Norton St Philip Neighbourhood Plan

2019-2029



Norton St Philip Parish Council

Referendum Version

June 2025

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1) Background

2)

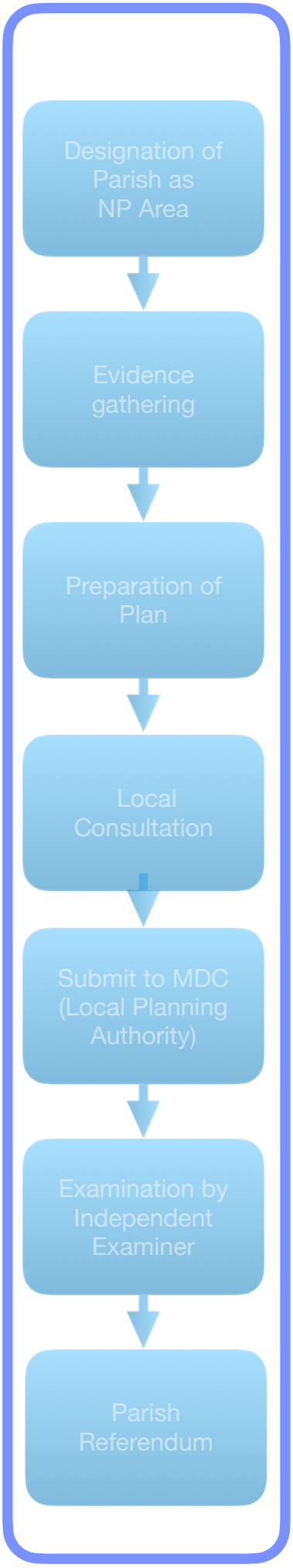
1.1 This Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been prepared by residents of Norton St Philip (NSP) under the provisions of the Localism Act of 2011 to guide the future development of NSP. The Plan covers the period 2019 to 2029. The end date of 2029 corresponds with the former Mendip District Council's Local Plan period.

1.2 On 1st April 2023 the former Mendip District Council (MDC) became part of the new unitary Somerset Council. The geographical area of MDC is now known as Somerset East. All references in this Plan are to the adopted Mendip Local Plan, Parts 1 and 2 (LPP1 and LPP2) which remain as the statutory adopted Local Plan documents for the former Mendip District Council area until such time as they are superseded by updated Local Plan(s) prepared by Somerset Council.

1.3 In October 2023 Somerset Council published a county Local Development Scheme (LDS) which confirmed that MDC's Development Plan will remain in place pending the adoption of a combined Local Plan for the whole Local Planning Authority (LPA) area. The timetable for this is published in the Council's LDS. "Early engagement" with interested parties is due to commence in mid 2024 with a Regulation 18 Consultation anticipated in Spring 2025. The Council hope to submit the Plan for Examination in the first half of 2027.

1.4 This Neighbourhood Plan contains a Monitoring and Review section which explains how the policies will be monitored for their effectiveness. It aims to ensure the NP is reviewed to remain aligned with changes to national and local policy as well as further addressing climate change and biodiversity..

A list of abbreviations and acronyms used in this document is included at Appendix 6 on page 98.



2) Planning Context

2.1 References in this Plan to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are to the NPPF published in December 2023. In December 2024 the Government published a revised NPPF. This set out transitional arrangements for Plans which had already been submitted as was the case with this Plan.In due course, the NP will be revised, if necessary, to take account of any changes in national policy as they affect NSP.

2.2 Norton St Philip Parish Council (PC) resolved to start the process of preparing a NP in December 2017. An application was made to the former Mendip DC which was approved on 5th April 2018. This decision designated the Civil Parish of NSP as a Neighbourhood Area in accordance with Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the purposes of

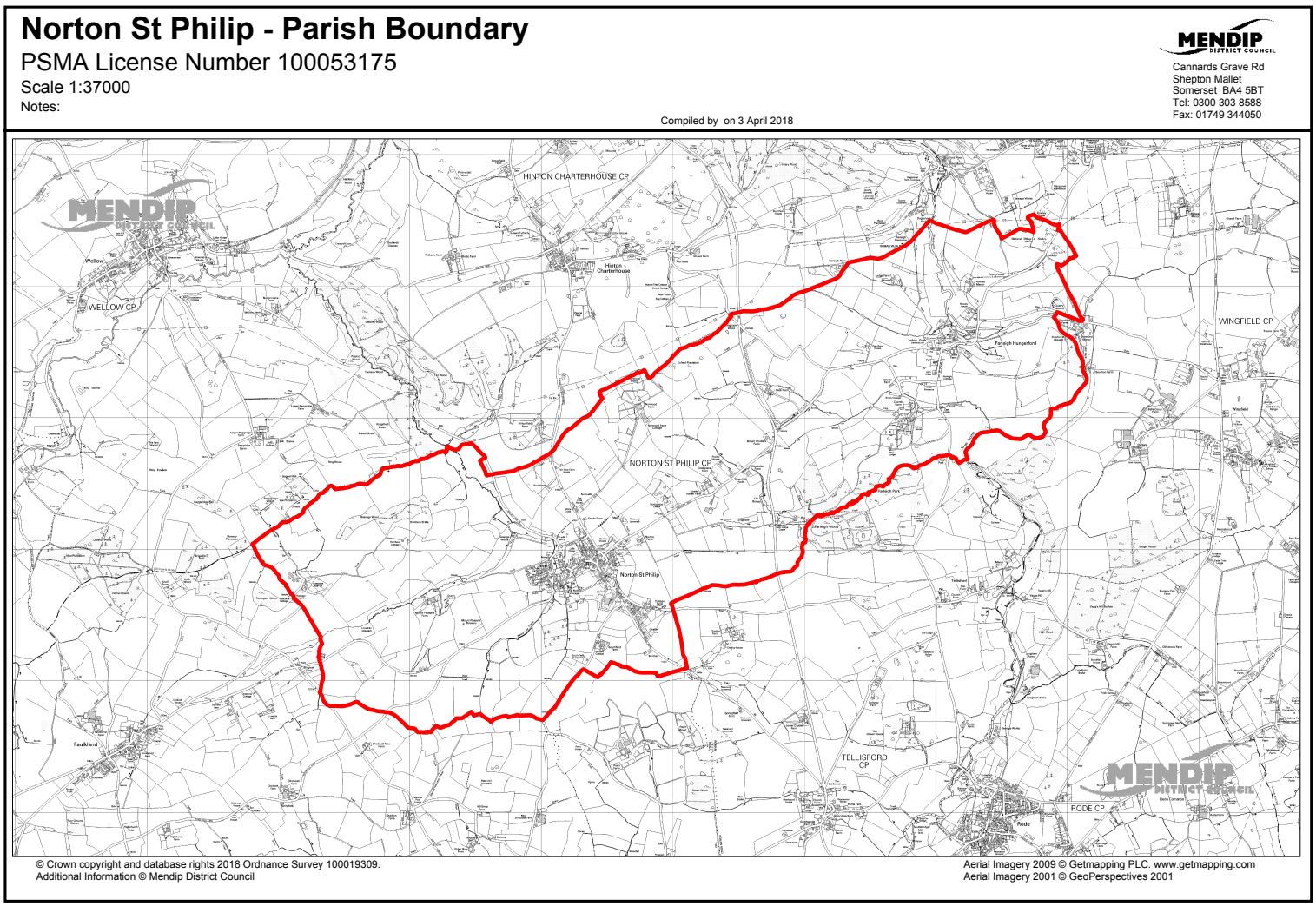


Fig 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area / NSP Parish Boundary

2.3 This NP covers the Parish of Norton St Philip (Fig 1). The purpose of a NP is to set out planning policies for a local area, in this case NSP. The planning policies contained in the NP are used by the LPA to decide planning applications. Local people can thus create a plan that allows them to develop planning policies that reflect their priorities for their area. These policies have the same statutory weight as policy from the LPA.

2.4 Following approval at an independent examination, a Parish referendum is held.

2.5 A vote in favour at the referendum means that the NP will then become part of the Development Plan for the area, against which any proposals for development will be assessed. Thus a NP is an important document as it has legal authority. However, as it forms part of a hierarchy of planning policies there are some limitations on what it can do, known as the Basic Conditions:

- It must have regard to government planning policies and guidance
- It must contribute to sustainable development
- It must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan produced by the LPA (in this case the former MDC)
- It must conform to European environmental legislation.
- It must not conflict with the European Convention on Human Rights



C14th George Inn (Listed Grade 1)

What is meant by Development? It is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as

"the carrying out of building....or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land".

So development includes:

- Erecting new buildings
- Extending and altering existing building structures
- Demolishing a building
- Engineering works such as building a new road
- Changing the use of land or buildings

3) Early Stages of Preparation









3.1 A Steering Group was established. This consisted of both Parish Councillors and other Parish Residents. A Planning Consultant was retained by the PC with the help of a grant from Locality. The Steering Group set up 4 Working Groups with the following titles:

- Housing and Local Green Spaces (LGS)
- Environmental Sustainability
- Transport and Traffic
- Economic and Social Infrastructure

3.2 These Groups worked with the community to feed back to the Steering Group and then to the PC. Consultation was in the form of two Public Meetings (the first attended by 60 residents, the second by 65 residents); a village wide Housing Survey; attendance at 3 village events for information, awareness and 'Initial Feedback', and a display and feedback weekend in the Village Hall.

3.3 A dedicated website was set up, which published all relevant documents and also contained a 'Have Your Say' page. The Steering Group also surveyed the village and settlements of Farleigh Hungerford and Hassage for a Character Assessment; this forms part of the NP. The Plan has been drawn up with reference to the Parish Plan (2005) and the Conservation Area Appraisal (2007). These documents are on the NP website.

3.4 At a Meeting in September 2018 the Steering Group decided to recommend to the PC that this NP should be reviewed within 2 to 3 years of adoption.

3.5 A Pre-Submission Consultation (Reg 14) ran from 7th December 2018 to 25th January 2019. Following this consultation, all the comments received were considered and, where necessary, changes made to the Draft Plan. A consultation statement summarising all the comments received and the action taken was produced.

3.6 The draft plan and supporting documents were submitted to the former MDC for the Regulation 16 Consultation and subsequent examination in February 2019.

3.7 The Examiner's report, dated 19 July 2019, concluded that the Plan, as modified in accordance with her recommendations, should proceed to referendum.

3.8 At its Cabinet Meeting on 2nd September 2019 the former MDC decided that the Plan should proceed to referendum.







Display weekend/ public meeting

4) Injunction/Judicial Review

4.1 On 8th October 2019, following a Hearing in the High Court, Lochailort Investments Ltd were granted an injunction which cancelled the Referendum planned for 17th October, and forbade the holding of a Referendum pending the outcome of a Judicial Review.

4.2 On March 24th 2020 the Judicial Review Hearing took place at the High Court. The Grounds for the claim were:

i) The decision to proceed to Referendum was unlawful as it was not taken with adequate regard to the national policies concerning the designation of LGS and misunderstood the strategic policies in the development plan.

ii) Policy 5 of the NSP NP is inconsistent with national policies for managing Green Belts.

iii) The view that LGS7 and LGS8 are areas of "particular importance" and "demonstrably special" was irrational and/or inadequately reasoned and/ or unsupported by the evidence base.

4.3 Judgment was handed down on 11th May 2020, with the claim being dismissed on all grounds. The Judge found that the Basic Conditions had been met and that *"the development policy in Policy 5 is sufficiently broad in scope so as to be interpreted and applied consistently with Green Belt policy".*

4.4 An application to the Court of Appeal was made on 1st June 2020 and heard on 28th July. There were 4 grounds;

1)The judge erred in concluding that Policy 5 of the NSPNP is "consistent" with policies for managing development in the Green Belt. The wording of Policy 5 is irreconcilable with Green Belt policy.

2) The judge erred in concluding that the Council had given consideration to the policy requirement for designation of a LGS that they are "capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period" when she accepted that there was "an absence of any specific consideration as to whether these designations were capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period".

3) The Judge was wrong to enlarge the presumption that an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State will have understood the policy framework to a neighbourhood planning inspector who is appointed very differently. In any event the judge was wrong to say this presumption could make lawful failing to make any reference to a key policy requirement for LGS designation in the Respondent's reports, the examiner's report or anywhere in the evidence base. This is especially so when the local plan inspector, who certainly benefits from the presumption, had all the same evidence base before him and concluded that all the LGS designations should be deleted from the emerging Local Plan Part II.

4) MDC misunderstood its own strategic development plan policies when it took the Decision that the Basic Conditions were complied with which included the test that the NP was in general conformity with these strategic policies. The judge was wrong to hold that this error in law did not render the decision unlawful.

4.5 Judgment was handed down on 2nd October 2020. It upheld the Mendip District Council position on 3 substantive grounds of appeal. The Judgment concluded that:

- The 10 Local Green Spaces are lawfully designated by the Plan,
- The Neighbourhood Plan Examiner had sufficient expertise and experience and understood the policy background to the Plan, and
- The Neighbourhood Plan did not misinterpret strategic policies in the development plan.

However, the Judgment ruled that policy 5, setting out the types of development that may be permitted within the Local Green Spaces, is more restrictive than national policy and the additional restrictions had not been sufficiently justified in the Plan. The Judgment concluded that:

"..each of the areas was lawfully designated as an LGS; but that Policy 5, which applies to them once designated, is not consistent with national planning policies for managing development within the Green Belt. In the absence of reasoned justification, the consequence is that Policy 5 is unlawful. I would allow the appeal on that ground alone."

4.6 As policy 5 was not considered lawful, the Council's decision to submit the Plan to referendum was quashed. The Order provided that:

"The Respondent Council's decision dated 2 September 2019
a)To accept the examiner's conclusions in relation to Policy 5 of the draft Norton St Philip Neighbourhood Plan
b)that Policy 5 of the draft Norton St Philip Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and can proceed to referendum is quashed for the reasons set out in the Judgment. "

4.7 The High Court and Court of Appeal Judgments and Order are on the NP website at https://nortonstphilipneighbourhoodplan.com/judicial-review-court-documents/

5) Proposed Amendments to draft Plan following Court of Appeal Judgment

5.1 Following the Court of Appeal decision, the former MDC prepared Modifications to Policy 5 and its supporting text. These proposed deleting para 12.3 of the NP;

> ~~"12.3. The emerging Mendip District Local Plan has also proposed these areas as LGS. Both Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans can designate LGS and for consistency it is important both Plans show the same areas. Local feeling supported the designations and wanted to make them in this Plan. It was decided no other area required designation as LGS."~~

And replacing with a new para:

> "Paragraph 101 of the [2019] NPPF sets out an expectation that Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space will be consistent with those for Green Belts (set out in paragraphs 143 – 147 of the NPPF)."

The proposed modification to Policy 5 was to delete:

> ~~"Development on Local Green Spaces will only be permitted if it enhances the original use and reasons for the designation of the space."~~

And replace with:

> "Development in an area designated as Local Green Space will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts".

5.2 On 1 March 2021, MDC's Cabinet agreed to carry out consultation on the further modifications to the Plan. This was held in March/April 2021 and included the earlier modifications identified by the Examiner and at the Cabinet meeting of 2 September 2019. These amendments are shown in Appendix 6. The Cabinet report of 1 March 2021 set out an intention to bring a report back as soon as possible. This was to consider responses to the consultation before deciding whether the Plan (as modified) should proceed to a referendum. These consultation responses are on the Documents section of the NP website.

5.3 A Meeting of the NP Steering Group was held on 24th March 2021. The Minutes of that Meeting note that :

> "It was confirmed that the amendments had been made in order to comply with the Court of Appeal's finding that the LGS development policy had not been consistent with green belt policy. It was further confirmed that the PC's legal team had reviewed the proposed amendments and were content with them.
> Following discussion, the Steering Group determined that the amendments were acceptable and should be supported."

5.4 The Steering Group also considered whether there had been any material change of circumstances relevant to the draft NP since its recommendation to the PC that the NP go forward to Reg 14 consultation. Although at that time there was a possibility that there would be further changes to the village development boundary, the Steering Group noted paras 53 and 55 of the Court of Appeal Judgment; in particular the Judge's conclusion that any misinterpretation was not material.

5.5 The Steering Group resolved to support the proposed amendments and prepared a report for the PC to that effect.

5.6 At an Extraordinary Meeting of the PC on 23rd April 2021 it was :
"unanimously resolved to support the modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan as proposed by Mendip District Council"

6) Examination of Mendip Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) and subsequent Judicial Reviews

6.1 During the (former) MDC Local Plan Part II Examination additional housing sites not included in the submitted Plan were proposed in the NE of the Mendip District. These were to meet the need for a further 505 dwellings as a consequence of an extra year being added to the life of Local Plan Pt1. The LPP2 Main Modifications allocated a site in Norton St Phillip for 27 dwellings (NSP1).
The PC together with the neighbouring PCs of Beckington and Rode made representations to the Examining Inspector, seeking clarification of his justification for limiting the proposed allocation of the 505 dwellings to the NE of the District.

The Inspector held a second round of Hearings over 6 days in November/December 2020. The PC participated in these Hearings.

The LPP2 Inspector's Report was published in September 2021 and confirmed the additional site in NSP together with a further 4 sites in NE Mendip District.

6.2 The former MDC and the PC agreed that until there was clarity about changes to the village settlement boundary in LPP2, progress on the NP should be paused.

6.3 LPP2 was adopted by MDC's Full Council in December 2021.

6.4 NSP PC applied for a Judicial Review of Mendip DC's decision to adopt LPP2 in January 2022.

There were four grounds for the challenge:

Ground 1: Misinterpretation of Mendip District Local Plan 2006 – 2029 Part I: Strategy and Policies, by considering that it required an additional 505 dwellings to be allocated in the north east of the district through LPP2; or, at the very least, set a "strategic expectation" that required primary consideration to be given to allocations within this location.

Ground 2: Failure to consider any reasonable alternatives to allocating the additional 505 dwellings within the north east of the District through the sustainability appraisal.

Ground 3: Failure to have regard to Policy CP2.2(c) and the requirement for proportionate development in rural settlements and/or provide adequate reasons to explain how this had been taken into account.

Ground 4: The decision to allocate sites in Norton St Philip (NSP1) and Beckington (BK1) through modifications to LPP2 was irrational.

Permission was granted in April and a 2 day Hearing took place in the High Court on 18th and 19th October 2022.

6.5 Judgment was handed down on 16th December 2022. It upheld the PC's 2 main Grounds of Appeal(Grounds 1 and 2), the Judge ruling that the Examining Inspector had misinterpreted MDC's adopted spatial strategy, thereby leading MDC into legal error. Grounds 3 was rejected by the Judge who ruled that it could not be concluded that the Inspector had not taken proportionate growth into account in relation to NSP simply because he did not refer to the percentages which he must have been aware of. Ground 4 was rejected as the arguments put forward came nowhere near clearing the high hurdle for establishing irrationality.

6.6 Site NSP1 was one of 5 allocated sites which were remitted back to the Council with the order that they be treated as not having been adopted as part of the local Development Plan and that the allocations for the 505 dwellings be reviewed and reconsidered in accordance with the adopted spatial strategy.

6.7 This review required Somerset Council to assess where the 505 should be located and go through the normal reg 18 and 19 stages before examination and adoption.



The Barton looking towards Manor Farm

Judicial Review of MDC's failure to designate site NSP1 as "white space"

6.8 In February 2023 Lochailort Investments commenced Judicial Review proceedings arguing that the amendments to the policy map published on 13 January (in accordance with the court order) were legally void. Their argument was that the land should be shown as 'white space' with no designations rather than outwith development limits and in the open countryside.

6.9 The PC was not initially named as an Interested Party by Lochailort in the action, despite being named by (the former) MDC. Despite this, the PC began a "Liberty Application" requesting the Court to review the Order of 16th December 2022 and if the Judge considered it appropriate, make any necessary amendments in order to resolve the status of the struck out sites.

6.10 Both the JR and the Liberty Application were heard in the High Court on 29th June 2023 by Mr Justice Holgate, who had heard the original JR in 2022.

6.11 Judgment was handed down on 14th July 2023, with the case dismissed. The Judge concluded

"….*I conclude that the action taken by MDC to alter the development limits on the Adopted Policies Map cannot be criticised as unlawful in any way. It simply addressed the unlawful consequences of the unlawful allocation of NSP1 and lay well within the ambit of MDC's powers as explained by the Court of Appeal in Fox and by Lang J in Bond. Furthermore, I agree with Mr. Forsdick that that action accords with the order dated 16 December 2022, as well as the judgment to which it gave effect.*
The application by Lochailort for judicial review is dismissed."

Permission to Appeal was refused.

6.12 The Order dated 14 July 2023 required Somerset Council (who had by this time replaced the former MDC as the LPA) to:

(1) undertake a call for sites for the allocation of 505 dwellings within 28 days, allowing 42 days for responses;

(2) publish its regulation 18 statement with proposed allocations by 31 December 2023;

(3) publish its regulation 19 draft plan for representations by 31st March 2024 and

(4) submit draft modifications of LPP2 to the Secretary of State for examination by 1st July 2024"

6.13 Following an application to the Court by Somerset Council, a revised Order was made on 11th March 2024. This amended the dates so that Somerset must:

(1) undertake a call for sites for the allocation of 505 dwellings within 28 days, allowing 42 days for responses;

(2) publish its regulation 18 statement with proposed allocations by 28th February 2024;

(3) publish its regulation 19 draft plan for representations by 30th June 2024 and

(4) submit draft modifications of LPP2 to the Secretary of State for examination by 30th September 2024"

7) 2023 "Call for Sites"

7.1 Ten sites within the parish were submitted during the required 6 week "Call for Sites" across the former Mendip District. This ended on 4th September 2023.

7.2 Somerset Council presented its draft site allocations report to its Planning and Transport Sub-Committee on 14th February 2024. This report identified sites for the "505" dwellings to go forward for Reg 18 Consultation. No sites in NSP were proposed for allocation. The report was accepted unamended.

