development or a particular specified use class and can cover all land within a local authority (61A);
  - an LDO can grant permission subject planning conditions (61C); and
  - planning permission can be withdrawn if the order is revoked or the order is amended so that it ceases to grant planning permission in respect of the development or materially changes any condition or limitation to which the grant of permission is subject (61 D).

## 1.4 Scope

- 1.4.1 It is important to note that development proposals that do not fall within the prescribed criteria of the LDO may still be acceptable in planning terms. In such circumstances, proposals that do not conform to the LDO will need to secure planning permission through the normal planning process. Accordingly, such proposals would be considered in the context of local and national planning policies.
- 1.4.2 The criteria for development is provided in **Section 6** of this document and the accompanying Design Code.

## 1.5 Consents

- 1.5.1 The LDO only removes the requirement to obtain express planning permission. It does not remove the need to obtain other statutory consents such as Building Regulations approval,



consents under Highways legislation, licensing, and Health and Safety Executive consents. It remains the responsibility of the developer to ensure that all other statutory requirements are followed.

- 1.5.2 The conditions of this LDO prevent the use of permitted development rights to subsequently change, alter or extend any development delivered through this LDO.

## 1.6 Structure of this LDO

1.6.1 This LDO is made up of three separate documents:

- i. This **Development Order** provides the purpose, procedure, context and legal conditions for all LDO development;
- ii. A **Technical Informative** to help LDO users understand whether technical assessments will be required to support their submission dependent on an individual site's circumstances;
- iii. The **Design Code** sets the acceptable parameters and principles for development which should be evidenced within a compulsory Design and Access Statement submission.

DRAFT

## 2 Consultation Process

### 2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 It is a legal requirement that LDOs are the subject of proper consultation. LDO consultation procedures are set out in article 38 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

### 2.2 Statutory Consultation

2.2.1 SWT to advise on consultation.

2.2.2 Statutory consultees.

2.2.3 Letters – across SWT.

DRAFT

## 3 LDO Boundary

### 3.1 LDO Boundary

- 3.1.1 This LDO covers the administrative boundary of Somerset West and Taunton District Council as shown in the boundary plan below.

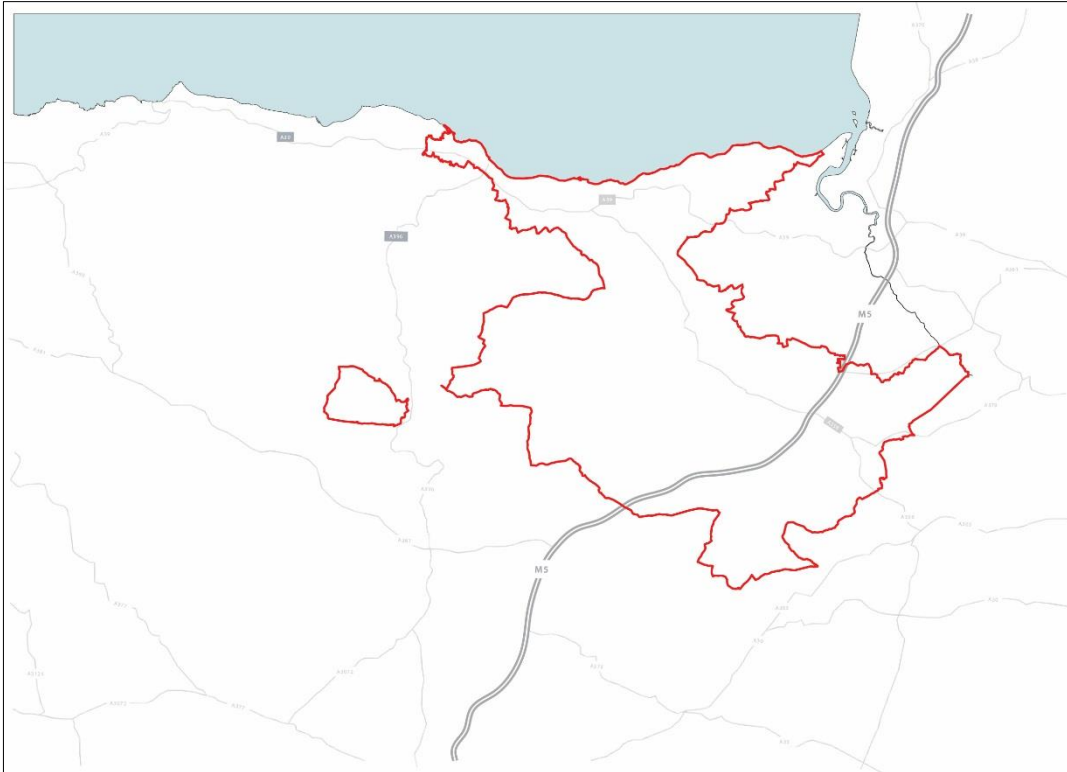


Figure 1. LDO Boundary Plan.

### 3.2 Area Exclusions

- 3.2.1 Chapter 1 of the Design Code specifies which areas of Somerset West and Taunton are excluded from this LDO, despite being within the LDO boundary.
- 3.2.2 For avoidance of doubt, this LDO does not apply to any of the below site locations:
- Within Taunton's adopted settlement boundary.
  - Within Wellingtons adopted settlement boundary.
  - Within a conservation area.
  - Within the curtilage of a Listed Building.
  - Within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
  - Within a location judged as likely to affect environmental designations.
  - Within a functioning flood plain (flood zone 3b).

## 4 Development Considerations

### 4.1 Design Code

- 4.1.1 The Design Code is the principal mechanism for the consideration of LDO compliance. The Design Code provides the development parameters and general design principles which development proposals being delivered through this LDO will have to accord to. The Design Code includes a pro forma which enables LDO applicants to check their submissions against requirements.

### 4.2 LDO Application for Compliance Submissions

#### Design and Access Statement

- 4.2.1 Each Application for Compliance Form (appendix A) will need to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement – the requirements for which are set out in the Design Code.

- 4.2.2 Each Design and Access Statement should include:

- A Site Location Plan;
- A Proposed Layout Plan;
- Details of Proposed Elevations;
- Landscaping Plan and Details;
- Materials Plan; and
- Details of Access.

#### Further Technical Requirements

- 4.2.3 In some circumstances further technical evidence will be required in support of a compliance submission. Further information will be limited to:
- i. Highways and Access Requirements;
  - ii. Flood Risk Assessment;
  - iii. Ecological Assessment;
  - iv. Ground Contamination Assessment
- 4.2.4 Information on the circumstances further assessments will be required and how to undertake them is included in the Technical Informative which forms a part of this LDO.

## 5 Statement of Reasons

### 5.1 Purpose of the LDO

5.1.1 The purpose of creating this LDO is to enable the development of small-scale light industrial floor space in Somerset West and Taunton. This LDO provides a delivery mechanism to enable small scale business units which cater for the needs entrepreneurs to develop new or expanded workspace without having to apply for full planning permission.

### 5.2 Justification for Creating the LDO

5.2.1 The SWT Employment, Retail and Leisure Study undertaken in 2018 highlights economic trends which this LDO either seeks to help address as an intervention or has regard to as associated economic trend. These can be summarised as:

- Existing demand for industrial space across Somerset West and Taunton is typically for micro business and small and medium enterprise (SMEs).
- There is a high, viable, deliverable and unmet demand for freehold light industrial units. Specifically, this is for smaller flexible units which could be used across the B1 use class, although highest demand would be expected for B1(c) use.
- The supply of freehold business units is often undersupplied across Somerset West and Taunton. This is especially the case where employment sites have been promoted alongside housing sites.
- It is recognised that potential owners of freehold plots rarely engage in the plan making process, however, have the need to react dynamically to changes in the market.

5.2.2 The objective of this LDO is therefore to provide a route for permitted development for small scale (B1) business units to provide a speed and certainty to business start ups and SMEs looking to expand their existing operations outside of Somerset West and Taunton's existing key settlements.

### 5.3 National and Regional Strategies

#### **Towards a One Nation Economy: A 10 Point Plan for Boosting Productivity in Rural Areas - Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2015)**

5.3.1 In 2015, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) released a strategy document aiming to harness the economic potential England's rural areas for the prosperity of those living in rural areas and for the benefit of the UK economy.

5.3.2 The document provides a framework of 10 broad areas considered by the Government to be reflective of the particular priorities for rural areas. These included the following measures to encourage a productive rural economy:

- better and improved planning regulations;
- promoting enterprise zones in rural areas; and
- providing opportunities for apprenticeships.

## Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy (2018)

- 5.3.3 The Productivity Strategy is owned by a partnership that brings together the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), local authorities, National Parks and health service organisations. The 2018 Productivity Strategy set out to double the size of the Heart of the South West economy over the next twenty years, and to raise productivity levels which on average are currently lower than the UK. The Strategy focusses on three key themes i) business leadership and ideas, ii) improving housing, connectivity and infrastructure and iii) improving the skills of the work force.

## Somerset Growth Plan 2017-30 (2017)

- 5.3.4 The purpose of the Growth Plan is to attract and guide investment, to overcome barriers and maximise sustainable growth from local opportunities.
- 5.3.5 The Growth Plan for Somerset aims to: create a shared ambition and vision for sustainable and productive growth; support the delivery of infrastructure and housing to enable growth to take place; increase the scale, quality and sustainability of economic opportunity in Somerset; and ensure participation and access to these opportunities for local residents.
- 5.3.6 The Growth Plan specifically supports growth in rural areas, stating that Somerset will have a business community that is growing because of its use of digital technology and infrastructure, particularly to drive productivity and growth in rural areas. The Plan goes on to identify in its vision that Somerset seeks to be a successful small business economy.

## 5.4 Planning Policy Context

- 5.4.1 The LDO supports the implementation of existing planning policies and economic strategies at the national and local level.

## National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 5.4.2 Paragraph 51 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages LDOs to be prepared for particular areas and categories of development, where the impacts would be acceptable, and where this would promote economic, social or environmental gains (paragraph 51).
- 5.4.3 The NPPF makes it clear that the planning system has an important role in supporting a prosperous rural economy through the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses (paragraph 83-84).
- 5.4.4 The NPPF acknowledges that, because sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In such circumstances the NPPF states it is important that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (paragraph 84).
- 5.4.5 The NPPF states that when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, the sequential approach outlined in Section 7 should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small-scale rural employment (paragraph 88).

## The Development Plan

- 5.4.6 The relevant adopted Development Plan documents to this LDO are:
- The Taunton Deane Core Strategy 2011–2028.
  - Site Allocations and Development Management Plan 2028.

- West Somerset Local Plan to 2032.
- Saved policies from the West Somerset District Local Plan 2006.
- Made Neighbourhood Plans at:
  - Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone;
  - Stogumber;
  - Trull and Staplehay; and
  - West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine.

5.4.7 Work has commenced on the new SWT Local Plan. At time of writing, the plan is estimated to be adopted in the Autumn of 2021.

### Taunton Deane Core Strategy

5.4.8 The Taunton Deane Core Strategy (TDCS) was adopted in 2012 and sets the long-term strategic vision for the future of the Borough to 2028. The Core Strategy together with the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) formed the Development Plan for Taunton Deane Borough Council prior to the creation of the new Somerset West and Taunton Council in April 2019.

5.4.9 Vision 1 of the TDCS acknowledges the importance of employment led growth to facilitate economic diversification and increased self-containment within the borough. Objective 2 of the TDCS recognises that achieve this vision, there must be the right conditions and sufficient land in appropriate locations.

5.4.10 The TDCS does not allocate land for employment, instead identifying the broad strategic locations for employment growth. The TDCS (SP1) focuses on strategic scale provision at Taunton and Wellington. The justification of this approach to promote the most sustainable pattern for growth, by linking housing and employment growth in areas with existing major infrastructure connections. The proposed employment locations of the TDCS do not account for minor employment opportunities and potential for sustainable small-scale linkages to major and minor rural centres and villages. This LDO promotes the opportunity for such smaller linkages outside of the SWT district's main centres.

5.4.11 The Core Strategy sets out a number of broad development management policies that will be applied at the strategic level across the Borough. Policies relevant to the LDO are summarised in the table 1.

Policy	Summary
<b>DM1: General Requirements</b>	Sets out the criteria for development which includes making the most effective and efficient use of land.
<b>DM4: Design</b>	Aims to encourage a sense of place by addressing design at a range of spatial scales using planning documents that relate to each scale.
<b>DM5: Use of Resources and Sustainable Development</b>	States that the Council will require all development to incorporate sustainable design features to reduce their impact on the environment.

Table 1. TDCS Development Management Policies

## Site Allocation and Development Management Plan 2028 (2018)

- 5.4.12 The SADMP sets out a range of allocations across the Borough consistent with the Core Strategy. The SADMP also provides a set of detailed development management policies for new development in Taunton Deane. These policies are listed in table 2.

Policy	Summary
<b>A1 Parking Requirements</b>	New development will normally be required to make provision for car parking in accordance with the standards in Appendix F of the SADMP.
<b>ENV1 Protection of trees, woodland, orchard and hedgerows</b>	Development which would harm trees, woodlands, orchards, historic parklands and hedgerows of value to the area's landscape, character or wildlife will not be permitted.
<b>ENV3 Special Landscape Features</b>	Development which would specifically harm the appearance, character and contribution of landscape quality within a Special Landscape Feature will not be permitted unless appropriate mitigation measures would reduce such harm to an acceptable level.
<b>D7 Design Quality</b>	New development shall create a high standard of design quality and a sense of place.
<b>D9 A co-ordinated approach to development and highway planning</b>	A co-ordinated approach shall be adopted to the design of development and associated highways.

Table 2. SADMP Development Management Policies.

### West Somerset Local Plan

- 5.4.13 The West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 (WSLP) was adopted in November 2016 and sets planning policies for the parts of the area outside of Exmoor National Park.
- 5.4.14 Policy SC1 of the WSLP provides a settlement hierarchy for new development in West Somerset. The policy states that new development will be concentrated in the district's main centre of Minehead/Alcombe, however, recognises the potential for small scale development at primary and secondary villages.
- 5.4.15 Policy EC1 of the WSLP states that proposals which make West Somerset's economy stronger and more diverse and are likely to increase the proportion of higher paid jobs locally will be supported. This includes the new development on existing employment sites, or which are have compatible uses where the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing neighbouring uses.
- 5.4.16 Policy SC5 of the WSLP states that development which improves the balance of land uses within a settlement in terms of minimising overall transport use will be encouraged. This LDO such an opportunity for mixed uses while minimising and potentially reducing the vehicle trips to larger centres.
- 5.4.17 Policy EC4 of the WSLP states that the development of home-based business activities within residential properties will be permitted providing there are limitations places on the hours of



work and deliveries and proposals are consistent with the residential amenity of the area and do not lead to harmful intensification.

- 5.4.18 The WSLP also includes development management policies affecting the design of new minor scale development. These policies are listed in Table 2 alongside the saved policies of the previous district Local Plan.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Plan Year</b>
<b>CC5 Water Efficiency</b>	The design of development schemes which include measures to economise on the use of water supplies will be encouraged.	2016
<b>NH5 Landscape Character Protection</b>	Development within identified landscape character areas should be designed in such a way as to minimise adverse impact on the quality and integrity of that local landscape character area.	2016
<b>Policy TW/1 Trees and Woodland Protection</b>	Development proposals that would adversely affect woodlands, groups of trees or individual trees of significant landscape, wildlife or amenity value will only be permitted where conditions can be attached.	2006
<b>Policy TW/2 Hedgerows</b>	Development management proposals will be required to show that an allowance has been made of for the retention and protection of existing hedgerows unless they are not considered to be of value to the area's landscape, character or wildlife.	2006
<b>Policy BD/6 Agricultural Buildings</b>	Proposals for new agricultural buildings should have regard to the existing landscape.	2006

Table 3. Relevant WSLP (2016) and WSDL (2006) Development Management Policies.

### **Made Neighbourhood Plans**

- 5.4.19 The following Neighbourhood Plans have been made in the Somerset West and Taunton.

#### **Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Neighbourhood Plan**

- 5.4.20 The plan emphasises the importance of the conservation area and surrounding landscape to residents of the village while setting an objective to increase the range, extent, and scale of commercial and light industrial premises (objective 3).

- 5.4.21 The employment policies of the plan seek to increase the opportunity for local employment and thereby support potential for sustainable patterns of travel.

#### **Stogumber Neighbourhood Plan**

- 5.4.22 The plan emphasises the important use of materials in and around the settlement and the high value of views of the surrounding landscape and supports economic development which accords to the plan's overall objectives for development (EC1 and O1).

#### **Trull and Staplehay Neighbourhood Plan**

- 5.4.23 The plan recognises that the majority of the parish travel to work by public transport and recognises the opportunity for start-ups and microbusinesses (employing 1-9 people) within the parish to encourage sustainable growth. Policy EE1 suggests small business units of 50 sqm will be supported on existing employment and mixed-use sites. The plan supports opportunities to create live work units.

### **West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan**

- 5.4.24 The plan emphasises the two villages rural setting and importance of the existing conservation areas with reference to national and local environmental policies.
- 5.4.25 The plan also sets an employment objective to minimise commuting and encourage employment opportunities through either the expansion and relocation of existing local businesses or new start-ups which allow residents to work near to where they live (p27).

DRAFT

## 6 Local Development Order

### 6.1 Description of Development Permitted by the LDO

6.1.1 The table below sets out the permitted uses as prescribed by the Use Classes Order or in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and /or re-enacting that order with or without modification).

6.1.2 The uses in table 4 are permitted through this LDO.

Use Class	Definition	Limitations
B1 (a)	Offices - other than those within class A2.	Up to 50 sq m net
B1 (b)	Research and development of products or processes	Up to 200 sq m net
B1(c)	Light Industry – use for any industrial process which can be carried out in a residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of that area.	Up to 200 sq m net

Table 4. Development Permitted by the LDO.

6.1.3 This does not prevent office floorspace being included as an ancillary use within Research and Light Industrial premises providing it is not the dominant use and covers an area of no more than 50 sq m net.

