



[Second homes are "killing towns and villages" in Somerset, says former Lib Dem leader](#)

Tim Fallon MP
Liberal Democrat
Spokesperson
(Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)

["We should start as a matter of urgency identifying new sites locally for small-scale, sympathetic developments so we can start redressing some of the structural damage inflicted on the housing sector by the spread of second homes."](#)

West Somerset MP Ian Liddell-Grainger

Sustainable Location Assessment

"Sustainable development – meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own requirements."

United Nations 2016

20/23/0019 & 20/23/0020
Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane
Kingston St Mary TA2 8HL

3rd August 2023

ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

Conscious that this report is lengthy we begin with an summary of it content and conclusions from which readers can navigate to more detailed explanation within the supporting Appendices.

Questions should be addressed to the author. chris@millmeadow.co.uk

The council's contests that the site is not sustainable yet has approved similar sites on GREENFIELD locations referring the the Bagey Road Appeal as justification.

- Sidbrook 48/18/0055, a "Greenfield" site outside of the settlement and with no "lit or paved footpaths" on a 50 mph & 30 mph limit route. 4 luxury family homes. £800k each.
- Higil Lea 3/07/11/016 a "Greenfield" site outside of the settlement and with no "lit or paved footpaths" on a 50 mph & 30 mph route. 5 affordable homes.
- The application site is in a more sustainable location then these two which have already been granted permission.

The location is not sufficiently adjacent to the develop boundary so as to compare to developments that have been approved

- The area between the site and the settlement boundary is managed as a community green space by The Woodlands Trust as therefore is unlikely to be developed.
- The site lies within the developed area of Mill Cross which the Neighbourhood Plan proposes will come into the village settlement boundary.

Whilst providing no criteria or supporting evidence the council asserts that rural unlit, unpaved off-road footpaths are not "safe".

- The council's own publication, **EDUCATION TRAVEL IN SOMERSET**, Section 2.2 Route Safety, the council states:

... Lack of street lighting - the majority of roads in Somerset do not have streetlights and lighting is not an issue all year round.

Lack of pavements - the lack of a paved

footpath is not necessarily a reason to assess a route as unsuitable..."

- *The site meest BRE & ROSPA assessment criteria for EcoHomes 2006*

Without evidence the council asserts that the change of planning condition will result in increased traffic.

- Traffic volumes are more likely to reduce than increase, in addition there are numerous sustainable alternatives available to car use.
- **Notwithstanding this the site complies with the council's own Policy A5.**

The council maintains that each site is considered on it merits yet appears to lend little weight to the clear social, environmental and local economic benefits of the proposals.

- Meeting an identified local housing need with a local need priority condition
- Strengthening the social structure and diversity (age and socioeconomic) of the village as directed by the NPPF
- Recognising the expressed wishes of the community
- Bringing house that whilst not "affordable" are more affordable than current market
- **Countering the impact of second home ownership in the village and AONB**

Reference:

Appendix 10

Appendix 14

[Neighbourhood Plan](#)

Appendix 6

[BRE Safe Footpaths Criteria](#)

Appendix 9

[2021 Housing Needs Survey](#)

Appendix 13

Appendix 15

Appendix 12

National Planning Policy Framework

2. Achieving sustainable development

8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

An identified local need confirmed in the 2021 Housing Needs Survey and in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

No evidence to support that the economic contribution as permanently occupied residential dwellings will be any less than the contribution as occasionally occupied second homes for which consent is in place.

Accommodation supply exceeds demand with the growth of Online Travel Agent's e.g. AirBnb whole home or flat listing for "Kingston St Mary" number 347 so there is no incentive to bring forward the units as holiday homes.

If permission is granted the site will enable a section of the planned Active Travel Route from the Quantocks AONB to Taunton.

b) a social objective

to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities

The parish is aging as family homes are "blocked" by those wishing to downsize but stay within the community.

According to ONS second home/holiday homes in the parish have increased by at least 13% since 2011 to an estimated 49 homes.

Young people are unable to buy in the village due to the pressure on prices caused by the shortage of supply for 2 and 3 bedroom properties. The community is losing its diversity and become increasing aged and isolated.

by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations;

Two successive Housing Need Surveys show a shortage of 20 two bedroom properties for downsizing.

and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;

The site offers properties that are already accredited under the Eco Homes 2005 standard, predecessor of The Code for Sustainable Homes and Build for Life 12 and meets the criteria under Building for Healthy Life

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including:

making effective use of land,

This is a brownfield site with existing consent for properties on which a change of use is sought. In making use of this site other greenfield sites can be protected.

improving biodiversity,

The site has incomparable biodiversity with links to conservation and wildlife organisations i.e. Quantock AONB,

using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The sustainable credentials of the site are endorsed by the Eco Homes 2005 accreditation which combined with ongoing developments in EV technology, solar generation, water management, waste recycling and overall management of the environment has to make the site one of the most sustainable in Somerset if not the South West.

Reference:

[NPPF 2](#)

[2021 Housing Needs Survey](#)

Appendix 11

Appendix 12

[2021 Housing Needs Survey](#)

[BREEAM EcoHomes 2006](#)

Appendix 1
Appendix 2

[BREEAM EcoHomes 2006](#)

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development and it defined sustainable benefits as:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Adverse Impacts claimed by the council:

- **not immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary (by 150m approx) -**
 - **there are no specified distances in DM2**
 - **the area between the settlement boundary and the site cannot be developed as it is owned by the Woodland Trust for public access.**
- **unlit, unpaved & unsafe footpaths -**
 - **despite requests no criteria produced by the council to counter the applicants submissions.**
 - **the council's own Education Travel in Somerset 2018 contradicts this reason.**
 - **footpaths conform to BRE requirements as confirmed by EcoHomes 2006 accreditation of the site**
- **negative impact of change from tourism -**
 - **despite requests no evidence produced by the council to counter that full time residential use would provide more contribution than as second homes as is allowed under the existing condition.**
- **unsustainable due to reliance on the car**
 - **despite requests by the applicant no evidence has been produced**
 - **the site does comply with Policy A5**
 - **unblocking family homes in the village for family use will support the falling local numbers at the school and reduce the relatively high number of pupils travelling by car from Taunton, thus easing traffic.**

Social & Environmental Benefits:

- Advanced and sustainable design and construction
- Homes for Life
- Target of Passive House standard
- Improve social structure and diversity of the village
- Release "blocked" family homes into the market to counter an ageing community
- Lower overall house prices for 2 and 3 bedroom properties by increasing supply and reducing competition with local need priority
- Identified local need through the Housing Needs Survey
- Community Support
- Parish Council Support
- Developing an existing Brown Field Site, this is a change of condition not a new development
- Protecting Green Field locations

NPPF (continued)

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Social & Environmental Benefits:

- Advanced and sustainable design and construction.
- Homes for Healthy Living.
- Target of Passive House standard.
- Improve social structure and diversity of the village.
- Release "blocked" family homes into the market to counter an ageing community.
- Lower overall house prices for 2 and 3 bedroom properties by increasing supply and reducing competition with local need priority conditioned.
- Identified local need through the Housing Needs Survey.
- Community Support.
- Parish Council Support.
- Developing an existing Brown Field Site, this is a change of condition not a new development.
- Protecting Green Field locations.
- Retaining development within the established residential area of Mill Cross which is included within the settlement boundary proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- No negative landscape or environmental impact.
- Enables a key section of the proposed Active Travel Route from the Quantocks AONB to Taunton.
- Support local services: pub, Village Hall, church, garage, bicycle mechanic, playing field & pavilion.
- Unblocking family homes for family occupancy will support the primary school where currently a large percentage are drawn from Taunton necessitating car travel.
- Combats the damaging proliferation of Second Homes.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION & LOCATION



Eco Homes 2006

Eco Homes 2006

The site was accredited under the BREEAM Eco Homes 2006 standard which demanded high standards of sustainable design, construction, and environment.

Since the initial assessment further developments in design, materials and technology have been developed and incorporated so that the eco homes are an ever-evolving example of sustainable living.

In April 2007 the Government's scheme, the Code for Sustainable Homes replaced Eco Homes for the assessment of 'new' housing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This was itself replaced in 2015 by **the new optional technical housing standards.**

Reference:

[BREEAM EcoHomes 2006](#)

[Code for sustainable homes](#)

[breeam:ecohomes](#)



Built For Life

Built for Life is an industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods which is endorsed by the government. Accreditation gives consumers confidence that important aspects of design have been considered.

The **Built for Life** quality mark is 'the sign' of a good place to live with new well designed homes & neighbourhoods.

The tool was rewritten in 2012 and published under the name '**Building for Life 12**'. To achieve the standard only 9 "Green Lights" from the 12 tests were required.

The site has been assessed against the **Built for Life** criteria and passed the 9 "Green Light" marker.

In 2020, the tool was updated and renamed '**Building for a Healthy Life**'. The site has been assessed against the 2020 standards.criteria and again passed the 9 "Green Light" target to go forward for accreditation.