7.3 The sites are identified below at para 7.5, together with a map (Fig 2). Detail relating to the call for sites exercise relating to NSP is on the NP website at https://nortonstphilipneighbourhoodplan.com/2023-call-for-sites/

7.4 Nine of the ten sites submitted were subject to Sustainability Appraisal, with the tenth screened out as being under the threshold of 6 dwellings. One site, Land at Bell Hill Garage (NSP020) was recognised as largely conforming with the Local Plan Settlement Strategy. Although the appraisal noted that the village had delivered 238% of its Local Plan minimum, the site is within the development boundary and largely a brownfield site. The appraisal also noted that the northern part of the submitted site included land designated in LPP1 as an "Open Area of Local Significance" (OALS) protected under Local Plan Policy DP2. The remainder part of the OALS was submitted separately during the "Call for Sites" (NSP019). The brownfield site together with further land previously used by the garage is allocated for housing development in Policy 3 of this Neighbourhood Plan. The allocated site does not include any of the site designated as OALS.

7.5 A list of sites submitted together with a plan is below:

NSP012	Land W of 67 Fortescue Street
NSP013	Land off Mackley Lane (Laverton Triangle)
NSP016	Land off Mackley Lane(south site)
NSP017	Chatley Furlong and Tellisford Lane
NSP021	Land at Farleigh Road/ N of Hawkesmeade Close
NSP018	Land south of Shepherds Close
NSP020	Land at Bell Hill Garage
NSP019	Land to r/o Bell Hill Garage
NSP022	Site to West of Fortescue Fields & drainage ponds
NSP023	Land adj Mackley Lane

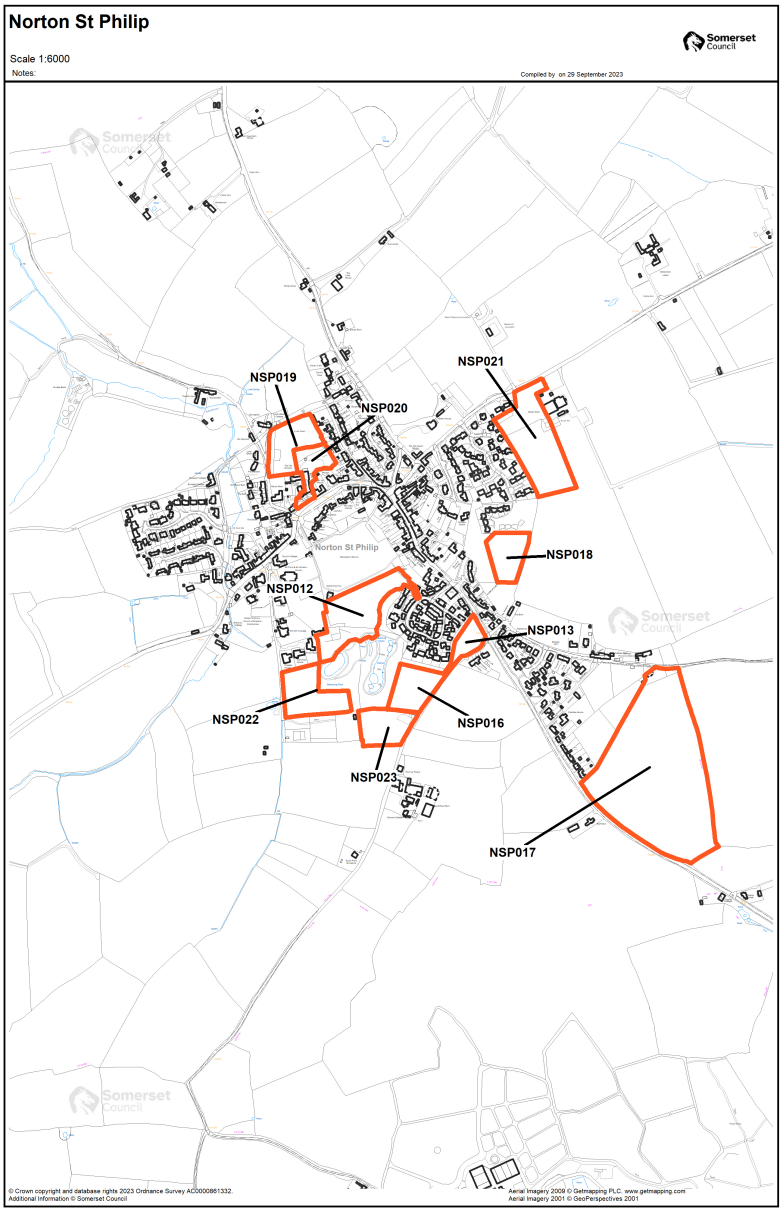


Fig 2: Sites submitted in Somerset Council's 2023 Call for Sites

8) 2023 and 2024 Regulation 14 Consultations

a) 2023 Regulation 14 Consultation

8.1 The PC, in consideration of the passage of time since the 2018 consultation and the Court of Appeal Judgment, resolved on 10th May 2023 to hold a further Regulation 14 Consultation prior to resubmitting the Draft Plan to the Local Planning Authority.

8.2 The Consultation related to the Draft Plan dated 11th May 2023 and the Character Appraisal of the same date. These included all the Modifications consulted on in March/April 2021.

8.3 78 Parish Residents submitted responses via the online 'Survey Monkey' portal; a further two residents sent written responses. These were reproduced verbatim in the Reg 14 Residents Responses and PC Comment Draft Report.

8.4 Eleven landowners and one developer submitted responses as did English Heritage and Natural England. These are reproduced in full on the Regulation 14 page and were summarised together with a PC Comment in a Draft Report.
Both the Residents and Landowners/3rd party Reports were tabled at the Parish Council Meeting on 13th September 2023. Members noted the Regulation 14 consultation responses and agreed that a further report would be presented to the PC in due course.

8.5 As a result of objections raised by landowners of proposed LGSs during the regulation 14 Consultation the Parish Council sought external legal and planning advice.
Although the proposed designation of 10 LGSs remained overwhelmingly supported by parish residents, it generated some extremely strong objection comments from landowners. Despite the Court of Appeal finding in 2020 that "each of the areas was lawfully designated as an LGS" it was apparent that the continuing objections could delay or even, yet again, halt the progress of the Plan to referendum.

8.6 Of the ten LGS's proposed in the 2023 draft plan, seven are within the village settlement boundary. Of those seven, six are designated OALS under Policy DP2 of the former MDC's adopted Local Plan (2006-2029). The remaining proposed LGS within the settlement boundary (Church Mead [LGS009]), is owned by the Parish Council and protected by restrictive covenants. The remaining three LGSs proposed for designation in the 2023 draft Plan are outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and have no other designation.

8.7 At its meeting on 14th February 2024 the PC considered the Regulation 14 comments together with proposed responses and amendments. It recognised that there were 3 choices:

i) whether to continue with the Plan as drafted including the LGSs,
ii) amend the Plan as proposed in the tabled Reg 14 or
iii) suspend work on the Plan.

The PC also recognised that the NP regulations allowed for the Plan to be amended at this stage following the Consultation; and that it was required to consider all representations but not necessarily amend the plan. There were differing views; those of residents almost unanimously supported LGS designation but those of many of the landowners strongly opposed them.

8.8 Following discussion the PC resolved to delete all proposed LGSs from the draft Plan. It further resolved to adopt the table of proposed amendments to the Plan. As well as updating the Plan and adding detail 2 new Policies were proposed. The first new Policy would identify important greenspace and describe the contribution it makes to the villages Green Infrastructure, character and appearance whilst requiring development proposals to take account of the designation and justify any conflict with the reason for the designation. The second new Policy would have committed the PC to carrying out a NP Review to take account of changes to National and Local Policy and building on the Plan's Climate Change Policy. This Policy was deleted following a recommendation from the Examiner, who considered that it was not capable of being used to determine a planning application.

8.9 Despite there being no changes in the 2023 Draft Plan to the proposed Bell Hill Garage site, Natural England's response to the 2023 Regulation 14 Consultation resulted in the Screening Report requiring a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the proposed Bell Hill Garage site allocation.

8.10 This work began in April 2024. It was undertaken by AECOM and enabled following a grant from Locality.

8.11 The SEA Scoping Report was received in early May and submitted to Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency for comment.

8.12 The SEA Scoping Report considered the following environmental themes:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Climate change and flood risk
- Historic environment
- Land, soil and water resources
- Landscape

8.13 "Air Quality" was proposed to be scoped out of the SEA as development in NSP was not considered to be likely to result in significant change. The Report noted that "positive planning could be beneficial for air quality through
opportunities to improve accessibility, particularly in terms of active travel and encouraging more local journeys and sustainable connections. Therefore, opportunities which address issues such as accessibility and sustainable communities whilst also enhancing air quality are encouraged" (para 3.8).

8.14 The SEA Environmental Report was received in June 2024. It is on the 2024 Reg 14 Consultation page on the NP website. It described its purpose as to :

"Identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects of the NSPNP and alternatives ; and Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date."

It contained

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the NSPNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes.
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues for the area.
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the NSPNP has been assessed.
- The discussion of alternative approaches for the NSPNP.
- The likely significant effects of the NSPNP.
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the NSPNP.
- The next steps for the NSPNP and accompanying SEA process."

8.15 In addressing the proposed allocation of the Bell Hill Garage site for housing development, the report noted that:

*"A key objective of the NSPNP is to preserve the character and heritage of the village and support sustainable housing. The proposed site allocation is not aimed to address an unmet housing need, but to deliver a unique purpose of improvements to townscape character through the redevelopment of the poor-quality site. The redevelopment of the Bell Hill Garage site will provide opportunities to improve the
character of the conservation area and there is strong local support for its redevelopment. Therefore, it is not possible to derive meaningful spatial strategy alternatives to the draft Neighbourhood Plan."*

Section 4.20 concluded that, there were no reasonable alternatives to the site allocation and the level of growth proposed in the NP at this stage.

8.16 The report considered the proposed development limit boundary and found that it accorded with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan .

8.17 The report went on to consider “likely significant effects” on the scoped in themes described in 8.12 and 8.13 (above). It summarised the effects at Table 5.2:

SEA Topic	Overall Effects
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Neutral effect
Climate Change	Neutral effect
Flood Risk	Neutral effect
Community Wellbeing	Minor positive effect
Historic Environment	Uncertain significant positive effect
Land,Soil and Water Resources	Neutral effect
Landscape	Uncertain minor negative effect
Transportation and Movement	Neutral effect

8.18 The “minor negative effect” recorded for “landscape” results from the potential for Rural Exception Sites allowing for the possibility of development on land in close proximity to the settlement boundary causing harm to local landscape character . It considered however that the 5% limit for all rural exception sites should limit harm to landscape and townscape character. The report considered that the development of the Bell Hill Garage site provided an opportunity to enhance the character of the village.



8.19 At section 5.47 the report set out recommendations to enhance the positive effects of the NP and mitigate any negatives. These recommendations were:

- *The NSPNP sets out the size of housing supported for the site allocation and requires rural exception site proposals to be supported with a housing needs assessment. The NSPNP could be improved by requiring all housing proposals within the settlement boundary to be supported by up to date evidence of local housing need including type, size, tenures and affordable housing needs and to demonstrate how proposals meet the needs of the local population.*
- *Policy 1 does not support development which would require 'substantial new infrastructure or other facilities to support the development'. There is potential for this policy to discourage the provision of new community facilities, services, infrastructure or other forms of social betterment. It is recommended that the policy is reworded to either set out what forms of new infrastructure or other facilities would not be acceptable or to remove this requirement.*
- *Policy 4 allocates the Bell Hill Garage site for up to 15 homes. The policy could be improved by providing site specific detail to support the preservation of existing on site high quality habitats and to maximise opportunities to enhance and restore damaged habitats and to compensate for lost habitats as a result of development.*
- *Policy 5 could be improved by removing the provision to allow for rural exception development on land not adjacent to Norton St Philip. This should avoid potential harm to landscape and townscape character.*
- *Policy 8 sets out a requirement for development to 'secure biodiversity net gain for at least 10% where required'. The positive effects of the policy could be enhanced by requiring development to deliver a high amount of onsite biodiversity net gain or by setting out measures to ensure new planting and green infrastructure is robust, native and of high biodiversity value.*
- *Policy 8 could also be improved by adding detail to require proposals to minimise potential visual impact of renewable energy generation schemes.*

These recommendations were all taken forward and included in the 2024 Reg 14 Draft NP.

8.20 The Shadow HRA was received in June 2024 having been updated following comments on a previous draft from the Somerset Council Ecologist. It described its purpose as to consider whether there would be any “likely significant effects” on Habitats Sites and if so carry out an “Appropriate Assessment”. Should the Appropriate Assessment so determine, avoidance and mitigation measures should be contained in the NP. These tasks should consider any impacts in combination with other plans, and not in isolation.

8.21 The HRA considered the following Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Habitats Sites :

- Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC (Winsley Mines SSSI)
- Mendip Woodlands SAC (Asham Wood SSSI)
- Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA (Salisbury Plain SSSI) area; and,
- Mells Valley SAC (St Dunstan’s Well Catchment SSSI).

8.22 The report considered that no likely significant effects would be caused to the Mendip Woodlands SAC or Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA (Special Protection Area). The potential for significant effects on land functionally linked to both the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and the Mells Valley SAC resulted in a requirement for Appropriate Assessment.

8.23 The shadow Appropriate Assessment in the HRA Report considered that there was no conflict between the draft NP and existing overarching Policies, in particular LPP1, Mells Valley SAC, North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC Guidance on Development.

8.24 The HRA considered that the NP was unlikely to have a significant effect on Habitat Sites in isolation and thus assessed the effects in combination with other plans. At section 5.5 it recognised that Policy 4 (Bell Hill Garage-now Policy 3) “has the potential to result in a likely significant effect on the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC in combination with other projects and plans, and as such is subject to Appropriate Assessment”. At section 5.16 it recognised that Policy 4 (Bell Hill Garage-now Policy 3) “has the potential to result in a likely significant
effect on the Mells Valley SAC in combination with other projects and plans, and as such is subject to Appropriate Assessment “.



8.25 The Appropriate Assessment included in the HRA references the "Site Improvement Plans" for both the Mells Valley and Bath and Bradford on Avon SACs and states that *"planners and prospective developers need to be aware that the habitats and features which support the populations of foraging and commuting SAC bats outside the designated site are a material consideration in ensuring the integrity of the designated site"* and that specific mitigation measures will be needed. It concludes at sec 6.9 that the NP should contain a policy framework which refers to mitigation and avoidance measures and adequately protects the Habitats sites as set out in the published guidance, and that if this recommendation is taken up, the NP will not result in a Likely Significant Effect on any habitat Site, either alone or 'in-combination' with other projects or plans.

8.26 The HRA Report recommended that:

> *"…supporting text is included within NP Policy 4: Housing Site Allocation, Bell Hill Garage, or elsewhere within the Neighbourhood Plan that refers to the location of the allocation and the Parish in relation to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone B and C and the Mells Valley SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone C and thus the requirement for development to accord with the Mendip District Council Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC Guidance for Developers."*

Accordingly, Policy 3 has been amended to take account of the recommendation described in section 6.10.

8.27 The 2024 Regulation 14 version of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan included amendments set out in the 2018 Consultation Statement and the amendments adopted by the PC following the 2023 Regulation 14 Consultation and noted that following a further 6 week Reg 14 Consultation the PC would consider all responses and make further amendments if necessary.



North Street/Bell Hill junction towards High Street showing several listed buildings

b) 2024 Regulation 14 Consultation

8.28 At its meeting on 14th August 2024 the PC resolved to hold a further Regulation 14 Consultation. This ran from 30th August 2024 until 12th October, a period of just over 6 weeks. The following documents were approved for consultation purposes:

- Draft Neighbourhood Plan (dated 15th August 2024)
- Schedule of Amendments to 2023 draft Neighbourhood Plan
- Character Assessment
- SEA/HRA Reports

8.29 Details of the Consultation together with the PC response and amendments to the Plan are given in the Consultation Addendum. 78 parish residents either completed the online survey or sent comments via post/email. 6 of these residents were also landowners of proposed "Important Greenspaces". A further 4 responses were received from landowner developers or their agent.

8.30 As with the previous consultations, all representations were considered by the PC. These, together with the PC response and amendments, are contained within the Consultation Statement Addendum of November 2024.

8.31 The agreed amendments were incorporated into the Regulation 16 version of the draft Plan.

c) 2024 Regulation 16 Consultation

8.32 There was a further period of consultation which took place over a seven-week period between 29th November 2024 and 17th January 2025. This consultation, required under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations was organised by Somerset Council, prior to the Plan being submitted for examination.

8.33 In total there were 10 responses received including one received after the deadline of the consultation.

All responses were published on the Somerset Council website. The Examiner referred to the representations in his Report where he considered them relevant.

d) Examination

8.34 The Examiner's Report was received on 7th May 2025. All the recommendations contained in the Report have been included in this Plan, together with the amendments agreed following the earlier Consultations.

9. Norton St Philip – a brief history

9.1 The Parish of Norton St Philip is located in the north east corner of the Mendip District of Somerset and as such has Bath and North East Somerset along its northern boundary and Wiltshire along its eastern boundary.It is a rural area, but lies just 8 miles to the south of Bath City Centre and 7 miles north of Frome, Mendip's largest town.

9.2 The village lies on a ridge and forms a strong skyline in surrounding views, particularly from the south and west. It occupies approx. 20 hectares of the Parish's 700 hectares(3%). Farmland accounts for over 80% of the Parish area. The village itself is surrounded by farmland, which to the west, north and east also forms part of the Bristol and Bath Green belt. This covers approximately 70% of the Parish, washing over both settlements of Farleigh Hungerford and Hassage.

Medieval Period

9.3 In 1345 the fair, held previously in Hinton Charterhouse, moved to Norton. The village began to develop with a busy wool market and outlet in the district for locally produced cloth. Being situated on the Jurassic limestone belt gave the village the optimum environment for wool production. The fine vernacular buildings reflect the wealth produced in this period. The George was both an Inn and storehouse for cloth. It was situated at the centre of the developing village, and many houses in the High Street and North Street have medieval origins.



The George Inn (listed Grade 1)

Post Medieval Period

9.4 Most of the listed buildings in the village date from this period. More than 50 Grade 2 listed dwellings line the High Street, North Street and Church Street, with the Grade 1 George at the centre. Stone from the demolished Hinton Priory was used in the construction of many of these houses.

9.5 The village was the site of a skirmish during the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685 after which twelve men were hanged, drawn and quartered in the market place by The George. The skirmish took place in the vicinity of Chevers Lane which, to this day, is known in the village as Bloody Lane.

9.6 The 18th and 19th centuries saw infill along Bell Hill and the new Bath Road. The Gothic, Grade 2 listed village school was opened in 1827, when the Parish population was around 700.

20th Century

9.7 There are areas of modern development at both ends of the B3110 (the northern and southern entries), on the eastern edge off the A366, and at the western extremity, west of Ringwell Lane. These adjuncts have markedly expanded the physical area of the settlement and weakened the former strong boundaries between compact older development and open countryside. Modern development has also linked the two previously separate historic clusters on the ridge (High Street, The Plaine and North Street) and the area around the Parish Church. A ribbon of bungalows on the south side of Bell Hill and older, mixed housing types on the north have filled in the historic pattern. The Monmouth Paddock and Norton Grange housing developments are on the site of two previous local businesses.

21st Century

9.8 Greenfield development (mostly at the former Longmead House) together with brownfield development at the former Faccenda factory has seen the village accommodate a further 119 dwellings, taking the total within the village to 420. The total of 420 represents an increase in housing stock of over 35% since 2006.

The Co-Op opened a store at the Fortescue Fields development in 2016.





21st Century Development at Longmead (above) and Fortescue Fields (right)

10. 2011/2021 Census Data

10.1 The 2021 Census recorded the population at 1004; in 2011 it was 858. The majority of residents live in the village of NSP, but there are settlements at Farleigh Hungerford (pop 45) and Hassage (pop 10).

The population of Mendip District had increased by 6% between the two Census dates; NSP's increase of 17% reflects the recent increase in housing stock but is not in the same proportion. This is likely to be due to young people leaving the family home whilst new residents tend to be older; either single or couples.

The demographic of the parish population is significantly older than nationally as shown in figure 3i below . Over 50% of the population are in 2 person households against 34% nationally (figure 3v); this is an indicator of the older demographic with fewer families than nationally.

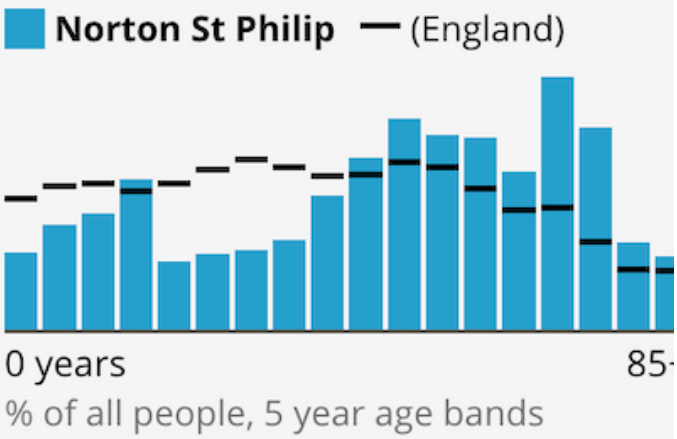
82% of homes in NSP are owned compared with 62% nationally. 40% of NSP homes are 4+ bedrooms compared with 21% nationally.

Almost half of those in employment work mainly from home.

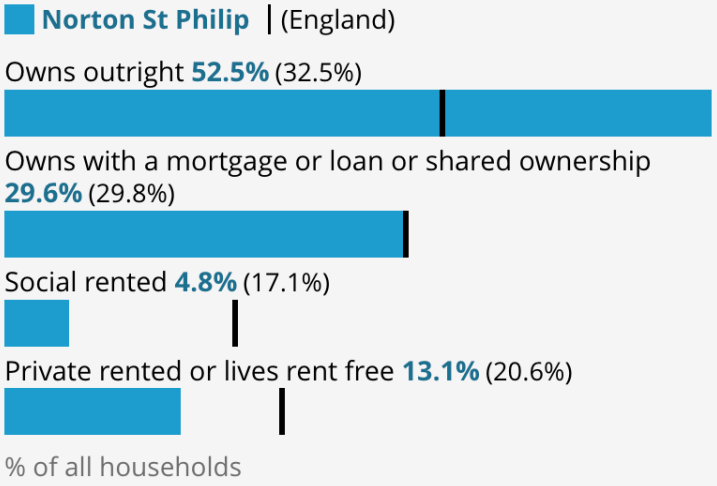
Data from the 2021 Census is reproduced below (Figures 3i-3x).