## 7 Conditions

7.1.1 The following Conditions are necessary to ensure that development is acceptable in planning terms.

No.	Condition	Reason
1.	<p>The LDO and the terms within it will be active for a period of 15 years following the day of its adoption and will expire following this period.</p> <p>The LPA will review progress with the LDO on the 5th anniversary of its adoption to be able to fully reflect on the continual suitability of the LDO in the light of any changes to planning policy. The review will be completed with 28 days of the 5th anniversary and at the end of the review the LPA will determine whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Retain the LDO as it stands for the remaining 10 years of its life;</li> <li>b) Retain but revise some elements; or</li> <li>c) Revoke and cancel the LDO, thereby removing any unimplemented LDO permissions.</li> </ul>	<p>In order that the benefits of the LDO can be secured.</p>
2.	<p>The development permitted by this Order shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the permitted Design and Access Statement (including any technical assessments) and conditions set out within this LDO and the accompanying Design Code, with the exception of material amendments submitted to and approved in writing by Somerset West and Taunton Council.</p>	<p>To ensure development in line with the aspirations for the LDO.</p>
3.	<p>No development shall commence until an Application for Compliance with the LDO and supporting Design and Access Statement has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority which shall include the following information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A Site Location Plan</li> <li>b) A Proposed Layout Plan</li> <li>c) Details of Proposed Elevations</li> <li>d) Landscaping Plan and Details</li> <li>e) Materials Plan</li> <li>f) Arrangements of access for pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and other modes of transport</li> <li>g) Demonstration of compliance with the LDO Design Code</li> </ul>	<p>To enable the impact of the development to be fully assessed in line with the aims of the LDO.</p>

No.	Condition	Reason
	<p>h) LDO Planning fee</p> <p>Where deemed necessary by this LDO or otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority, any of the following details may also be required:</p> <p>i) Flooding and drainage management strategy</p> <p>j) Environmental and ecological mitigation measures</p>	
4.	No development shall commence until a Notice of Compliance has been issued by the Local Planning Authority.	In order that progress and compliance can be monitored.
5.	Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the information submitted by the applicant to which the Notice of Compliance has been granted, and to any additional conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority forming part of the Notice of Compliance.	To ensure compliance with the LDO.
6.	This LDO can only be used for a single development within an ownership plot. Once development has commenced, any building permitted will not qualify for further permitted development, either through the use of this LDO or other national permitted development rights.	To avoid the potential cumulative impacts of development on the environment and to avoid the LDO being used for enabling uses that do not conform with the purpose of this LDO.
7.	Not less than 14 days prior to the commencement of development, a Commencement Notice shall be submitted to Somerset West and Taunton Council.	To enable the monitoring of development and the effective implementation of the Order.
8.	No construction work shall be carried out on the site on any Sunday, Christmas Day or Bank Holiday or other than between the hours of 0730 and 1900 hours on weekdays.	To ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the amenities of neighbouring properties.
9.	<p>If contamination is found at the site, no further development shall be carried out until:</p> <p>a) a scheme of remediation has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority;</p> <p>b) the applicant has received written approval of their proposed scheme of remediation; and</p> <p>c) Remediation has been carried out in accordance with its terms.</p>	To ensure the risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised and to protect the environment from contamination and to ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under part 2A for the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

No.	Condition	Reason
10.	Prior to occupation of the building, space shall be laid out, drained and surfaced within the site in accordance with the approved plans for the parking and turning of vehicles, and such areas shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking and turning of vehicles associated with the development.	To ensure suitable access to the site is provided and retained, in the interests of highway safety.
11.	Prior to the buildings being occupied visibility splays shall be provided in accordance with details which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 300 mm above the adjoining carriageway level within the visibility splays approved by this condition. The visibility splays shall thereafter be maintained in the approved form.	To ensure suitable visibility is provided and retained at the site access, in the interests of highway safety.
12.	<p>Noise emissions from development which this permission refers shall not exceed background levels by more than 3 decibels expressed in terms of an A-Weighted, 2 Min Leq, at any time during the days and times indicated when measured at any point at the facade of any residential or other noise sensitive boundary.</p> <p>Mon-Fri 0800 hrs to 1800 hrs Sat 0800 hrs to 1300 hrs</p> <p>At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, noise emissions shall not be audible when so measured.</p> <p>Noise emissions having tonal characteristics, e.g. hum, drone, whine etc, shall not exceed background levels at any time, when measured as above.</p>	To ensure the development is not detrimental to the amenity of the area.

## 8 Process and Procedures

### 8.1 Confirmation of Compliance

8.1.1 The Local Planning Authority should be provided with prior notification of any development proposed under the provisions of the LDO. This should be done by completing the Application for Compliance Form attached at Appendix A to this LDO. The form, together with the required supporting documents, should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

8.1.2 The Local Planning Authority will provide a response with 28 days, which will comprise one of the following;

- A letter of conformity to confirm that the proposed development satisfies the terms of the LDO;
- A request for further information; or
- A letter stating that the proposed development does not meet the terms of the LDO and that an application for planning permission should therefore be made.

DRAFT

DRAFT



# Technical Informative

Local Development Order (LDO) for B1 Uses

Somerset West  
and Taunton

DRAFT

**Contents**

- 1 Highway and Access Requirements ..... 2**
  - 1.1 Introduction ..... 2
  - 1.2 Level 1 Assessment ..... 2
  - 1.3 Level 2 Assessment ..... 3
  - 1.4 Main Access Specification ..... 4
  - 1.5 Parking Specification ..... 4
- 2 Other Potential Technical Requirements ..... 6**
  - 2.1 Introduction ..... 6
  - 2.2 Flood Risk Assessment ..... 6
  - 2.3 Ecological Assessment ..... 7
  - 2.4 Ground Contamination Assessment ..... 8

DRAFT

# 1 Highway and Access Requirements

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Access to the site should be achievable via a route which is safe and appropriate for the increase in traffic and size of vehicle that the proposals will attract to protect the safety of those travelling to the site and the existing users of the road. Furthermore, the site itself should be laid out in such a way that vehicles do not have to stop or park on the public highway in a location that may result in the safety of other road users being compromised.
- 1.1.2 It is therefore necessary to check certain aspects of the proposals such as the standard of the existing access point and the route to the site from main roads as well as the provision of onsite parking and distance of the proposed building from the highway to determine if they are of a suitable standard to support the proposals via the LDO process or whether a further detailed check with the highway authority (SCC) is necessary. The Highways and Access section within the Technical Informative at the end of this document sets out the process for determining how approval for the proposals should be sought and what evidence is required to be submitted alongside an application.
- 1.1.3 The following assessment process determines:
- whether your proposals are suitable for approval via an application for compliance through this LDO
  - the level of further evidence required to be included with (or within) your Design and Access Statement submission, or
  - whether a planning application is required

## 1.2 Level 1 Assessment

- 1.2.1 If the Level 1 assessment set out in the table below confirms that no further assessment is required, then it is appropriate to submit the compliance application without further evidence to support the site in terms of access.

Table 1. Is further evidence required?

Parameter	No further assessment or evidence required	Step 2 assessment required
Proposals are for sole B1(a) use with a GFA less than 50m <sup>2</sup> with an existing access	✓	
Proposals are for any combination of B1(a)/B1(b)/B1(c) uses off an existing access with a total GFA of less than 200m <sup>2</sup>		✓
Proposals are for sole B1(b) or B1(c) use off an existing access with a total GFA of less than 200m <sup>2</sup>		✓

- 1.2.2 If the Level 1 assessment suggests further assessment is required, then progress to the Level 2 assessment to determine if the proposals are suitable for approval via the compliance application route or whether you would be required to submit a planning application for the Site.

## 1.3 Level 2 Assessment

- 1.3.1 The table below sets out the parameters which would allow approval to be sought via application for compliance through this LDO. For each parameter in table 2, evidence should be provided in plan form to show that the requirement is met. All parameters in Table 2 should be checked and if any parameter suggests that the proposals are not eligible for consideration through the LDO process, then further advice should be sought from the LPA.

Table 2. Site eligibility and access evidence required

Parameter	Evidence of Required through D&A Statement	Is the site eligible for consideration through this LDO?
<b>Route to Main Site Access – to ensure employees and service vehicles can access the site via a safe and appropriate route</b>		
Main site access is located on a classified road (A, B or C)	✓	✓
Main site access is located on an unclassified road but within 100m of a classified road	✓	✓
Main site access is located on an unclassified road but within 100m of a site with existing consented industrial or commercial use	✓	✓
Main site access is located on an unclassified road, without access within 100m to a classified road or existing industrial/commercial site	X	X
<b>Main site access - to ensure vehicles can enter/exit highway safely</b>		
Existing access of standard set out in line with parameters detailed in Section 1.4 below	✓	✓
Existing access which does not meet standard set out under Section 1.4 below	X	X
A new access is required	X	X
<b>Internal Layout – to ensure that site layout is appropriate for access to the proposals</b>		
Proposed building frontage is within 50m of adopted highway	✓	✓
Servicing is possible from the highway or site can accommodate turning of the largest anticipated vehicle (large refuse truck as a minimum) such that vehicles can leave the site in forward gear.	✓	✓
Parking is provided in accordance with the standard set out in Section 1.5 below.	✓	✓
Layout does not meet one or more of the other requirements under internal layout heading	X	X

## 1.4 Main Access Specification

1.4.1 Main site access must meet the specification set out below:

- Visibility must be provided looking both directions out of the site in accordance with the requirements set out below. This must be achievable using only land within the client's control or highway verge/footway. Key parameters for showing visibility splays for this can be seen in figure 7.18 of Manual for Streets. For all speeds an 'x' distance of 2.4 metres is applicable. The 'y' lengths are listed below:
  - If the plated speed (speed limit signs) is 20mph, 25 metres visibility must be provided
  - If the plated speed (speed limit signs) is 30mph, 43 metres visibility must be provided
  - If the plated speed (speed limit signs) is greater than 30mph, 90 metres visibility must be provided
- Minimum width of 6 metres over a length of 15 metres
- Surface water should not drain onto the public highway.
- Any new access shall be designed to ensure that highway water does not drain onto the development site.
- Gradient of access should not exceed 1 in 10, for at least the first 15 metres from the edge of the adopted highway
- Access should be consolidated or surfaced for at least the first 15 metres, as measured from the edge of the adjoining carriageway, (not loose stone or gravel).
- Entrance gates should be hung to open inwards and should be set back a minimum distance of 5.0 metres from the carriageway edge.

## 1.5 Parking Specification

1.5.1 The parking provision for the new development should be as set out below. This should not compromise parking for the existing building:

Table 3. Extract from SCC Adopted Parking Strategy - Zones defined by Accessibility

Type	Town/Village Centres and Peripheries	Rural Areas
Cycle	1 per 250m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor area	1 per 250m <sup>2</sup> of floorspace
Vehicle	1 per 40m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor area	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup> of gross floor area
Disabled	1 of the vehicle spaces provided should be sized for disabled use	1 of the vehicle spaces provided should be sized for disabled use
Motorcycle	1 space	1 space

1.5.2 Parking bays should be sized as follows:

- Perpendicular - 2.4 x 5m
- Parallel - 2.4 x 6m
- Disabled – as above with a 1.2m buffer on the offside and rear of the space

- 1.5.3 Bays should have a minimum of 6m perpendicular distance to the rear of the space to allow adequate manoeuvring area for vehicles entering/exiting spaces.

DRAFT

## 2 Other Potential Technical Requirements

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 For some sites technical information may be required to be supplied alongside your Design and Access Statement. The nature of this technical information depends on the individual circumstances of your site's location.

2.1.2 The information in this informative relates to:

- a) the circumstances when further information is needed to be submitted alongside your submission;
- b) how to find out if your site is affected by such circumstances;
- c) how to find what information should be submitted in such circumstances; and
- d) clarifications on the interpretation on standing advice where relevant.

### 2.2 Flood Risk Assessment

2.2.1 It is possible to find out which Flood Zone your submission area sits in by using the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

2.2.2 A Flood Risk Assessment is required to support this submission if:

- a) your site is in an area within flood zone 1, but has critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency; or
- b) your site is in flood zone 2 or 3a; or
- c) your site could be affected by sources of flooding other than rivers and the sea.

2.2.3 Advice can be found on what should be included within a Flood Risk Assessment is available through the Somerset West and Taunton Website. Standing advice for the production of an Flood Risk Assessment and examples of Flood Resilience Measures can also be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice>.

- The development uses included within this LDO are considered as 'less vulnerable' to flooding and is therefore appropriate for consideration through this process.
- Development will provide less than 250m of new floorspace and be set within an overall site coverage of less than 1Ha (see drawing a site boundary guidance). This means proposed development through this LDO is minor in nature and **will not require a sequential or exception test.**
- **You do not need to submit your Flood Risk Assessment as a separate submission.** This information should be submitted alongside the rest of your Design and Access Statement.

## 2.3 Ecological Assessment

2.3.1 Development within this LDO has the potential to impact environmental designations and local habitats. To understand whether your proposal would qualify for the use of this LDO and whether further ecological information will be required to be submitted alongside your application, please follow the following two steps.

### Step 1

2.3.2 Firstly, you must check the central government database for nearby environmental designations. To do this, simply:

1. Open Magic Maps, available from: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk>
2. Type in your postcode.
3. Tick the 'Designations' box on the 'Table of Contents' tab.
4. Tick the 'Land-Based Designations' subcategory box.
5. Click the information button on the toolbar and then click on your site.
6. Read the criteria for 'SSSI Impact Zones' to understand whether development is likely to impact any protected habitats (SSSI, SACs, SPAs and Ramsar Sites);
7. If your proposal fulfils any of the stated criteria or states "ALL APPLICATIONS", it is judged as likely to affect a protected designation or species. It therefore does not qualify for development through this LDO.
8. If your proposal does not fulfil any of the criteria, proceed to Step 2.

### Step 2

2.3.3 There is potential for wildlife to be found in and around occupied properties and affected by works covered by this LDO. Please complete the table 1.

Are any of the following buildings or features present at your Site?	Yes	No
1. Veteran (historical or important) trees, cellars, ice houses, old mines and caves?		
2. Buildings with <a href="#">features suitable for bats</a> , or large gardens in suburban and rural areas?		
3. Traditional timber-framed building (such as a barn or oast house)?		
4. Lakes, rivers and streams (on the land or nearby)?		
5. Heathland on, nearby or linked to the site (by similar habitat)?		
6. Meadows, grassland, parkland and pasture on the land or linked to the site (by similar habitat)?		
7. Ponds or slow-flowing water bodies (like ditches) on the site, or within 500m and linked by semi-natural habitat such as parks or heaths?		
8. Rough grassland and previously developed land (brownfield sites), on or next to the site?		
9. Woodland, scrub and hedgerows on, or next to the site?		
10. Coastal habitats?		

Table 1. Habitat Checklist



- 2.3.4 If you have answered yes to any criteria in table 1, there is an increased chance of protected species being present at your site. An ecology survey (extended stage 1 survey) will therefore be required to be undertaken and findings submitted alongside your Design Access Statement.
- 2.3.5 If evidence of habitation is found at your site during the ecological survey, you must also include a summary of acceptable mitigation measures alongside your Design and Access Statement.
- 2.3.6 Any ecology survey must be undertaken by a qualified ecologist at the appropriate time of year in accordance with Natural England Standing Advice, available from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications#standing-advice-for-protected-species>. The chosen ecologist will be able to advise on necessary avoidance, enhancement and mitigation measures.
- 2.3.7 To find a suitably qualified ecologist to complete a survey and suggest mitigation measures, you can search: <https://events.cieem.net/RegisteredPracticeDirectory/Registered-Practice-Directory.aspx>.
- 2.3.8 If species are discovered following the commencement of development must stop immediately and consult your chosen ecologist.

## **2.4 Ground Contamination Assessment**

- 2.4.1 If there is a reason to believe contamination could be an issue, applicants should provide proportionate but sufficient site investigation information (a risk assessment) prepared by a competent person to determine the existence or otherwise of contamination, its nature and extent, the risks it may pose and to whom/what (the 'receptors') so that these risks can be assessed and satisfactorily reduced to an acceptable level.





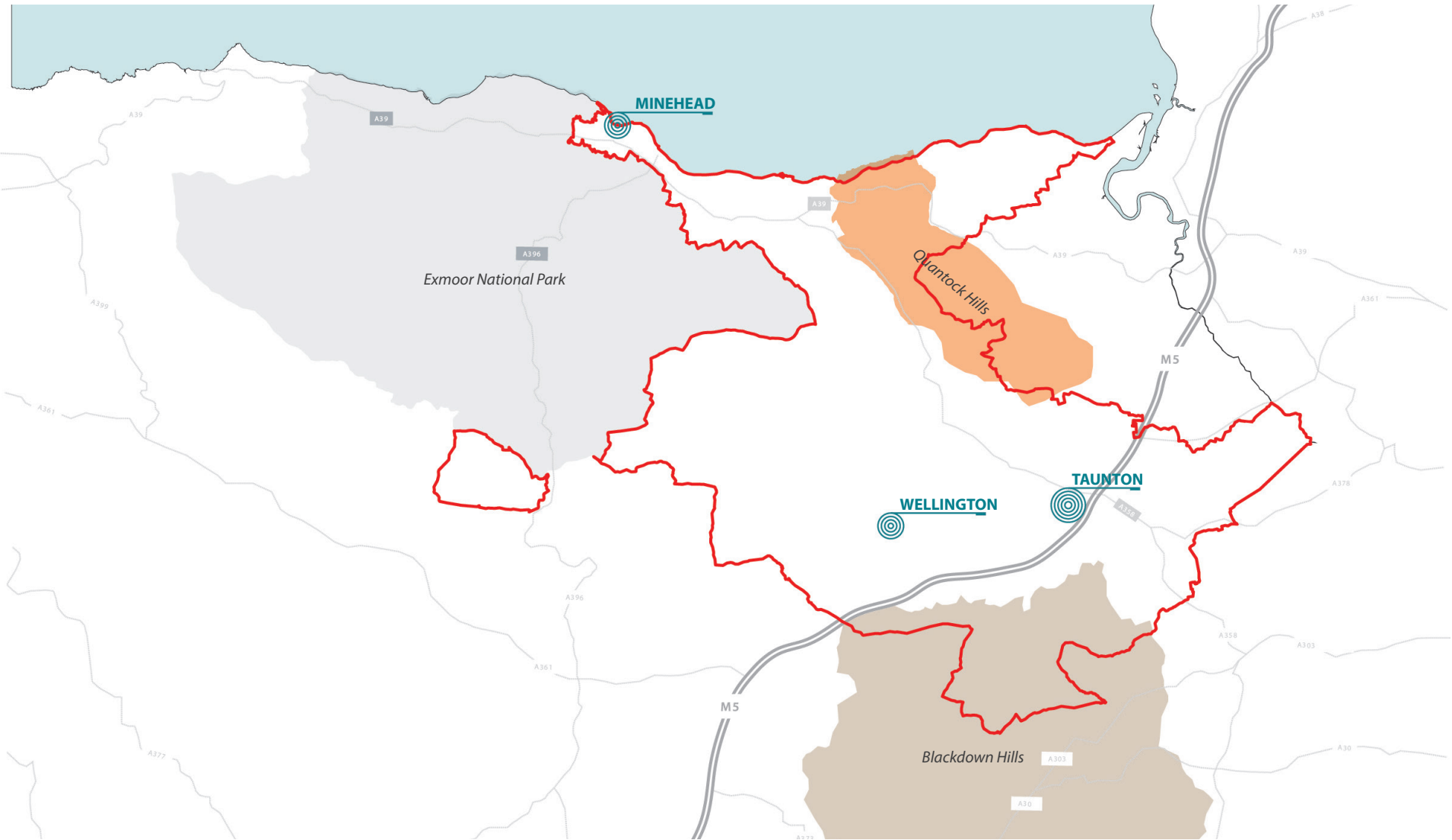
# Somerset West and Taunton Council

## Design Code for Small Scale Employment Space

*Local Development Order for B1 uses*

September 2019 | [www.lhc.net](http://www.lhc.net)

18036 - Issue: 02



Above: Site Plan of Somerset West and Taunton District

# Contents

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose (planning context/ background)

- Introduction
- What does this LDO cover? (uses etc)
- Supporting Technical Information

### 1.2 Can Your Development be Considered?

- LDO Exclusion Map
- Table Checklist

### 1.3 How to Use the Design Code

- Why A Design Code
- How to Use the Code (Flow Diagram)
- Block & Building Design Code diagram

## 2.0 Understanding the Site

### 2.1 Site Location

- Character areas (definitions)
- Towns
- Villages
- Rural Areas

### 2.2 Landscape Setting

- Landscape Character Areas
- Landscape Setting

## 3.0 Design Code

### 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

- Urban Design & Landscape Parameters
- Building Parameters

### 3.2 Proposed Developments in Villages

- Urban Design & Landscape Parameters
- Building Parameters

### 3.3 Proposed Developments in Rural Areas

- Urban Design & Landscape Parameters
- Building Parameters

## 4.0 Submission Requirements

### 4.1 LDO Submission Process

### 4.2 DAS Pro Forma

### 4.3 Example Drawing

Date:	20/09/2019	
Project:	Somerset West and Taunton Council Employment LDO   18036	
Produced by:	AS / KS	Date: 27 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2019
Checked by:	PO	Date: 27 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2019

This page has been left intentionally blank

# 1.0 Introduction

# 1.1 Purpose

## Introduction

The Local Development Order (LDO) will, when adopted, grant planning permission for much needed, small scale light industrial space across Somerset West and Taunton, and by doing so, remove the need for a planning application to be made by the developer.