Appendix 1

Appendix 2



INTEGRATION & CONNECTIVITY



Accessibility for all

This is an accessible site designed with a “Home for Life” provision at the fore with adaptable living spaces that evolve and adapt with the needs of the occupant.

Accessibility for the site and wider community will be enhanced with the arrival of a “Tramper” all terrain mobility scooter for site and community use.

Internet

The site is serviced by Fibre Broadband with “Very Good” speeds making working from home and staying in touch easier than many rural locations

Cycling

Kingston Road is now 20/30/40 mph to and from the village and Taunton with the various services along the route. This is a significant improvement in safety with Kingston Road having been designated 40mph along its length from the previous national speed limit.

Parsonage Lane through Mill Cross is part of the Taunton Cycle Route with safe access to neighbouring settlements to the east and west before ending meeting in Taunton. There is a cycle service & maintenance small business in the village supporting the site.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan outlines the T2b Active Travel Plan to create a route connecting Kingston St Mary and Taunton. The Kingston Area Pedestrian And Cycle Campaign (KAPACC) and the Kingston St Mary Parish Council commissioned Sustrans who produced a feasibility study.

The applicant is in discussion with the Parish Council, KAPACC & AONB to provide access to the site for a key part of the Active Travel Route:

“From our perspective the development will also feed into the active travel route work that is being undertaken to bring car free travel from Taunton, through Kingston St Mary to the Quantock Hills AONB as will the proposed enhanced access through Mill Meadow and the Spinney, for which Capital Access Grant funding is allocated.”

Iain Porter AONB Manager, Quantock Hills AONB Service

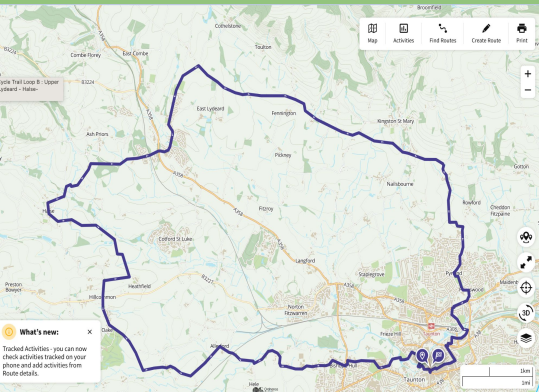
Reference:

["Tramper" Countryside Mobility South West scheme.](#)

Appendix 3

[KAPACC](#)

Appendix 11



SAFE FOOTPATHS



- **Lack of street lighting** - the majority of roads in Somerset do not have streetlights and lighting is not an issue all year round
- **Lack of pavements** - the lack of a paved footpath is not necessarily a reason to assess a route as unsafe.

Source: Somerset Council EDUCATION TRAVEL IN SOMERSET 2018.

Routes 1 & 2 comply under BRE and ROSPA definitions of safe footpaths in a rural setting. Appendix 4 & 5.

Routes 3 & 4 are regularly used by children walking to and from the village school as they meet the criteria under SCC policy, which states:

2.2 Route Safety

Where children live within statutory walking distance of their transport area or nearest qualifying school the Local Authority has a duty to provide travel assistance where the nature of the available walking route is such that a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk (accompanied as necessary) in reasonable safety.

The Courts have defined an “available route” as one “along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk to school with reasonable safety. It does not fail to qualify as ‘available’ because of dangers which would arise if the child is unaccompanied”. The route measured may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways, as well as recognised roads.

The council objects on the basis that **“There is no pavement or safe lit route to the centre of the village”**, yet it is acceptable for those same routes to be used for the daily round trip to the primary school. This is clearly a contradictory position.

The Councils Policy A5 states:

“1.5.12 Accessibility standards need to be different in rural areas when compared to the main towns in the Borough. For example, it is clearly not possible for more than a small minority of rural residents to be able to walk or cycle to major facilities such as shopping centres, hospitals or secondary schools. The accessibility of sites in rural areas does remain important, particularly in terms of travel time to urban facilities or the existence of regular, daily bus services from a settlement to nearby towns.”

Reference:

Appendix 6

Appendix 4
Appendix 5

[SCC Home to School Travel Policy](#)

Appendix 9

INTEGRATION & CONNECTIVITY



Bus & Community Transport Services

Bus

There is a timetabled bus service through the village routes 23 & 23A.

Footpath Routes 1-4 detailed above provide footpath access to scheduled bus stops at The Swan, The Village Green, The Grange and Mill Cross.

Reference:

Appendix 7

GETTING ABOUT

Onsite Shuttle

Mill Meadow offers a courtesy shuttle service to guests as part of its Car Free Holiday incentive. This will be extended to plots 15-18 which will supplement the public transport options and reduce reliance on the car.

An EV is to be acquired to replace the current diesel vehicle and the EV charging point is already in place.

Community Transport

The Slinky Service operates in the site area on a Monday.

Appendix 8



INTEGRATION & CONNECTIVITY (continued)

Traffic & Vehicle Movements

It is noted that County Highways have raised no concerns on traffic movements or any potential increase in reliance on the car.

Private Vehicles EV

As part of the development the substation is to be upgraded to facilitate the installation of rapid EV chargers supported by Solar PV and battery installations, future proofing the development.

Community Benefit

Neighbouring properties will also have the option to upgrade their supply subject to National Grid consent.



GETTING ABOUT

Traffic Movements

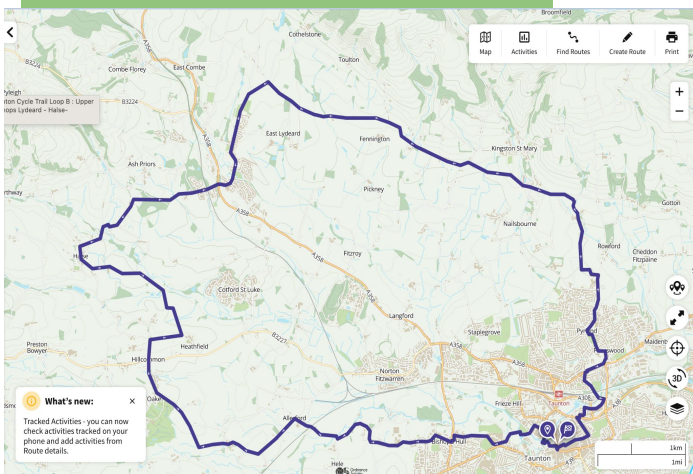
Under the existing use as holiday/second homes each existing approved unit can accommodate up to 6 guests which can mean 6 vehicles if the guests travel independently although 4 vehicles are more common from experience with the existing holiday units.

At 60% occupancy that could mean 6 vehicles per unit for 219 days, 10512 traffic movements per annum. months. With 4 cars the number is 7008.

By contrast the 2-bed residential 55+ proposed will have 2 cars or less per unit. Even at full occupancy there is a reduction of 20-50%. presumed by the council with no supporting evidence.

Within the village 95.8% of households have two cars or less, as would be expected with 50.6% of occupants aged 55 and above.

The proposal is therefore more sustainable in relation to car use than tourism with multiple visitors and increased car movements.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

“Outstanding and innovative design will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal: a. will protect and enhance local character (through meeting criteria in 1., and 2. where relevant); and b. includes high levels of sustainability through design (exceeding the most up-to-date standards in relation to reducing carbon emissions where feasible and viable).”

Source: Policy KSM1, Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Economic Contribution

The council have raised objections on economic grounds in respect of the proposed change of conditions.

The proposed site is enabled but undeveloped and unlikely to be brought forward as holiday homes therefore there is no current or short term economic contribution from the site.

As second homes any economic contribution would be as hoc and less than that from the residential use now proposed and the loss of the opportunity for local need housing would be counter to the aims of the community.

Would Somerset wished to be known as a county that favours Second Home ownership above local need?

Phosphates

Although not under consideration as this is a site with an existing consent it is notable that there is a considerable capacity to capture phosphates across the site.

The smaller silt trap pond removes large volumes of suspended materials and soluble material from the water course with remaining soluble materials passing into the main lake where aquatic planting and marginal coppiced areas capture phosphates.

Local Community

The Vision Statement within the draft Neighbourhood Plan is that:

“Kingston St Mary Parish will retain its unique and distinctive rural character, separated from Taunton, mitigating climate change, having organically developed by sympathetically meeting identified housing, social, community and economic needs, whilst preserving its heritage, character and the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside.”

The proposals within 20/23/0019 & 20/23/0020 meet the objectives of this vision statement on what must be one of the most sustainable and environmentally sound developments in Somerset.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CONCLUSION

The Vision Statement within the draft Neighbourhood Plan is that:

“Kingston St Mary Parish will retain its unique and distinctive rural character, separated from Taunton, mitigating climate change, having organically developed by sympathetically meeting identified housing, social, community and economic needs, whilst preserving its heritage, character and the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside.”

The proposals within 20/23/0019 & 20/23/0020 meet the objectives of this vision statement on what must be one of the most sustainable and environmentally sound developments in Somerset.

The applications carry the support of the village, excellent sustainable credentials and meet a clear and undisputed local community housing need.