2021 Census Data-NSP/National (Source:ONS)

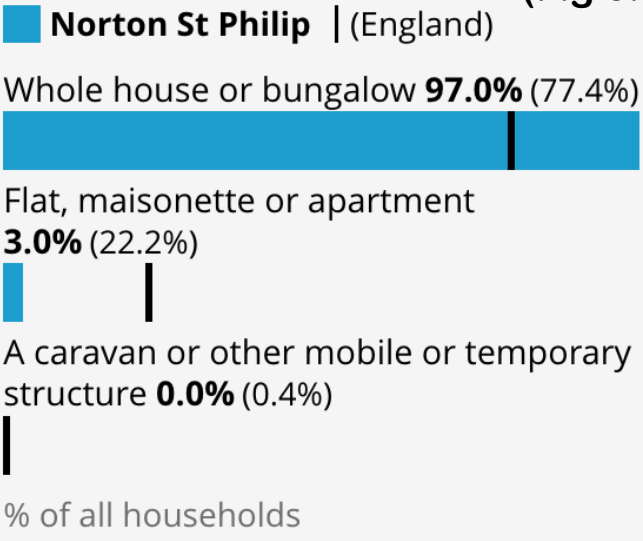
Age profile (Fig 3i)



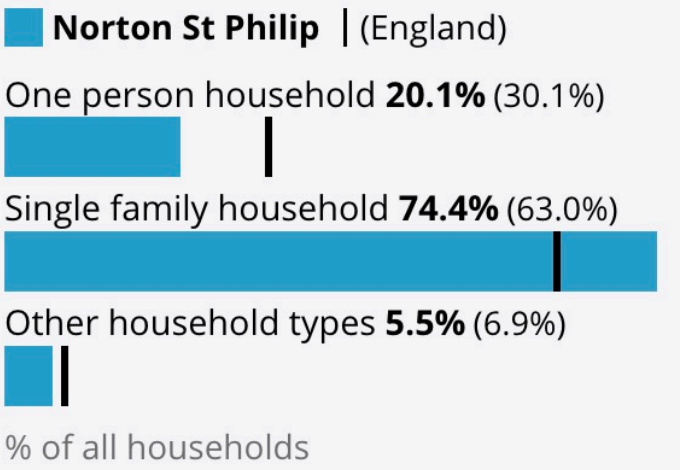
Tenure of household (Fig 3ii)



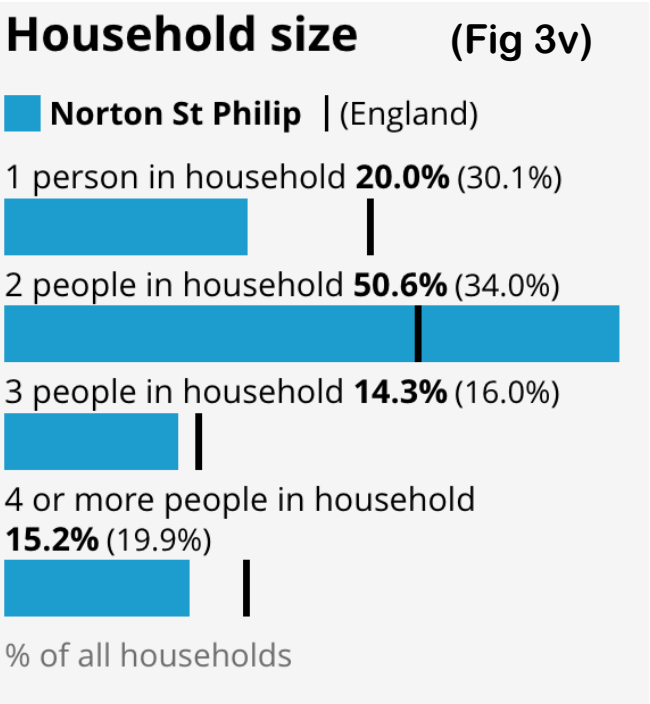
Accommodation type (Fig 3iii)



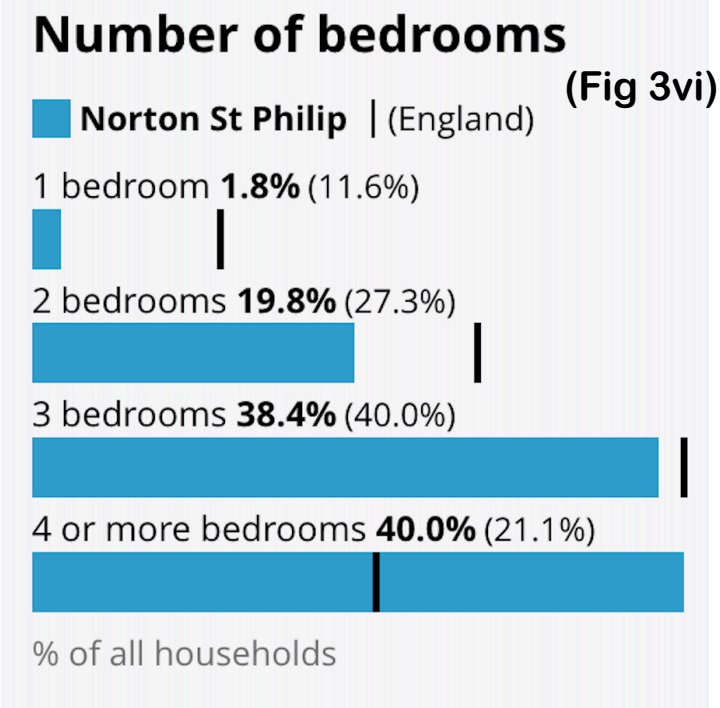
Household composition (Fig 3iv)



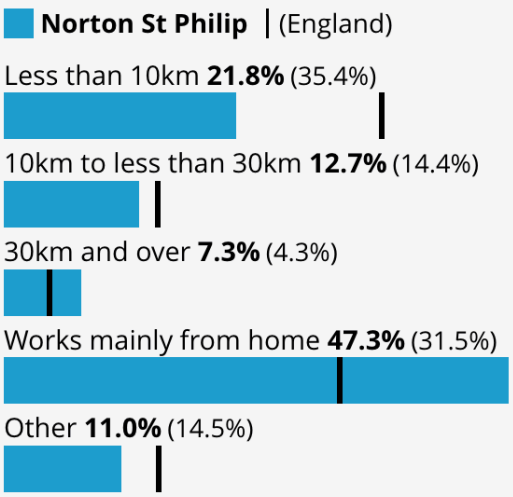
Household size (Fig 3v)



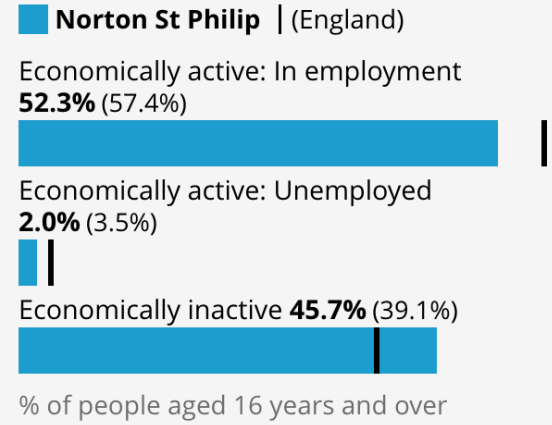
Number of bedrooms (Fig 3vi)



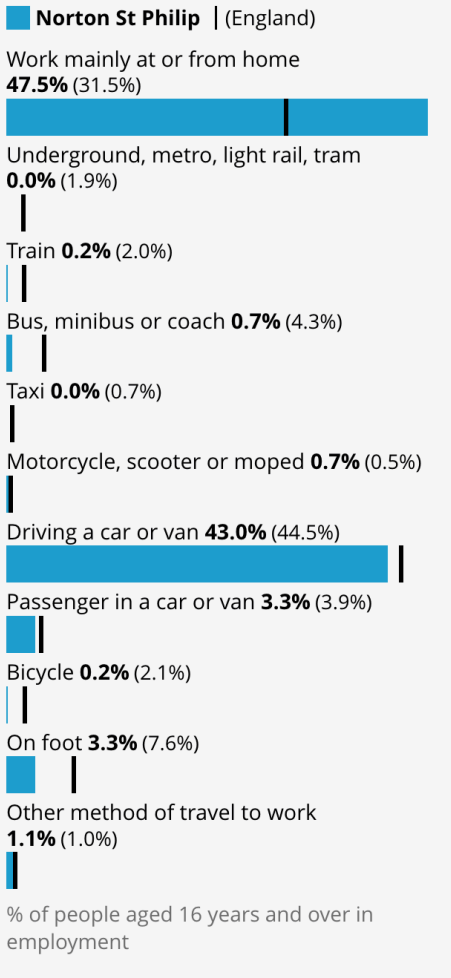
Distance travelled to work (Fig 3vii)



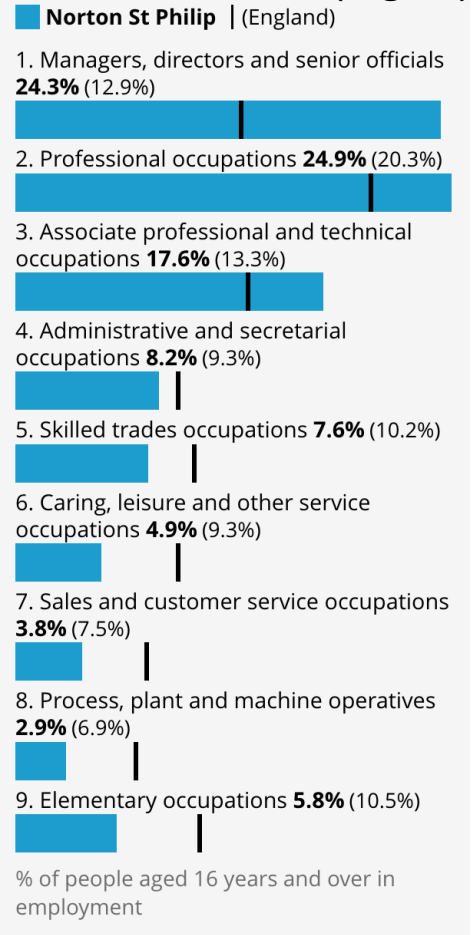
Economic activity status (Fig 3viii)



Method of travel to workplace (Fig 3ix)



Occupation (Fig 3x)



11. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

11.1 The Vision and Objectives of this Plan were first considered at the initial meeting of the Steering Group and subsequently presented at the Public Events. Feedback from these as well as the Regulation 14 Consultations of 2018 and 2023 provide strong evidence of support for the objectives set out below.

11.2 The basis of the Plan's Vision is to provide for the sustainable growth of the village. It recognises that the village's identity as a historic, beautiful and green village with a friendly and inclusive community should be maintained together with encouraging a mix of new housing designed to meet its needs.

Vision

To maintain the special character and built heritage of the Parish of Norton St Philip while promoting its development as a compact and sustainable community.

Objectives

- **Encourage sustainable housing development within the village settlement boundary**
- **Ensure that the location, design and scale of any housing development is managed in order to maintain the character and heritage of the village**
- **Identify, protect and enhance the village's key green spaces and recreational facilities**
- **Support people with a local connection who wish to remain within or return to the community**
- **Promote energy efficient buildings and increasing resilience to climate change**
- **Maintain the rural nature of the Parish and the Green Belt within it**

Policies

In order to achieve the aims for the sustainable development of the parish set out in the "Vision and Objectives" the Neighbourhood Plan contains the following Policies:

Policy 1
Development within the Defined Settlement Boundary of Norton St. Philip

Policy 2
Rural Areas/ Green Belt

Policy 3
Housing Site Allocation, Bell Hill Garage

Policy 4
Rural Exception Sites

Policy 5
High Quality Design

Policy 6
Important Green Spaces

Policy 7
Promoting Biodiversity and Addressing Climate Change

12) Defined Settlement Boundary/Green Belt

12.1 The PC recognises that the 2014 Local Plan requirement for the village of NSP to provide 45 new dwellings is a minimum. This minimum figure has already been more than doubled, with 119 completions and permissions at 31 March 2024 (Appendix 5). The PC wishes to have a NP in place which takes account of the residents needs. The NP aims to reflect local concern that continuing inappropriate development will harm the unique rural and historic character of the Parish.

12.2 The adopted Local Plan supports maintaining development boundaries and promoting development within them. Part 2 of the Plan however includes a revision to the development limits to take account of recent development at Longmead Close in NSP. The NP therefore sets a development limit that follows the Local Plan to include this recent development (Figure 4 below).

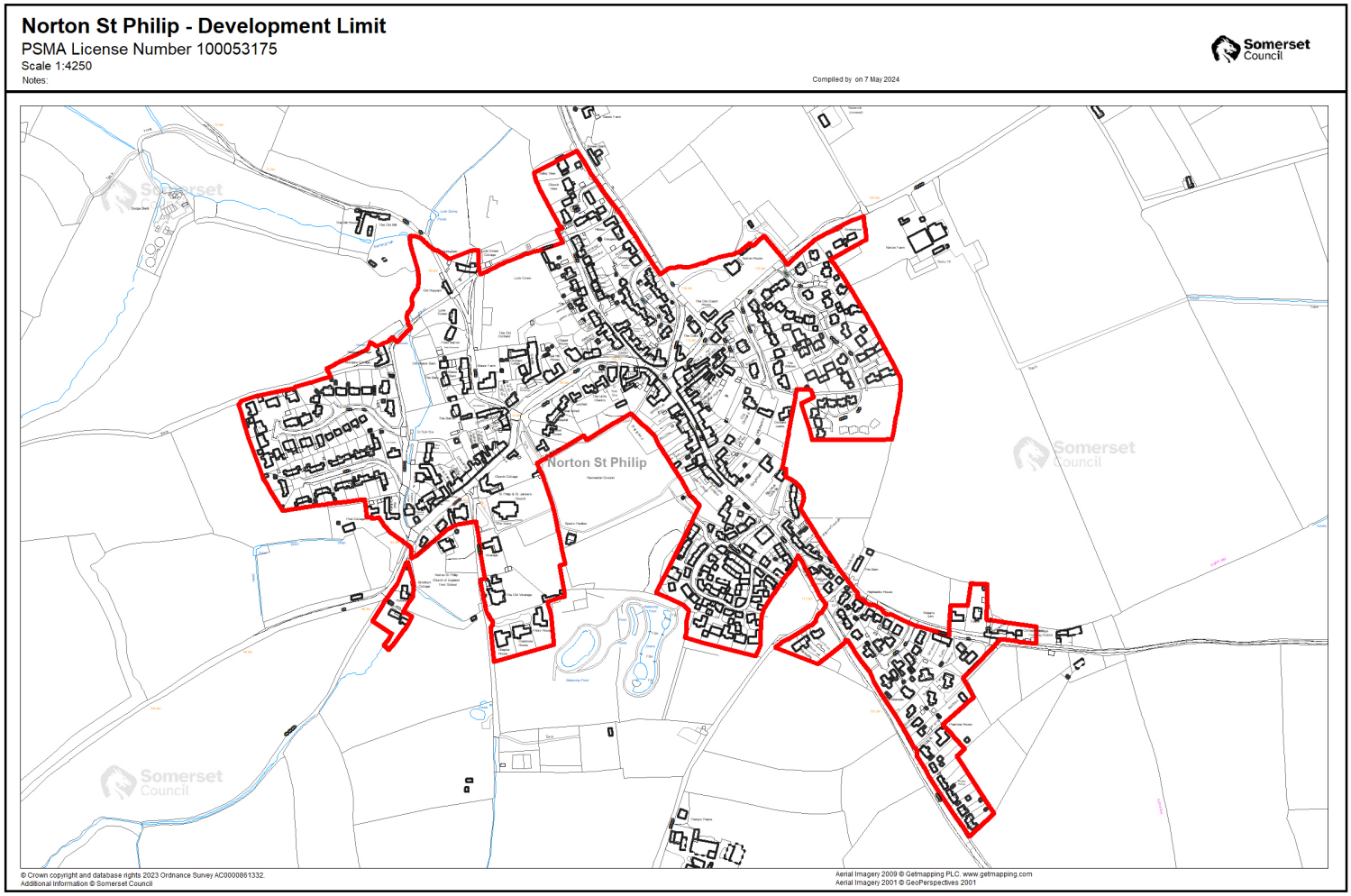


Fig 4: Settlement Boundary as defined by Policy 1

Policy 1:

Development within the Settlement Boundary of Norton St Philip

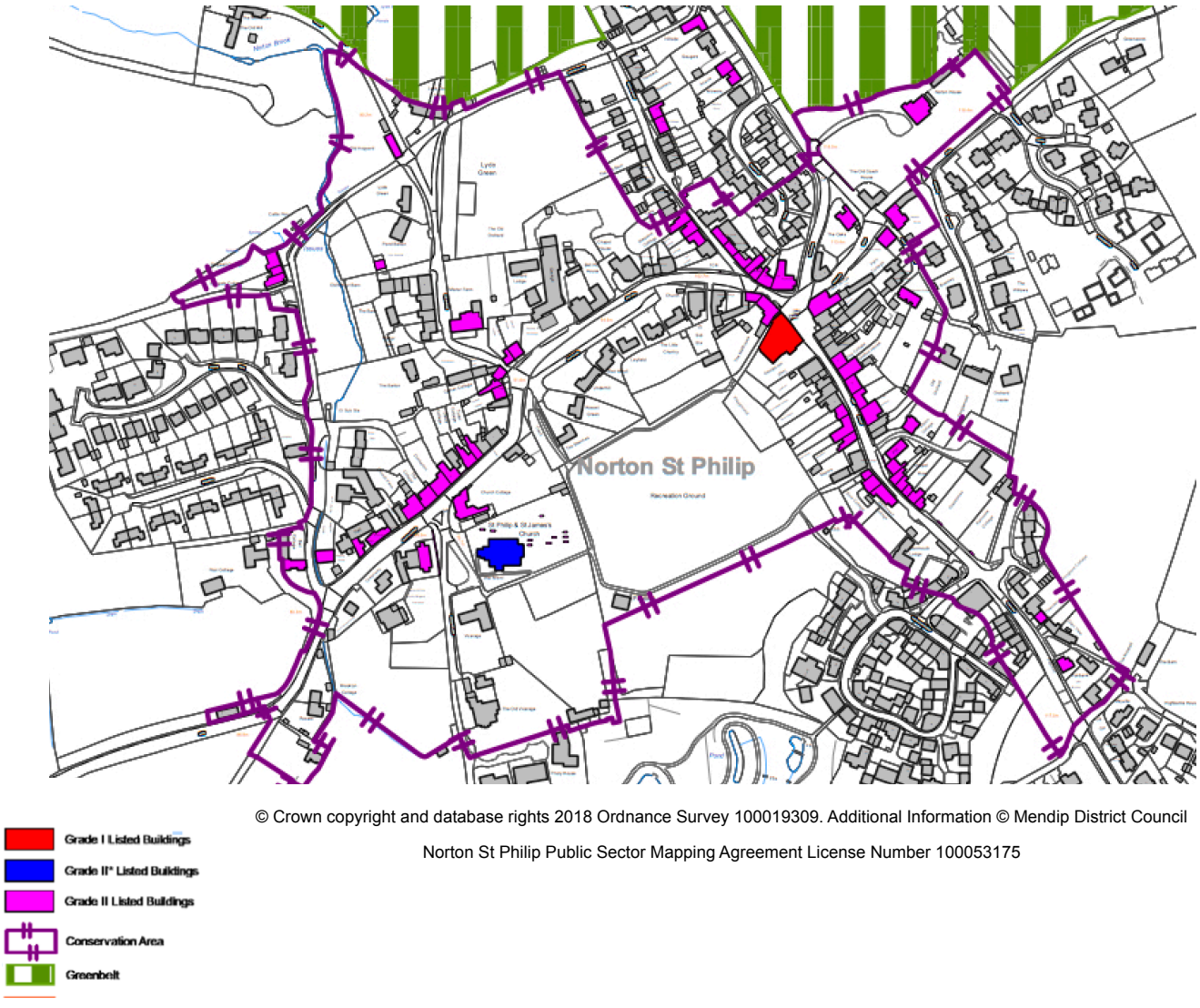
Proposals for new development on sites within the settlement boundary of Norton St. Philip as defined on Figure 4 will be supported, where the proposals take account of and satisfy the criteria set out in the Policies in this Plan and the adopted Mendip Local Plan as well as the guidance contained in adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

12.3. Policies 5 (Design) and 7 (Climate Change & Biodiversity) include specific and related criteria. Development proposals should satisfy these standards.

12.4 The submission version of the draft Neighbourhood Plan (dated 13th November 2024) had, in common with previous versions of the NP, included design and ecological criteria with which proposed development within the settlement boundary should comply. Particularly as the NP facilitates development outside of the settlement boundary through the Exception Site Policy it is appropriate that these criteria should be applied to any development proposal outside the settlement boundary. This version of the NP thus retains these criteria through their inclusion in the Policies to which they refer. Design criteria are included in Policy 5, Ecological criteria in Policy 7, whilst Policy 1 references Development Plan Policies including this Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents.

12.5 Outside the development boundary, rural protection policies apply. Additionally, national Green Belt policy as set out in NPPF paras 152-156 (2024 NPPF §153-160) applies to approx 70% of the area of the parish (Figure 6 below). This is a significant asset; NSP is the only Parish within the former Mendip District to include designated Green Belt. The parish attaches importance to maintaining, protecting and enhancing the openness of the Green Belt and restricting intrusion and inappropriate development. Section 6 vii) of the Character Assessment includes detail of the settlements of Farleigh Hungerford and Hassage which lie within the Green Belt, No changes to Green Belt boundaries were proposed in the LPP1 (2014) or Part 2 (2021).

12.6. This NP supports sustainable growth of the village in line with the adopted spatial strategies of Mendip DC's Local Plan. It recognises that the quantum of growth provided for in LPP1 was a minimum and that CP1 states that development outwith village development limits will be "strictly controlled" but may "exceptionally be permitted in line with the provisions set out in Core Policy 4: Sustaining Rural Communities". The allocation of the brownfield Bell Hill Garage site and the Exception site policy support the sustainable growth of the village during the remaining Plan period.