The purpose of this LDO is to assist in the delivery of small scale office, research and light industrial space. Through the LDO the delivery of such employment space will be easier and faster. The LDO and accompanying Design Code will create a straightforward system for potential applicants to understand and interpret potential development opportunities.

The Design Code element sets out design parameters to be applied to any development. Its purpose is to ensure that a high and consistent standard of design is delivered, and to provide sustainable and stimulating working environments whilst at the same time enabling the diverse requirements of individual occupiers to be met.

Development must accord with all aspects of the Design Code in order to benefit from the permitted development rights confirmed by the LDO. This Design Code should be considered alongside the accompanying Local Development Order (LDO) which addresses planning and procedures in respect of the site.

## What does this LDO cover?

The LDO permits the following uses:

Use Class	Definition	Limitations
B1 (a)	Offices - other than those within class A2.	Up to 50 sqm net
B1 (b)	Research and development of products or processes	Up to 200 sqm net
B1 (c)	Light Industry – use for any industrial process which can be carried out in a residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of that area.	Up to 200 sqm net

## Supporting Technical Information

To support your application, you are required to demonstrate that you have considered a range of technical matters. Most of these matters are frontloaded through the design criteria in this Design Code, however further evidence may be required to address:

- **Flood Risk** – To ensure your proposed development would not be affected by future flooding or increase the chances of flooding elsewhere. Note that sites in a functional flood plain (flood zone 3a) will not be considered through this LDO.

- **Ecology Surveys and Measures** – To manage the potential impact of proposed development on local habitats.

- **Existing and Proposed Access** – to ensure that access arrangements will not lead to an unsafe environment for pedestrians and road users.

Advice on what assessments are required to be undertaken, and when, is included in the Technical Informative which forms a part of this LDO.

Please note that where Somerset West and Taunton judge there is insufficient information provided to make a decision, they may make request for further information on this basis.

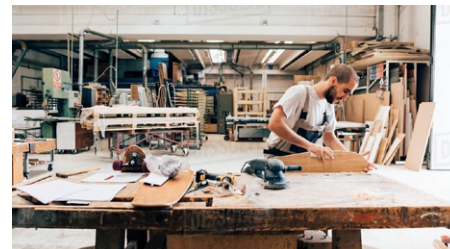
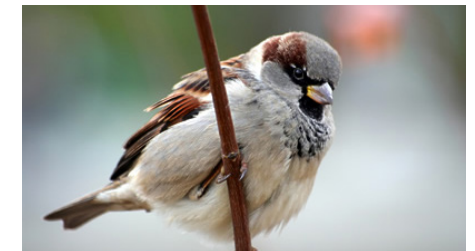


## Sustainability

Underpinning this LDO is the need to encourage employment uses close to where people live. With this shift from a daily commuting pattern to working locally, the LDO hopes to have a positive impact on reducing traffic and associated issues across the District.

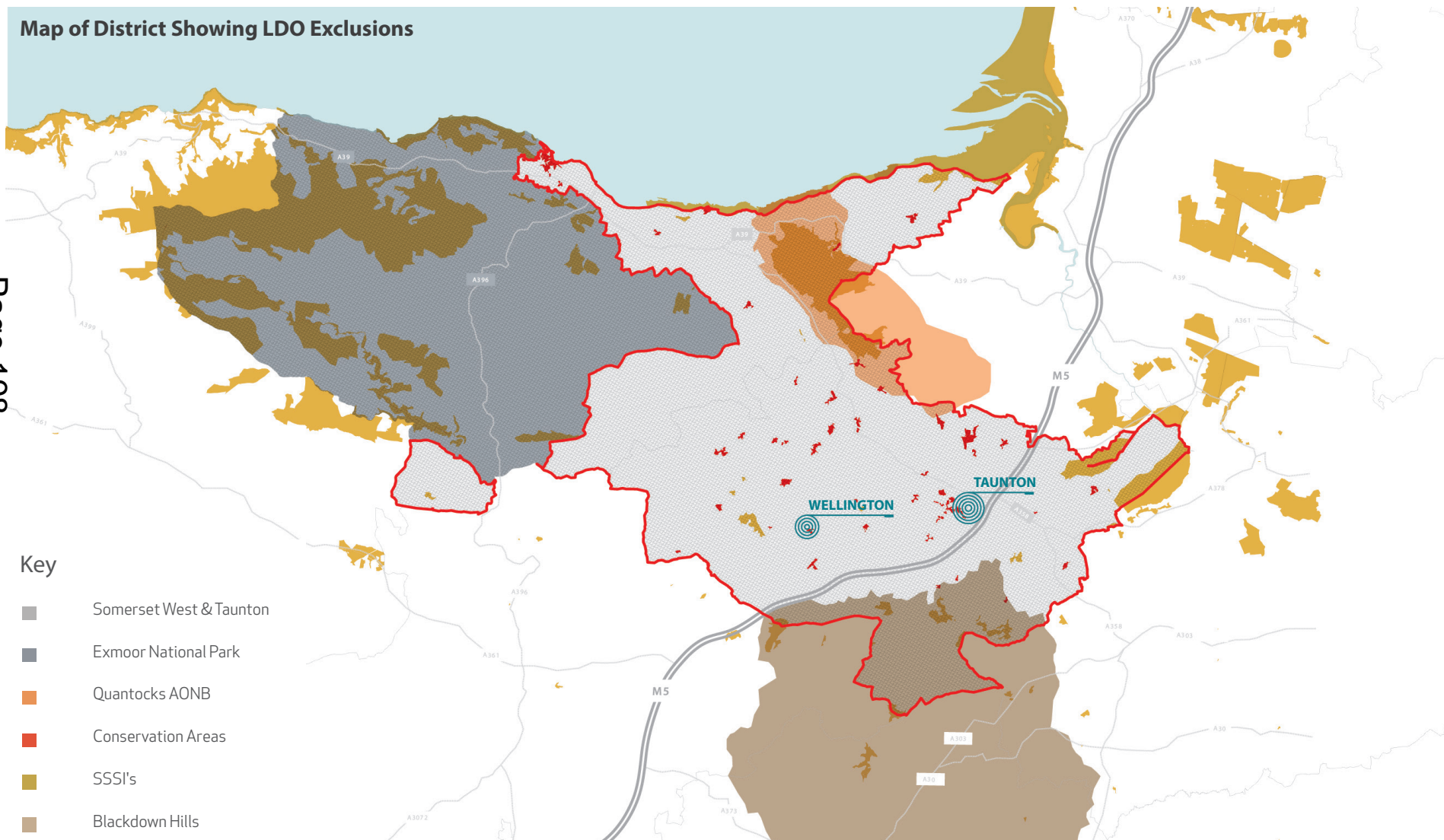
The following sustainable approaches are encouraged within any new employment unit and surrounding landscaping works under this LDO:

- Low energy use
- High levels of insulation
- Appropriate levels of natural lighting
- Reuse of building materials where possible
- Use of building materials which can be recycled in the future
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Use of native plant species
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows
- Measures to support biodiversity
- Appropriate waste management and recycling strategies
- Cycle storage to encourage sustainable travel
- Installation of bird and bat boxes or nesting provisions within new buildings



## 1.2 Can your Development be Considered?

Map of District Showing LDO Exclusions



### Key

- Somerset West & Taunton
- Exmoor National Park
- Quantocks AONB
- Conservation Areas
- SSSI's
- Blackdown Hills

The adjacent table should be used to determine whether your proposed development can be considered through this LDO submission process.

The table highlights where you should read the informative document to assess:

1. Whether the site is eligible to be considered through this LDO, or whether you should instead operate through the standard planning application process.

2. Whether further work may be required, and you should refer to the Technical Informative.

**If you are unsure on how to find any of the information required, please refer to the Technical Informative which forms a part of this LDO.**

	Your proposal is eligible for consideration through this LDO	Check Technical Informative	A planning application is required
<b>1. Process</b>			
This is your first LDO submission at this address.	✓		
You have previously received an LDO certificate of conformity at this address.	✗		✓
You intend to demolish buildings to enable the development of new buildings.	✗		✓
You have completed the DAS proforma checklist.	✓		
<b>2. Site Location</b>			
Your site is located in Taunton.	✗		✓
Your site is located in Wellington.	✗		✓
Your site is located in a Conservation Area.	✗		✓
Your site is within the curtilage of Listed Building	✗		✓
Your site is located in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	✗		✓
Your site is located within a character area identified within this Design Code.	✓	✓	
<b>3. Site Size (see measurement guidance page xxx)</b>			
Less than 1 Hectare	✓	✓	
1 Hectare or More	✗		✓
<b>4. Flooding</b>			
Any part of your site is in Flood Zone 1	✓	✓	
Any part of your site is in Flood Zone 2	✓	✓	
Any part of your site is in Flood Zone 3a	✓	✓	
Any part of your site is in Flood Zone 3b	✗		✓
<b>5. Access</b>			
Your Site has vehicle access to an A or B class road	✓	✓	
Your Site is not accessed by a A or B class road	✗		✓
Your existing vehicular access has a width of at least 5 metres for a length of at least 6 metres.	✓	✓	
Your existing access has a width of less than 5 metres.	✗		✓
<b>6. Ecology</b>			
Your development is not judged as likely to affect nearby environmental designations.	✓	✓	
Your proposed development is judged as likely to affect nearby environmental designations.	✗	✓	✓
Your proposal site may affect any potential local habitats.	✓	✓	
<b>7. Design</b>			
Your proposal is in accordance with the design parameters of this LDO.	✓		
Your proposal is for development that differs in scale, design or materials to those proposed in this Design Code.	✗		✓

# 1.3 How to Use the Design Code

## Why a Design Code

A Design Code is a proactive method of securing high quality new development, giving the developer clear guidance on delivering high quality light industrial space within the given context. The Design Code provides clear guidance to the developer and certainty to the community and local authority regarding the quality of the proposed development.

This Design Code is intended to be a benchmark and reference manual for a range of architectural, urban and landscape design issues that will inform the detailed design of the scheme. The Design Code responds to the LDO framework, identifying appropriate approaches for delivering small scale employment space within a range of contexts and locations across Somerset West and Taunton. The Design Code responds to national and local design policies by clearly setting out design principles that are appropriate to their context and provides the required small-scale industrial space whilst contributing positively to the site and landscape/townscape.

This Design Code sets out plot parameters for height, scale and massing, proximity to adjacent buildings (existing and proposed), corners and end plots, building materials, colour palettes, roofs, doors and windows and landscaping, all of which draw precedent from the local character of the district.

## How to use the Code

Please refer to the flow diagram opposite which illustrates how to use the Design Code.

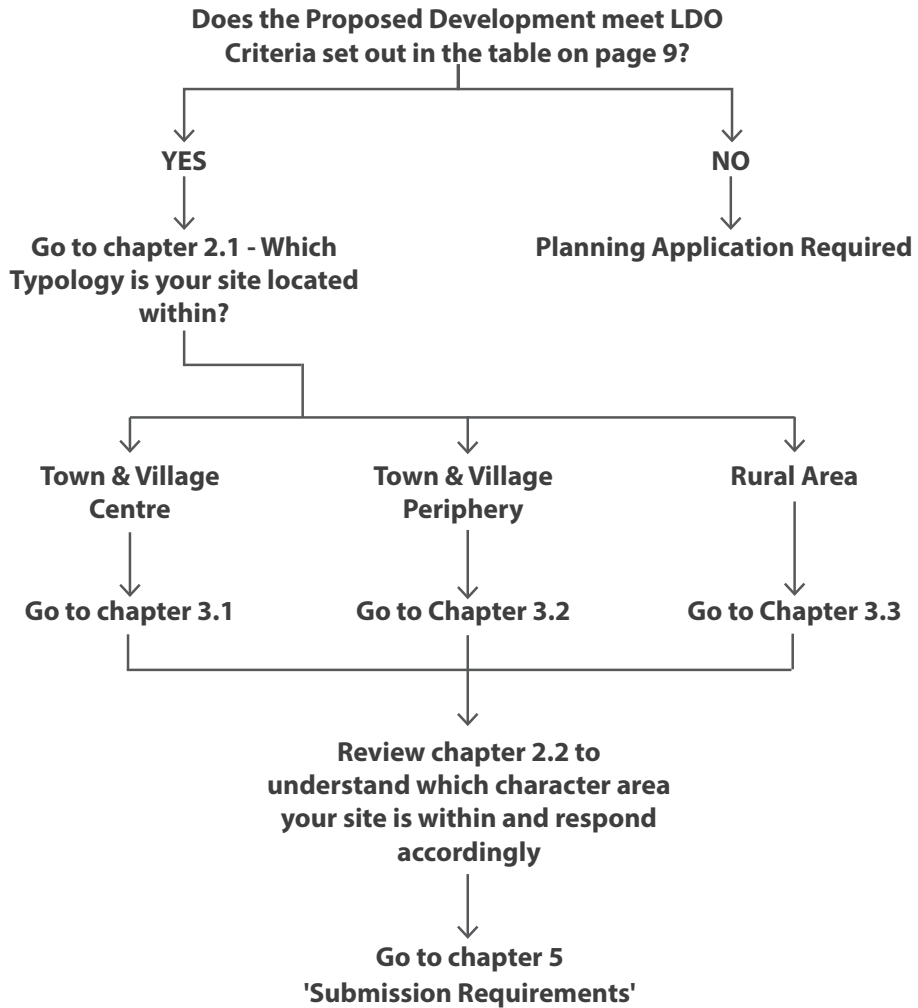
The Code is divided into sections, starting with the site and context, before focusing in on blocks and buildings, edges (plot boundaries) and details. Within each section individual 'Codes' are highlighted, covering specific design requirements and parameters.

All designs submitted for the LDO must be compliant with:

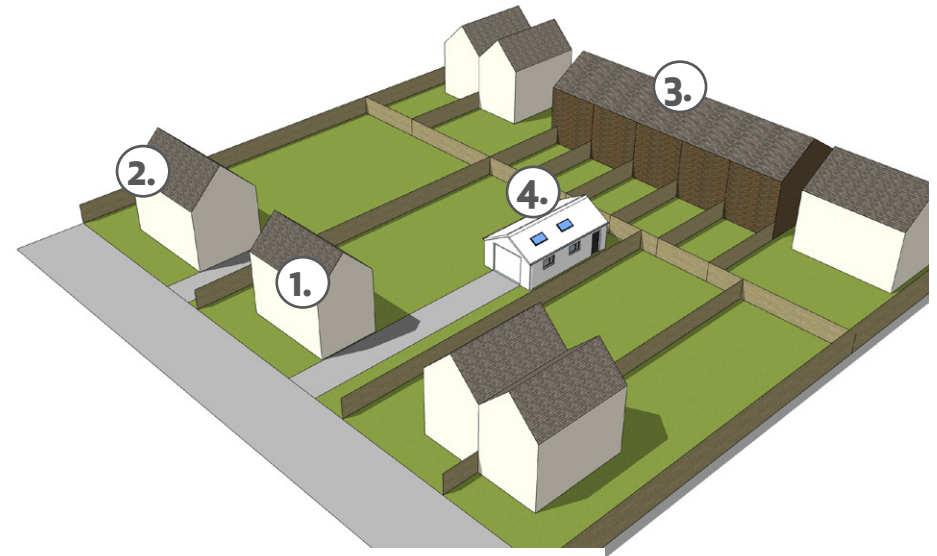
- **The LDO document**
- **The requirements set out within this Design Code**
- **The UK Building Regulation requirements in effect at the time of submission for approval**
- **Ecological legislation**



How to Use the Design Code Flow Diagram:



Block and Building Design Code Diagram:



- 1. Your dwelling
- 2. Neighbouring Properties
- 3. Neighbouring Properties
- 4. Proposed LDO Unit

This page has been left intentionally blank

## 2.0 Understanding the Site

# 2.1 Site Location

## Site Typologies

This Design Code covers a number of area Typologies which are seen throughout the district. The Code is divided into 3 sections, which covers each Typology: Town and Village Centres, Town and Village Peripheries and Rural Areas. Prospective applicants should use this guide to locate their site.