“Planning applications 20/23/0019 and 0020 are fully supported by Kingston St Mary Parish Council and if approved, will make a practical contribution towards bringing the communities vision for the future of Kingston St Mary to life.”

(Paul Townsend, Chair Kingston St Mary Parish Council – June 2023).

Appendix 1



Integrating into the neighbourhood

1 Connections

Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site?

Yes links the existing adjacent tourism units to the core of the village community.

2 Facilities and services

Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?

Yes, pub, village hall, playing field & hall, church

3 Public transport

Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?

Yes, multiple footpath routes to a selection of local transport nodes including community transport.

4 Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

Yes, 55+ two bedroom homes for downsizing and small family homes

Creating a Place

5 Character

Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?

Yes, blends with the existing character of the surrounding village and neighbouring properties yet creates its own distinctive feel.

6 Working with the site and its context

Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?

Yes, there are extensive protected and managed wildlife habitats throughout the site with adjacent water course and central lake. By the nature of the construction materials and assembly micro habitats are created within each unit increasing the number and variety of invertebrates thus boosting the food supply for birds, reptiles and mammals.

7 Creating well defined streets and spaces

Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?

Yes designs are approved

8 Easy to find your way around

Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?

Yes both in layout and with signposting.

Street & Home

9 Streets for all

Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?

Yes, gated site with controlled entrance, 5 mph speed limit with traffic calming, excellent visibility and monitoring

10 Car parking

Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?

Yes as there is no on street parking with adequate parking at each unit

11 Public and private spaces

Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?

Yes they are already in place, defined, safe and managed to a high standard.

12 External storage and amenity space

Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?

Yes, designated recycling centre onsite with kerbside collection & private car parking and cycle storage.

Building for a Healthy Life

A Design Toolkit for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces



In 2020, **Built for Life** tool was updated and renamed '**Building for a Healthy Life**'. The site has been assessed against the 2020 standards criteria and again passed the 9 "Green Light" target to go forward for accreditation. Appendix 2.

Building for a Healthy Life (2020 edition)		
Integrated neighbourhoods	Criteria	Comment
1. Natural connections	<p>Filtered permeability. A useful technique that designs out 'rat running' and creates a pleasant low traffic environment around people's homes whilst still allowing pedestrian and cycle movement.</p> <p>Connecting existing and new habitats; safeguarding existing or creating new movement corridors for nature</p> <p>Where retained, keeping hedgerows within the public realm, safeguarding their future retention and management.</p>	<p>Already in place as the site is gated with controlled access and has traffic calming and speed restrictions with unhindered routes for cyclists and pedestrians.*</p> <p>All wildlife corridors have been in place since the 2005 planning consent when they were conditioned for particularly for badger movement.</p> <p>Retained landscaped areas are established and managed by a Management Company with strict covenants applied. See App</p>

Appendix 2 P2

<p>2. Walking, cycling and public transport</p>	<p>Share street space fairly between pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles.</p> <p>Cycle friendly streets (see Local Transport Note 1/20) with pedestrian and cycle priority (and protection) with across junctions and side streets.</p> <p>Design out school runs dependent on cars.</p> <p>Start or contribute to the delivery of a Local Cycle and Walking Strategy Infrastructure Plan.</p> <p>Concentrate new development around existing or new transport hubs.</p> <p>20mph design speeds, designations and traffic calming.</p>	<p>In place onsite see comment above*.</p> <p>Parsonage Lane forms part of the circular Taunton Cycle Trail with access to neighbouring settlements and meeting in Taunton.</p> <p>Kingston Road North to the village centre is now 30 mph from the site to south of The Grange and then 20 mph through the village.</p> <p>There are walking routes and cycling routes that can eliminate the school run via car although 4 of the units are for 55+ and unlikely to have school age children. (Could be 60+???)</p> <p>Working with the PC to deliver a highly sustainable Active cycle route as part of NP</p> <p>Transit nodes in immediate locality with access to main rail, bus/coach hubs in Taunton. Courtesy EV transport also available.</p> <p>5mph on the gated site and 20 mph in village centre.</p>
<p>3. Facilities and services</p>	<p>Frequent benches can help those with mobility difficulties to walk more easily between places</p> <p>AONB Funding Spinney</p>	<p>Can add this in along footpath routes although do exist within The Spinney, playing field, village green.</p> <p>Spring 2024 improve accessibility for all</p>
<p>4. Homes for everyone</p>	<p>Designing homes and streets where it is difficult to determine the tenure of properties through architectural, landscape or other differences.</p> <p>A range of housing typologies supported by local housing needs and policies to help create a broad-based community.</p> <p>Homes with the flexibility to meet changing needs.</p>	<p>Designs are approved and comply.</p> <p>Comply, identified need in Housing Needs Survey 2021. All units are subject to a local need priority.</p> <p>Designs provide for life progression with accessible facilities, ground floor bedroom and bathroom plus additional sleeping for others including carers..</p>

Appendix 2 P3

<p>5. Making the most of what's there</p>	<p>Taking a walk to really understand the place where a new development is proposed and understand how any distinctive characteristics can be incorporated as features.</p> <p>Using existing assets as anchor features, such as mature trees and other existing features.</p> <p>Positive characteristics such as street types, landscape character, urban grain, plot shapes and sizes, building forms and materials being used to reflect local character.</p> <p>Sensitive transitions between existing and new development so that building heights, typologies and tenures sit comfortably next to each other.</p> <p>Remember the 'four pillars' of sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>Protecting and enhancing existing habitats; creating new habitats.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>All landscape assets retained including wildlife areas, lake, tree belts, mixed pasture.</p> <p>Comply.</p> <p>Proposed units are within an existing development and seamlessly blend into the neighbouring developed areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control the runoff to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Rain harvesters installed supplying water for foul flushing, clothes washing and external use ii. Permeable driveways around units iii. Surface water to hard surfaces addressed iv. Balancing pond already established onsite v. 200 Year Flood Risk Assessment completed as part of 2005 application. 2. Manage the quality of the runoff to prevent pollution <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Non bio friendly chemicals are already restricted across the site and neighbouring tourism units. 3. Create & sustain better places for people <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Extensive wildlife areas onsite including a lake. ii. Access to adjacent wooded area and countryside The Spinney iii. Access to numerous greenspaces for mental health benefits iv. The entire site lends itself to a feeling of wellbeing 4. Create & Sustain better places for nature <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Extensive protected and managed nature areas across the site ii. Partnerships with local agencies to monitor and manage habitat for wildlife <p>See above point 4.</p>
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Appendix 2 P4

Distinctive Places		
<p>6. A memorable character</p>	<p>A strong, hand drawn design concept. To find the right solution a number of different ideas and options might need to be explored.</p> <p>Drawing inspiration from local architectural and/or landscape character. Reflecting character in either a traditional or contemporary style.</p> <p>Structural landscaping as a way to create places with a memorable character.</p> <p>Memorable spaces and building groupings.</p> <p>Place names that have a connection to the locality can help stimulate ideas and design thought. A place name like 'Valley View' will always be more helpful on larger, multi-developer developments than generic terms such as 'Parcel R5.1'.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>“Mill Meadow” site name is established and site with the local character.</p>
<p>7. Creating well defined streets and spaces</p>	<p>Streets with active frontages.</p> <p>Well defined streets and spaces, using buildings, landscaping and/or water to enclose and define spaces.*</p> <p>Cohesive building compositions and building lines.</p> <p>Front doors that face streets and public spaces.</p>	<p>This normally refers to commercial/mixed use but the approved designs do comply. In addition the designs provide covered external seating so that frontages can remain “active” no matter what the weather and allow increased opportunity for social interaction.</p> <p>This is considered particularly important where units are for “later life” occupancy.</p> <p>Comply</p>

Appendix 2 P5

<p>7. Creating well defined streets and spaces</p>	<p>Streets with active frontages.</p> <p>Well defined streets and spaces, using buildings, landscaping and/or water to enclose and define spaces.*</p> <p>Cohesive building compositions and building lines.</p> <p>Front doors that face streets and public spaces.</p>	<p>This normally refers to commercial/missed use but the approved designs do comply. In addition the designs provide covered external seating so that frontages can remain “active” no matter what the weather and allow increased opportunity for social interaction.</p> <p>This is considered particularly important where units are for “later life” occupancy.</p>
<p>8. Easy to find your way around.</p>	<p>Designing for legibility when creating a concept plan for a place.</p> <p>Using streets as the main way to help people find their way around a place. For instance, principal streets can be made different to more minor streets through the use of different spatial characteristics, building typologies, building to street relationships, landscape strategies and boundary treatments.</p> <p>Navigable features for those with visual, mobility or other limitations.</p> <p>Frame views of features on or beyond a site.</p> <p>Create new legible elements or features on larger developments – further reinforce legible features where necessary through the landscape strategy, building and layout design, hard landscaping and boundaries.</p> <p>Simple street patterns based on formal or more relaxed grid patterns.</p>	<p>Comply</p>