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Norton St Philip Public Sector Mapping Agreement License Number 100053175

Fig 5: Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Green Belt

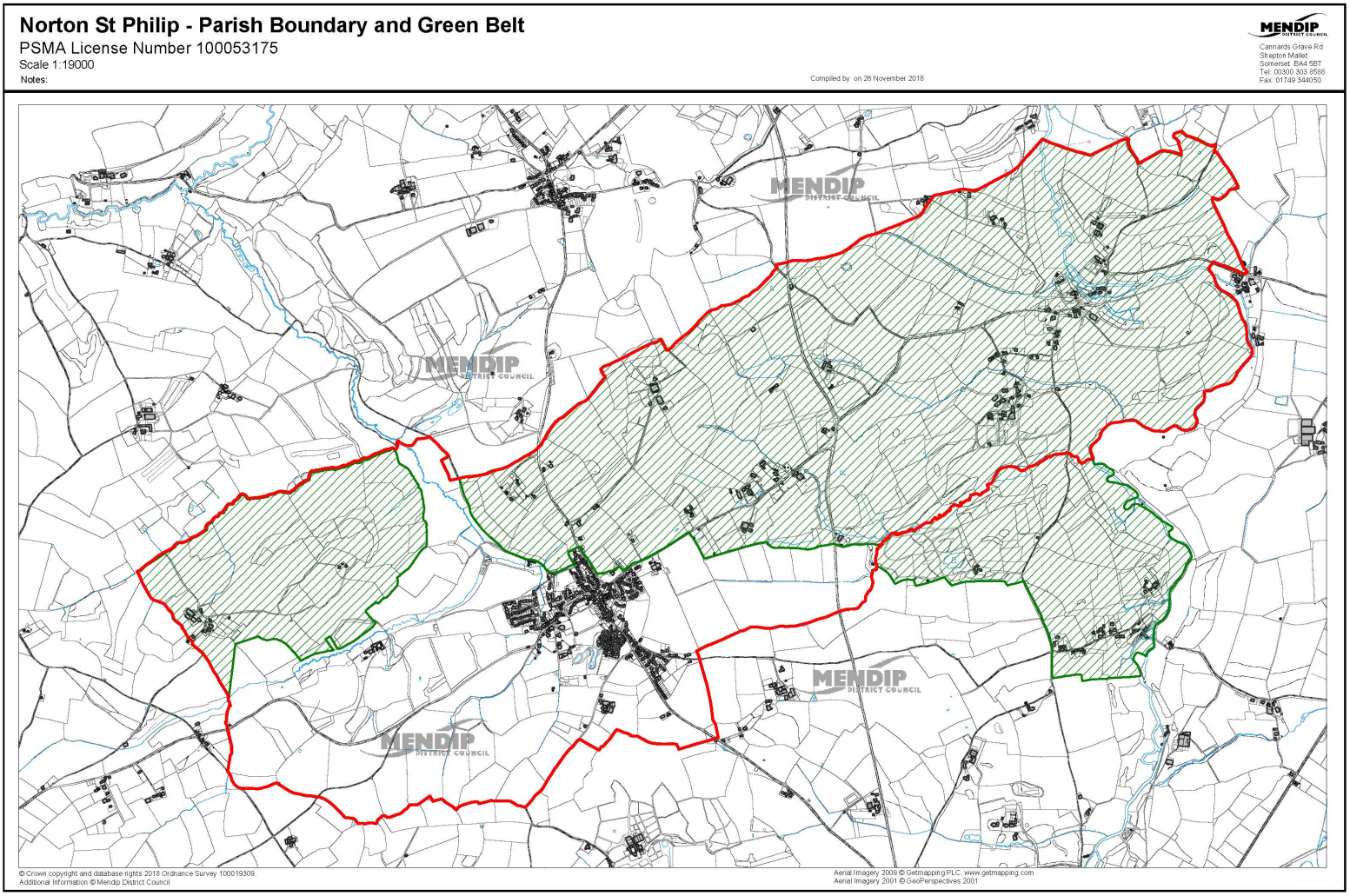
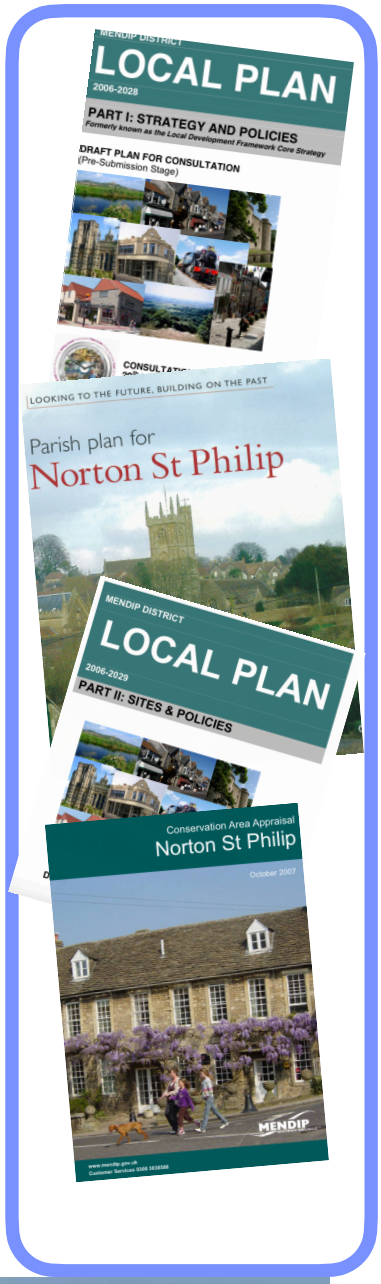


Fig 6: Green Belt in NSP

Policy 2: Development within the Rural Areas beyond the Defined Settlement Boundary

Development proposals on sites within the rural areas beyond the Defined Settlement Boundary of Norton St. Philip and not within the designated Green Belt, as shown on Figure 6, will not be supported unless such proposals satisfy the requirements of policies in this Plan and the adopted Mendip Local Plan. National Green Belt policy applies to the designated Green Belt within the Plan area.

13. Housing



13.1 The Adopted Mendip LPP1 2014 shows that for the period 2006-2029 the district will need to provide a minimum of 9,635 new homes. Most of this development is to be focused on the main towns, and housing allocations have been made on this basis. NSP was classified by the former MDC as a “primary village" and the Local Plan Part 1 (MLPP1) proposes a 15% increase in housing for the primary villages over the plan period – a figure that provided for local need and some in-migration.

13.2 The baseline for NSP was the housing stock of 305 dwellings; a 15% increase equated to 45 additional dwellings. In fact the village has far exceeded that minimum quota set in LPP1. The completions between 2006-24 plus commitments sites totals 119 dwellings. NSP has therefore provided 265% of its allocation for the period 2006-2029. In this period there has been a 39% increase in housing stock. Thus this Plan will maintain a settlement boundary around the village including the recent new development. In this Plan period market housing is only envisaged within that settlement boundary. As regards development opportunities, this NP focuses on the village of Norton St Philip as development in other settlements within the parish is, in effect, precluded because they are within the Green Belt.



Looking west from Church Mead

13.3 The PC recognises that the 2014 Local Plan requirement for the village of NSP to provide 45 new dwellings is a minimum. This minimum figure has already been more than doubled (Appendix 5). The PC wishes to have a NP in place which takes account of the residents needs. The NP aims to reflect local concern that continuing inappropriate development will harm the unique rural and historic character of the Parish.

13.4 The adopted LPP2 recognises the "significant additional development" of a number of villages during the Plan period. At para 3.28 it confirms that "The approach of this Plan is that further growth in these villages through planned site allocations does not reflect the adopted spatial strategy. The proposed site allocations reflect this principle by not identifying allocations in villages which have already fulfilled the requirements set out in Local Plan."

13.5 The 2023 NPPF (2024 NPPF §30) states at Paragraph 29:

' Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies' A footnote clarifies that *'Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.'*

13.6 The Policies in this Neighbourhood Plan aim to build on the adopted strategic policies by recognising that recent housing development in the village has not delivered 2 or 3 bedroom lower cost homes. There is a strong and evidenced feeling in the community that there has been under provision of smaller and 'entry level' housing specifically for first time buyers and those with young families. The Policies in the NP seek to address this imbalance. Housing proposed by the NP is intended to meet the needs of the existing community including lower cost and affordable housing.

13.7 Despite there being no residual housing requirement for the NP area, this NP seeks to provide for further housing through:

a) allocating a deliverable brownfield site and

b) an Exception Site policy.

14. Housing surveys/ Housing statistics

14a- 2018 Housing Survey

14.1 NSP Parish Council carried out a Housing Survey during February and March 2018. The purpose of the survey was to identify the housing needs and wishes of the village community over the next 5 years.

14.2 All dwellings within the village received a hard copy of the survey which was also available online. Responses were limited to one per household. 171 households completed the survey, a response rate of 44.5% of village households. 78 respondents also contributed a comment. The survey results are reproduced in full on the NSP NP website; they provided invaluable evidence for the Steering Group in considering potential Policies.

14.3 81% of respondents to the survey were opposed to new open market housing being built in the village, with 4% in favour and 19% with no strong views/don't know. When asked whether they would be in favour of new properties being built in the village to meet the needs of local people, 32% were in favour,40% opposed and 28% with no strong views/don't know.

14.4 21 respondents had a member of their household who wished to set up home separately within the next 5 years, of whom 13 would wish to remain in the parish. 10 households had family members who had moved away from the parish but who would wish to return if housing was available specifically for local people.

14.5 When asked about the tenure of housing they would be seeking when setting up home separately, 13 (65%) would be seeking to purchase, 3 (15%) would be looking to rent privately, 2 (10%) for shared ownership and 2 (10%) for over 55 housing.

14b-2023 Housing Survey

14.6 In December 2022 the PC decided to undertake a fresh Housing Survey in the village. The previous survey was taken in early 2018. The purpose of that survey was to inform the draft NP by identifying the housing needs and wishes of the village community over the following 5 years.

14.7 As a significant amount of time had elapsed since the previous survey the PC decided, in December 2022, to undertake a new survey in order to identify the current housing needs and wishes of the village community and to establish whether the Policies contained in the draft Neighbourhood Plan remained supported by evidence. All 420 dwellings within the village settlement boundary were delivered a notice of the survey. An email was sent to those on the PC and NP mailing lists (approx 250 residents). The PC website and village Facebook groups posted the Notice and links to the survey were placed in the Parish magazine.The option to request a hard copy was taken up by 6 households with 180 households completing the identical online version. The survey was limited to one response per household.

14.8 186 households completed the survey;15 more than in 2018. Both the 2018 and 2023 surveys had an exceptionally high response rate of approx 45% of village households. The 186 households represented 542 residents-approx 60% of the village population.

14.9 The main need for those possibly wishing to move *within* the village was for housing to buy on the open market, either up or down sizing. 17 respondents (16%) would be looking for affordable housing and 14 (13%) age restricted housing.
144 respondents (78%) opposed the building of new open market housing with 21 (11%) in favour.
107 respondents (58%) were in favour of new properties being built in the Parish to meet local needs, with 31% opposed.
10 respondents had family members who, having moved away from the village, would wish to move back if housing was available for local people. 18 respondents had young family members who would be likely to move away from home within the next 5 years.

14c Local Housing Statistics

14.10 Of the 111 completions to date in the plan period, there were 38 one or two bedroom dwellings. 14 of these are over 55 age restricted; a further 14 were originally similarly age restricted. Permission was refused by the LPA to remove this restriction but this was overturned at Appeal (APP/Q3305/W/16/3144605,3144619 & 3146260). The 14 dwellings were subsequently re-designated as open market. Initial permissions for one and two bedroom unrestricted properties thus account for less than 10% of the total, whilst 4+ bedroom properties account for 47%.

14.11 Eight of the 119 permissions to date in the Plan period have been for affordable housing. Six of those are social rent and two for shared ownership. In 2023 there were no applicants for social rented housing naming NSP as their first preference; eight applicants had the village as their 2nd preference and two applicants gave the village as their 3rd preference.

14.12 Recent house price data for NSP is given in Appendix 4 . This shows that in the period 2022-2023 the average price paid for a semi detached house in NSP was £470k compared with £413k in Frome and £298k in Midsomer Norton/Radstock. This average of £470k is however substantially less than the average in Bath (£665k) and the "Green Belt" villages of Wellow and Freshford to the south of Bath (£940k). The average house price in Somerset in 2017 was £306k. Average gross income was £30,294, giving a ratio of earnings to average house price of over 10. In Norton St Philip that ratio is more than 15.

14.13 Evidence contained in the 2023 Housing Survey Report demonstrates that even though NSP has provided over 250% of its LPP2 "minimum", house prices in the village have risen substantially faster than the national average. So it would not follow that more market housing in the village will have a downward pressure on houses. High prices in the village actually attracts developers as there is a premium for housing in the villages which lie outside of Bath and in particular, outside of the Bath Green Belt. NSP is the first village to the south of Bath not within the Green Belt.

15. Proposed Housing Allocation Site

15.1 Paragraph 71 of the NPPF (2024 NPPF §74) recommends that Neighbourhood Plans should give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 70a) suitable for housing in their area. Para 70a) recognises the importance of small sites and recommends that plans should identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare .

15.2 Despite the parish having over provided on its Local Plan 'minimum' and having no housing requirement the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered whether there were opportunities for the Plan to allocate suitable and sustainable sites that would be deliverable in the Plan period.

15.3 The Bell Hill Garage site has been identified within the settlement boundary as suitable for infill development in keeping with the village and guidance in the Character Assessment (CA) which accompanies this Plan. A development brief at Appendix 1 of this Plan offers design guidelines for this site.

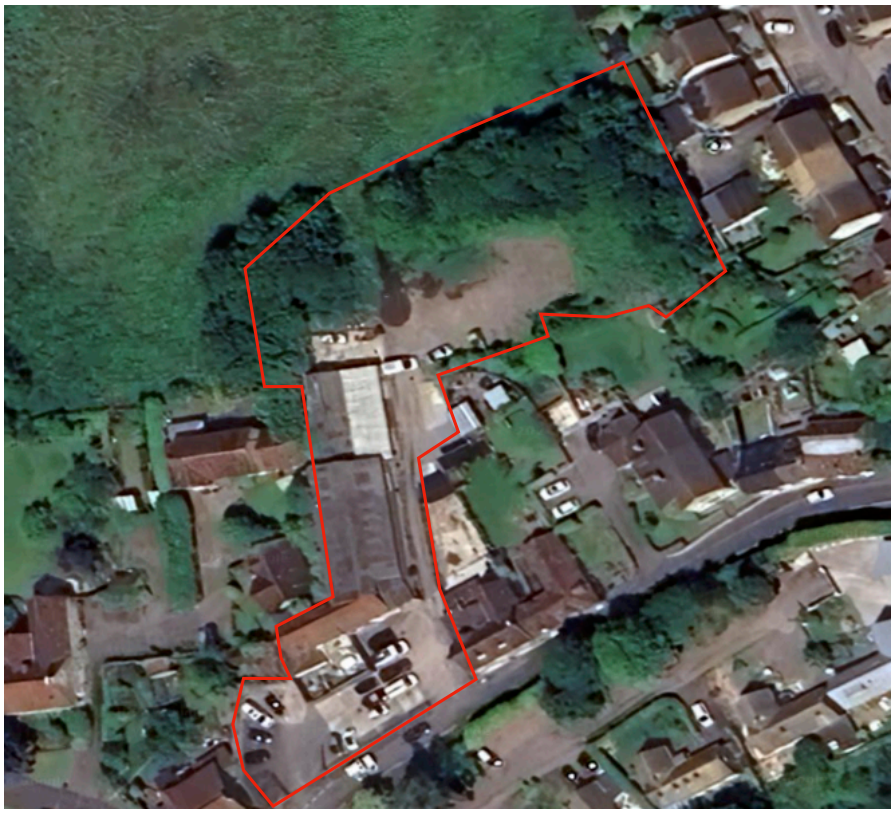


Bell Hill Garage

15.4 The Bell Hill Garage is a long established village facility which also provides local employment. The workshops and forecourt are recognised in both MDC's NSP Conservation Area Appraisal (2008) and the Character Assessment associated with this Plan as making a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the village and its Conservation Area.

15.5. The site is prominent in the Conservation Area and as set out in Historic England's "Historic Environment and Site Allocations" Advice Note 3 ,"Site allocations which include a heritage asset (for example a site within a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site) may offer opportunities for enhancement and tackling heritage at risk". Development of this site has the potential to enhance the Conservation Area. Any development proposal will be expected to comply with the adopted Local Plan Polices DP3 (heritage Conservation) and DP 7.1 which sets standards for scale, form and layout, as well as protecting the amenity of users of neighbouring properties.

15.6 The allocated site totals approx 0.4 ha. Part of the site (approx 0.24ha) is listed on Somerset's Brownfield Site Register (NSP002a). The site allocation in this Plan is increased to 0.4ha to include land used by the garage for car storage. Detail is given in Figures 8 and 9.
A mix of predominately 2&3 bedroom houses are allocated and there is also the possibility of a small number of flats being provided.



Brownfield Bell Hill Garage site with red line allocation

© Google Earth 2024

15.7 A planning application was submitted in 2023 for a mixed development of 9 dwellings and a new purpose built garage. This proposed scheme also incorporated retention of the existing barn (converted into a dwelling in 2015[ref:2015/2521]). The proposed layout is shown in figure 7 below:



Fig 7: Proposed layout 2023/1918

15.8 The proposed layout for the submitted application indicates that without the retention of the garage business, a scheme of up to 12 dwellings is viable. This would allow for provision of parking to meet the Somerset standards.

15.9 The 2023 Regulation 14 Consultation and Somerset Council's SEA/HRA Screening Report identified that the site was likely to include suitable habitats to support"Special Area of Conservation" (SAC) bat species such as vegetated boundaries. The site is within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone B and the Mells Valley SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone C (Figures 11 & 12) . Bat surveys for the site recorded horseshoe bats (qualifying features of the Mells Valley SAC and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC) using the site.

15.10 At the suggestion of Natural England, a shadow HRA leading to Appropriate Assessment was carried out in April 2024 by AECOM. This concluded that likely significant effects were possible on the Mells Valley SAC and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC. The Site Improvement Plans for both the Mells Valley and Bath and Bradford on Avon SAC are referenced in the Appropriate Assessment which acknowledges that the Bell Hill Garage site "appears to include suitable habitats, such as vegetated boundaries to support SAC bat species. These could be impacted through physical removal, or introduction of artificial lighting as a result of residential development on this site resulting in disturbance of foraging and commuting bats and thus affecting the targets in the Supplementary Advice on Conservation Objectives and the specific objectives regarding maintaining or restoring 'The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species' and 'the populations of qualifying species'.



15.11 Both species of horseshoe bat have been recorded using the site for both foraging and commuting. Any development proposals should address how they might affect the designated sites and are likely to require up to date surveys and to identify specific mitigation measures. These should include retaining key landscape features and careful lighting design including the preparation of lux plans.

15.12 The Appropriate Assessment considered however that the LPP1 Policies in place (in particular DP6: Bat Protection) together with the former MDC's "Mells Valley SAC,North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC) Guidance for Development (2019)" provided the means to enable compliance with the Habitats Regulations.

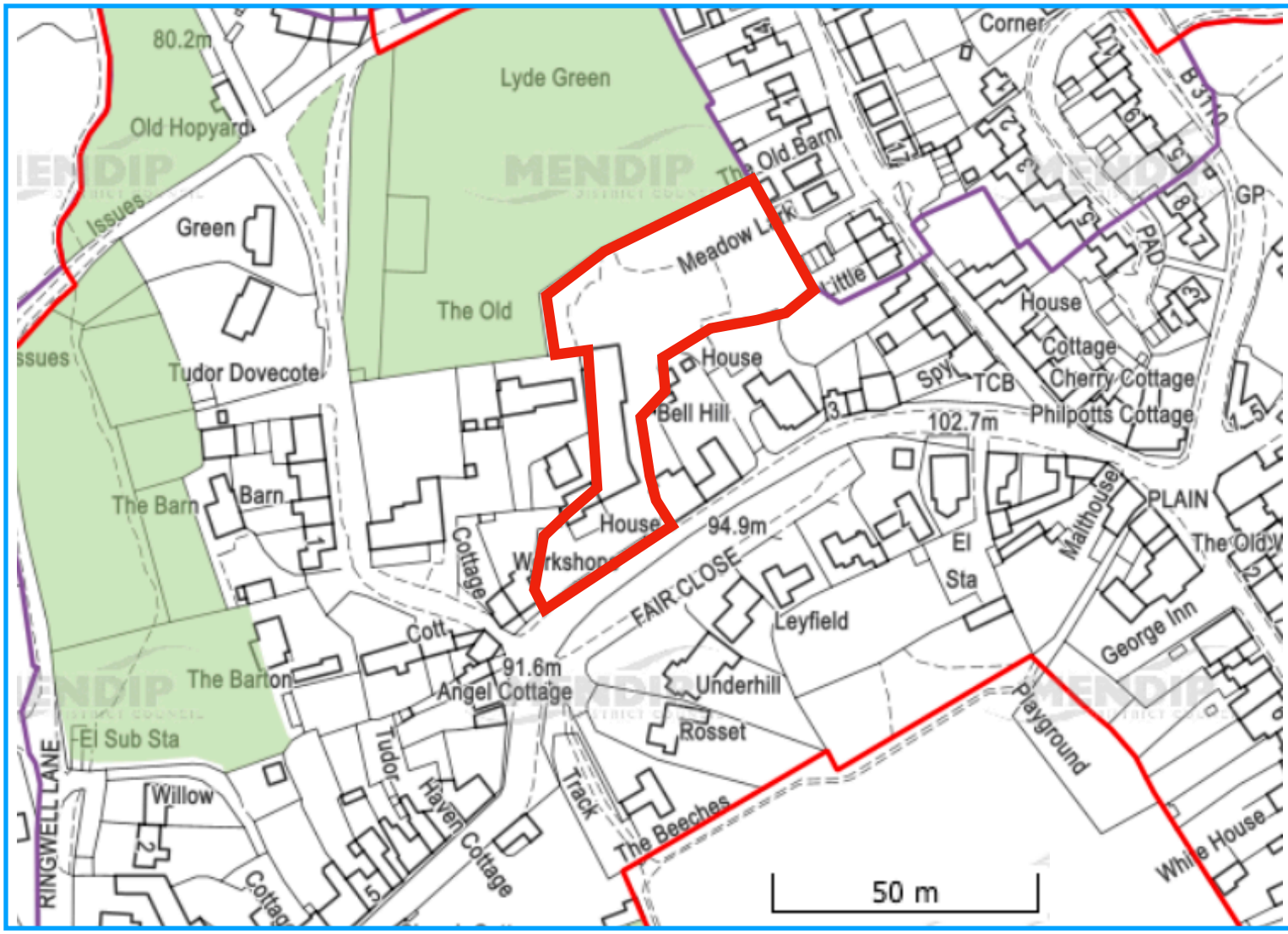
15.13 As the Site is within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone B and C and the Mells Valley SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone C there is a requirement for development to accord with the former MDC's LPP1 and Guidance for Development (described in 15.9 above).