Any proposed site should be considered in relation to the appropriate section of this document. Each section will set out the simple parameters by which the proposed development should conform with.

The 3 Typologies are:

- 1 Town and Village Centres
- 2 Town & Village Peripheries
- 3 Rural Areas

Further information for each of these can be found in Section 3.0 of this report.



Above: Typology Diagram



### Town & Village Centres

The site is:

- Bordered on all sides by neighbouring development
- Limited impact on wider landscape views due to proposed buildings being seen within existing context

### Town & Village Peripheries

The site is:

- Bordered on 2 or more sides by existing development
- Have views to the open countryside

### Rural Areas

The site is:

- Isolated clusters of buildings made up of a dwelling and existing agricultural buildings
- Isolated dwellings in the open countryside

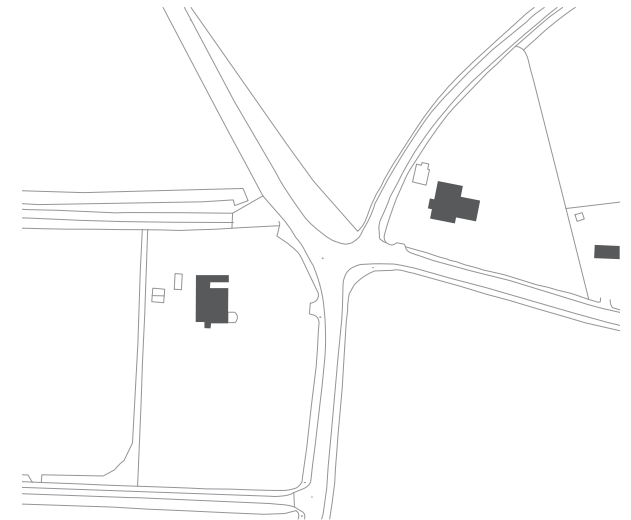
1.



2.



3.



Above: Town & Village Centre

Above: Town & Village Periphery

Above: Rural

## 2.2 Landscape Setting

### Landscape Character Areas

Landscape Character Areas (each to include landscape / architectural / material / palette information)

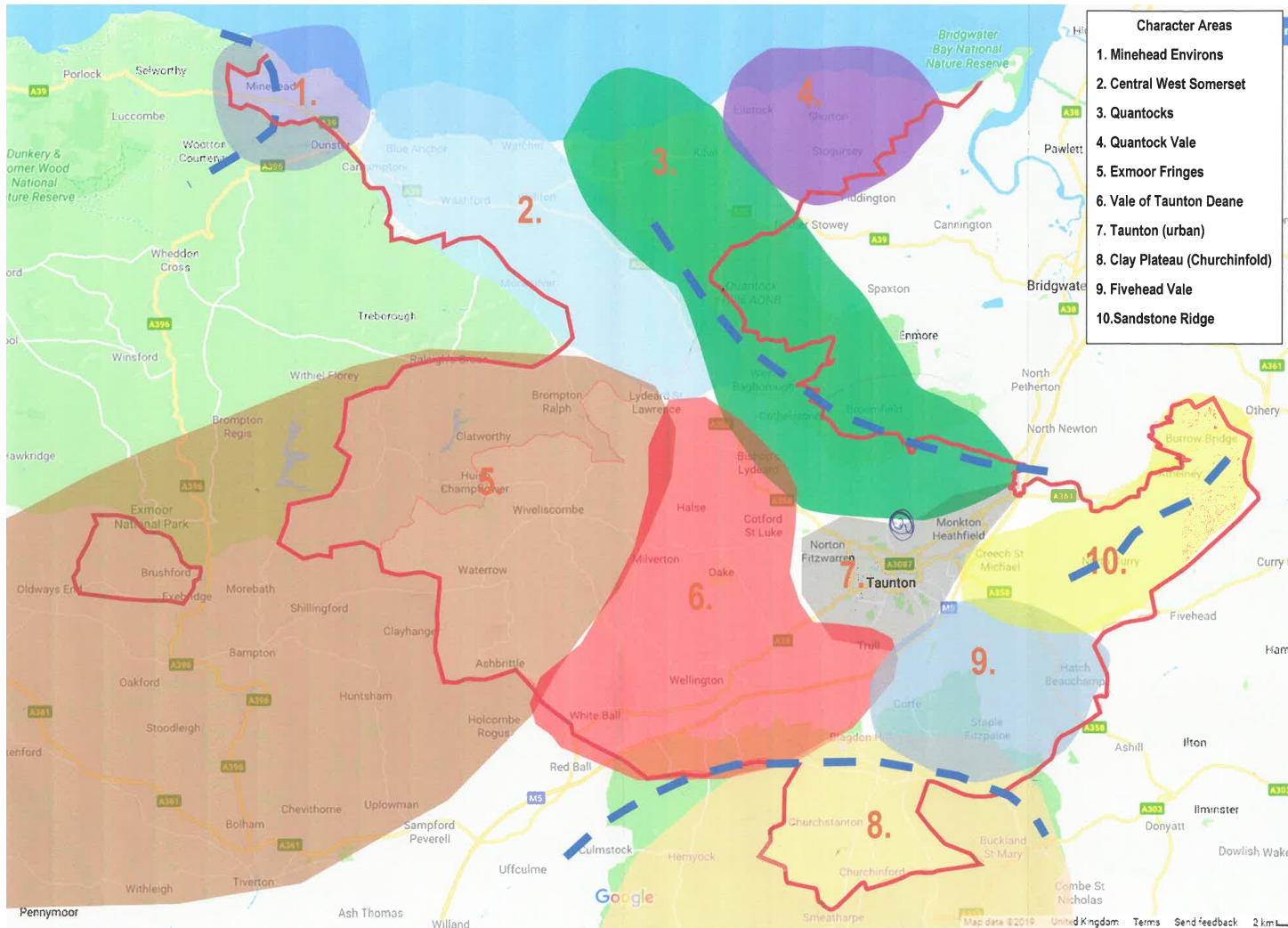
- Minehead Environs
- Central West Somerset
- Quantocks
- Quantock Vale
- Exmoor Fringes
- Vale of Taunton Deane
- Taunton (urban)
- Clay Plateau (Churchinford)
- Fivehead Vale
- Sandstone Ridge

The proposed development should respond to the character of its landscape/townspace setting. The Somerset West and Taunton Design Guide sets out principles for each Landscape Character Area. The relevant parameters for each area, relating to landscape, architectural design and materials are summarised below:

**CO-ORDINATE WITH DESIGN  
SOMERSET WEST AND TAUNTON  
DESIGN GUIDE INFORMATION**

Further Information can be found in the Somerset West and Taunton Design Guide.

# Design Guide - Taunton and West Somerset Landscape Character Areas



This page has been left intentionally blank

## 3.0 Design Code

# 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

## Urban Design/Landscape Parameters

### Access & Parking requirements:

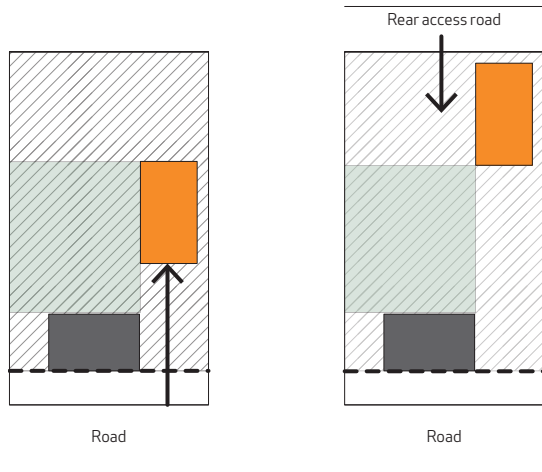
- Must have existing vehicular access to proposed employment unit - if a new access is required, including dropping kerbs, planning permission will need to be obtained.
- Additional access length/area must be no more than XXm in length
- No more than 1 additional parking space per 50m2 employment space and any additional parking should not be in front of the existing dwelling

### Landscape structure & Potential Visual Impact:

- Where there is potential harm to wider views, appropriate screening (e.g hedgerow/tree planting) shall be implemented.

### Where the building is located on the plot:

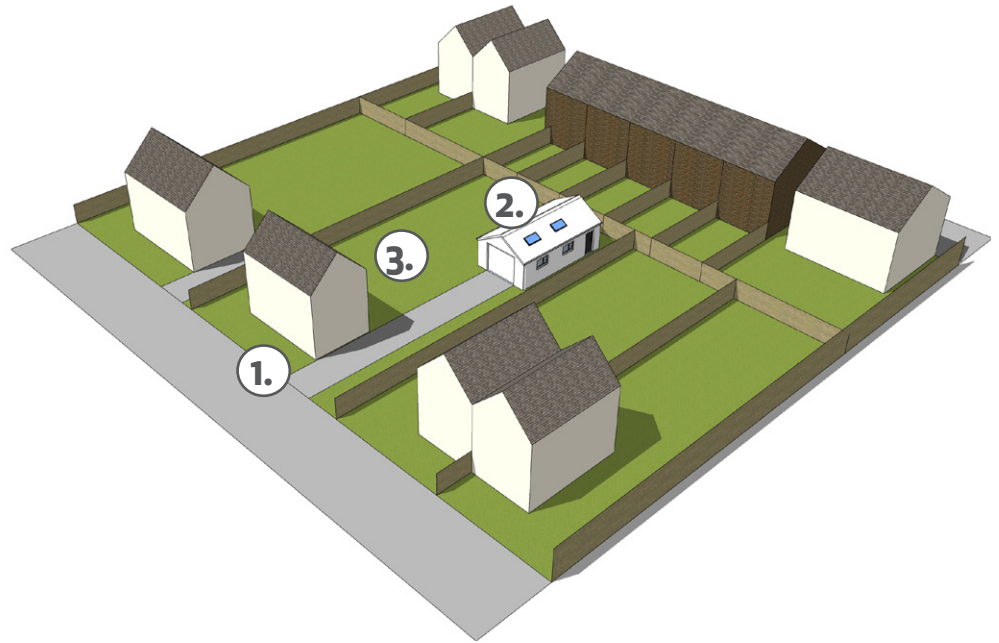
- No proposed building to protrude in front of existing dwelling building line
- Proposed building to be no larger than 10% of rear garden area (curtilage behind existing building line minus the existing dwelling area and any outbuilding areas) up to a maximum of 50m2 for office (B1a) and 200m2 for light industrial (B1 b and c)
- Remaining garden must not be less than 50m2
- The remaining garden must relate to the existing dwelling and its layout and living spaces – location of proposed building on the plot must not cause detriment to amenity of existing dwelling.



Above: Proposed unit off existing access at the front & Rear

Key

- Proposed Unit
- Existing Dwelling
- Building Line
- Existing Access
- Garden Area Behind Building Line
- Retained Existing Garden (50m<sup>2</sup> minimum)



1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind the building line
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling

Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a town or village centre setting

# 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

## Urban Design/Landscape Details

### Surfacing Materials

Any new paving or surfacing material is to be permeable to allow sufficient drainage. This includes materials such as:

- Gravel
- Permeable concrete block paving
- Porous asphalt

### External Lighting

- Private external lighting must be designed to minimise light pollution on neighbouring properties (i.e. directional light spread)
- All external lighting (space and security lighting) must be provided by energy efficient fittings with appropriate control systems and daylight cut-off sensors.

### Boundary Treatment & details

- Where planted screening is required, applicants should use a mix of native and non-native species that supports wildlife, including insects and birds.

Tree planting should include native species (or varieties of native species)

**EXAMPLE SPECIES/DETAILS TO BE INCLUDED**

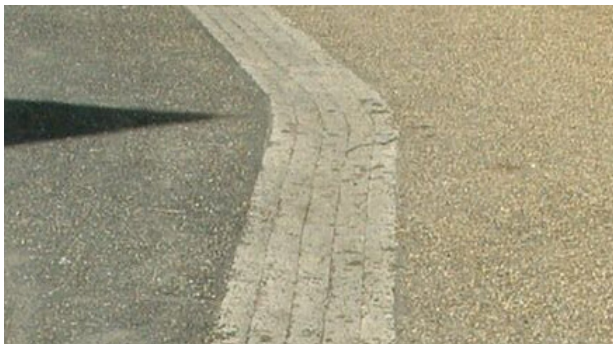
### Townscape/ Landscape Character Areas

Refer back to Somerset West and Taunton Design Guide Principles in Chapter 2.2

### Refuse & Cycle Storage

- Secure covered bike storage must be provided unless they are provided internally (1 space per 50m<sup>2</sup>, minimum 2 spaces)
- External bin storage will be provided on plot at the rear of the proposed dwelling (unless provided internally). Bins must not be stored at the front of buildings, facing onto the street



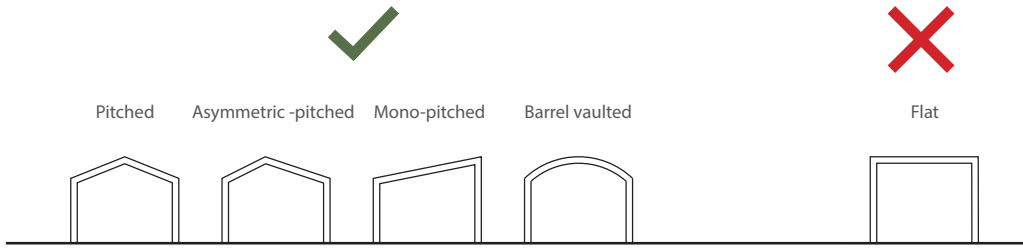


Above: Precedent images for details

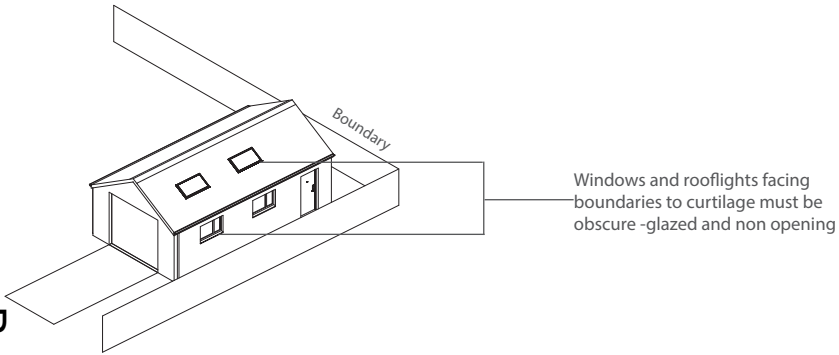
# 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

## Building Parameters

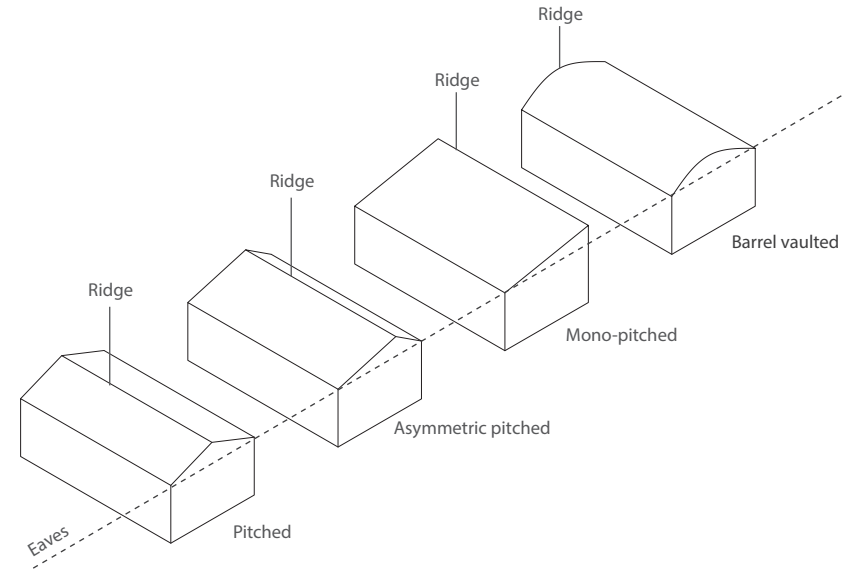
- Only single storey buildings are permitted
- Mezzanine structures are not permitted
- Flat roofs are not permitted
- Maximum ridge height of a building = 4 metres
- UNLESS within 2 metres of the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse where the maximum ridge height for any roof form = 2.5 metres
- Maximum eaves height for any roof form = 2.5 metres
- Simple roof forms that express the building form should be used (e.g. pitched, asymmetric pitch, mono-pitch or barrel vaulted)
- The ridge of a mono-pitched structure should not face the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- The height of the building, enclosure or container should be measured from the highest ground level immediately adjacent to the building
- Any window inserted on a wall or roof slope forming a side elevation of the building must be obscure-glazed, and non-opening.