Appendix 2 P6

Streets for All		
<p>9. Healthy Streets</p>	<p>20mph (or lower) design speeds; 20mph designations.</p> <p>Tree lined streets. Make sure that trees have sufficient space to grow above and below ground, with long term management arrangements in place.</p> <p>Tight corner radii (3m or less).</p> <p>Places to sit, space to chat or play within the street.</p> <p>Pavements and cycleways that continue across side streets.</p> <p>Anticipating and responding to pedestrian and cycle 'desire lines' (the most direct routes between the places people will want to travel between).</p> <p>Landscape layers that add sensory richness to a place – visual, scent and sound.</p>	<p>5 mph onsite</p> <p>Established landscaping in place and retained.</p> <p>Seating provided throughout the site and particularly around the lake area.</p> <p>In place.</p>
<p>10. Cycle and car parking</p>	<p>At least storage for one cycle where it is as easy to access as the car.</p> <p>Secure and overlooked cycle parking that is as close to (if not closer) than car parking spaces (or car drop off bays) to the entrances of schools, shops and other services and facilities.</p> <p>Shared and unallocated on street car parking.</p> <p>Landscaping to help settle parked cars into the street.</p> <p>Frontage parking where the space equivalent to a parking space is given over to green relief every four bays or so.</p> <p>Anticipating and designing out (or controlling) anti-social car parking.</p> <p>A range of parking solutions.</p> <p>Staying up to date with rapidly advancing electric car technology.</p> <p>More creative cycle and car parking solutions.</p>	<p>Comply</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply, future proofing the site with an upgraded electric substation to benefit proposed units and existing.</p> <p>Comply?</p>

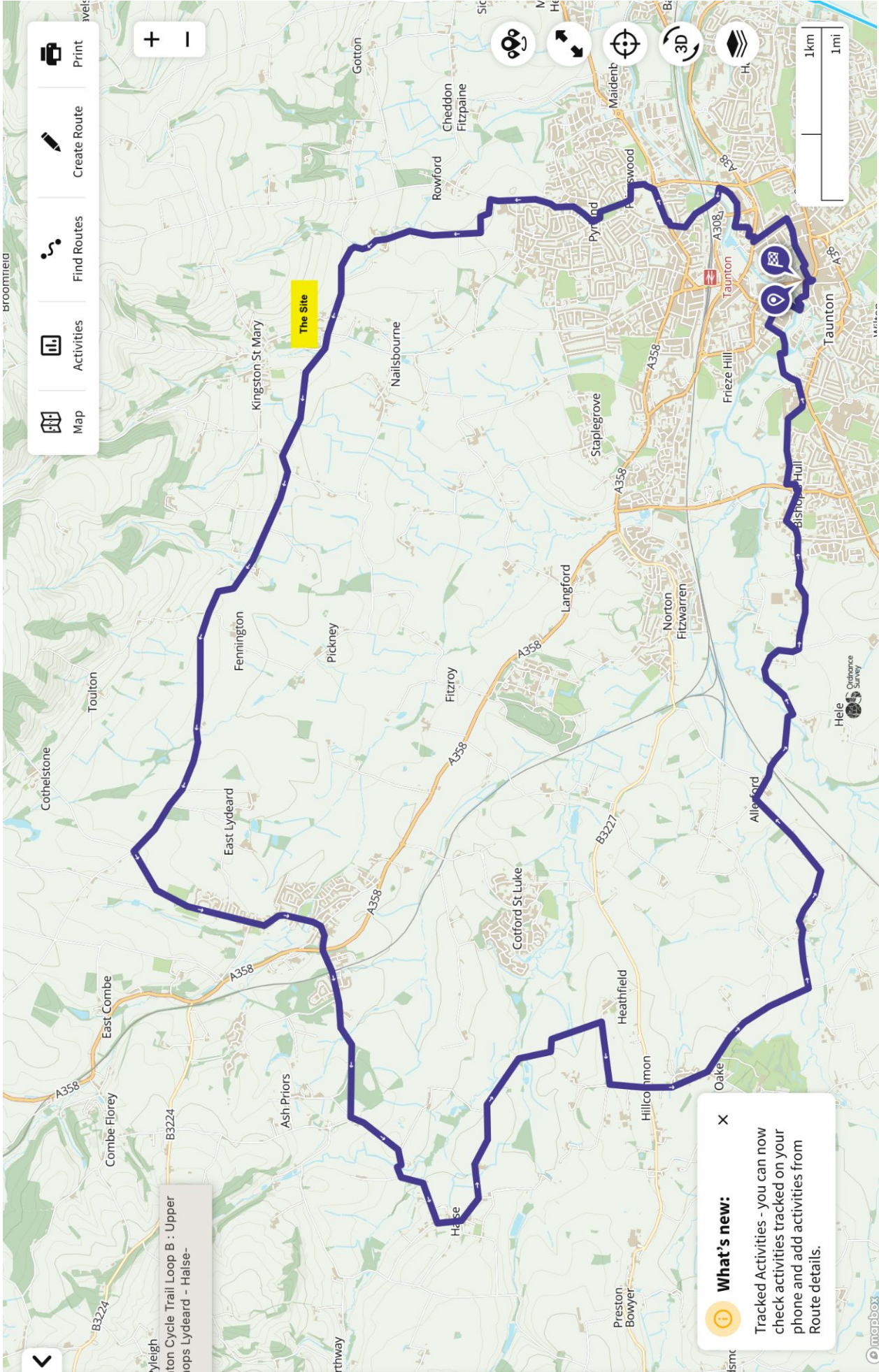
Appendix 2 P7

<p>11. Green & Blue Infrastructure</p>	<p>Biodiversity net gain through features such as species rich grasslands.</p> <p>Movement and feeding corridors for wildlife, such as hedgehog highways. Bird boxes, swift nesting bricks and bat bricks may be appropriate.</p> <p>Plans that identify the character of new spaces, such as ‘parks’, ‘woodland’, ‘allotments’, ‘wildflower meadows’ rather than ‘P.O.S.’. Be more specific about the function and character of public open spaces.</p> <p>Create Park Run ready routes on larger developments and other ways to encourage physical activity and social interaction.</p> <p>Capturing and managing water creatively and close to where it falls using features such as rain gardens and permeable surfaces. Allow people to connect with water.</p> <p>Create a habitat network providing residents with opportunities to interact with nature on a day to day basis. Wildlife does not flourish within disconnected back gardens, artificial lawns and tightly mown grass.</p> <p>Provide natural surveillance opportunities.</p> <p>A connected and accessible network of public open spaces with paths and other routes into and through.</p> <p>Sports and play facilities.</p> <p>Well considered management arrangements whether public or privately managed</p>	<p>Established landscape and wildlife habitat retained.</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply, “allotment” areas to be provided.</p> <p>Small site but road free access to the neighbouring countryside for walking & running on footpath routes including the Quantock Hills.</p> <p>Comply with permeable curtilages, onsite lake and rain harvesting.</p> <p>In place with a wide range of interaction opportunities.</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Comply</p> <p>Lake is available for fishing, the village playing field is accessible by off road footpath, cycling, running, walking.</p> <p>Management company in place across the site.</p>
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Appendix 3

Taunton Cycle Trail Loop B :

Upper Cheddon - Kingston St Mary - Bishops Lydeard -Halse- Hillfarrance



Section: Tra 3

- Distances measured over a straight line are not acceptable.
2. In order to qualify for the third credit 'For providing safe pedestrian routes to the local amenities' there need to be **safe pedestrian routes** to all amenities that are within the required distances and which have been used to justify the 1st and 2nd credit/s. Safe pedestrian routes do not need to be provided to amenities which have not contributed towards achieving the credit/s. The definition of safe pedestrian routes is set out in Tra 1, *Guidance* note 8.
 3. The third credit can only be awarded if the requirements of at least one of the other two credits have been met.
 4. The amenities must be as described in the *Credit Requirements*, e.g. a restaurant or take-away shop will not qualify as a food shop.
 5. A children's play area will only classify as such under Ecohomes if it is a clearly defined and designated publicly available play area maintained by the Local Authority or other body.
 6. A postal facility can be a post office or a postal subsidiary within for example a supermarket.
 7. If a post office provides a cash service then this can also be counted towards the 'bank/cash machine' amenity.
 8. Leisure centres must be open for public use although an entry fee may be charged (i.e. not a subscription). Members only facilities would not classify under Ecohomes.
 9. An outdoor open access public area can be a public park, village green, national park, network of public footpaths, public bathing beach or any other type of outdoor amenity area with unrestricted public access.
 10. The following should be clearly marked on the plan/map:
 - the plan/map scale
 - all suitable and safe routes with the distances
 - crossing points across major roads
 - amenities should be labelled, preferably with the trading name.

Flats

11. The distance requirement is based on the distance from the front door of the block. 80% of the blocks need to be within the distance requirement.

Refurbishment

12. There is no specific guidance for refurbishment. The standard approach should be followed.

Special Cases

13. Planned amenities.

In the case of a large development where amenities are to be provided as a part of the overall development, but built at a later stage than the dwellings being assessed, the following should apply.