15.14 Somerset Council's Conservation Officer concluded in her Regulation 16 comment on the proposed allocation that the policy and design brief represented "an appropriate approach to protecting Norton St Philip's heritage and guiding decision-making on any future scheme development at the allocated site.

15.15 A development that satisfies the criteria set out in this Plan would provide for the sustainable growth of the village and enhance the Conservation Area.



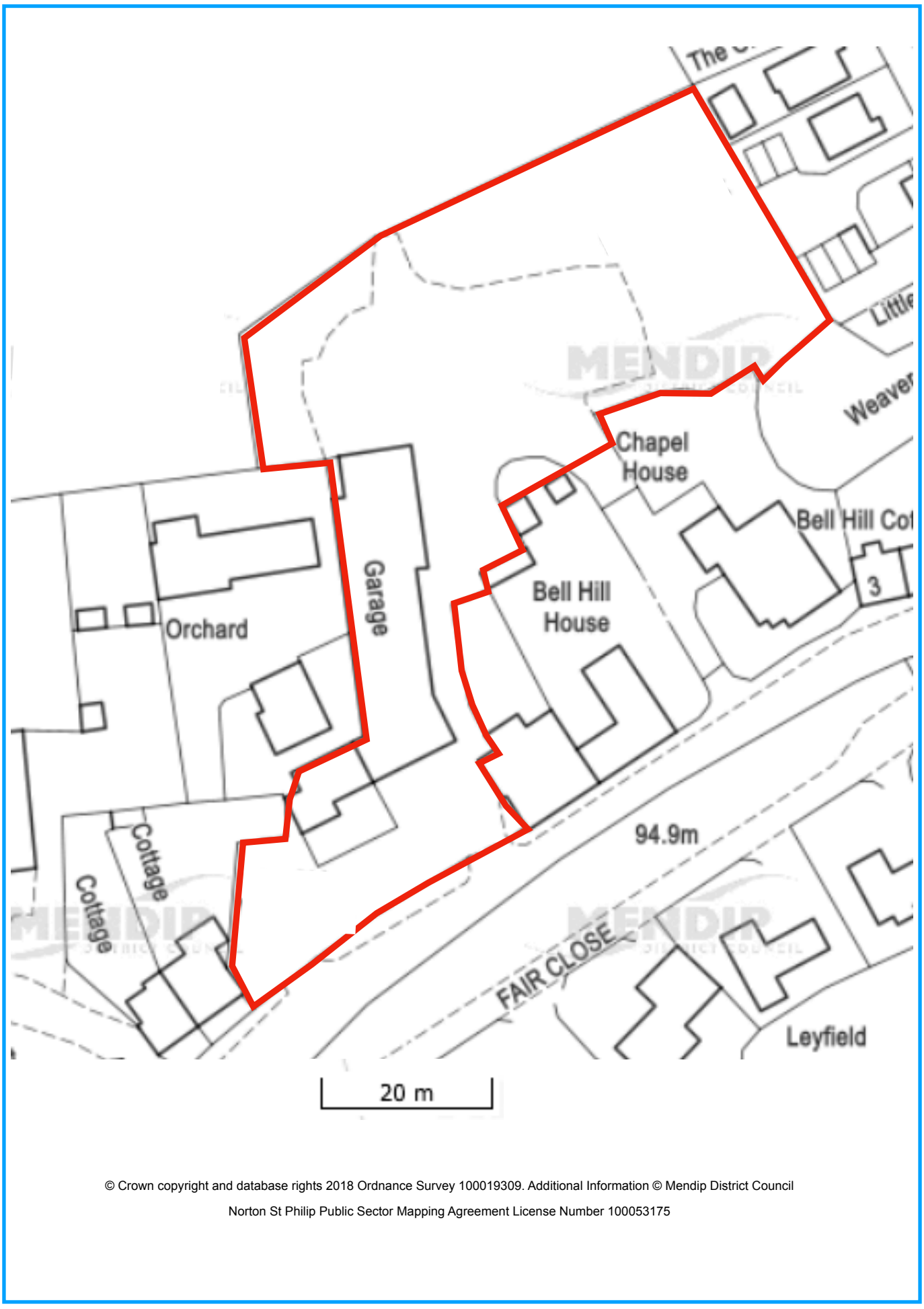
Bell Hill Garage



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Fig 8:Bell Hill Garage Site, Bell Hill BA2 7LT
Allocated Housing Development Site (Policy3)



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Fig 9:Bell Hill Garage Site, Bell Hill BA2 7LT-Allocated Housing Development Site (Policy 3)



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Fig 10: Bell Hill Garage showing brownfield site and Open Area of Local Significance

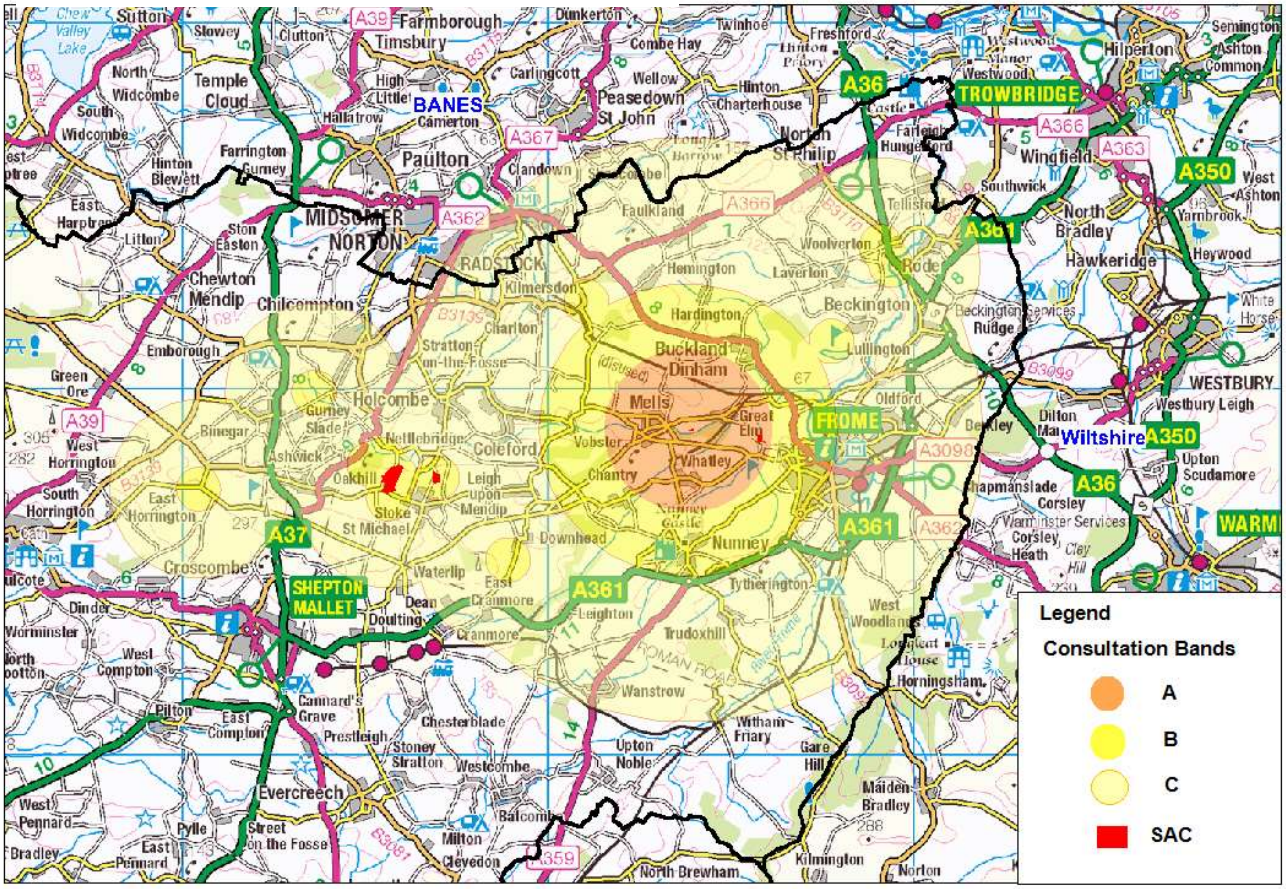


Fig 11: Mells Valley SAC Bat Consultation Zone (Mendip DC Bats SAC- 'Guidance for Development' 2019)

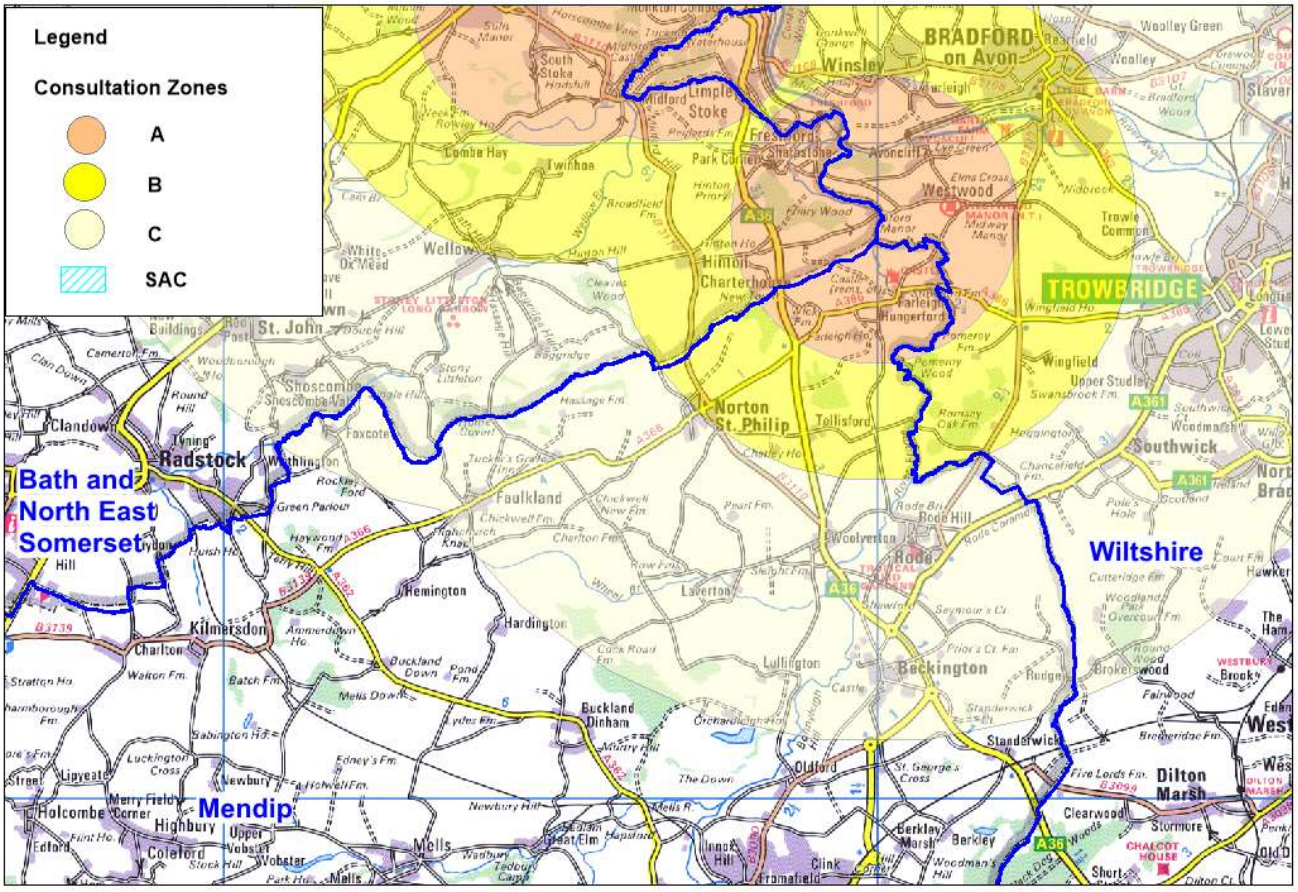


Fig 12: Bath and Bradford on Avon SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone (Mendip DC Bats SAC-'Guidance for Development' 2019)

Policy 3: Housing Allocation Site – Bell Hill Garage

The following site in Norton St Philip, as defined on Figures 8 & 9 is allocated for residential development of about 12 new dwellings in line with the development briefs for the site in Appendix 1.

<u>Bell Hill Garage site.</u>

The site comprises areas of previously-developed land and is well suited to residential development close to the centre of the village. This is subject to the need for the proposals to conserve and if possible enhance the Conservation Area and comply with the guidance contained in the Village Character Assessment and other relevant policies in both this Plan and LPP1.

The site is within both the Mells Valley and Bath and Bradford on Avon SAC Consultation zones. Development proposals are required to accord with the Mendip District Council Mells Valley and Bath and Bradford on Avon "Guidance on Development" (2019).

The dwelling mix should be predominately of 2 and 3 bedroom homes. A small number of flats may be suitable at the southern part of the site adjacent to Bell Hill in the Close Terraced Cottage area defined in the Village Character Assessment.

The proposed development should include an appropriate proportion of affordable housing units in line with the requirements of Policy DP11 of the Mendip Local Plan Part 1.

16. Exception Sites

16.1. This Policy would support sites outside of, but either adjoining or in close proximity to the village settlement boundary, to provide for community led housing to meet local need and targeted at those with a local connection seeking to buy or rent for the first time.

16.2 The policy aims to encourage development as described in para 73 of the NPPF (2024 NPPF §76) as follows:
“Local planning authorities should support the development of exception sites for community-led development (as defined in Annex 2) on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:
a) comprise community-led development that includes one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding; and
b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards.”

The NPPF Annex 2 defines affordable Housing as
“ housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)” and details the types of affordable housing.
These types are included in Appendix 3 of this Plan.



A view of Norton from the west

16.3 Footnote 37 to NPPF para73 (Footnote 36 to § 76 in the 2024 NPPF) specifies that : “Community-led development exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement.”

16.4 Footnote 38 to NPPF para73 (Footnote 37 of § 76 in the 2024 NPPF) gives detail of restrictions applying to areas such as Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), LGS, and areas at risk of flooding.

16.5 The Policy aims to help meet the shortfall of affordable housing identified in the housing surveys of 2018 and 2023. An up-to-date housing needs assessment would be required to establish the need for any exception site allowed under this policy, and PC support for any site proposed would be a requirement. Should a site come forward, the PC would consult with both the local community and Somerset Council as to suitability and deliverability.

16.6 Exception sites supported under this policy will be expected to include planning obligations which provide that:

- All initial and subsequent occupiers of the affordable dwellings will be for eligible local people as set out in the definition of “eligible local” in Appendix 3.
- Affordable homes secured under the policy are retained in perpetuity for occupation by those in housing need;
- Affordability will be maintained in perpetuity at the agreed percentage of open market value (not to exceed 80%).
- The LPA will be responsible for ensuring that any planning obligation is complied with by first and subsequent occupiers

16.7 In exceptional circumstances and where non-viability of a scheme for 100% affordable homes has been proved, the inclusion of market housing may be considered as part of an exception site. Any such proposal will only be supported if the scheme meets all the above criteria and:

- Has clear evidence of support from the local Parish Council
- Demonstrates through a detailed financial appraisal/viability assessment that the scale of the market housing component is essential for the successful delivery of the development
- The viability assessment (above) to be made available in its complete and unredacted form to the Parish Council, the LPA and the local community.
- Ensures no additional subsidy for the scheme and its affordable housing delivery is required

Policy 4: Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of local needs affordable housing schemes on small sites adjacent to the settlement boundary of Norton St Philip, which would not otherwise be released for housing, will be supported where:

a) there is clear evidence, supplied by the applicant, of a need within the Parish for the number and type of housing proposed;

b) the site is adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of Norton St Philip village

c) the proposed development satisfies other relevant policies in the adopted Mendip Local Plan with particular regard being given to its integration into the form and character of the settlement and its landscape setting;

d) the appropriate legal agreements are entered into for the affordable housing with Somerset Council, to ensure that all dwellings will remain available for affordable housing for local need as defined in Appendix 3, in perpetuity, and that the necessary management of the scheme can be permanently secured;

e) the site is not subject to any other overriding environmental or other planning constraints;

f) the total of all proposed sites is not to exceed 5% of the Parish housing stock;

g) the proposed development has the support of the Parish Council.

Affordable Housing is as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF.

The inclusion of market housing will be supported where any such scheme meets all the criteria in the preceding parts of this policy, and:

a) demonstrates, through detailed financial appraisal, that the scale of the market housing component is essential for the successful delivery of the development.

b) ensures no additional subsidy for the scheme and its affordable housing delivery is required.

c) that the market and affordable housing are not distinguishable in design quality.

17. Design of new development

17.1 The NPPF promotes good design and the protection and enhancement of local distinctiveness and states that neighbourhood plans have an important role to play in doing this (section 12). The document draws out 3 elements to this: a design vision, the need to have a good understanding of local character and the importance of guidance in explaining the way in which development can positively respond to and enhance local character. The adopted Local Plan policy DP1 also promotes design that respects and enhances local distinctiveness.

17.2 The former MDCs Local Plan remains the adopted Plan for the Somerset East area of the new Unitary Authority, Somerset Council. The Design Policy of this Neighbourhood Plan supports the aim of both the Supplementary Planning Document (adopted in March 2022) and the related Development Policy DP7 in the Local Plan. Policy DP7 aims to support high quality design in development which results in useable, durable, adaptable, sustainable and attractive places. The policy acknowledges the role of good design in making places that are attractive to visitors and residents and sustainable in the way they use resources.

17.3 The 'overview' for this Policy is that:

"Good architecture and urban design contribute to making places both functional and attractive to residents, users and visitors. While architecture is about the design of buildings, urban design is about the relationships between the buildings, the roads and spaces that they front, and the people who make use of them. The outstanding building projects are those that are not only visually stimulating, but are also sensitive and respectful of their surrounding developments and environment. A well-designed place takes into consideration the important relationships between buildings, spaces, functional needs and the wider context within which the planned building or structure sits. The testament of a good design will ultimately be the direct spin-offs it generates in terms of economic, social-cultural and environmental benefits. A well designed new house may command a higher value, have lower running costs and emissions and perhaps contribute to the diversity of the streetscape."



Fortescue Fields (left) and Bell Hill/High Street (right)



17.4 DP7 as supported by the March 2022 Supplementary Planning Document is intended to help promote the use of sustainable construction techniques and onsite renewable energy. These aims are supported by the Design Policy in this Neighbourhood Plan.

17.5 NSP is a parish with many distinctive features and a very visible and strong heritage legacy. As suggested by the NPPF as regards the value of producing guidance for developers to assist with the understanding of what local distinctiveness' means, the Steering Group decided to undertake a Character Assessment (CA) of the parish. A significant number of local volunteers, working with our planning consultant, assisted with this process. The resulting assessment is an accompanying evidence document, and sets out guidelines for development in NSP so that local distinctiveness and village character are protected and enhanced. Policy 5 requires new development to comply with this guidance.



Westmead Cottage

Policy 5: High Quality Design

Proposals for new development within the Plan area should promote high quality design that follows the relevant guidelines set out in the Norton St. Philip Character Assessment and where appropriate, in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Development of new buildings or extensions to existing buildings must complement the existing character of the surrounding area in terms of scale, massing, building style and height. Landscaping and high-quality public realm areas must be an integral part of the design and layout of new housing developments.

Where relevant, development proposals should satisfy the following criteria through:
1) being of a scale, layout, design and appearance that is compatible with the character and density of the surrounding area;
2) not having unacceptable adverse impacts upon residential amenity in the vicinity of the site;
3) not resulting in unacceptable harm to or the loss of public or private open spaces that contribute positively to the character of the local area (including residential gardens);
4) incorporating safe and suitable access for pedestrians and vehicles in accordance with the relevant policies and standards of Somerset Council as Highways Authority;
5) safeguarding and, where appropriate, enhancing existing Public Rights of Way in the vicinity of the site, in order to provide sustainable transport choices for new developments;
6) addressing any potential requirement for substantial new infrastructure or other facilities to support the development;
7) avoiding harm to the significance and/or setting of both designated and non-designated heritage assets (including the designated Conservation Area as shown on Figure 5).

18. Green Infrastructure and the Environment.

18.1 An objective of this Plan is to "Identify, protect and enhance the village's key green spaces, green infrastructure, valued views and recreational facilities". There is strong documented evidence of local support for this objective right from the earliest stages of work on the Plan up to and including the 2023 Regulation 14 Consultation.

18.2. The character and appearance of the village is largely defined by the contrast between its urban and rural element; the important green spaces allow an appreciation of the village's development and evolution. For these reasons in 1969 the village was the first in Mendip to have a Conservation Area designation, shown at figure 5 (p31).

18.3 In 1995 Mendip Council published a Conservation Area Statement which noted that:

"The character of Norton St Philip relies on its setting, historic fabric, grouping of buildings, pattern of roads and footpaths, linking stone walls and the juxtaposition of the built up areas with open areas. The character varies throughout the village and presents a sequence of views as one travels through."

MDC's 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal reinforces this:

" The dense corridor of development along the High Street and the adjoining wider space of the Plain and its approaches contrast with the mixture of terraced development, green space around the Parish Church and the historic buildings of Barton Farm and the relatively rural character of the back lanes along Ringwell and Chevers Lanes.