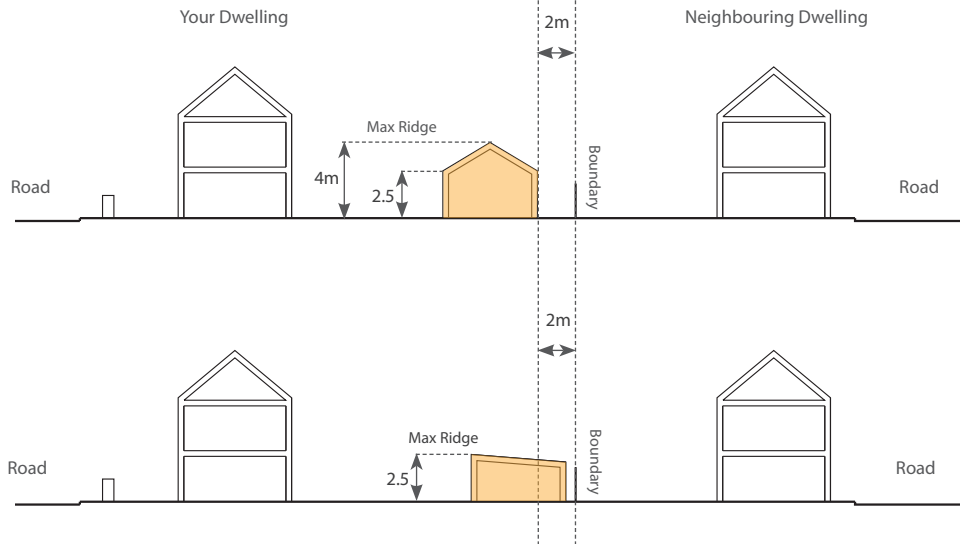
Above: Potential Roof Forms



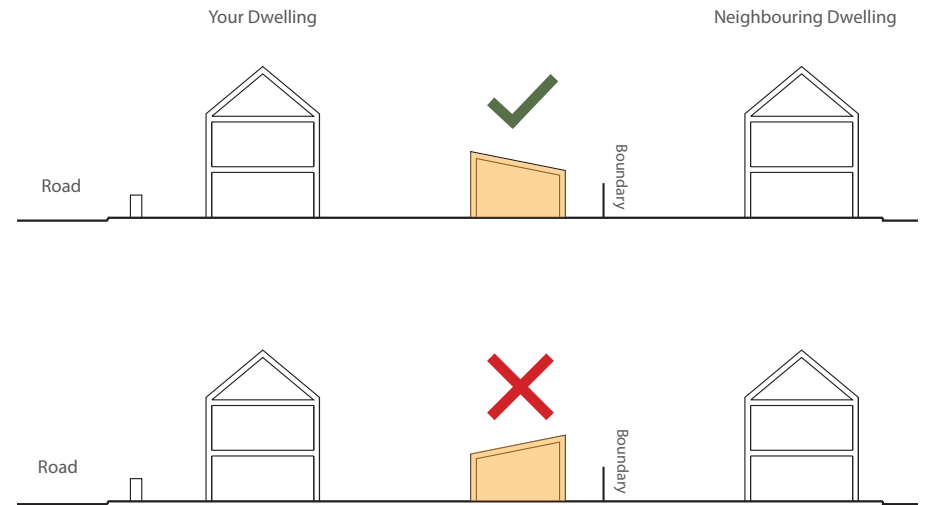
Above: Obscure Glazing requirement



Above: Roof Forms Explained



Above: Maximum Ridge and Eaves Heights



Above: Mono-pitched roof form requirement



# 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

## Building Elements

The building should appear subservient to the main dwelling and demonstrate its B1(c) function through its form, façades and detailing. The building should use a subdued pallet of contextual materials which are simple and fit for purpose.

### Wall Materials

Wall materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse  
E.g.
  - If predominantly brick then a matching brick should be used for new building
  - If predominantly local stone then matching stone should be used for new building
  - If predominantly render then a similar tone of render should be used for new building
  - The reuse of local stone or brick is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary wall materials include:

- Good quality timber cladding detailed to a high standard. Timber should have a natural appearance and should not be unnaturally stained or varnished

- Profiled metal cladding in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard

### Roof Materials

The chosen roof material should be appropriate to the designed roof pitch. Roof materials must not be reflective or cause any glare throughout the day.

Roof materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

E.g.

- If slate then a matching slate should be used for new building
- If tile local tile then a matching tile should be used for new building
- The reuse of roof materials is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary roof materials include:

- Grey metal standing seam roof
- Profiled metal roofing in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard

- Green roof detailed to a high standard

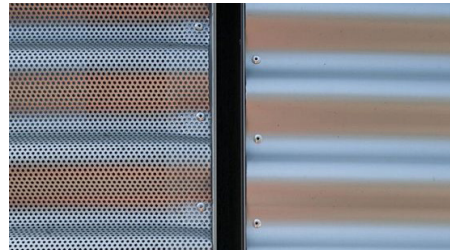
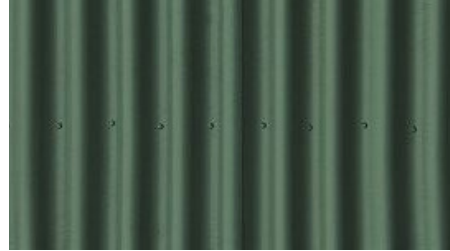
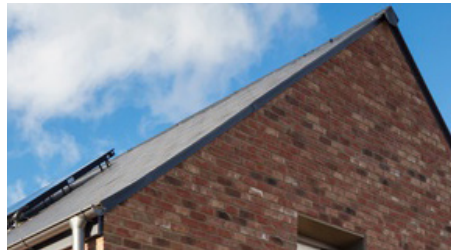
### Windows and Doors

- Windows and doors should be simple, well-proportioned and suit the function of the building.
- Domestic proportioned openings should be avoided.
- Where large format doors are required, they should be in a complimentary material and colour tone to the material palette of the wider building.
- Windows and doors should be recessed within the walls and not flush with the external face.

Windows and doors of a standard size should be of a similar material and colour tone to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse.

OR

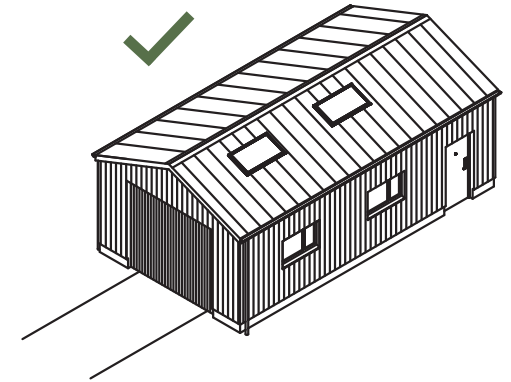
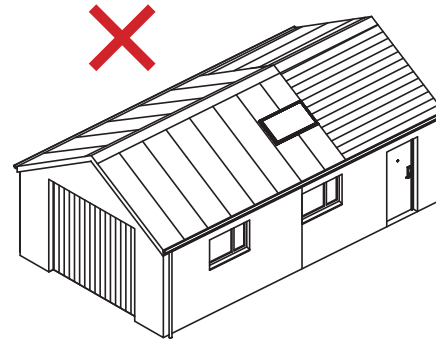
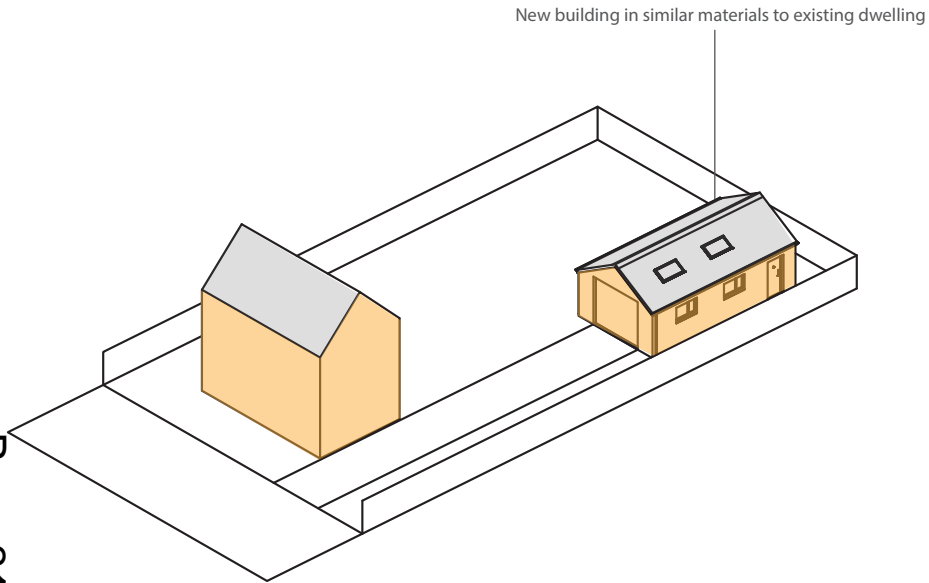
If a contemporary approach is taken to the building, window and standard sized doors should be simple and crisp in profile and be of a colour tone which complements the contemporary material palette of the wider building.



# 3.1 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Centres

## Building Details

- Buildings should generally have one material used on the walls and one material used on the roof to ensure a clean, simple building and avoid ad-hoc pepper-potting of materials, or stark contrasts of material.
- Where a cladding material is used on the walls a visible masonry 'plinth' may be used in which must be of a similar appearance to masonry used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse, or of a complementary contemporary appearance to the cladding material above.
- Eaves and verges should be tight and simple to suit the simple form and of the building and its function.
- Using simple trim details should be used to produce uninterrupted eaves lines.
- The use of standard box shape eaves and projecting fascia and bargeboards should be avoided unless already on the existing dwelling.
- Downpipes should be integrated into the design of the roof and façades of the building to minimise impact of pipes on the overall design.
- Rooflights should be used sparingly and purposefully and have a maximum upstand of 150mm from the roof plane. Rooflights should match the colour of the roof finish.



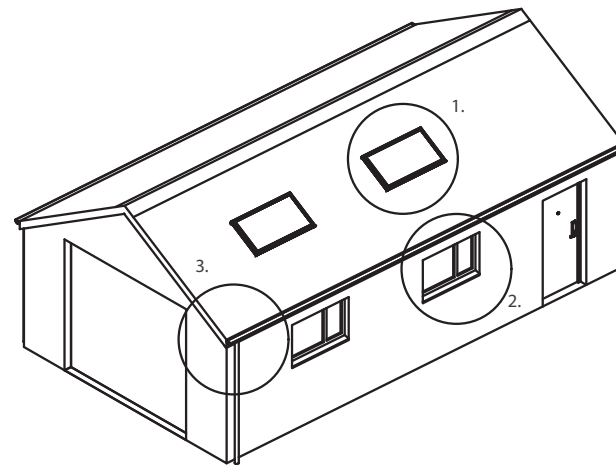
Above: Buildings should generally have one material for the walls and one material for the roof

Above: Building materials should either:

Be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

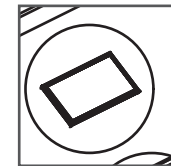
OR

Be of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

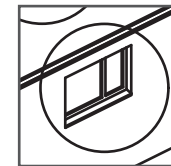


Above: Building Details

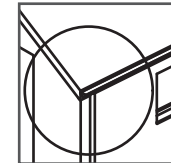
Below: Building Details



1. Text on rooflights



2. Text on openings



3. Text on rainwater and roof details



## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries

### Urban Design/Landscape Parameters

#### Access & Parking requirements

- Must have existing vehicular access to proposed employment unit - if a new access is required, including dropping kerbs, planning permission will need to be obtained.
- Additional access length/area must be no more than XXm in length.
- No more than 1 additional parking space per 50m<sup>2</sup> employment space and any additional parking should not be in front of the existing dwelling.

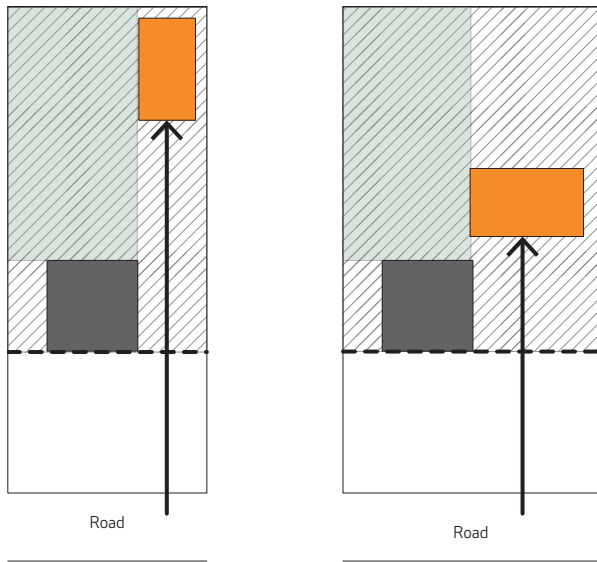
#### Where the building is located on the plot

- No proposed building to protrude in front of existing dwelling building line
- Proposed building to be no larger than 10% of rear garden area (curtilage behind existing building line minus the existing dwelling area and any outbuilding areas) up to a maximum of 50m<sup>2</sup> for office (B1a) and 200m<sup>2</sup> for light industrial (B1 b and c)
- The primary entrance to the proposed building to be no further than 15m from the edge of an existing dwelling/outbuilding
- Remaining garden must not be less than 50m<sup>2</sup>.
- The remaining garden must relate to the existing dwelling and its layout and living spaces – location of proposed building on the plot must not cause detriment to amenity of existing dwelling.

#### Landscape structure & Potential Visual Impact

- Where the site lacks existing mature boundaries around the proposed new building the submission should include a strategy to provide a suitable degree of screening / enclosure (e.g. hedgerow/tree planting).
- New buildings not to protrude outside of the defined built up area/landscape features which define the edge of a town or village

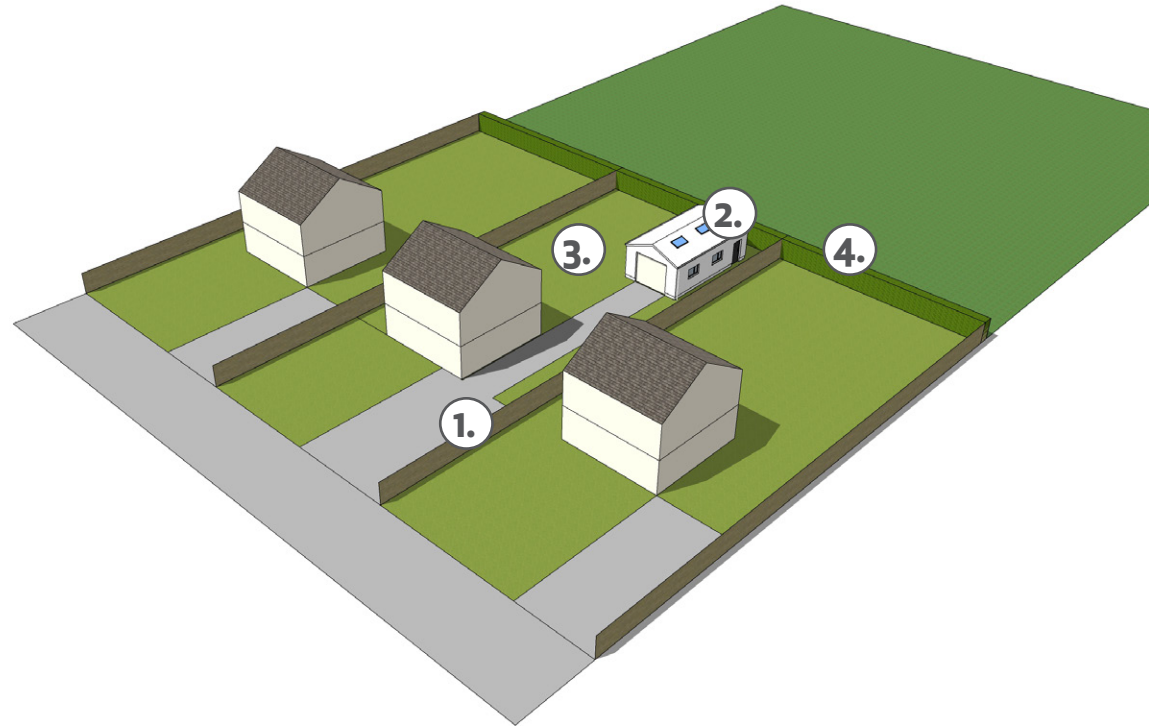




Above: Proposed unit off existing access

Key

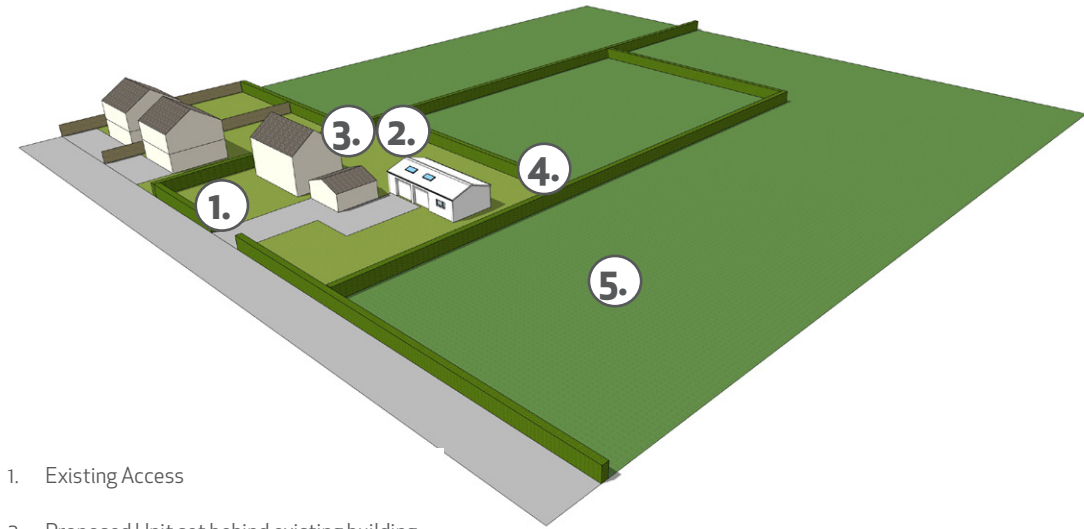
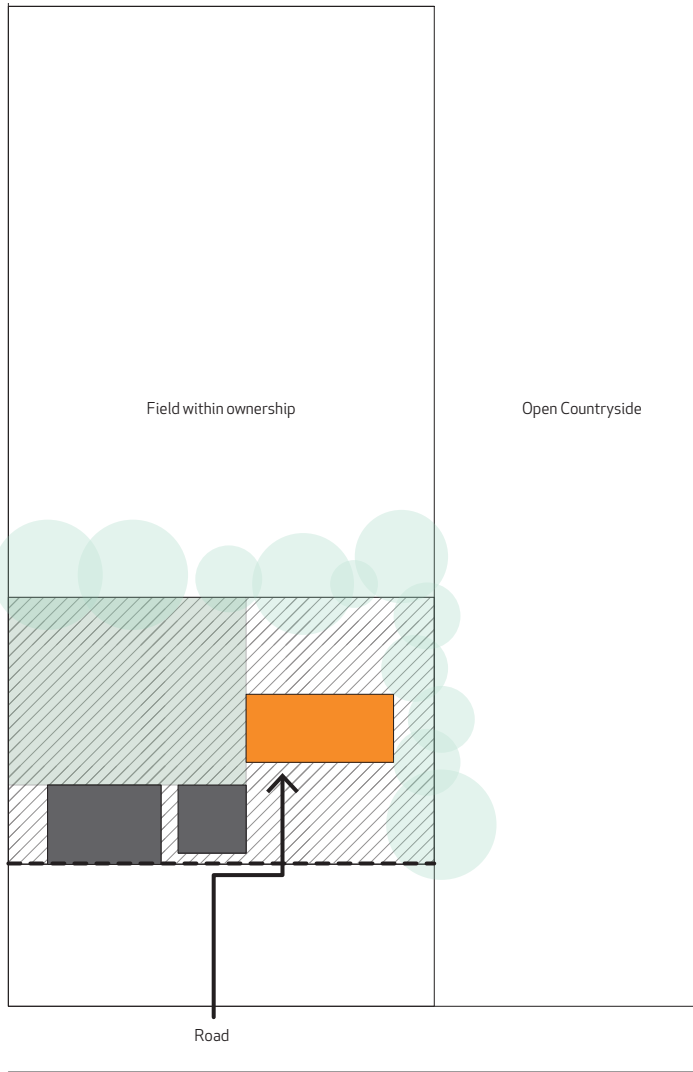
- Proposed Unit
- Existing Dwelling
- Building Line
- Existing Access
- Garden Area Behind Building Line
- Retained Existing Garden (50m<sup>2</sup> minimum)



1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind existing building line
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling
4. Settlement edge (not necessarily owner's boundary)

Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a town or village periphery setting

## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries



1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind existing building line
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling
4. Settlement edge (not necessarily owner's boundary)
5. Open Countryside

Above: Proposed unit off existing access

Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a town or village periphery setting

This page has been intentionally left blank

## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries

### Urban Design/Landscape Details

#### Surfacing Materials

Any new paving or surfacing material is to be permeable to allow sufficient drainage. This includes materials such as:

- Gravel
- Permeable concrete block paving
- Porous asphalt

#### External Lighting

- Private external lighting must be designed to minimise light pollution on neighbouring properties (i.e. directional light spread)
- All external lighting (space and security lighting) must be provided by energy efficient fittings with appropriate control systems and daylight cut-off sensors.