- The amenities must be available for use by the time 25% of the assessed homes have been completed and are ready for occupation, or



Road Safety Factsheet

November 2020

20mph Zones and Speed Limits Factsheet

In 2019, 817 people were killed, 20,885 were seriously injured, and 91,153 were slightly injured in reported road collisions on built up* roads in Great Britain^{1**}. A large proportion of these collisions occurred on residential roads, with 121 deaths on B roads in built-up areas and 280 deaths on other minor roads in built-up areas².

Speed significantly increases the chance of being injured in a collision. Research has shown that the risk of death for pedestrians struck by cars increases at higher impact speeds, although the exact risk levels varied between the studies.

One of the first studies of pedestrian injury and car impact speed³ found that at 20mph there was a 2.5% chance of being fatally injured, compared to a 20% chance at 30mph, although this study is now regarded as having overestimated the risks. A recent review identified the studies which had produced the most reliable modern estimates⁴.

*According to the DfT's [definition of built-up roads](#).

Appendix 6

EDUCATION TRAVEL IN SOMERSET

This document sets out the Somerset County Council Policy for Home to School Travel Assistance and Travel Provision for children aged 4 to 16 years. [Last updated: April 2018](#)

2.2 Route Safety

Where children live *within* statutory walking distance of their transport area or nearest qualifying school the Local Authority has a duty to provide travel assistance where the nature of the available walking route is such that a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk (accompanied as necessary) in reasonable safety.

The Courts have defined an “available route” as one “along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk to school with reasonable safety. It does not fail to qualify as ‘available’ because of dangers which would arise if the child is unaccompanied”. The route measured may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways, as well as recognised roads.

The Local Authority will provide free travel assistance when:

- the walking route to the **nearest or transport area school** is within statutory walking distance but is assessed as un-suitable because of the dangers which would arise for an accompanied child, and, once measured the alternative safe route is longer than the statutory walking distance.

Walking routes are assessed against the following criteria:

- That the child will be accompanied
- Road width, visibility and the severity of bends
- Existence of 'safe refuge' - this means footpaths and verges, road markings at the side of the road
- The volume of traffic at the relevant time of day
- The type of traffic and its speed
- Difficulty of road crossings
- Nature of road (urban or rural) and driver expectation
- The presence or absence of speed limits and other warning signs
- The accident record along the route

A range of factors are taken into account. The fact that there is a high volume of fast-moving traffic is not in itself a reason to assess a route as unsuitable - there may be a footpath and good crossing points along the route that would mean it is safe.

Similarly, the lack of a footpath or verge would not be a reason to assess a route as unsuitable if there was, for instance, a very low volume of traffic and good visibility.

The following are not taken into account:

- The parent's individual circumstances, for instance personal availability to walk with the child or that it may be necessary to walk with younger children or prams.
- Parental finances
- Local weather conditions
- Unusual events - such as, road closures, construction work, flooding
- **Lack of street lighting - the majority of roads in Somerset do not have streetlights and lighting is not an issue all year round**
- **Lack of pavements - the lack of a paved footpath is not necessarily a reason to assess a route as unsuitable**

HATCH GREEN

COACHES

23/23B

23 COTFORD ST. LUKE / WEST BAGBOROUGH - BISHOPS LYDEARD - KINGSTON ST. MARY - TAUNTON
23B WILLITON - WATCHET - KILVE - STOGURSEY - NETHER STOWEY - KINGSTON ST. MARY - TAUNTON

MONDAY - FRIDAY (EXCEPT PUBLIC HOLIDAYS) - From: 02/09/2020

SERVICE ►	CD		NCD				
	23B	23B	23	23	23	23B	23B
WILLITON, FORE STREET	0705	0705	-	-	-	-	-
WATCHET, WSR RAILWAY STATION	0710	0710	-	-	-	-	-
KILVE, HOOD ARMS	0720	0720	-	-	-	-	-
STOGURSEY, ACLAND HOOD ARMS	0730	0730	-	-	-	-	-
NETHER STOWEY, CLOCK HOUSE	0737	0737	-	-	-	-	-
HAWKRIDGE, RESERVOIR	0747	0747	-	-	-	-	-
BUNCOMBE, PINES CAFÉ	0753	0753	-	-	-	-	-
WEST BAGBOROUGH, HEATHFIELD	-	-	1005	-	1410	-	-
COTFORD ST. LUKE, GRAHAM WAY	-	-	-	1145	-	-	-
BISHOPS LYDEARD, NR. LETHBRIDGE ARMS	-	-	1015	1155	1420	-	-
STAIRFOOT CROSS	0803	0803	1025	1205	1430	-	-
YARFORD	0805	0805	1027	1207	1432	-	-
FULFORD, TELEPHONE BOX	0807	0807	1029	1209	1434	-	-
KINGSTON ST. MARY, SWAN INN	0809	0809	1031	1211	1436	-	-
TAUNTON, WHITMORE ROAD	0815	0815	1036	1216	1441	-	-
TAUNTON, RAIL STATION NORTH SIDE	0820	0820	1041	1221	1446	-	-
TAUNTON, PARADE	0825	0825	1046	1226	1451	-	-
TAUNTON, RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE	0835	-	-	-	-	-	-

SERVICE ►	CD		NCD			CD		NCD	
	23B	23B	23	23	23	23B	23B	23B	23B
TAUNTON, RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE	-	-	-	-	-	1645	-	-	-
TAUNTON, PARADE	-	-	1100	1330	1510	1650	1650	-	-
TAUNTON, RAIL STATION BRIDGE	-	-	1105	1335	1515	1655	1655	-	-
TAUNTON, WHITMORE ROAD	-	-	1108	1338	1518	1700	1700	-	-
KINGSTON ST. MARY, SWAN INN	-	-	1113	1343	1523	1706	1706	-	-
FULFORD, TELEPHONE BOX	-	-	1115	1345	1525	R	R	-	-
YARFORD	-	-	1117	1347	1527	R	R	-	-
STAIRFOOT CROSS	-	-	1119	1349	1529	R	R	-	-
BISHOPS LYDEARD, NR. LETHBRIDGE ARMS	-	-	1129	1359	1539	-	-	-	-
COTFORD ST. LUKE, GRAHAM WAY	-	-	1139	-	R	-	-	-	-
WEST BAGBOROUGH, HEATHFIELD	-	-	-	1409	-	-	-	-	-
BUNCOMBE, PINES CAFÉ	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
HAWKRIDGE, RESERVOIR	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
NETHER STOWEY, CASTLE STREET	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
STOGURSEY, ACLAND HOOD ARMS	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
KILVE, HOOD ARMS	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
WATCHET, WSR RAILWAY STATION	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
WILLITON, FORE STREET	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-

R = REQUEST ONLY (Serves this point when a request is made by a passenger to the driver)
 CD = College Days only (College Term Time) NCD = Non College Days (College Holidays) NS = Not Saturdays

THIS BUS ACCEPTS CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS BY CARDS CARRYING THE CONTACTLESS SYMBOL, APPLE PAY, AND GOOGLE PAY, except Maestro and American Express, ON ALL JOURNEYS.

www.hatchgreencoaches.co.uk

Telephone: 01823 480 338 | Email: info@hatchgreencoaches.co.uk



hatchgreencoaches

Appendix 8

Monday



Monday to Thursday



Tuesday



Tuesday to Friday



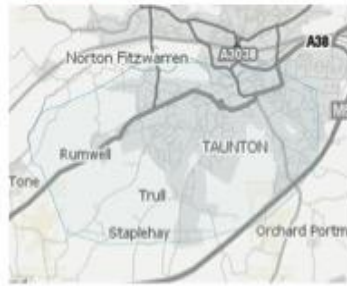
Wednesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Friday



Other community transport services in the area:

Go to www.travelsomerset.co.uk/community-transport-services to view other services in the area.



1 Development Management Policies

Policy A5: Accessibility of development

Residential development should be within walking distance of, or should have access by public transport to, employment, convenience and comparison shopping, primary and secondary education, primary and secondary health care, leisure and other essential facilities.

All major non-residential development should be accessible within walking distance or by public transport to a majority of its potential users.

Provision should also be made for cycling between residential development and non-residential facilities, or between a non-residential development and its catchment area, where these lie within 5km of the development.