One of the greatest assets is the visual and psychological contrast between 'urban' and rural elements, experienced in the sudden views over the lower slopes and open countryside from The George's car park and the summit of Bell Hill. The views back east to the ridge and the skyline of High Street and The Plain from Church Mead and the Wells Road entry are also significant".

18.4 Retention of this character is part of the Vision and a key objective of this Plan.



18.5 Norton St Philip has two separate areas of development, around the Parish Church to the west, and High Street, The Plaine and North Street on the ridge above. Areas of open space form 'green corridors' into the village from surrounding farmland and keep this historic form distinct. Green spaces within the village also perform an important visual function in that they define the historic village and contrast with the tightly packed development within its core.

18.6 Historic England described the importance of the setting of the village in recent comments on planning applications:

"The medieval settlement of Norton St Philip grew up around two historic cores. The first focused around the Church of St James and St Philip (grade I listed) at the bottom of the hill, while the second focused on the marketplace and the George Inn at the top. Bell Hill linked the two with incremental historic development being built along the lane. Norton St Philip is in part characterised by the important green spaces left by this distinctive historic development"

and

"The village has a rural setting and is surrounded on all sides by farmland. While modern developments have had a marked impact on the layout of the village and its Conservation Area, its heritage significance lies in the legibility of its medieval form and development and the survival of two distinct character areas that stand out in a prominent position within the wider landscape….the rural setting within this section of the conservation area is of fundamental importance as it reinforces the green buffer between the two historic centres and consequently, the conservation area's significance."



Fortescue Fields Ponds

18.7 Work on the Character Assessment showed that much of the green space in the village is a crucial part of the historic setting and local distinctiveness of Norton St Philip. The green setting of NSP that these corridors provide is particularly visible given the village's ridge top setting. They protect and provide the distinctive views both inwards to the village and outwards to the surrounding countryside. As the Inspector summarised in dismissing Appeals for development largely outside , but forming the setting of the Conservation Area:

"...the significance of the Conservation Area derives not only from its historic settlement pattern and its many listed and historic buildings, but also from the abundance of green space both within it (which, as noted by the appellant) ranges from small residential gardens, to the church/churchyard and Church Mead) and its rural landscape setting. That setting allows for an understanding and appreciation of its significance, providing an historical context for this ridge-top village, marking it as a rural settlement".

18.8 LPP1 Development Policy 4 (Mendip's Landscapes) opening sentence recognises that "Mendip district is defined by its landscapes" and that development proposals "should demonstrate that their siting and design are compatible with the pattern of natural and man-made features of the Landscape Character Areas, including cultural and historical associations, as detailed in the "Landscape Assessment of Mendip District."

18.9 In 2020 the Council published an updated Landscape Character Appraisal to replace the previous (1997) Appraisal; this was partly to reflect the fact that the quality of landscape areas were at risk of being under-valued in the plan and decision making process. Furthermore the Council's declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency recognises that the district's landscapes are threatened.

18.10 The NSP Character Appraisal which accompanies this Plan contains detail of the 2020 Landscape Appraisal which is also reproduced on the NP Website at https://nortonstphilipneighbourhoodplan.com/mendip-landscape-character-appraisal-2020/



From Church Mead to west

18.11 Six of the important green spaces within the village were initially designated in 2002 by Mendip District Council's as "Open Areas of Visual Significance" through adopted Policy Q2. This protection was carried forward into the current adopted Local Plan (2014-2029) in Policy DP2 "Open Area of Local Significance", a designation unique to the Mendip District. Policy DP2 is that

"Permission will not be granted for development which would harm the contribution to distinctive local character made by Open Areas of Local Significance".

The Policy's supporting text gives detail about what can be considered distinctive local character:

"These spaces may provide views out of an otherwise built up street scene, allow views of significant local features or buildings beyond them, enhance the setting of the settlement, create a sense of space or otherwise contribute to the locally distinctive character of an area."



The George Inn and neighbouring houses from Fortescue Ponds



Parish Church framed by school playground to its west; Churchyard, paddock and Church Mead to its east

18.12 The NPPF recognises that green infrastructure can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood and that it enhances local landscape character. Paragraph 180 aims to ensure that *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment"* by (inter alia) *"protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity".*

18.13 In January 2023 Natural England launched a new "Green Infrastructure Framework". One of the key aims is to "increase biodiversity and geodiversity wherever it can be helped to flourish." In order to achieve this at a local level, the Framework suggests that Green Infrastructure should:

- Thread biodiversity through the built environment connecting recreational, natural green and blue spaces
- Prioritise native species
- Be designed to connect people to nature
- Contribute to site specific biodiversity net gain requirements

18.14 Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework (January 2023) and its accompanying Design Guide notes (at paragraph 1.2) state that *"A green infrastructure network includes street trees, green roofs, green walls, parks, private gardens, allotments, sustainable drainage systems, through to wildlife areas, woodlands, rock outcrops, wetlands, and natural flood management functioning at local and landscape scale".*

18.15 Significant benefits for both the community and biodiversity can result from a robust green infrastructure. These include climate change resilience, nature rich places and positive effects on the health and wellbeing of the community.

18.16 The Natural England Framework recognises that benefits can be delivered from both managed or more natural spaces and that it can also comprise a series of smaller connected private spaces such as domestic gardens, or large public space such. Research using health related evidence has highlighted how a variety of greenspaces in a neighbourhood can have a positive impact on people's wellbeing.

18.17 The character of the village and its conservation area is highly distinctive due to its dispersed form, with its two distinct and separated nuclei. This is described in the 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal which also describes *"One of the great assets is the visual and psychological contrast between 'urban' and rural elements, experienced in the sudden views over the lower slopes and open countryside from The George's car park and the summit of Bell Hill."*

18.18 This Plan aims to conserve character not just by preserving it but by accommodating and managing change in order to retain the very special landscape character of the village and the benefits this brings to the community. It recognises there may be opportunities for development proposals to deliver landscape and biodiversity enhancements.

18.19 A "Greenspace" Supplementary Planning Document was adopted by the former Mendip District Council on 6 February 2023. The SPD provides guidance on the implementation of policies in the adopted Mendip Local Plan Parts I and II relating to the provision and protection of new and existing open space and greenspace.

18.20 Section 6 of the SPD refers to Neighbourhood Plans and the provision in the NPPF for them to designate Local Green Spaces. Para 6.5 states that:

"Communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans may wish to consider designating any open spaces within their area that meet the criteria set out in the NPPF. They may also wish to consider adopting a settlement wide approach to protecting networks of greenspace and identify opportunities to enhance green infrastructure networks through the creation of new greenspace."

18.21 This Plan does not designate Local Green Space (LGS). Although the 2019 version of the NP designated 10 Local Green Spaces (which as described in paras 4.5 & 4.6 were "lawfully designated") this Plan seeks to identify the green infrastructure which contributes to the character and appearance of the village. This includes a network of important green spaces which make a significant contribution to the character of the village and its natural beauty. These sites are important to the Conservation Area and its setting and are critical elements of the village's rural character.



NSP from the south west

18.22 Seventeen Greenspaces in NSP were listed, each under one of the three typologies. These are shown at para 18.24. All ten Local Green Spaces were included. The SPD refers to the following adopted Policies :

- DP1 – Local Identity and Distinctiveness
- DP2 – Open Areas of Local Significance
- DP16 – Open Space and Green Infrastructure

Greenspace sites are allocated to one of three typologies:

- Category 1 - Publicly accessible open spaces within the built environment
- Category 2 – Recreational and sporting
- Category 3 – Green infrastructure

18.23 Of the 17 sites in NSP identified as fulfilling the necessary criteria to qualify as 'Greenspaces', 12 had previously been identified as 10 proposed Local Green Spaces (LGS) in the draft Neighbourhood Plan (2023 Reg 14 version) dated 11 May 2023. Church Mead, previously designated LGS007, is split into 2 typologies of Greenspace due to the playground situated within it. The Churchyard and adjoining paddock, previously LGS006, is also split due to different typologies. 7 of these Greenspaces are also classified as 6 'Open Areas of Local Significance' (OALS) under DP2 of the adopted Local Plan.

18.24 The adopted OALS and listed Greenspaces are set out in Appendix 2, with a description of the contribution they make to the natural and local environment as well as character and appearance of the village. Church Mead Recreation Ground and the Playground within it are identified in this Plan as a single Greenspace. This Plan thus identifies 16 sites.



18.25 The following sites are identified in the former MDC's SPD "Greenspace"

ID	Site	Note	Development Policy	Type 1 Publicly Accessible	Type 2 Recreational	Type 3 Green Infrastructure
2001	School Playing Fields	Conservation Area	DP1,16		School Sports	
3002	Ringwell Meadow	OALS	DP1,2			Greenspace
3003	Old Hopyard	OALS	DP1,2			Private Garden
3004	Lyde Green	OALS	DP1,2			Greenspace
3005	Gt Orchard	OALS	DP1,2			Greenspace
1006	Church Green	OALS	DP1,2	Green amenity space		
1007	Churchyard	OALS	DP1,2	Cemetery/ access		
1008	Church Mead-field	Conservation Area	DP1,16	Recreational with access		
1009	Church Mead-Playground	Conservation Area	DP1,16	Children's Recreational		
2010	Fortescue Fields South	Abuts Conservation Area	DP1		Informal Recreation	
3011	Fortescue Fields West	Abuts Conservation Area	DP1			Greenspace
3012	Shepherds Mead	Abuts Conservation Area	DP1			Greenspace
3013	Uncultivated land to Nth of Chever's Lane	Abuts Conservation Area/Green Belt	DP1			Greenspace
3014	Laverton Triangle	Abuts Conservation Area	DP1			Greenspace
3015	Garden to rear of Malthouse	Conservation Area	DP1			Private Garden
3016	Village Green	Abuts Conservation Area	DP1		Amenity Space	
3017	Paddock adjoining churchyard	OALS	DP1,2			Greenspace

18.26 The sites identified as Greenspace in the SPD are all included in the green corridors described in the NP Character Assessment which requires development proposals to maintain them as a key definition of the historic village form-the “Green Infrastructure” of the village.

18.27 Green Infrastructure” is defined in the NPPF as
“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”
Natural England’s “Principles of Green Infrastructure” aim to provide :

1) Nature rich beautiful places - GI supports nature to recover and thrive everywhere
2) Active and healthy places - supporting active lifestyles, community cohesion and nature connections
3) Thriving and prospering communities - creating high quality environments
4) Improved water management - bringing amenity, biodiversity, economic and other benefits.
5) Resilient and climate positive places - designed to adapt to climate change to ensure long term resilience.

18.28 Of the 17 sites listed as “Greenspace” in the Supplementary Planning Document, 7 are designated OALS in the Local Plan. A further 4 are within the Conservation Area (CA) and the remaining 6 abut the CA. They are all therefore afforded some level of protection through the Local Plan. It is quite possible that these protections will not be part of the new Somerset Local Plan. One of this Plan’s objectives is to “Identify, protect and enhance the village’s key green spaces and recreational facilities”.

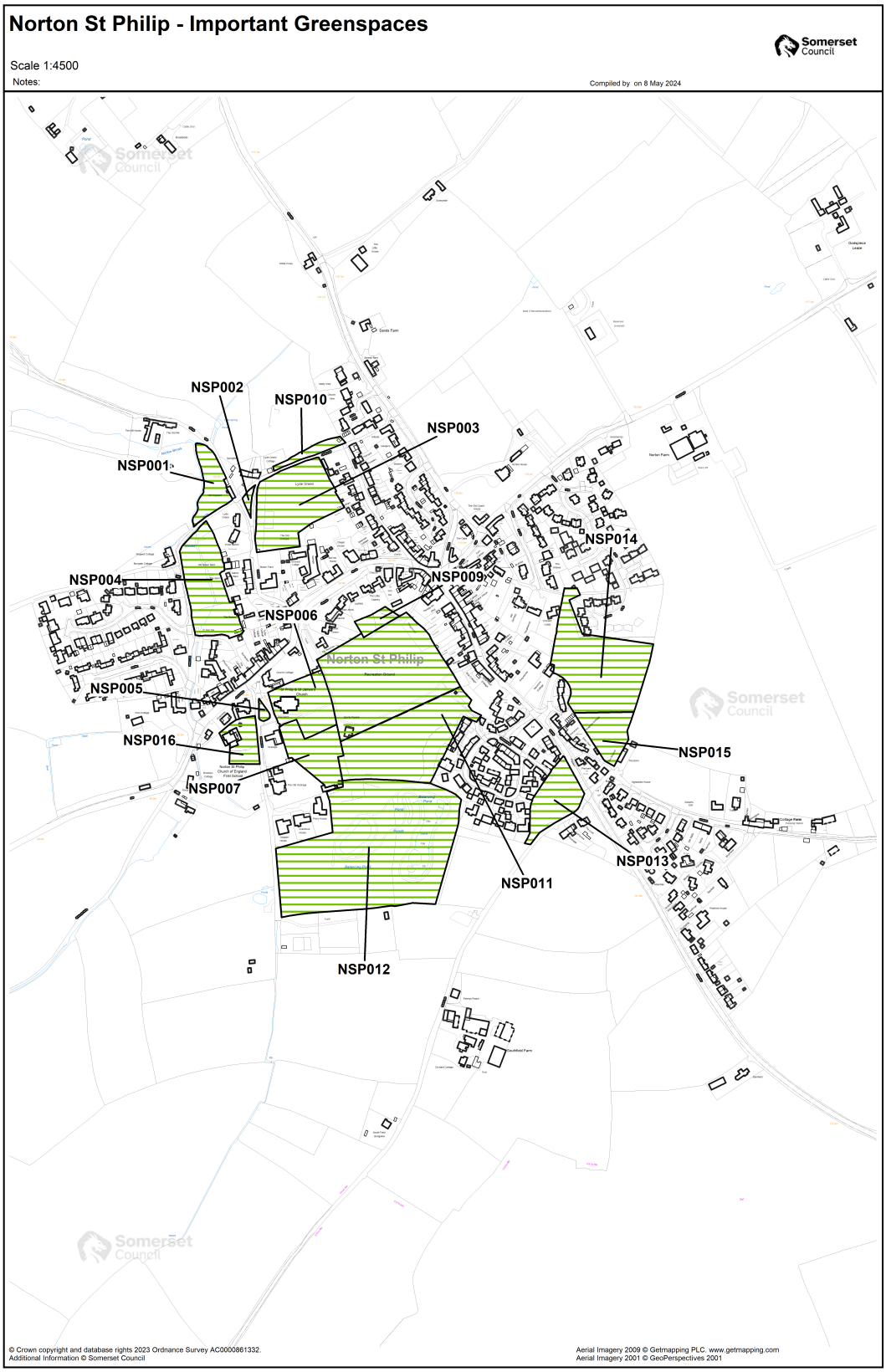
18.29 This Plan identifies these areas as being of importance to both the community and the village’s Green Infrastructure. Appendix 2 describes the reasons for that importance in order that the Local Plan Development Policies can be interpreted at a local level in the consideration of development proposals. Policies DP1, DP4 and DP7 of the adopted LPP1 seek to ensure that new development does not conflict with the maintenance and enhancement of local identity and distinctiveness. Policy DP3 of the adopted Local Plan is clear that development proposals should preserve, and where appropriate enhance, the significance and setting of the District’s heritage assets. This Plan recognises the importance of the Conservation Area and its setting to the historic character and appearance of the village. This setting includes the locations both within the Conservation Area and from which it can be appreciated. As a consequence of this, green spaces both within and abutting the Conservation Area are recognised in this Plan as forming the village’s Green Infrastructure.

Policy 6: Important Green Spaces

The Green Spaces listed below and shown in Figure 13, all make an important contribution to the Green Infrastructure and to the character of the historic village of Norton St. Philip. Development proposals within an Important Green Space should respect the reasons for their identification, as described in Appendix 2, and have regard to the relevant national planning policy and guidance and policies in the adopted Mendip Local Plan. Development that would positively enhance these spaces, such as to provide improved access and recreation, retain and enhance biodiversity, or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and its setting, will be supported.

<u>Important Green Spaces</u>

NSP001 Old Hopyard
NSP002 Lyde Green
NSP003 Great Orchard
NSP004 Ringwell Meadow
NSP005 Church Green
NSP006 St Philip and St James Churchyard
NSP007 Paddock adjoining Churchyard
NSP008 Church Mead
NSP009 Land to rear of The Malthouse
NSP010 Land to North of Chevers Lane
NSP011 Fortescue Fields West
NSP012 Fortescue Fields South
NSP013 Laverton or Mackley Triangle
NSP014 Shepherds Mead
NSP015 Village Green on Shepherds Mead
NSP016 School Playing Field



NSP001	Old Hopyard
NSP002	Lyde Green
NSP003	Great Orchard
NSP004	Ringwell Meadow
NSP005	Church Green
NSP006	Churchyard
NSP007	Paddock adj Churchyard
NSP008	Church Mead

NSP009	Land to rear of Malthouse
NSP010	Land north of Chevers Lane
NSP011	Fortescue Fields West
NSP012	Fortescue Fields South
NSP013	Laverton/Mackley Triangle
NSP014	Shepherds Mead
NSP015	Village Green on Shepherds Mead
NSP016	School playing Field

Figure 13: Important Green Spaces in NSP identified in Policy 6

19. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Low Carbon Development Policies

19.1 The need for planning to include policies to mitigate against climate change and reduce carbon emissions is government policy. The NPPF (paras 157-159;2024 version paras162-164) requires plans to take 'a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change' and to help to 'shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions'. Para 161 states that:
"Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning."

19.2 The use of sustainable construction techniques and onsite renewable energy are strongly encouraged in this Plan. Policy 7 aims to promote such initiatives as well as sustainable design and build practices that will reduce carbon emissions and mitigate against the adverse impacts of climate change. Guidance in the RTPI/TCPA publication "Planning for Climate Change" and the Centre for Sustainable Energy's publication "Low Carbon Neighbourhood Planning" has informed this policy.

19.3 Although much of the Parish is in a low flood risk area due to its elevated position, flooding does occur along the line of the Norton Brook watercourse at times of heavy sustained rainfall.This is shown at Figure 14. Following intensely heavy rainfall flooding affected houses along Church Street and Ringwell Lane in October 2023 and January 2024.

19.4 Surface water flooding also affects parts of Farleigh Hungerford along the line of the River Frome. This is shown at Figure 15.



Flooding on Ringwell Lane January 2024



Figure 14: Surface water Flood risk in Norton St Philip village

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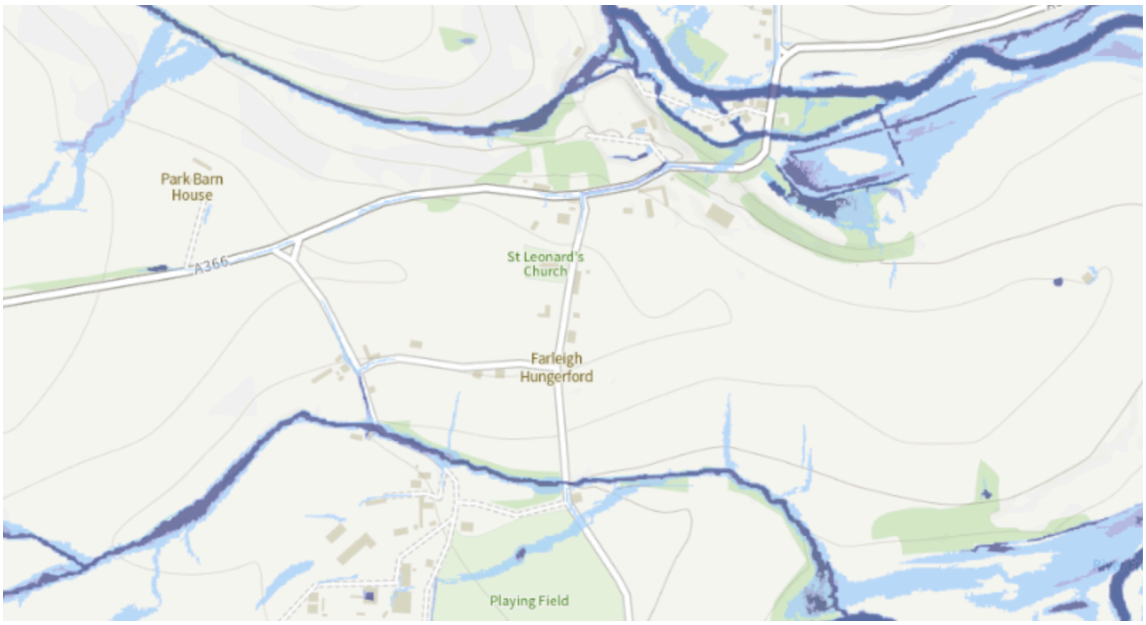


Figure 15: Surface water Flood risk in Farleigh Hungerford

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River Frome flooding in Farleigh Hungerford (January 2024)



19.5 The foul drainage infrastructure appears to be running at, or close to, capacity. Wessex Water began collecting data for foul water overflows in 2022.That year the NSP sewage treatment works spilled into Norton Brook on 42 occasions for a total of 450 hours. In 2023 this increased to 66 spills for a total duration of 832 hours. Future government targets are for a maximum of 10 permitted overflows per annum. Frome, a town 28 times the size of NSP, had half as much “spill time” in both 2022 and 2023. These spills are likely the consequence of the sewage treatment plant not being able to cope with the higher demand; the result of both an increase in rainfall and the increase in population. It is unlikely that the proposed government targets of 10 permitted overflows per annum can be met with the existing sewage treatment facilities. Development must not exacerbate this situation; infrastructure improvements are already necessary in order to meet government targets.







Flooding along the Brook in 2014

19.6 The landscape around the village of NSP is home to a wide range of wildlife. In recent decades there have been significant declines in biodiversity in the UK and worldwide. This has been recognised through national planning policy. Since February 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory in England. Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

19.7 The green spaces within the NP boundary are recognised and celebrated for the contribution they make to biodiversity; as well as the value they bring to people. The local landscape is in relatively close proximity to internationally important bat roosts for greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe and bechstein bats; and the countryside area is likely to help support these, and other, bat populations. The surrounding farmland may also support assemblages of farmland birds which have also undergone significant declines since the second world war.