#### Boundary Treatment & details

- Where planted screening is required, applicants should use a mix of native and non-native species that supports wildlife, including insects and birds.

Tree planting should include native species (or varieties of native species)

**EXAMPLE SPECIES/DETAILS TO BE INCLUDED**

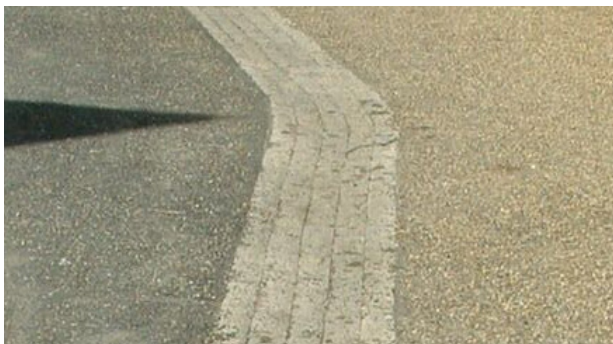
#### Refuse & Cycle Storage

- Secure covered bike storage must be provided unless they are provided internally (1 space per 50m<sup>2</sup>, minimum 2 spaces)
- External bin storage will be provided on plot at the rear of the proposed dwelling (unless provided internally). Bins must not be stored at the front of buildings, facing onto the street

#### Townscape/ Landscape Character Areas

Refer back to Somerset West and Taunton Design Guide Principles in Chapter 2.2



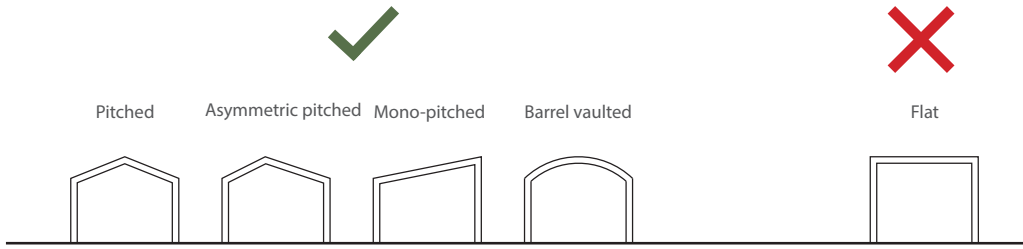


Above: Precedent images for details

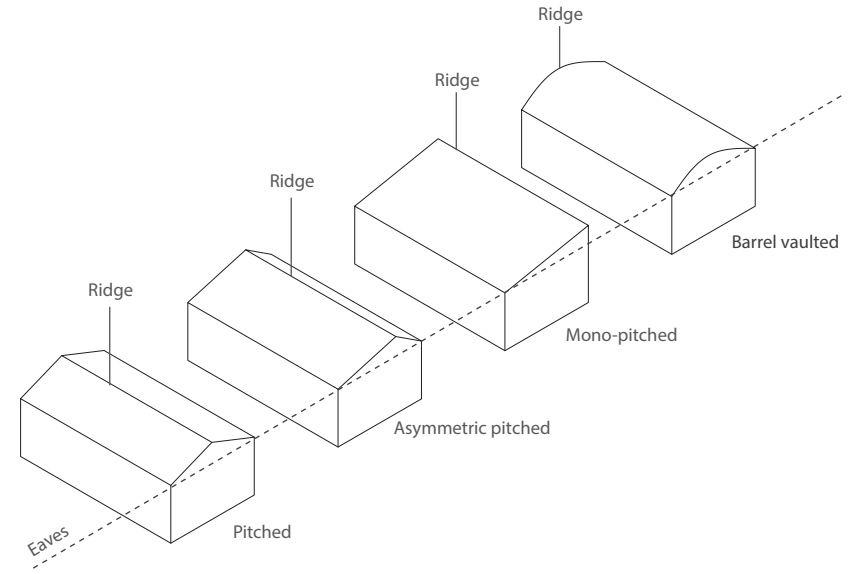
## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries

### Building Parameters

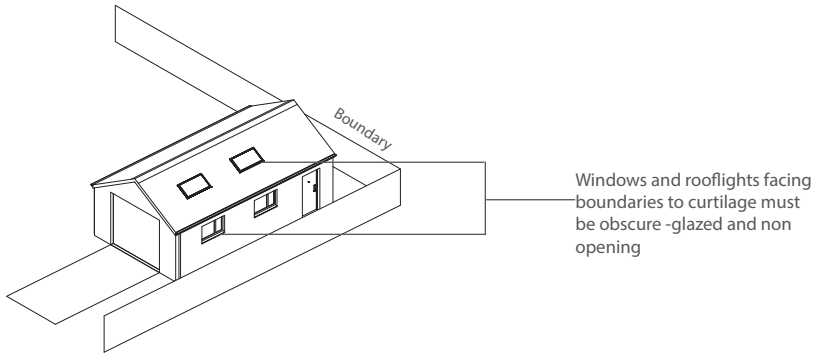
- Only single storey buildings are permitted
- Mezzanine structures are not permitted
- Flat roofs are not permitted
- Maximum ridge height of a building = 4 metres
- UNLESS within 2 metres of the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse where the maximum ridge height for any roof form = 2.5 metres
- Maximum eaves height for any roof form = 3 metres
- Simple roof forms that express the building form should be used (e.g. pitched, asymmetric pitch, mono-pitch or barrel vaulted)
- The ridge of a mono-pitched structure should not face the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
- The height of the building, enclosure or container should be measured from the highest ground level immediately adjacent to the building
- Any window inserted on a wall or roof slope forming a side elevation of the building must be obscure-glazed, and non-opening.



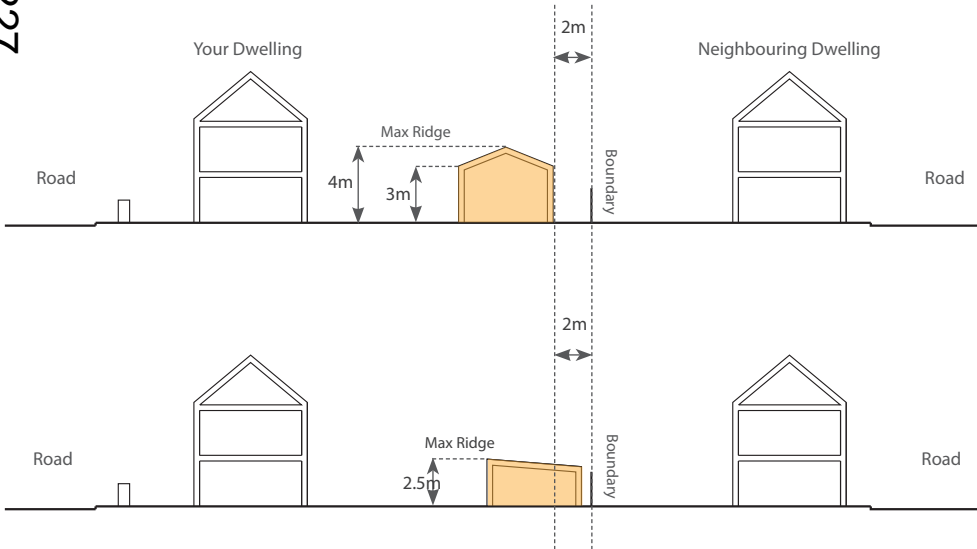
Above: Potential Roof Forms



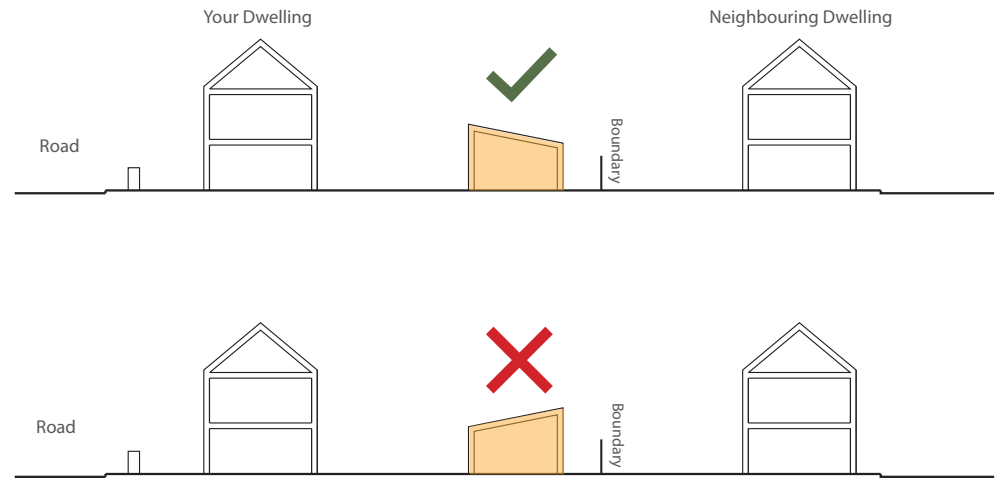
Above: Roof Forms Explained



Above: Obscure Glazing requirement



Above: Maximum Ridge and Eaves Heights



Above: Mono-pitched roof form requirement



## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries

### Building Elements

The building should appear subservient to the main dwelling and demonstrate its B1(c) function through its form, façades and detailing. The building should use a subdued pallet of contextual materials which are simple and fit for purpose.

#### Wall Materials

Wall materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse
- E.g.
  - If predominantly brick then a matching brick should be used for new building
  - If predominantly local stone then matching stone should be used for new building
  - If predominantly render then a similar tone of render should be used for new building
  - The reuse of local stone or brick is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary wall materials include:

- Good quality timber cladding detailed to a high standard. Timber should have a natural appearance and should not be unnaturally stained or varnished

- Profiled metal cladding in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard

#### Roof Materials

The chosen roof material should be appropriate to the designed roof pitch. Roof materials must not be reflective or cause any glare throughout the day.

Roof materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

E.g.

- If slate then a matching slate should be used for new building
- If tile local tile then a matching tile should be used for new building
- The reuse of roof materials is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary roof materials include:

- Grey metal standing seam roof
- Profiled metal roofing in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard
- Green roof detailed to a high standard

#### Windows and Doors

- Windows and doors should be simple, well-proportioned and suit the function of the building.
- Domestic proportioned openings should be avoided.
- Where large format doors are required, they should be in a complimentary material and colour tone to the material palette of the wider building.
- Windows and doors should be recessed within the walls and not flush with the external face.

Windows and doors of a standard size should be of a similar material and colour tone to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse.

OR

If a contemporary approach is taken to the building, window and standard sized doors should be simple and crisp in profile and be of a colour tone which complements the contemporary material palette of the wider building.



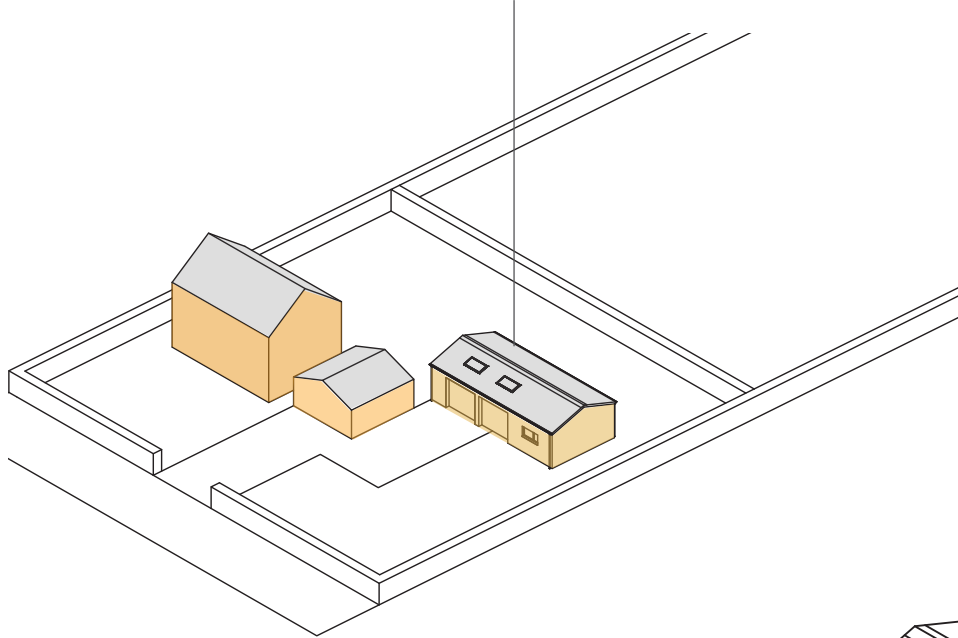


## 3.2 Proposed Developments in Town & Village Peripheries

### Building Details

- Buildings should generally have one material used on the walls and one material used on the roof to ensure a clean, simple building and avoid ad-hoc pepper-potting of materials, or stark contrasts of material.
- Where a cladding material is used on the walls a visible masonry 'plinth' may be used in which must be of a similar appearance to masonry used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse, or of a complementary contemporary appearance to the cladding material above.
- Eaves and verges should be tight and simple to suit the simple form and of the building and its function.  
Using simple trim details should be used to produce uninterrupted eaves lines.
- The use of standard box shape eaves and projecting fascia and bargeboards should be avoided unless already on the existing dwelling.
- Downpipes should be integrated into the design of the roof and façades of the building to minimise impact of pipes on the overall design
- Rooflights should be used sparingly and purposefully and be set flush within the roof plane. Rooflights should match the colour of the roof finish

New building in similar materials to existing dwelling

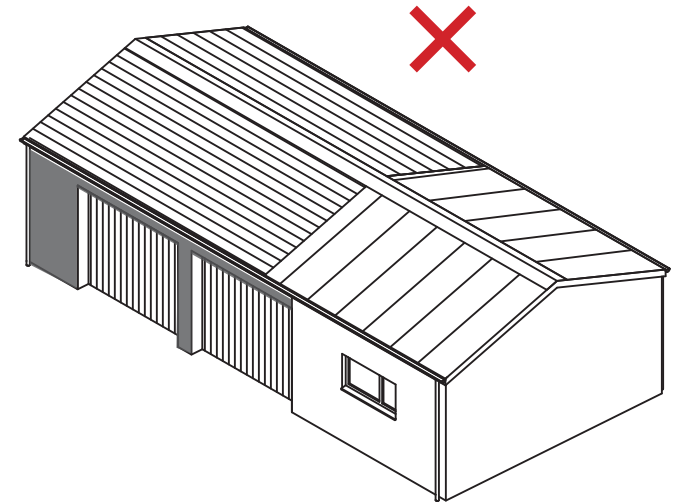


Above: Building materials should either:

Be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

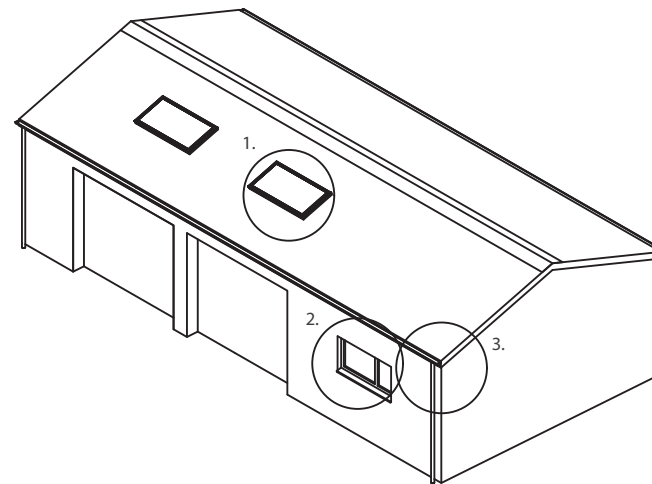
OR

Be of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

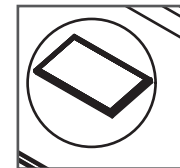


Above: Buildings should generally have one material for the walls and one material for the roof

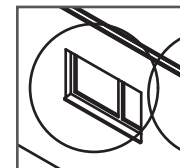
Below: Building Details



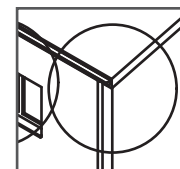
Above: Building Details



1. Text on rooflights



2. Text on openings



3. Text on rainwater and roof details

# 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

## Urban Design/Landscape Parameters

### Access & Parking requirements

- Must have existing vehicular access to proposed employment unit - if a new access is required, including dropping kerbs, planning permission will need to be obtained.
- Additional access length/area must be no more than XXm in length.
- No more than 1 additional parking space per 50m2 employment space and any additional parking should not be in front of the existing dwelling

### Where the building is located on the plot

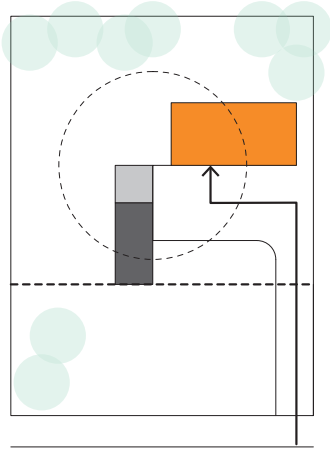
- Proposed building to be no larger than 10% of rear garden area (curtilage behind existing building line minus the existing dwelling area and any outbuilding areas) up to a maximum of 50m2 for office (B1a) and 200m2 for light industrial (B1 b and c)
- The primary entrance to the proposed building to be no further than 15m from the edge of an existing dwelling/outbuilding
- Remaining garden must not be less than 50m2.
- The remaining garden must relate to the existing dwelling and its layout and living spaces – location of proposed building on the plot must not cause detriment to amenity of existing dwelling.
- Where existing farm buildings already protrude in front of the main dwelling building line, no proposed building shall protrude in front of these.