Maximum acceptable travel time (minutes)

For public transport, includes waiting time and walking times at each end of the journey

	Taunton and Wellington (including urban extensions and associated settlements)		Other areas	
	Public transport	Car	Public transport	Car
Shopping and education	25	15	45	30
Other non-residential facilities	30	20	60	40

Maximum acceptable walking distances (i.e. not 'crow fly' distances)

Residential development in Taunton and Wellington

LEAP	400m	NEAP	1000m
Bus stop	400m	Playing fields	1000m
Primary school	600m	Health centre	1000m
Local shops	800m	Secondary school	1500m

Development Management Policies 1

Justification:

- 1.5.12** Accessibility standards need to be different in rural areas when compared to the main towns in the Borough. For example, it is clearly not possible for more than a small minority of rural residents to be able to walk or cycle to major facilities such as shopping centres, hospitals or secondary schools. The accessibility of sites in rural areas does remain important, particularly in terms of travel time to urban facilities or the existence of regular, daily bus services from a settlement to nearby towns.
- 1.5.13** The standards for access to local facilities are based on work undertaken by the University of the West of England and the Borough Council's established policies for provision of facilities for play.
- 1.5.14** It has been well established that bus ridership falls off substantially where distance to walk to bus stops exceeds 300-400m. Given that bus frequencies in Taunton Deane are relatively low compared with larger urban centres, it is important that walking distances to bus stops are short, and walking and waiting conditions attractive to potential bus users. It is also important that wherever practical, buses are not required to divert from a direct route in order to serve new areas of development, as this penalises existing bus users by extending journey times, as well as increasing operating costs.

Monitoring:

These policies relate to Core Strategy Strategic Objective 6 (Accessibility): *"To improve accessibility between homes, jobs and services and achieve a major change in travel behaviour towards walking, cycling and public transport."*

The monitoring indicators related to this Strategic Objective are set out in Core Strategy Table 2.6: Measuring Success.

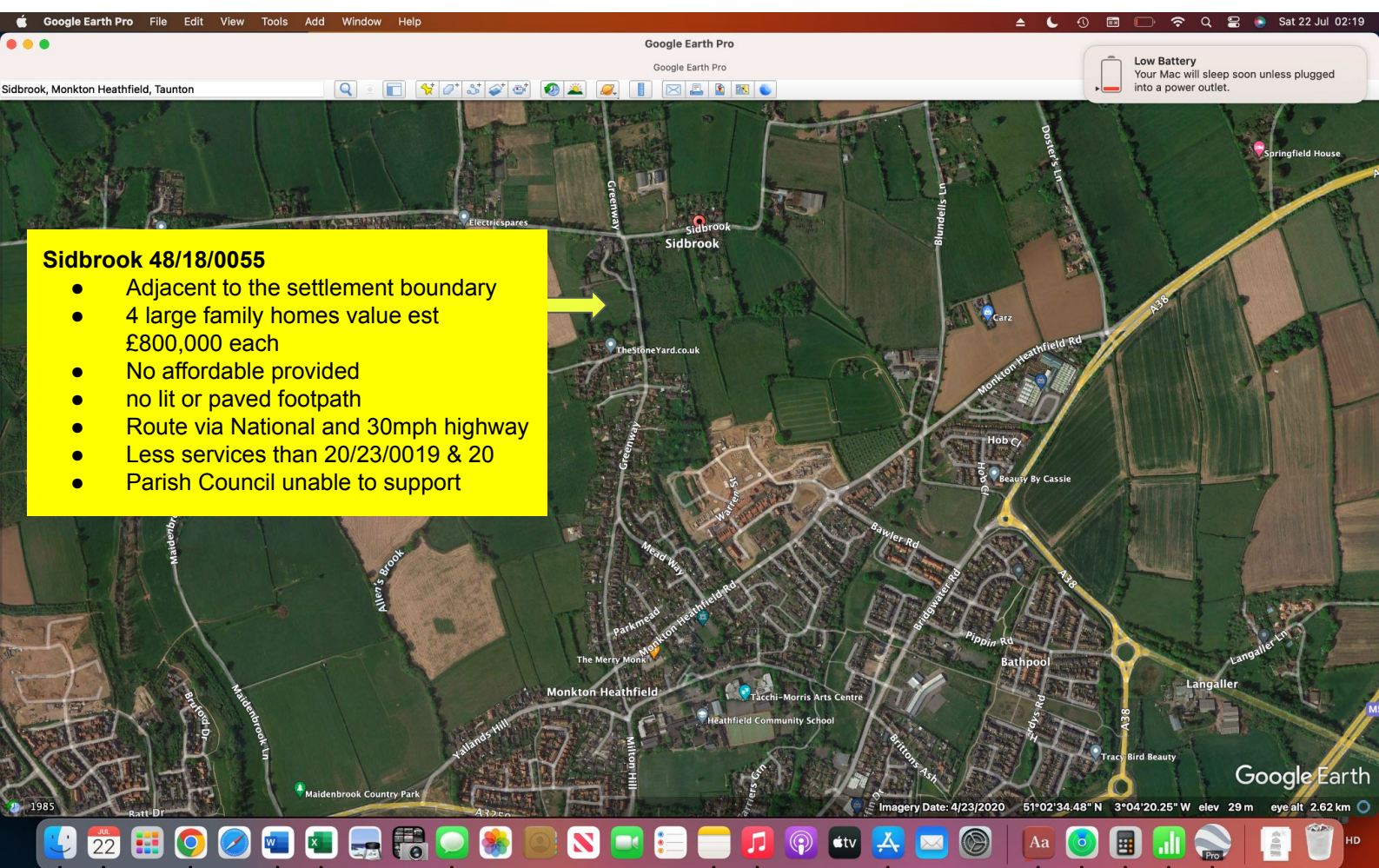


Comparable Approved Development



Higil Lea 3/07/11/016

- Further outside the settlement boundary that 20/23/0019 & 0020
- 5 affordable homes
- no lit or paved footpath
- walking route along National Speed Limit highway
- Less services than 20/23/0019 & 20
- Parish Council objected



Sidbrook 48/18/0055

- Adjacent to the settlement boundary
- 4 large family homes value est £800,000 each
- No affordable provided
- no lit or paved footpath
- Route via National and 30mph highway
- Less services than 20/23/0019 & 20
- Parish Council unable to support

Quantock Hills AONB

Planning application 20/23/0019 & 0020 External > Inbox x



Iain Porter
to me ▾
Hi Chris

15:54 (1 hour ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮

Sorry for the delay in responding, we are currently in the process of submitting a significant landscape recovery application which had taken my time this week.

I have spoken to Alex (Landscape Planning Officer) about these applications. The AONB Team / Partnership does not usually send comments for applications that support Management Plan Policies or Objectives or for applications where we have no concerns due to limited staff resource. We have not been consulted on the applications 20/23/0019 & 20/23/0020, however this may be because they fall outside the AONB boundary, and the planning officers felt they would not impact on the purposes of the AONB.

Having looked at them I can confirm that we have no concerns or issues as we can see no adverse impacts on landscape or visual aspects and as such the application meets AONB Management Plan Policy DPIP2. From our perspective the development will also feed into the active travel route work that is being undertaken to bring car free travel from Taunton, through Kingston St Mary to the Quantock Hills AONB as will the proposed enhanced access through Mill Meadow and the Spinney, for which Capital Access Grant funding is allocated.

Please do keep me posted on progress of the applications.

Kind regards

Iain Porter (pronouns he / him)

AONB Manager
Quantock Hills AONB Service
☎ 07977 412077



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The Impact of Second Home/Holiday Home Ownership

We draw the council's attention to the draft [Neighbourhood Plan](#) Page 66 of 105

"The reference to second homes made in the comments was of interest and an element not included in the survey. ONS Housing statistics showed that Houses with no usual resident - **vacant/ 2nd home/holiday lets – increased from 18 in the 2001 Census to 51 in the 2011 Census.** The development of Mill Meadow only currently accounts for eleven. Second homes could impact on the house supply for local people, which could possibly be addressed to some extent by a small Community Land Trust development."

The [English Housing Survey 2021 to 2022: second homes - fact sheet - GOV.UK](#) acknowledges a National average increase of 13% in second homes since 2011:

"In 2021-22, there were 809,000 second homes owned by households in England, an increase of 13% or just under 100,000 homes on 2010-11. However, the percentage of households with a second home was unchanged during this period, at 3%, Annex Table 9."