19.8 There are important ecological features within the Plan area and, in line with national and local planning policy, this Plan seeks measures and policies to not only protect, but help enhance, the natural environment. Areas of green space which act not only as wildlife habitats but also as green corridors have been identified as Important Greenspace.



Aerial view 2022 (Googlearth)

Policy 7: Promoting Biodiversity and Addressing Climate Change

Proposals for new development in the Plan area should:

- **Seek to avoid, and if not possible mitigate or as a last resort compensate for any significant harm to biodiversity ;**
- **Ensure that new planting and green infrastructure is robust, native and of high biodiversity value;**
- **demonstrate resilience to the likely impacts of climate change including increased flood risk and heat stress;**
- **Support the provision of electric vehicle charging points, including where appropriate in new street lighting columns;**
- **Include measures to prevent surface water entering the foul water sewerage system and to minimise surface water run off by:**
    - **incorporating sustainable drainage systems SuDS and permeable driveways and parking areas;**
    - **rainwater harvesting and storage features;**
    - **tree and hedgerow planting with native species.**

Individual and community proposals for renewable energy generation will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- **The siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape and minimises potential visual impact;**
- **The proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents.**

20. Monitoring and Review

20.1 Once made, the PC will monitor and record the Plan's usefulness and effectiveness in bringing forward supported and sustainable development in line with the Policies contained in the Plan. The monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis, and a decision can be made whether a review of the Plan is required.

20.2 This Plan contains policies which address climate change and biodiversity but it is likely that in the future, amendments to the Plan could improve the parish's resilience to climate change and improve biodiversity. The PC will also engage with Somerset Council Planning Policy in the preparation of the new county wide Local Plan.

20.3. The emerging Somerset Local Plan is expected to be adopted in 2029. Both a new NPPF and standard method for calculating housing need were introduced in December 2024 (after the submission of this Plan). In order that this Plan remains in conformity with the relevant strategic policies of the Local Plan and national policy it is likely that a review will be required.

Appendix 1
Development Brief - Bell Hill Garage

21.1 Development proposals will need to comply with policies in the Norton Parish Neighbourhood Plan and design guidance in the Norton St Philip Village Character Assessment, as well as the development policies in the Development Plan for Mendip (now Somerset East).

21.2 The frontage of the site (onto Bell Hill) is part of the 'Close Terraced Cottages' Character Area described in the Character Assessment and is considered suitable for higher density than the rear of the site, which is included within the 'Leafy Cottage' Area and abuts Great Orchard. Here development will be expected to maintain a low density, informal, rural feel, with soft landscaping and native tree-planting, additionally incorporating the Privacy Landscaping Strips as indicated on the plan.

21.3 The rear of the site to the north is adjacent to the Great Orchard Open Area of Local Significance and will need to present a soft edge in order to blend into this important greenspace. Any development of this site must therefore include significant and effective landscaping on the north boundary and any incursion by gardens should be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Council (and if relevant, Natural England and Historic England). The existing landscaping on the east boundary should be retained.

21.4 Any development proposal should incorporate the existing stone barn fronting Bell Hill.

21.5 All development will need to comply with Conservation Area requirements, and the use of traditional building materials and features will be expected.





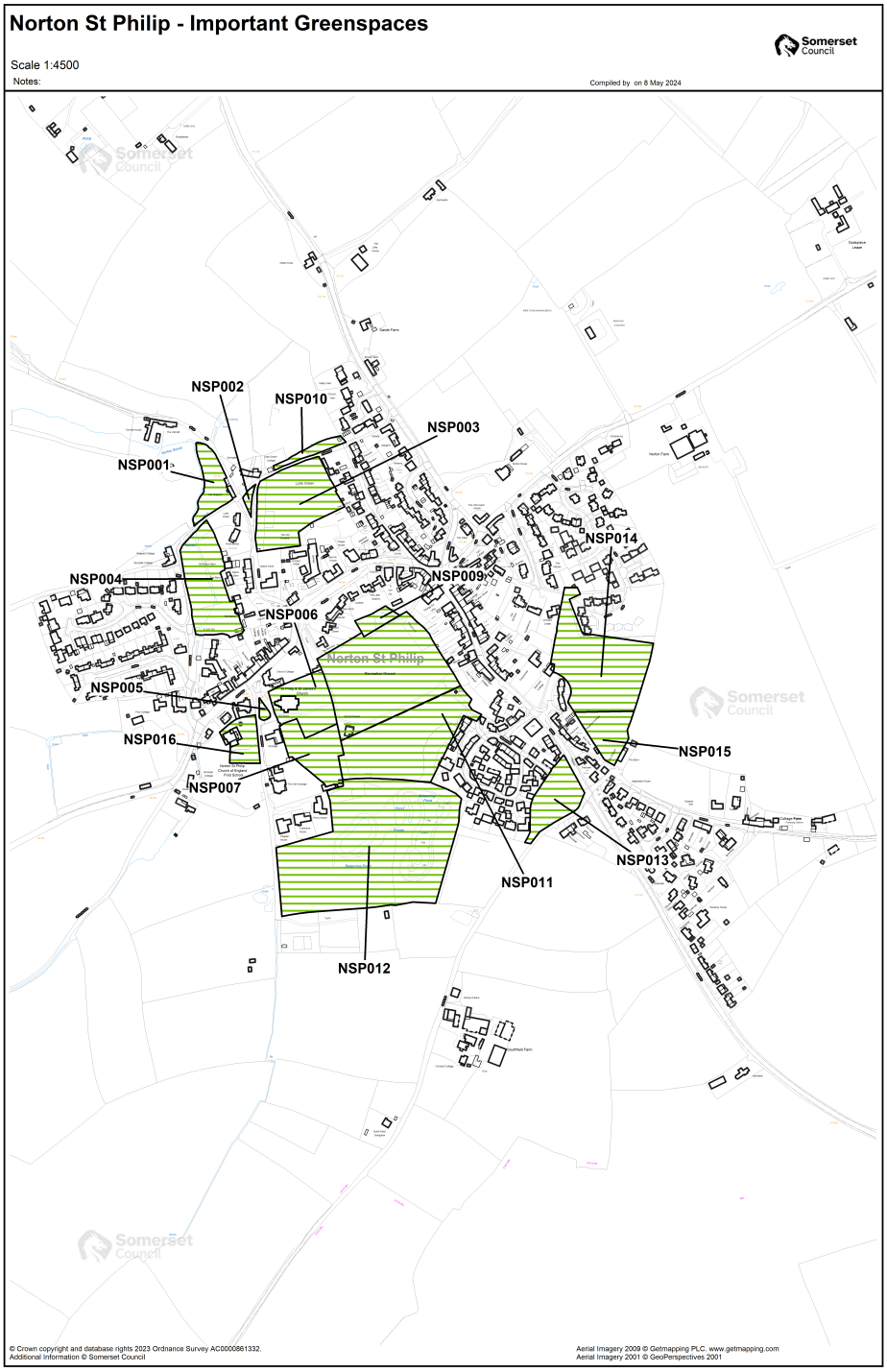
21.6 Dwellings and their curtilage should make provision for refuse and recycling provision and undercover cycle parking. Attention is drawn to the requirements and suggestions for environmentally sustainable design in Policy 7 of this Plan.

21.7 The access road should be designed to prioritise walking and cycling safety. Paved surfaces for pedestrians should be provided with the possibility of shared surfaces if safety permits. Visitor parking should be incorporated into the highway design. Any street lighting should be unobtrusive, minimise glare and light pollution.

21.8 The provision of a smaller, purpose-built garage workshop together with adequate parking on the site would be welcome. This would enable a development of 7-9 dwellings. Relocation of the garage to a site outside of the village would be supported by the Parish Council subject to the site's suitability and community support. The site would then be appropriate for a larger development of up to 12 dwellings. This is evidenced by the proposed layout for the 2023 planning application shown in figure 7.



Appendix 2
Green Infrastructure - Identified Sites



NSP001	Old Hopyard	NSP009	Land to rear of Malthouse
NSP002	Lyde Green	NSP010	Land north of Chevers Lane
NSP003	Great Orchard	NSP011	Fortescue Fields West
NSP004	Ringwell Meadow	NSP012	Fortescue Fields South
NSP005	Church Green	NSP013	Laverton/Mackley Triangle
NSP006	Churchyard	NSP014	Shepherds Mead
NSP007	Paddock adj Churchyard	NSP015	Village Green on Shepherds Mead
NSP008	Church Mead	NSP016	School playing Field

NB-OALS-'*Open Area of Local Significance' as designated in MDC's Local Plan 2014, previously designated as both Q3&Q2 (Open Space of Visual Significance).*

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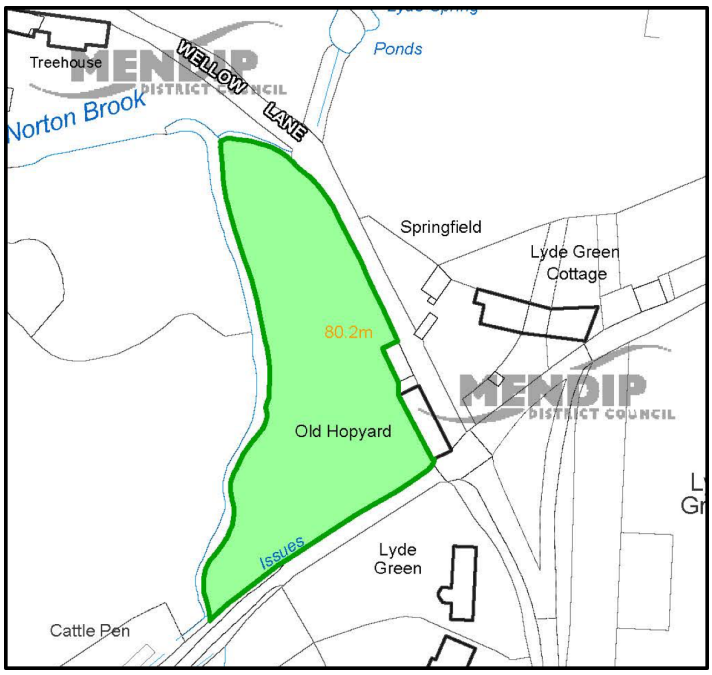
Norton St Philip Public Sector Mapping Agreement License Number 100053175

NSP001 Old Hopyard

Designated OALS (001) and identified as stage 3 Greenspace. The site is described in Annex 2 of the SPD:

“Site contributes to the village's rural character and the tranquil street scene. Although some parts are enclosed, it nonetheless creates a sense of openness with vistas glimpsed through gaps in the enclosing walls and vegetation and a sense of open space above and behind the frontage. The openness of the site of the site is particularly important to this part of the village. The land is much higher than the meadows at the bottom of Ringwell Lane and is an important feature when viewed from this direction.”

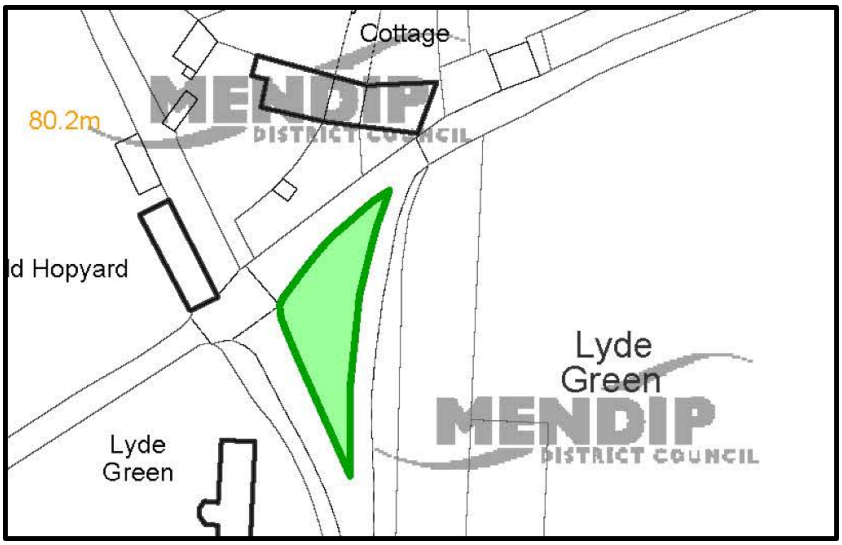
The site has a measure of protection through being entirely within the curtilage of the Grade 2 listed dwelling “The Old Hopyard”which is excluded as shown on the plan below.





NSP002 Lyde Green

Designated OALS (002) and identified as stage 3 Greenspace,, this is a small triangle of common ground which forms the focal point of the surrounding network of green verges and leafy lanes. It is described in Annex 2 of the SPD: "*It allows views along the network of lanes that join the triangle and is important to the street scene and the rural character of this part of the village, characterised by a network of narrow lanes interspersed by open spaces, and divided by walls, trees and historic buildings.*"
It links The Old Hopyard (NSP001) with Great Orchard (NSP003).



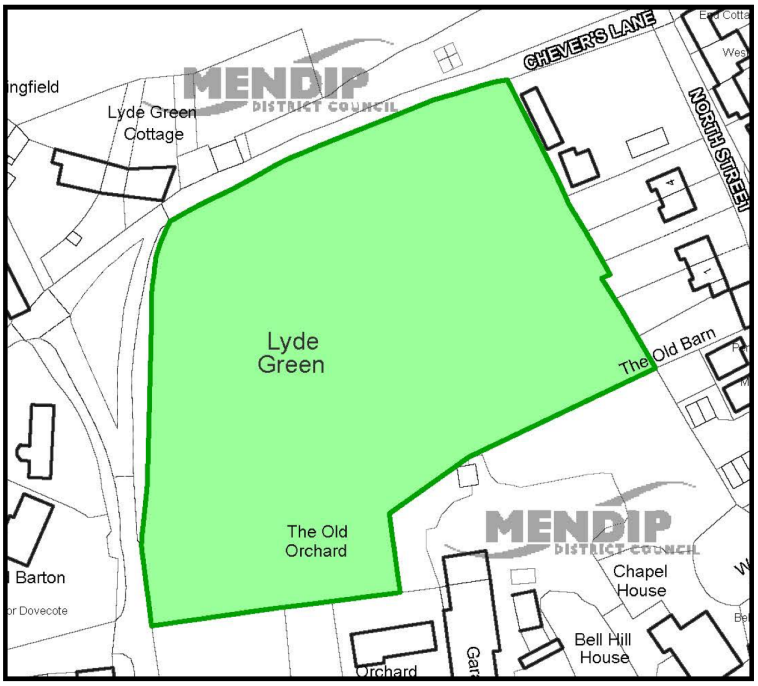


NSP003 Great Orchard

Designated OALS (003) and identified as stage 3 Greenspace, the site makes a major contribution to the visual appeal of the conservation area, blending with the surrounding contours. This also applies when looking back towards the village from the north-west. It provides an ideal setting for the surrounding listed buildings, in particular Manor Farm House. It also complements the loose-grained residential character of this corner of the village. The open space can be seen through breaks in the substantial dry stone walls that surround it and from views from the elevated ground to the west and north east across and over the site. A group of trees line the western boundary. Annex 2 of the SPD describes it:

"The openness of the site is also an important feature in the historic development of the village, marking a break between the rural character of the lower village and the more densely built upper village, mirroring Church Mead on the other side of Bell Hill. It is important in views of the village from footpaths to the south of the village. These views are particularly significant and the historic settlement can be seen marching up the hillside towards the ridgeline."

A recent planning application (2021/2928) for development of the site was refused; Historic England commented that development *"would result in the loss of an important open and green space within the Norton St Philip Conservation Area. The proposals result in the erosion of the town's relationship to its rural hinterland, while also eroding our appreciation of the town's historic evolution"* and that its inclusion in the Conservation Area was recognition of *" the positive contribution it makes to the character and appearance of the area. The site is highlighted as being of landscape value within the appraisal due to the important contribution it makes as an open green space."*





NSP004 Ringwell Meadow

An OALS (004) and identified as Stage 3 Greenspace, it is described in Annex 2 :
"Site contributes to the village's rural character and the street scene. It is important to the rural character of this part of the village, characterised by a network of narrow lanes interspersed by open spaces, and divided by walls, trees and historic buildings. The open space can be seen through breaks in the vegetation that surrounds it and the openness creates important views from Ringwell Lane, which open up suddenly on approach. Both the field and the embankment to the east are important to the site's contribution to the street scene. Vegetation in the gardens to the south is particularly important as a backdrop to the views from Ringwell lane."
The importance of this meadow to the historic character and appearance of the village has been endorsed in 4 recent Appeal decisions dismissing development proposals on the southern part of the site, described by the Appeal Inspector as being a *"verdant, tranquil and distinctive setting that makes a significant and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area."* (Appeal ref APP/Q3305/W/20/3247051).
It links with NSP001 (The Old Hopyard) to create a green corridor into the village.

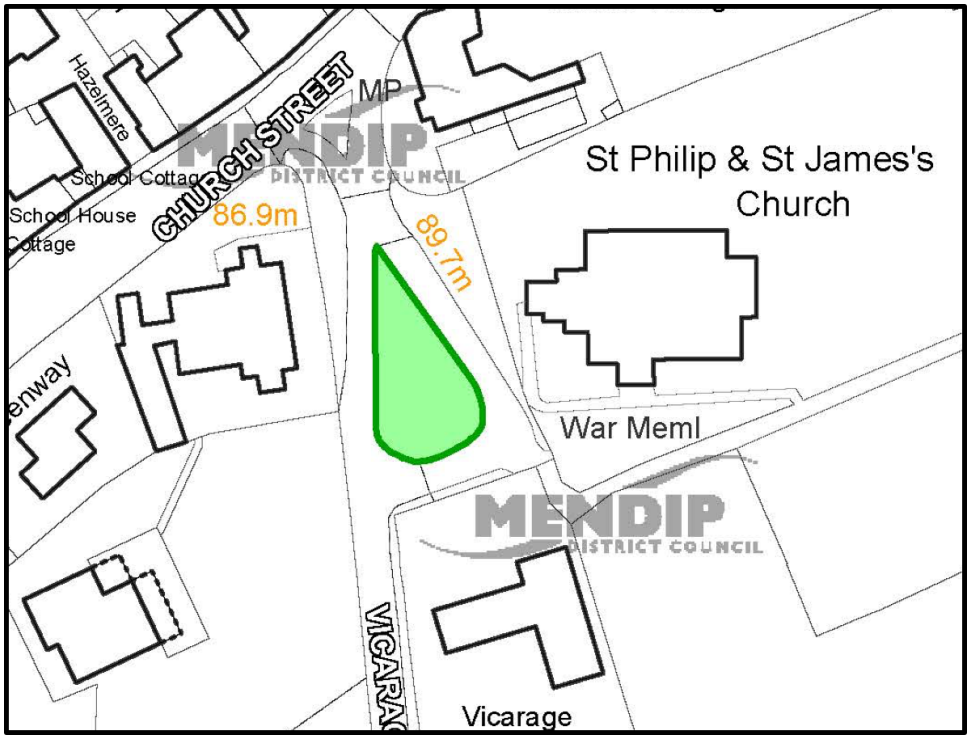






NSP005 Church Green

An OALS (005) and identified as Stage 1 Greenspace, the site contributes significantly to the setting and character of the medieval Grade 2* Church, the Grade 2 early 19th century school and the surrounding area. It frames the church and adds to the sense of tranquillity in this area. It forms a link between the Churchyard (NSP006) and school playing field(NSP016).





NSP006 St Philip and St James Churchyard

An OALS and identified as Stage 1 Greenspace,it is described in Annex 2 of the SPD:

“The site is extremely important to the character of the village. It provides an appropriate and tranquil setting for the church and the churchyard is important in views across Church Mead, which are pivotal in defining the character of Norton St Philip.”

The Church is listed Grade 2* and the churchyard contains many listed graves.

It forms a crucial link between the lower part of the village, the higher village across Church Mead and open countryside to the south. The Church and stone barn are excluded and shown in grey on the plan below.





NSP007 Paddock adjoining churchyard

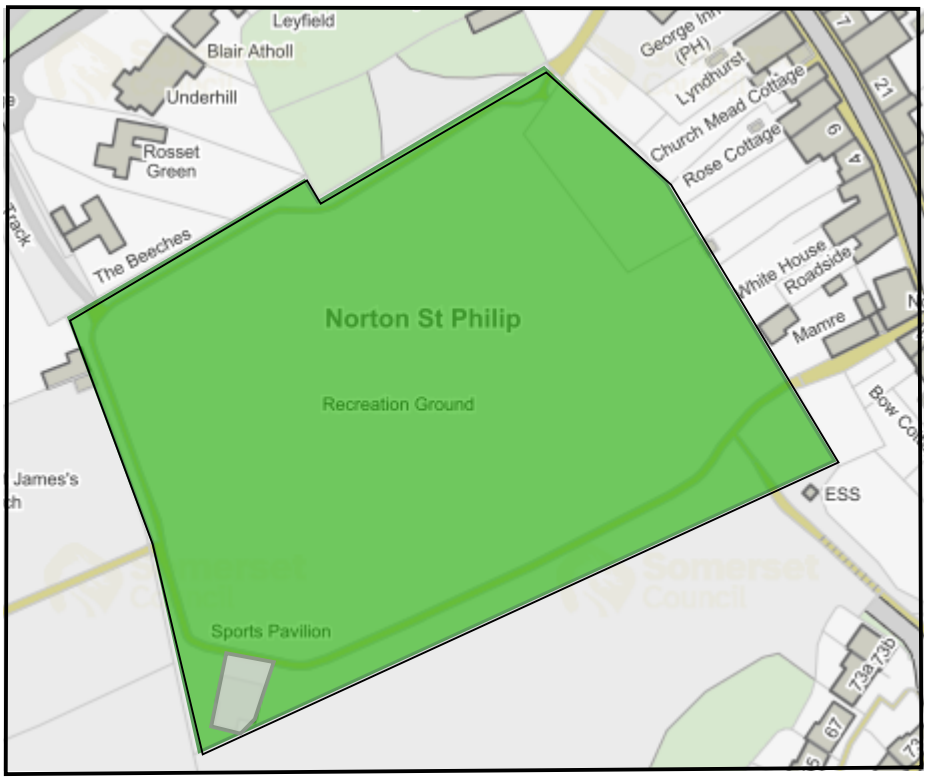
An OALS (006) and identified as stage 3 Greenspace. This area adjoining the Churchyard forms a crucial and inter-connected part of the setting of the Church and Church Mead. Views across the paddock from the George and Church Mead are highly valued.