- Proposed buildings not to obscure main dwelling's principal elevation
- Where possible, proposed buildings should aim to create a courtyard feel as is common within rural development, whilst utilising existing access areas/ areas of hardstanding

### Landscape structure & Potential Visual Impact

- Where the site lacks existing mature boundaries around the proposed new building the submission should include a strategy to provide a suitable degree of screening / enclosure (e.g. hedgerow/ tree planting).
- New buildings not to protrude outside of the defined built up area/landscape features ie. existing hedgerows or tree belts.

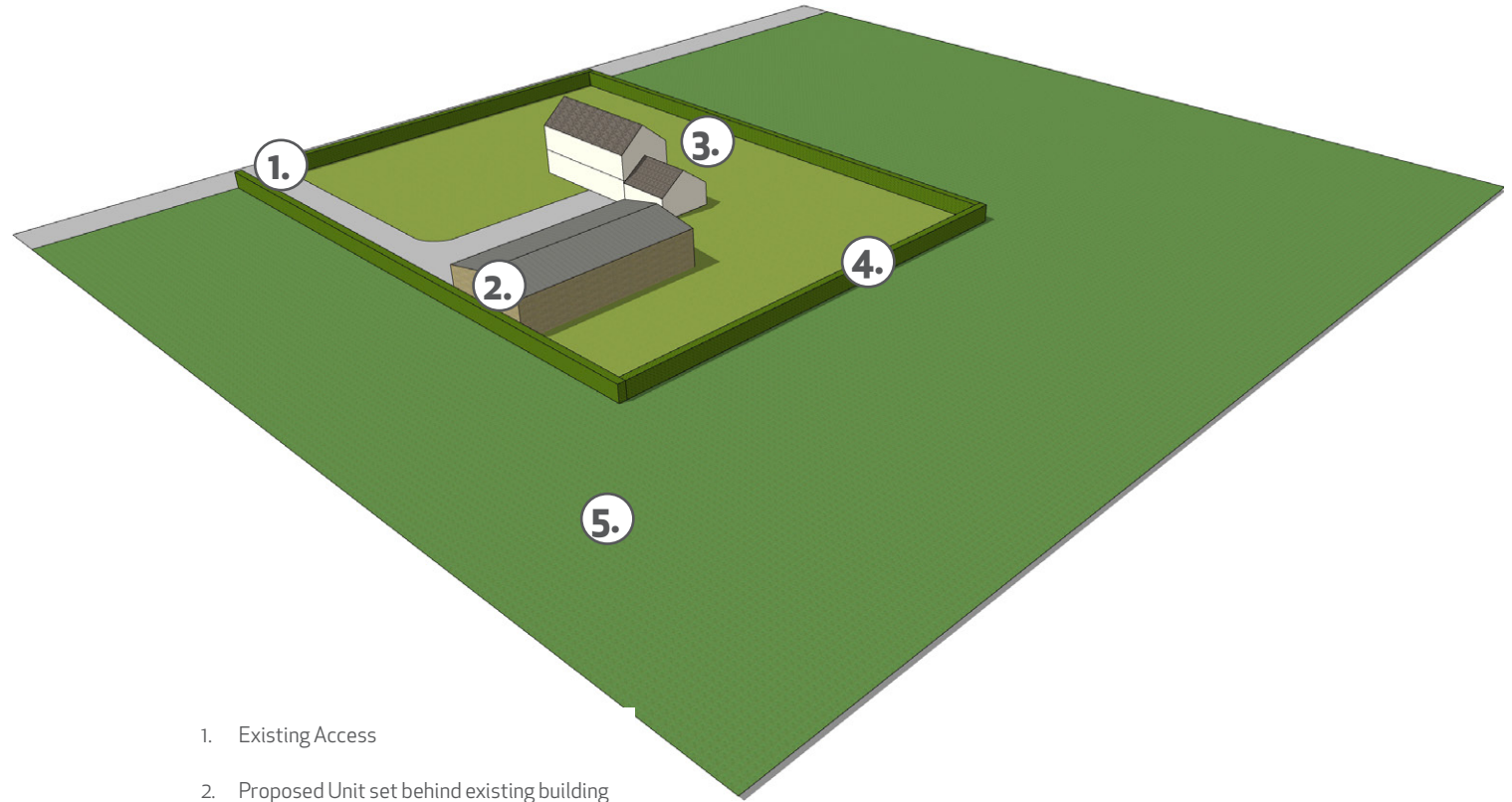




Above: Proposed unit off existing access

Key

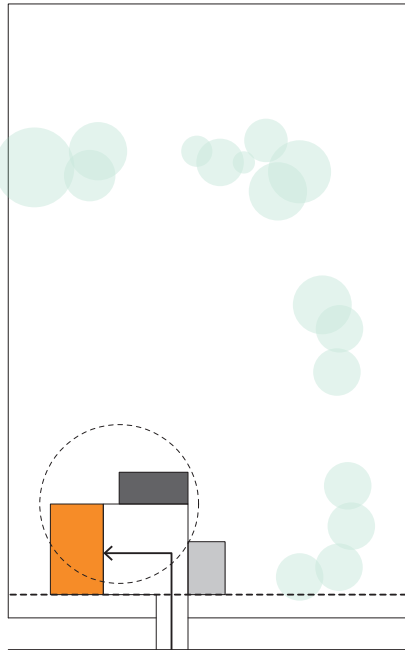
- Proposed Unit
- Existing Dwelling
- Building Line
- Existing Access
- Garden Area Behind Building Line
- Retained Existing Garden
- 15m offset



1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind existing building line, creating a courtyard feel
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling
4. Settlement edge (not necessarily owner's boundary)
5. Open Countryside

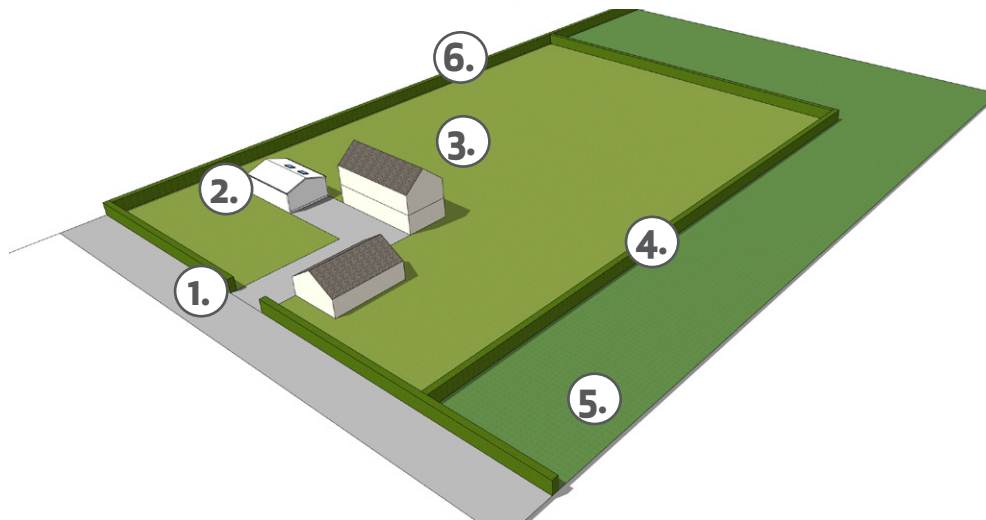
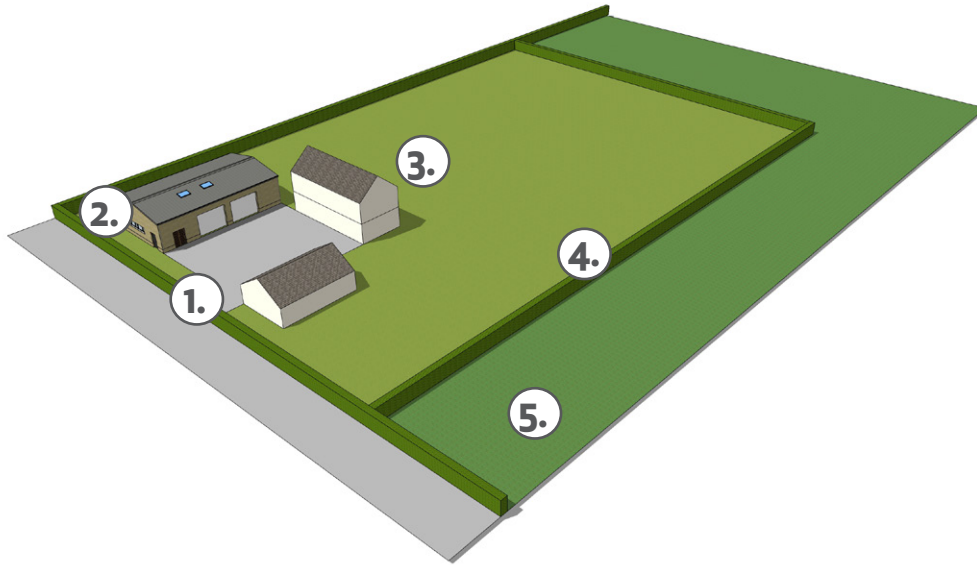
Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a rural residential setting

### 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

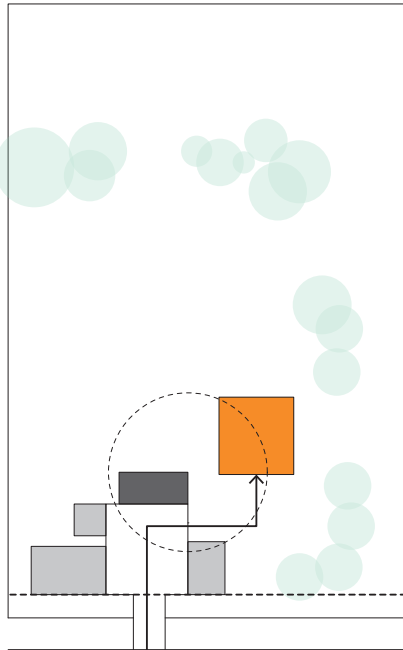


Above: Proposed unit off existing access

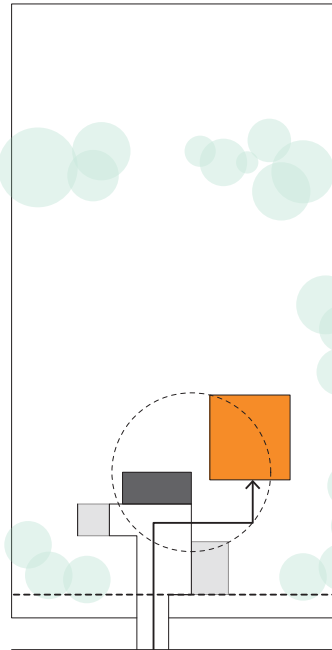
1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind existing building line, creating a courtyard feel
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling
4. Settlement edge (not necessarily owner's boundary)
5. Open Countryside



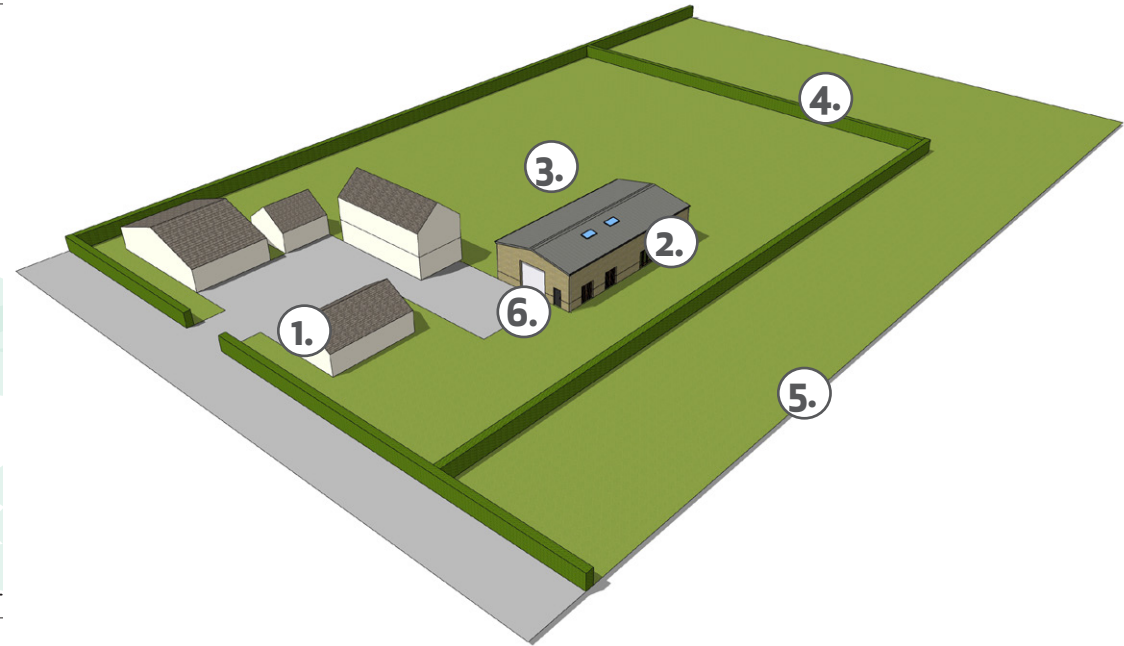
Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a rural residential setting



Above: Proposed unit off existing access



Above: Proposed unit off existing access



Above: Axo showing proposed unit in a rural agricultural setting

Key

- Proposed Unit
- Existing Dwelling
- Building Line
- Existing Access
- Garden Area Behind Building Line
- Retained Existing Garden
- 15m offset

1. Existing Access
2. Proposed Unit set behind existing building line, subservient to existing dwelling
3. Usable amenity space which relates well to existing dwelling
4. Settlement edge (not necessarily owner's boundary)
5. Open Countryside
6. New 'courtyard' created, utilising existing access and minimising additional hardstanding

# 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

## Urban Design/Landscape Details

### Surfacing Materials

Any new paving or surfacing material is to be permeable to allow sufficient drainage. This includes materials such as:

- Gravel
- Permeable concrete block paving
- Porous asphalt

### External Lighting

- Private external lighting must be designed to minimise light pollution on neighbouring properties (i.e. directional light spread).
- All external lighting (space and security lighting) must be provided by energy efficient fittings with appropriate control systems and daylight cut-off sensors.

### Boundary Treatment & details

Where planted screening is required, applicants should use a mix of native and non-native species that supports wildlife, including insects and birds.

Tree planting should include native species (or varieties of native species)

**EXAMPLE SPECIES/DETAILS TO BE INCLUDED**

### Townscape/ Landscape Character Areas

Refer back to Somerset West and Taunton Design Guide Principles in Chapter 2.2

### Refuse & Cycle Storage

- Secure covered bike storage must be provided unless they are provided internally (1 space per 50m<sup>2</sup>, minimum 2 spaces)
- External bin storage will be provided on plot at the rear of the proposed dwelling (unless provided internally). Bins must not be stored at the front of buildings, facing onto the street





Above: Precedent images for details

## 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

### Building Parameters

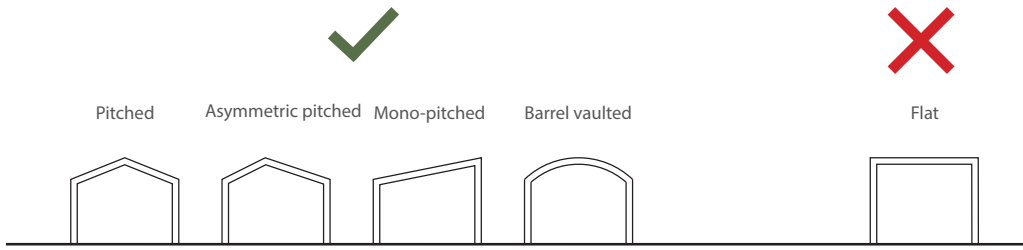
- Flat roofs are not permitted
- Simple roof forms that express the building form should be used (e.g. pitched, asymmetric pitch, mono-pitch or barrel vaulted)
- Mezzanine structures are permitted but their area shall be included as part of the permitted overall area.
- Any window inserted on a wall or roof slope forming a side elevation of the building must be obscure-glazed, and non-opening.

### Ridge

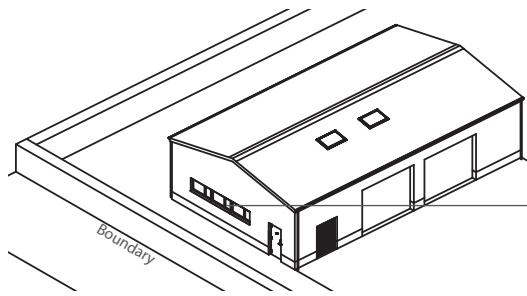
- Maximum ridge height of a building = 5.5 metres
- UNLESS within 10 metres of the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse where the maximum ridge height for any roof form = 5 metres
- The ridge of mono-pitch structure should not face the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.