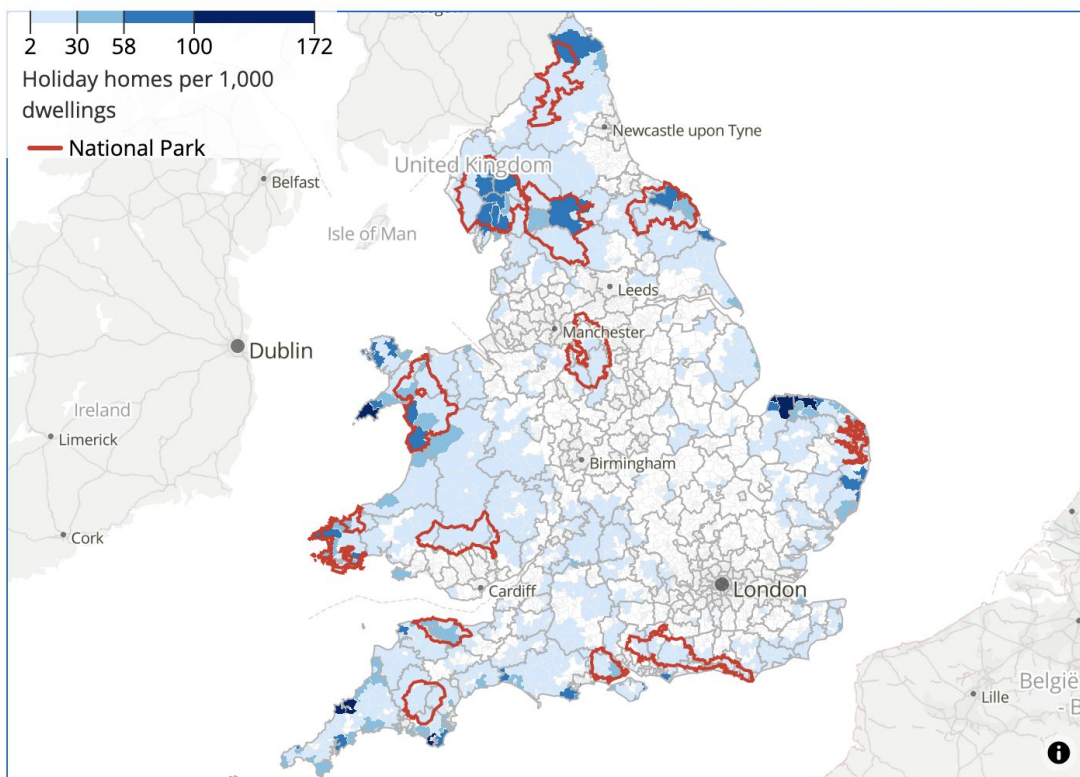
This would indicate that there are close to 60 households functioning within the parish as second homes/holiday homes although the number could be higher as in some areas of the South West [more than 1 in 10 addresses used as holiday homes in some areas of England and Wales.](#)

Without the 11 completed units at Mill Meadow that still means there are 49 properties within the parish that are not available for residential use which is 12% of the households

In addition there are 297 AirBnb listings on a search for Kingston St Mary for houses and flats available as entire property rentals. (Mill Meadow does not list on AirBnb). Notably AirBnb did not exist at the time of the original 2005 tourism consent for the site.

Holiday home hotspots

Location of second addresses used as a holiday home, by Middle layer Super Output Area, England and Wales



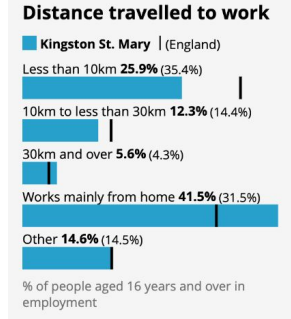
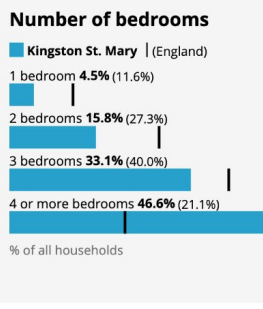
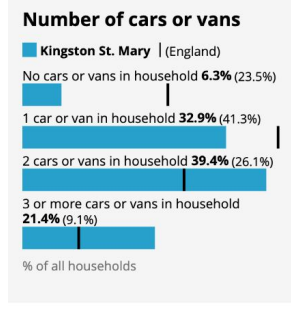
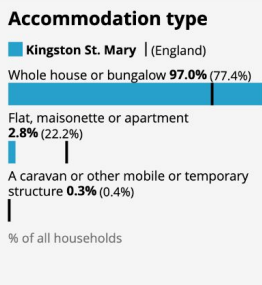
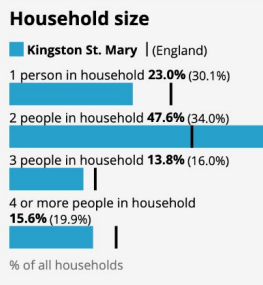
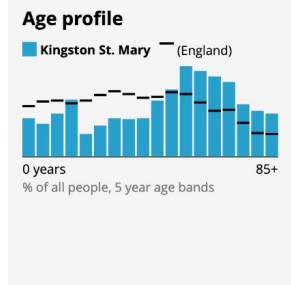
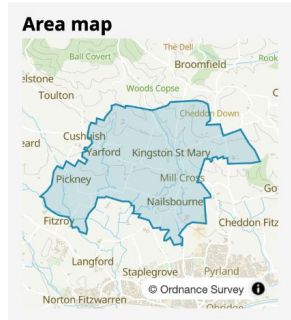
Source: Census 2021 from the Office for National Statistics

While the proportion of households owning a second home has remained the same, the number of second homes has increased since 2010-11.

The two applications in front of the council will go some way to redressing what is a regional and local housing needs crisis or would Somerset wish to be seen to favour out of county second home ownership over a clear local community need and community wishes.

Social Diversity & The Impact of an Ageing Community

Kingston St. Mary



[Source: Census 2021](#)

50.6% Aged 55 or over - ageing population that needs an injection of younger/family

47.9% Economically Inactive - indicates retired supporting that 50.6% are 55 or over

95.8% of households own 2 or less cars, points to ageing population and “empty nesters”

67.4% travel less than 10 km to work (25.9%) or work from home (41.5%)

70.6% of households comprise 2 or less individuals - points to ageing population and “empty nesters”, blocking family homes as there is no suitable village provision

20.3% of households are properties with 2 bedrooms or less as there is no supply

As concluded in the Housing Needs survey and Neighbourhood Plan the community has an increasingly ageing population that is having a negative impact on the social diversity and vibrancy of the village. The provision of the much needed 55+ downsizing housing will ease the impact as family homes are released into the market.

Marketing Report Letter



Fox & Sons
Regional New Homes Centre
52 East Street
Taunton, TA1 3NA

Mr C Heayns
Mill Meadow
Kingston St Mary
Taunton, Somerset
TA2 8HL

20 July 2023

Dear Mr Heayns,

Marketing report for Mill Meadow, TA2 8HL

Thank you for your time today to review the marketing of Mill Meadow and in particular the plots we have for sale. I always think it is worth getting our heads together to see how we can move things forward because I feel we have had little to no interest in these plots so would like to see more traction. As you know we first listed the plots in September 2022 and marketed them in a way where people could buy the plot and build themselves or buy a plot and a build package from Mill Meadow thinking the more options would attract different types of buyers. I am sad to say that in the nearly 11 months we have had the listings live we have only had one phone call who was from a gentlemen looking to build and sell to make a profit but he decided against the purchase and found elsewhere. The properties have been marketed on all of the major web portals (Rightmove, Zoopla etc), I have spent over £250 on social media campaigns and the plots are part of our weekly Land and New Homes property brochure which gets sent to all of our 58 offices in the South of the UK for our teams to give out to new applicants. These offices are from Wales to Southampton and down to Saltash in Cornwall. I can also confirm that the last HTML emailer that was sent went to 3000 people. I was hoping my recent purchase of ten For Sale boards, now erected on the empty plots would catch someone's attention but it hasn't. As you can see a huge amount of marketing has been created but no interest has returned. It's extremely sad to see the plots sat there empty but I do feel the market is very slow for these type of purchases/plots. I strongly feel the type of buyers that will buy are from out of the area and not from Somerset although the reputation of outside buyers coming into Somerset Villages has been mentioned negatively in the press so hope it doesn't put people off; (<https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/second-homes-killing-towns-villages-6473331>).

We have established the properties are being marketed in a huge range of places giving you maximum exposure but why aren't they selling? In my experience the Taunton area has never attracted many holiday home buyers as I believe they often head towards more coastal towns like Minehead or Lyme etc. I do feel one of the biggest challenges that all developers/builders/individuals are facing is the current costs of materials. When carrying out land valuations we often work backwards from a GDV and take in considerations such as build costs, planning costs, CIL etc. Over the last year instead of valuing build costs at an average of £140 per square foot we now value build costs at an average of £190 per square foot. What this has done is remove a huge amount of buyers because simply properties cost too much to build. If the units were fully residential when complete the build costs would be viable because of the potential return if sold but because the properties have a leisure restriction values are, by my calculations, 35-40% lower therefore building a new lodge at Mill Meadow may be a break even exercise at best which is too risky for most people. Is there any opportunity to change these plots to fully residential to make the site viable? I will continue to push hard and ensure the plots have fully marketed and are seen by as many people as possible.

I look forward to working with you and hope we can achieve some sales soon

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "SB" with a flourish.

STEPHEN BISIKER BA (hons) NFAFP
New Homes Partner
07552 237 465 / Stephen.bisiker@sequencehome.co.uk

Housing Market Overview



Mr Heayns
Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane
Kingston St. Mary TA2 8HL

Fox & Sons
52 East Street
Taunton
TA1 3NA

06 August 2023

Dear Mr Heayns,

We are delighted to provide you with our thoughts on the current market with particular focus on the area of Kingston St Mary. The below commentary is put together from a range of information available to the public on the internet along with some data received from our, paid for, software. Sequence – Fox & Sons - is one of the largest estate agency networks in the UK, with over 300 branches trading under 11 well-known names so because of our coverage we feel we have a good understanding of the marketplace and how it is performing.