### Eaves

- Maximum eaves height for any roof form = 4.5 metres
- UNLESS within 10 metres of the boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse where the maximum eaves height for any roof form = 4 metres
- The height of the building, enclosure or container should be measured from the highest ground level immediately adjacent to the building

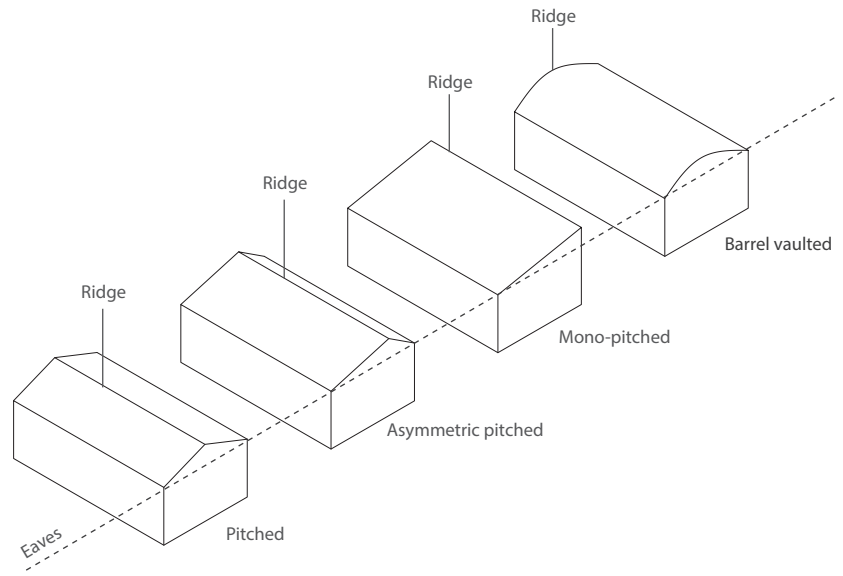


Above: Potential Roof Forms



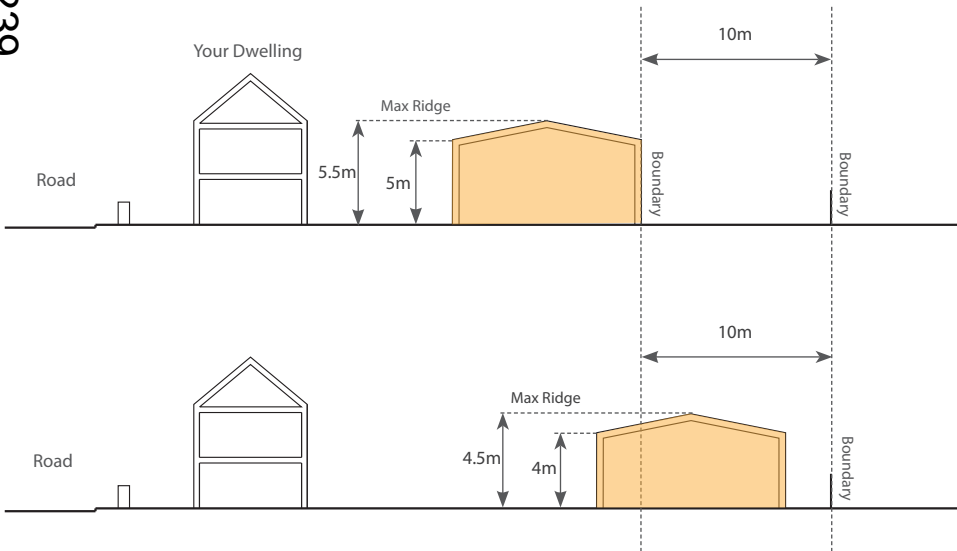
Windows and rooflights facing boundaries to curtilage must be obscure-glazed and non opening

Above: Obscure Glazing requirement

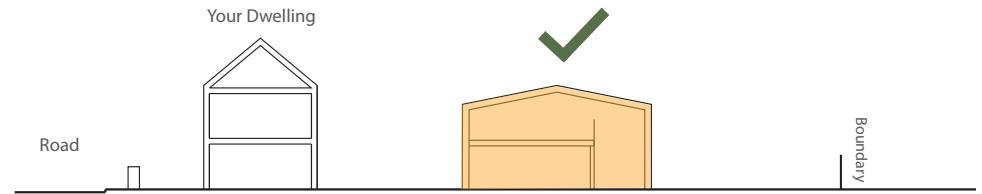


Above: Roof Forms Explained

Page 239



Above: Maximum Ridge and Eaves Heights



Above: Mezzanine permitted as part of total floor area

Note: If a neighbouring dwelling is within 10m of the proposed new building then the maximum ridge and eaves height must adhere to the building parameters set out in section 3.1



# 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

## Building Elements

The building should appear subservient to the main dwelling and demonstrate its B1(c) function through its form, façades and detailing. The building should use a subdued pallet of contextual materials which are simple and fit for purpose.

### Wall Materials

Wall materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse  
E.g.
  - If predominantly brick then a matching brick should be used for new building
  - If predominantly local stone then matching stone should be used for new building
  - If predominantly render then a similar tone of render should be used for new building

The reuse of local stone or brick is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary wall materials include:

- Good quality timber cladding detailed to a high standard. Timber should have a natural appearance and should not be unnaturally stained or varnished

- Profiled metal cladding in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard

### Roof Materials

The chosen roof material should be appropriate to the designed roof pitch. Roof materials must not be reflective or cause any glare throughout the day.

Roof materials should be either:

- Of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

E.g.

- If slate then a matching slate should be used for new building
- If tile local tile then a matching tile should be used for new building
- The reuse of roof materials is encouraged to reduce the embodied energy of the new building.

OR

- Of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

Permitted contemporary roof materials include:

- Grey metal standing seam roof
- Profiled metal roofing in a natural, subdued colour detailed to a high standard
- Green roof detailed to a high standard

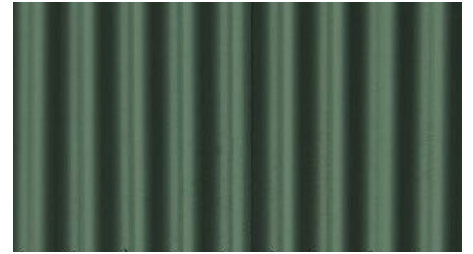
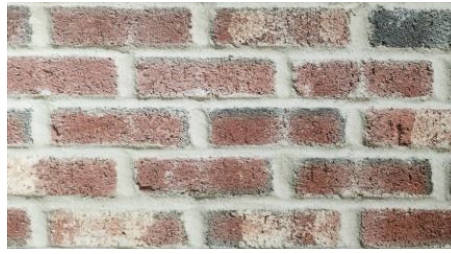
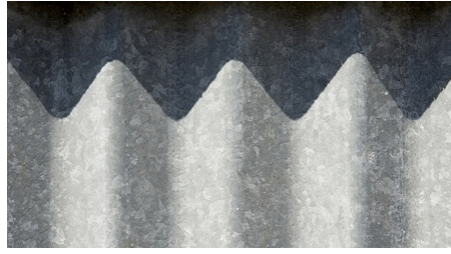
### Windows and Doors

- Windows and doors should be simple, well-proportioned and suit the function of the building.
- Domestic proportioned openings should be avoided.
- Where large format doors are required, they should be in a complimentary material and colour tone to the material palette of the wider building.
- Windows and doors should be recessed within the walls and not flush with the external face.

Windows and doors of a standard size should be of a similar material and colour tone to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse.

OR

If a contemporary approach is taken to the building, window and standard sized doors should be simple and crisp in profile and be of a colour tone which complements the contemporary material palette of the wider building.

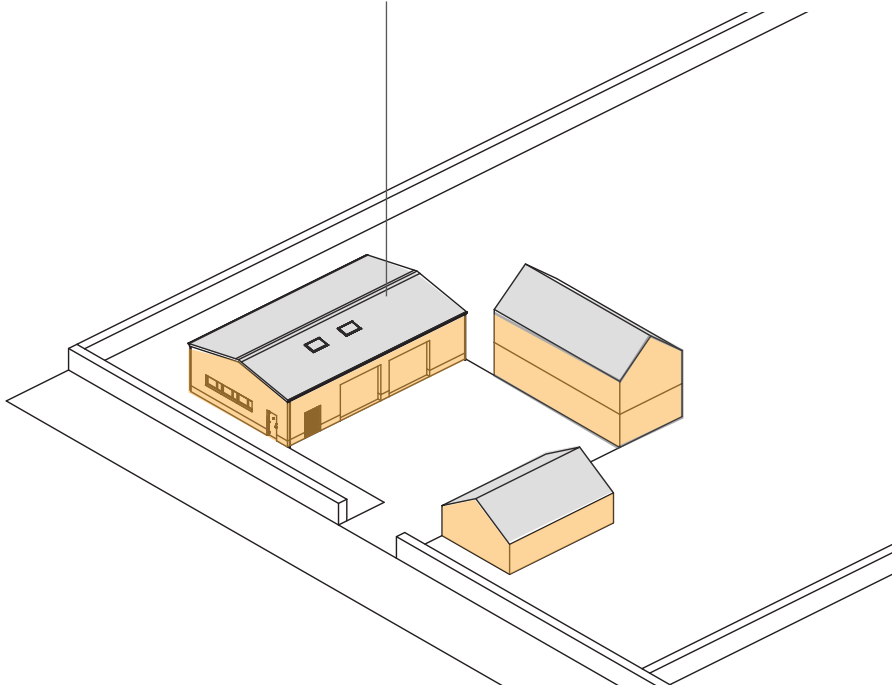


## 3.3 Proposed Development in Rural Areas

### Building Details

- Buildings should generally have one material used on the walls and one material used on the roof to ensure a clean, simple building and avoid ad-hoc pepper-potting of materials, or stark contrasts of material.
- Where a cladding material is used on the walls a visible masonry 'plinth' may be used in which must be of a similar appearance to masonry used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse, or of a complementary contemporary appearance to the cladding material above.
- Eaves and verges should be tight and simple to suit the simple form and of the building and its function.  
Using simple trim details should be used to produce uninterrupted eaves lines.
- The use of standard box shape eaves and projecting fascia and bargeboards should be avoided unless already on the existing dwelling.
- Downpipes should be integrated into the design of the roof and façades of the building to minimise impact of pipes on the overall design
- Rooflights should be used sparingly and purposefully and be set flush within the roof plane. Rooflights should match the colour of the roof finish

New building in similar materials to existing dwelling or outbuildings

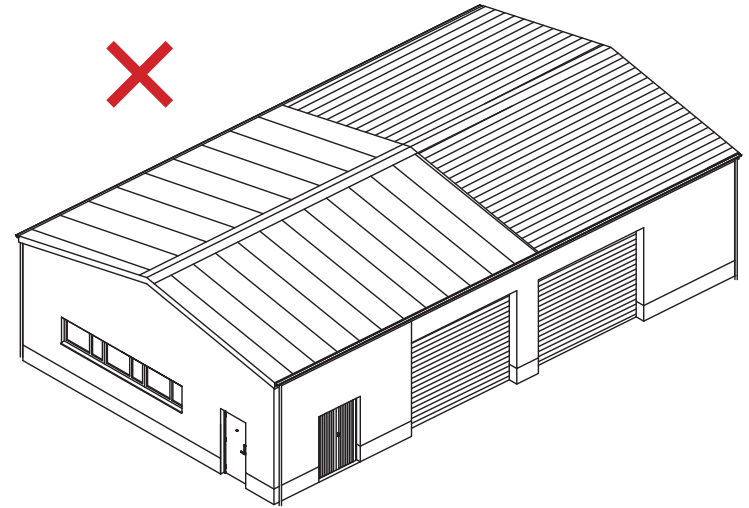


Above: Building materials should either:

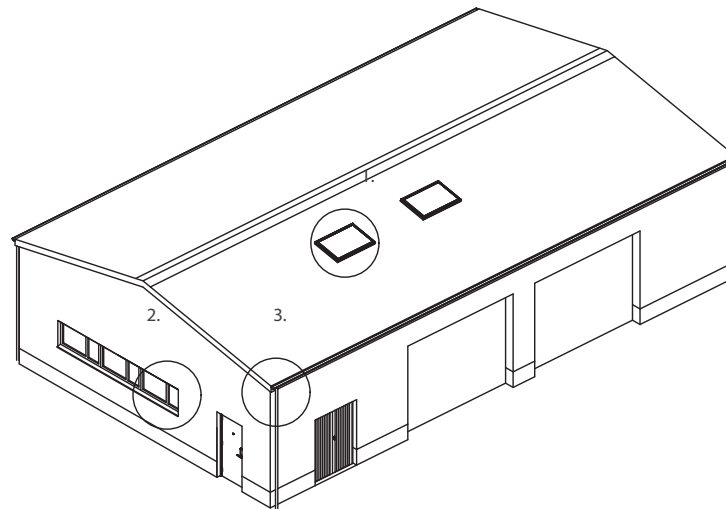
Be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse or outbuildings

OR

Be of a contemporary appearance to complement those used in the construction of the existing dwellinghouse

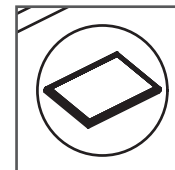


Above: Buildings should generally have one material for the walls and one material for the roof

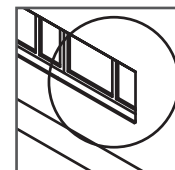


Above: Building Details

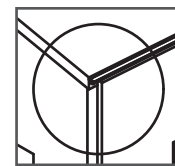
Below: Building Details



1. Text on rooflights



2. Text on openings



3. Text on rainwater and roof details

This page has been left intentionally blank



# 4.0 Submission Requirements

# 4.1 LDO Submission Process

The diagram on page 57 illustrates the process by which the Local Planning Authority will determine conformity with the LDO.

## Stage 1 - Pre-submission Advice

If you have read the attached Informative but are still unsure what is required to be provided with your submission, or have further questions, pre-submission advice is available at [xxxx \(SWT to confirm – we assume an LDO enquiry form will be available via website\)](#).

## Stage 2 - Submission of Design and Access Statement and other required technical reports

Use the LDO Pro Forma and Informative to ensure that you are submitting everything required for your LDO submission to be determined in conformity with this LDO. Any technical reports should be appended to your Design and Access Statement.

## Stage 3 - Determination

Somerset West and Taunton Council will confirm that your LDO submission has been received and is being considered within 2 weeks of payment being received. [Details of payment requirements are set out on the Somerset West and Taunton website \(SWT to confirm\)](#). You will receive a final decision within 8 weeks of your initial payment.

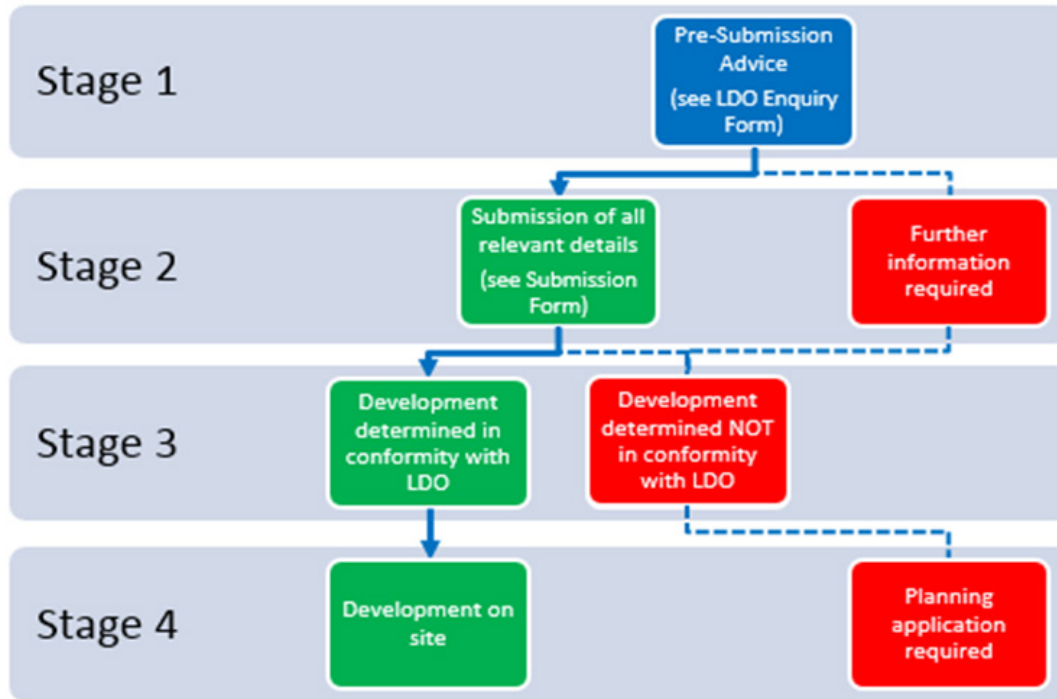
This decision has three potential outcomes:

- a) If you have followed the advice of this Design Code and carried out any required necessary supplementary technical assessments, you will receive confirmation that you are in conformity with the LDO.
- b) It may be that you are partly in conformity with the LDO, however further information is required by the Somerset West and Taunton Council to make a decision. If this is the case, further information will be requested at no extra charge from the local authority.
- c) It may be determined that the proposal is outside of the acceptable parameters of the LDO. If this is the case, you will be advised to submit a full planning application.

## Stage 4 - Notice of Development Commencement

A Commencement Notice must be submitted to the council no less than 14 days prior to the commencement of development. For avoidance of doubt commencement includes any preparation works. This is to inform the LPA that development is due to start on site and is required for monitoring purposes.

Development must be undertaken in full accordance with submitted details and the conditions of this LDO.



**Legend:**

- Standard process for development under the LDO
- Circumstances where LDO does not apply and a planning application is required

Above: Diagram illustrating the process by which the Local Planning Authority will determine conformity with the LDO

## 4.2 DAS Pro Forma

A design and access statement is a short report to explain and justify your proposal and gives you an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility. The statement will need to be proportionate in detail to the type of submission you are making and will vary in its length.

- **Site Location Plan/Existing Site Plan (1:1250 @ A4)**

- **Amount & Use**

The amount of floor space proposed and the uses which will be undertaken within the building

Explain and justify the amount of your proposal and how this amount relates to the site's surroundings.

- **Layout (Proposed Site Plan)**

Layout is the citing of your proposed development in relation to other buildings and open spaces on the site.

Explain and justify the proposed layout.

- **Scale & Massing (Elevations/Models)**

Scale is the height, width and length of a building or buildings in relation to its surroundings.

Detailed measurements will be required including volume, height, width, length and distance to boundary.

- **Landscaping (Plan and Details)**

Landscaping is the way in which the site is enhanced or protected through hard and soft landscaping.

A schedule of planting and proposed hard landscaping materials to be used is recommended.

Please also explain how the implemented landscaping scheme will be maintained.

For smaller developments where there is to be no change to the existing landscaping please confirm this.

- **Appearance (Material Specifications)**

Appearance is the visual impression the proposed development makes, including the external built form, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.

Explain and justify the appearance of the place or buildings proposed including how this will relate to the appearance and character of the development's surroundings.

- **Details of Access**

The access section of the design and access statement refers only to access to

the development and not to the inside of individual buildings.

This needs to describe how the proposed building will be accessed. If the access is via an existing route please confirm this below or describe any alterations that will be made to gain access to the new development.

# 4.3 Example Drawings

**WORKED EXAMPLE TO BE PROVIDED**



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 11

Document is Restricted