Nationally the average price of property coming to market drops by 0.2% (-£905) this month (August 23) to £371,907, marginally below the 0% norm for this time of year as new sellers temper their price expectations in response to recent Base Rate rises and increasing buyer affordability constraints. Price trends have proved more resilient than most expected during the first half of the year, with average asking prices now 2.6% higher than in January. However, the brakes on the economy being applied by the Bank of England to combat the surprisingly sticky inflation figures are biting, with the number of sales agreed in June now being 12% behind 2019's more normal market level, contrasting with the surprisingly strong first five months of the year. However, buyer demand remains resilient, being 3% higher than at this time in 2019, with agents reporting that right-priced homes are still attracting motivated buyers due to the shortage of property for sale compared to historic norms. The smaller home, two-bedrooms and fewer market sector has been less impacted, with June's sales agreed figure 9% below 2019's level. This typical first-time buyer sector has held up most strongly throughout the first half of the year, highlighting an ongoing determination from many first-time buyers to navigate the unsettled mortgage market and get onto the ladder, particularly with rents at record levels. It is also an indication of some people deciding to retire early and downsize to a smaller property, perhaps to release some equity from their home for lifestyle or early retirement, or to gift a deposit to family first-time buyers. Despite this easing in sales levels there is no glut of property choice, with the number of available properties for sale 12% lower than at the same time in 2019.

Properties in Kingston St. Mary had an overall average price of £733,600 over the last year. The majority of sales in Kingston St. Mary during the last year were detached properties, selling for an average price of £744,500. Semi-detached properties sold for an average of £690,000. Overall, sold prices in Kingston St. Mary over the last year were 30% up on the previous year and 34% up on the 2019 peak of £549,125. The 2 & 3 bedroom home market in Kingston St Mary is acutely limited in supply so that when properties do come up there is significant demand which drives up prices. Properties in Taunton had an overall average price of £287,658 over the last year. The majority of sales in Taunton during the last year were terraced properties, selling for an average price of £253,097. Overall, sold prices in Taunton over the last year were 6% up on the previous year and 16% up on the 2020 peak of £248,295. The overall selling price in Kingston St Mary is £445,942 higher than Taunton. In the past 2 years 18 properties have come to market in Kingston St Mary and have changed hands at an average sale price of £622,750 higher than what might be expected due to the high demand and competition from downsizers, younger buyers, families looking to upsize and those with no village connection relocating to the area who see the village as highly desirable and often have a larger budget e.g EDF, retiree's.

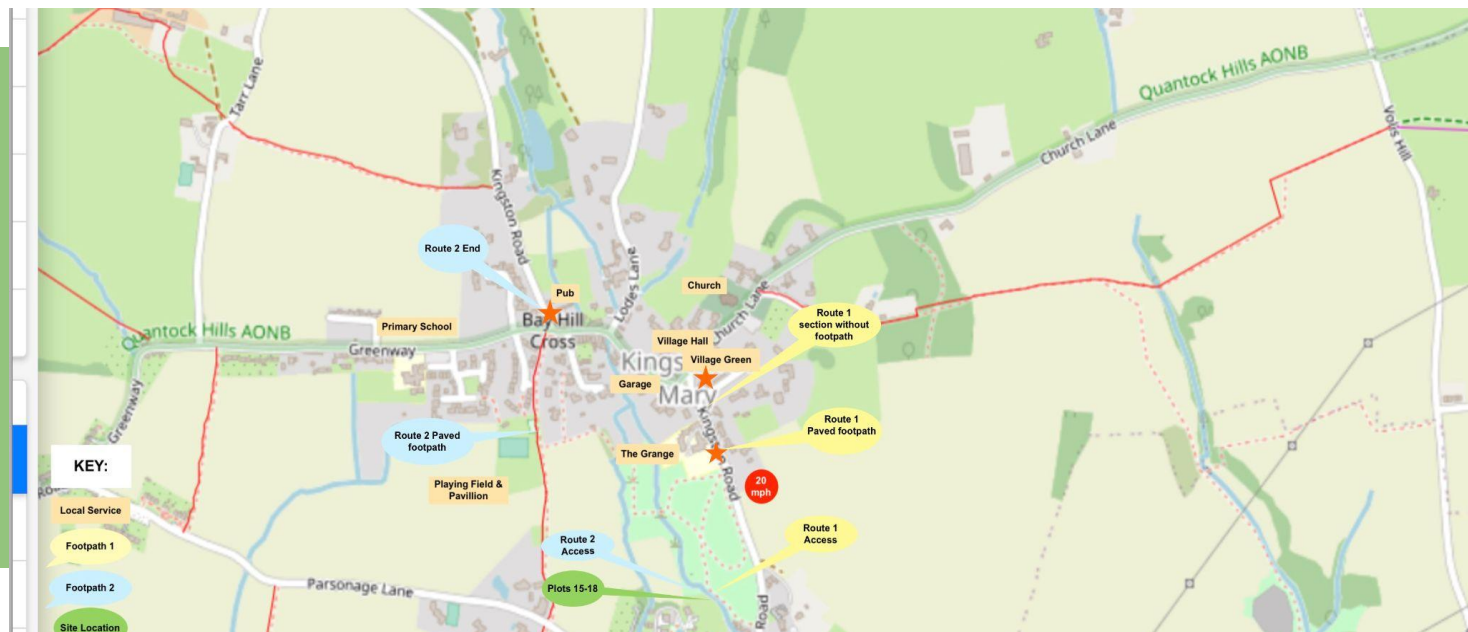
There is a latent demand from both downsizers and younger families, the Parish Council have reported 20 households looking to downsize alongside those younger villagers wishing to either buy their first home or return to the village community. The provision of 2 bedroom and small family homes with a local need priority would ease the pressure on prices and provide a much-needed supply to meet an existing and longstanding demand, allowing those with a village connection to remain in or re-join the community.

I hope this report gives you a good understanding of how the market is performing.

Yours sincerely

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SAFE FOOTPATHS



Off highway footpath routes to the village centre along and its services are in place with well used on and off highway routes taken by children to and from the school.

Route 1

Partially lit from the site through The Spinney to a paved section and established crossing point by The Grange where there is a bus stop for routes 23 and 23b then a 20m walk in the highway in a 20mph limit to the village green, hall and church with the garage a further 20m.

Route 2

Partially lit path from the site into The Spinney then following a field footpath to the village playing field and onwards over paved paths to the school and pub.

As part of the development Route 2 will be made available as a Permissible Footpath providing a pedestrian route to and from the school from the Mill Cross area to remove the National Speed limit section of the current Route 4 and provide an alternative to Route 3 which will significantly reduce the risk to children making the daily return walk to the primary school from the Mill Cross area.

Route 3

A route is available along Parsonage Lane east to Mill Cross then north along Kingston Road all in 30 and 20 mph with a small section of paved path by The Mill narrowing point then to the village green, hall and church. With the garage nearby. visibility on this route is good and with the reduction in road speed to 20mph safer than previously.

Route 4

West along Parsonage Lane starting in 30mph then with a straight stretch of National Speed Limit with good visibility, this is a length if the cycle way, to connect to a cross field footpath north to the village playing field and then paved paths onwards to the school and pub.

Notes

Further to our telephone conversation, please find below the justification as part of policy DM2.

Tourism is a key element of the local economy, providing around 1500 jobs and generating an estimated £129 million in 2007.

Surely it's 15000 jobs?

The Somerset Delivery Plan recognises the need for sustainability so as not to undermine the local environmental quality.

What in what we are proposing could be considered to "undermine the local environmental quality"

Recent evidence suggests that the growth of new build and other holiday homes is outstripping demand resulting in reduced viability for established enterprises, unnecessary visual impact on the countryside in non sustainable locations and subsequent pressure for conversion to residential uses to cover financial losses of conversion.

What we are proposing

- strengthens local community,
- reduces oversupply & competition in tourism by removing 6 holiday/second home units

Policy DM2 therefore limits holiday accommodation in permanent structures to the reuse of existing buildings associated with farm and other rural services such as pubs and shops, to help sustain and provide economic diversification for existing enterprises without the visual impact of new build.

Well they missed this with us given we are a 2006 consent as we have permanent structures, they applied the demolish if empty clause to the 13 units but not to the 5 (now 4).

The proposed accommodation meets an identified need for housing in KSM, which is a social benefit.

The proposed housing is not caught by phosphates and can come forward to boost supply when other developments are constrained.

The development accords with para 78 of the NPPF, which states that In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.

The development accords with para 79 of the NPPF, which states that To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

The development is policy compliant as follows:

- *Policy SP1 allows small scale development in designated villages such as KSM.*
- *Policy CP8 allows development outside settlement boundaries, subject to design considerations. In this case the proposal utilises already approved high quality house types already in situ at Mill Meadow, noting that the Neighbourhood Plan proposes to include the site within the settlement boundary.*
- *Policy DM2 does not explicitly prohibit housing outside settlement boundaries as confirmed in the Bagley Road appeal.*
- *The Council has used the above planning policy rationale to approve development outside of settlement boundaries in other locations, for example, 34 dwellings in Stoke St Gregory (36/18/0048) and 4 dwellings at Sidbrook (48/18/0055).*