NSP008 Church Mead

Identified as Stage 1 Greenspace. One of the most photographed and admired village greens in England, Church Mead is home to Norton St Philip Cricket Club. This site is of particular importance to the character of the village, as well as being a valuable and much-loved recreational facility. There are dry stone walls to 3 sides and trees to the fourth. The views across the site to the Parish Church, the Grade1 George Inn, gardens and the surrounding countryside are iconic and often used to exemplify the character of Norton St Philip. The sports Pavilion and its ancillary area of hardstanding are excluded and shown in grey on the plan below.





NSP009 Land to rear of The Malthouse

Identified as stage 3 Greenspace. It was originally the main part of the garden of the Malthouse, adjacent to The George. It plays an important role in setting of the village conservation area. It shares a boundary with Church Mead, defined by a stone wall. The garden forms part of the iconic setting of Church Mead and the Grade 1 listed George Inn. The dwelling together with a section of its curtilage which includes its area of ancillary hardstanding are excluded.

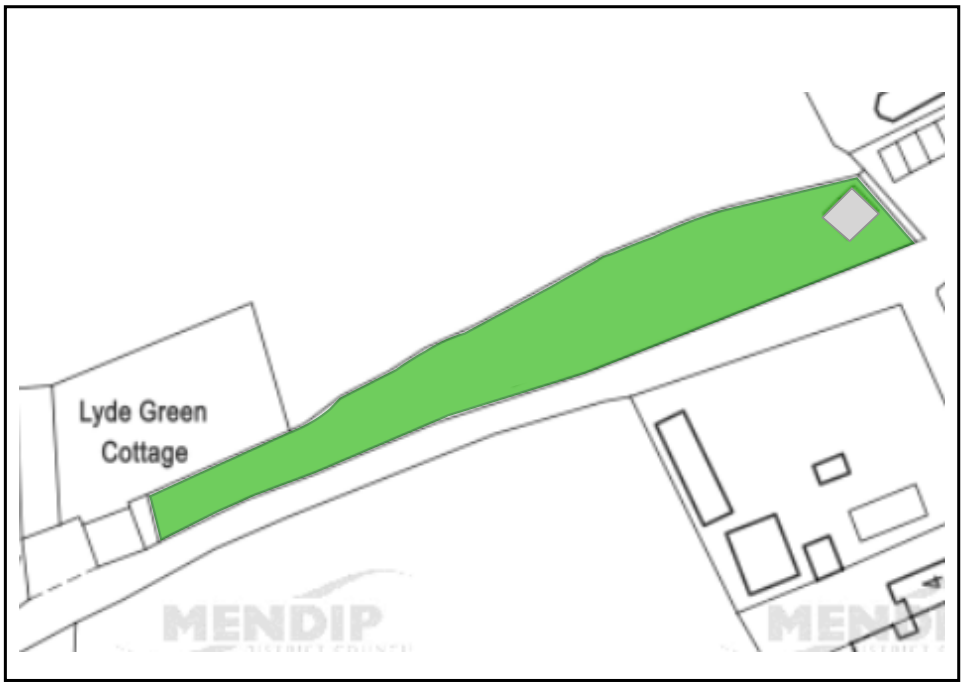




NSP010 Land to North of Chevers Lane

Identified as stage 3 Greenspace. This elongated sliver of land lies immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the village development limit. It forms a large part of one boundary of Chevers Lane - known locally as ‘Bloody Lane’ because it is the site of the 1685 battle between the King’s and Duke of Monmouth’s forces. The northern boundary abuts green belt and the southern boundary is adjacent to Great Orchard Greenspace NSP003). It thus provides an important green corridor between the green belt of the open countryside and the village as described in the NP Character Assessment.

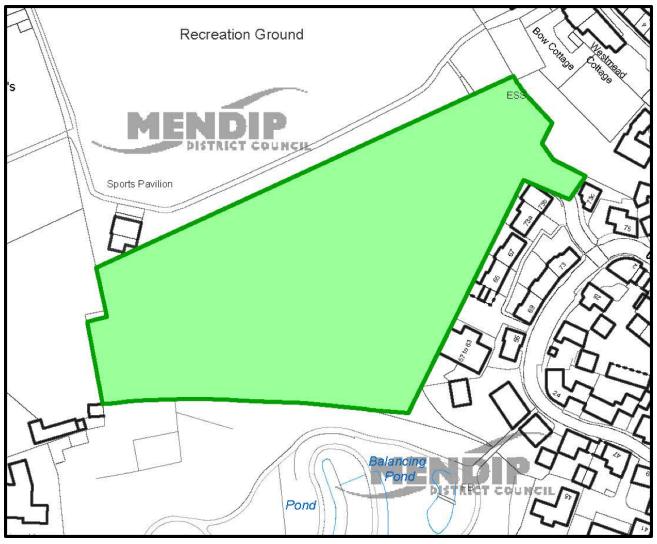
The two garages at the eastern end are excluded and shaded grey on the plan below.





NSP011 Fortescue Fields West

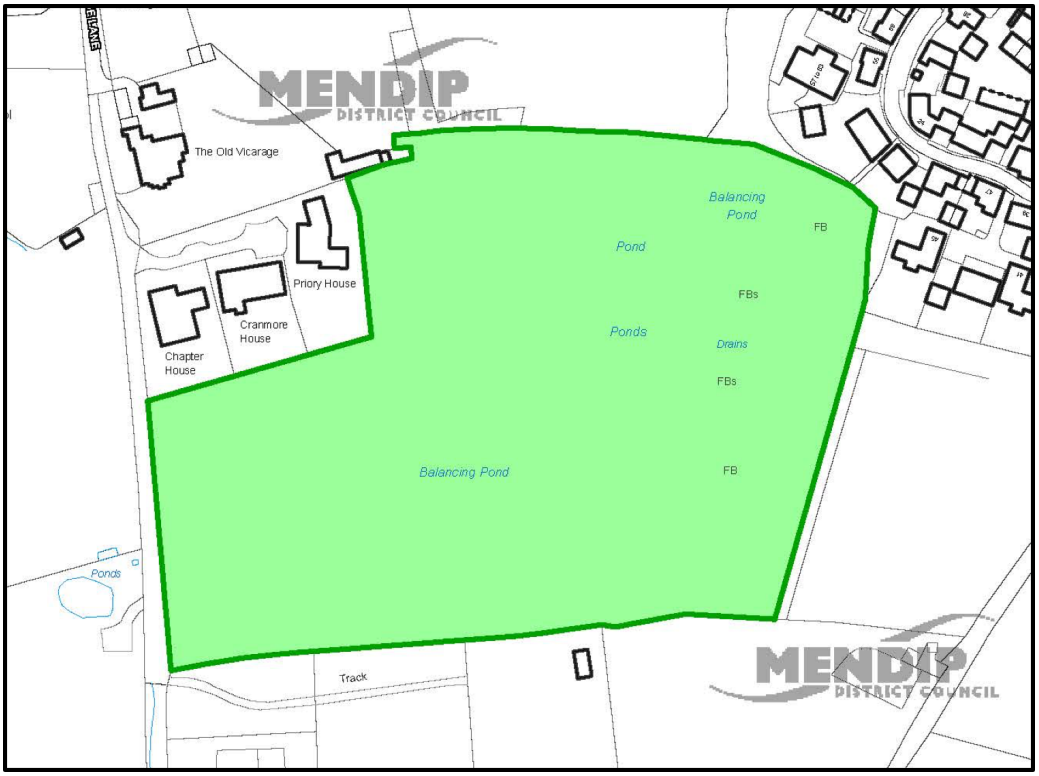
Identified as stage 3 Greenspace. This area makes a significant contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area and Grade 1 listed George Inn and Grade 2* Parish Church. It also plays an important part in the understanding of the historic evolution of the medieval village's two distinct character areas. The views from Church Mead, the George and Parish Church into the countryside are highly important to appreciate the rural setting which separates the two identified character areas. A copse of trees along its eastern boundary on elevated ground are important to the character of the site as well as providing some screening for the Fortescue Fields development. The site has a long planning history, with an Appeal decision in 2015 concluding that *"... the open undeveloped nature of the appeal site has a positive role in the significance of the Conservation Area, allowing for an appreciation and understanding of the historic evolution of Norton St Philip"*. Since then there have been 4 further applications; 2019/2976 and 2023/0247 were withdrawn and 2021/2776 was refused. 2023/0640 remains undetermined. Historic England commented on 2019/2976 noting that the proposed development *"would intrude into the rural setting of the conservation area, which has been consistent through its history, acting as a clear green buffer between the two historic groups allowing for the two centres to retain the sense of separation once more formally linked via the historic incremental development on Bell Hill. The rural setting within this section the conservation area is of fundamental importance as it reinforces the green buffer between the two historic centres and consequently, the conservation area's significance. "*





NSP012 Fortescue Fields South

Identified as Stage 2 Greenspace. Since their creation in 2015, the public and permissive footpaths and bridleway that cross this area have become part of a tranquil circular walk and village amenity. The drainage ponds and surrounding grassland/scrub provide a range wildlife habitats and frame views of the village and open countryside in all directions.





NSP013 Laverton or Mackley Triangle

Identified as stage 3 Greenspace. This triangular site lies partially within the village conservation area and is outside of but abuts the village development limit.It is bounded on 2 of its 3 sides by an ancient stone wall and important hedgerow and on the third side by a 15m wide tree belt planted as part of the conditions associated with the permitted development of Fortescue Fields. It is an important green corridor leading towards from the open countryside towards the village centre as described in the NP Character Assessment. In appeal decisions in 2001 and 2015 Planning Inspectors have particularly referenced that the

"hedges, glimpses of the field through the field gate and the impression of openness beyond all assist in giving the traveller along [Mackley] lane the perception of being in the countryside. The houses on the southern side of the lane near to the junction are well screened by banks, hedges, shrubs and trees and so do not obviously intrude….. In short, the land [the Triangle site]….appears to be part of the countryside and not the village" and

"the presence of the Laverton Triangle site helping the countryside to flow into this part of the village".

The 2015 Appeal Inspector also considered the impact of development of the Triangle on the Conservation Area, concluding that

"…Given that the significance of the Conservation Area derives in part from its rural landscape setting and the historic approaches through that setting, I am in no doubt that, in its anticipated restored state, the Triangle site would continue to play a role in allowing for an appreciation of the significance of the Conservation Area, contributing to its significance".

The Inspector also considered the significance of the (then unplanted) Tree Belt and stated that :

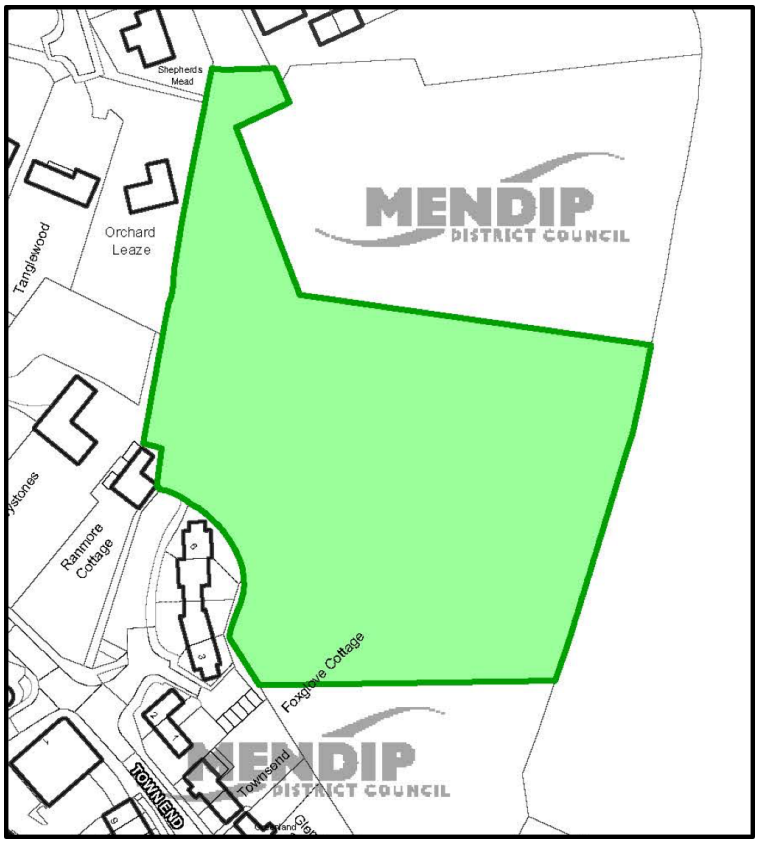
"…I am in no doubt that the replacement tree belt remains necessary in the anticipated location in connection with the Fortescue Fields development."





NSP014 Shepherds Mead

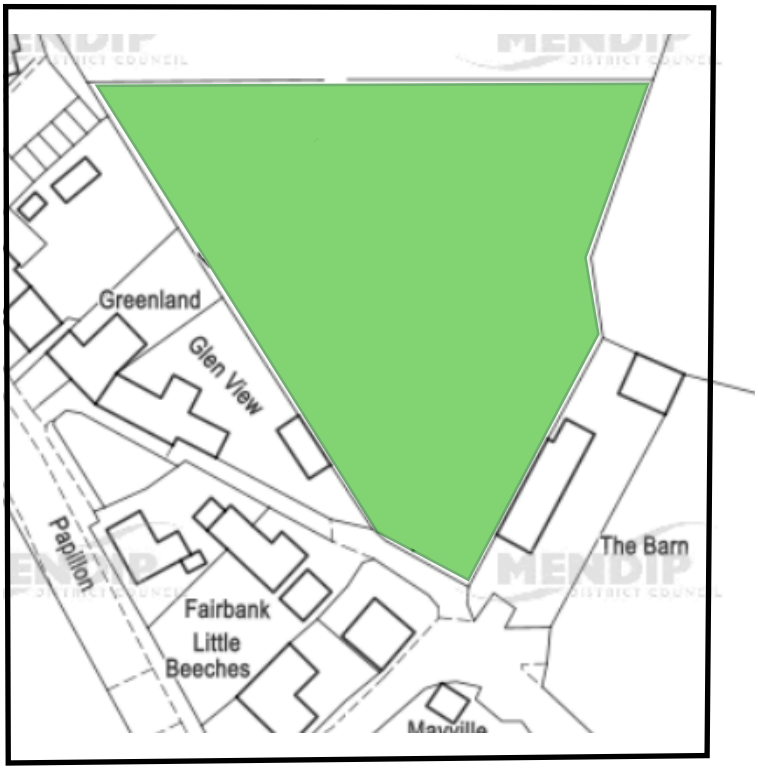
Identified as stage 3 Greenspace. The site abuts the village development limit, Conservation Area and Village Green. It includes three Public Rights of Way which are much used and valued, connecting the recent Longmead development with the High Street. It is an important open space in an elevated position on the ridge. It gives panoramic views across the village to the west and eastwards towards Salisbury Plain.





NSP015 Village Green on Shepherds Mead

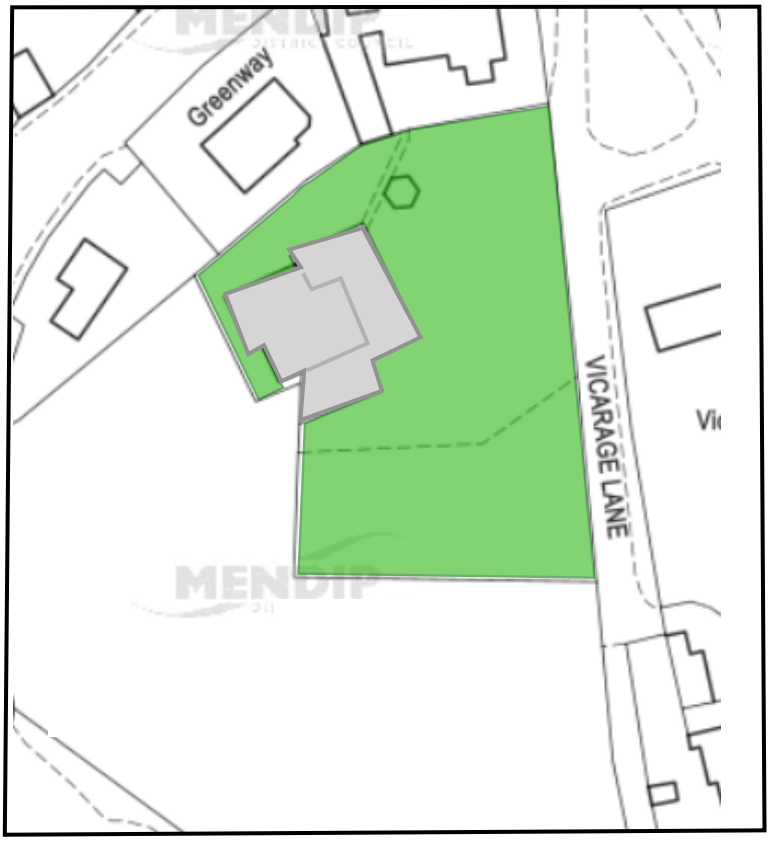
Identified as Stage 1 Greenspace, the Shepherds Mead Village Green was so designated by Somerset Council in 2018 following a Public Inquiry. It is an inverted triangle in shape and is accessed from Tellisford Lane and by 2 footpaths along its northern perimeter. The western perimeter abuts the village development with the rear gardens of properties at Town End. It is valued as a tranquil Greenspace where there are far reaching views to the west across the Mendips to Pen Hill and to the east to the Westbury White Horse and Salisbury Plain.





NSP016 School Playing field

Identified as Stage 2 Greenspace. The school playing field is situated adjacent to the school and within the Conservation Area but is outside the village development limit. The field makes a soft boundary between the built development and the open countryside and is an ideal secluded play area for the children of the school.
The pre school building and ancillary hardstanding are excluded and shown grey in the plan below.





Appendix 3
Definition of Local Need

When reference is made to “Local Need” this includes those who are in housing need* and meet one or more of the following criteria:

1) Have lived in the Parish for at least 10 years during their lifetime

2) Currently live in the Parish, having been resident in the Parish for at least two years

3) Currently in full time employment in the Parish or on a long-term contract of two years or more

4) Have close family already living in the Parish (parent, grandparent, child, sibling).

If, after a period of six months of marketing following practical completion of the housing offered at a reasonable price given current market conditions there is no prospective purchaser or tenant for a property, the geographical area for the above criteria will be widened initially to neighbouring parishes. **

If after a further 3 months the property has not been let or sold (as relevant to that property) then it shall become available to anyone in housing need subject to the criteria set out in Policy 4.

*Those in Housing Need are households whose needs are not met by the market ie unable to purchase/rent a home of the appropriate size on the open market. The criteria for this would be set by either the registered provider or Community Housing Trust.

** Neighbouring civil parishes are: Hemington; Lullington; Tellisford; Hinton Charterhouse; Wellow; Wingfield; Westwood.

Definitions of Affordable Housing (NPPF)

A) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions:

(a)the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable);

(b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and

(c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

B) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

C) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

D) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

APPENDIX 4
HOUSE PRICE DATA

Average House Prices 1/1/22-31/12/23 by type & area	Detached £k	Semi Detached £k	Terraced £k
Norton St Philip	713	470	528
Freshford	1355	863	520
Wellow	1600	1020	535
Frome	514	413	301
Midsomer Norton/Radstock	424	298	257
Bath	1317	665	532

Source: Zoopla/Rightmove

Average new build house price year to 30/9/23:

Somerset	**£315k**
Bath and NE Somerset	**£515k**
South Gloucestershire	**£405k**

Source: ONS

APPENDIX 5
HOUSE COMPLETIONS/ EXTANT PERMISSIONS 1/4/2006-31/3/2024

Completions 1/4/2006-31/3/2023 Application No/Site	1 & 2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed	Affordable	Age Restricted	Total
116732/001 Sunnyside			1			1
117257/002 Highbanks		2				2
105954/009 Longmead		2	4			6
043594/037 Fortescue	3	5	2	8		10
105954/009 Longmead			2			2
121374 Fairbank		1				1
2012/1029 Fortescue	2					2
2010/2725 Old Forge	3					3
2010/0493 Fortescue		5	4			9
2013/1855 Commercial units, Fortescue			2			2
2010/0493 Fortescue	14	4	10		14	28
2015/2521 Bell Hill	1					1
2010/0493 Fortescue			6			6
2013/0063 Foma			3			3
2015/1517 Longmead			3			3
2016/0947 Market Bldng, Fortescue	1					1
2017/1380/REM Sth of Longmead	14		15		14(+1 Wardens not built)	29
2017/1380 Land to sth of Longmead			2			2
2020/1120 Longmead Close		1				1
Less: Demolished 105954/009 & 2013/0063			(2)			(2)
TOTAL COMPLETIONS IN PERIOD	**38**	**21**	**51**	8	14 *	**110**
EXTANT PERMISSIONS AT 31/3/24						
2021/0248 Former RC Church	4	1				5
2022/2191 Norwood Farm	1	3				4
TOTAL COMPLETIONS/EXTANT PERMISSIONS	**43**	**25**	**51**	8	28*	**119**

***NB** 14 x 2 bed dwellings originally restricted to 'Over 55' had age restriction lifted on appeal in 2016. (APP/Q3305/W/16/3144605 & 3144619).

APPENDIX 6
List of Acronyms & Abbreviations referred to in this document

Abbreviation	Full phrase
NSP	Norton St Philip
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
CA	Character Assessment for NSP
PC	Parish Council
NSPNP	Norton St Philip Neighbourhood Plan
MDC	Mendip District Council (now part of Somerset Council)
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LPP1	Local Plan Part 1 (Mendip District Council)
LPP2	Local Plan Part 2 (Mendip District Council)
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework (published 2018 and updated 2023)
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LGS	Local Green Space
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
HRA	Habitat Regulations Assessment
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
BaNES	Bath and North East Somerset
CAA	Conservation Area Appraisal (Mendip DC October 2007)
LED	Light Emitting Diode
OALS	Open Area of Local Significance
Q2 and Q3	Title given to areas of ‘Open Space of Visual Significance’
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
NSP1	Site formerly allocated in pre JR LPP2
JR	Judicial Review
SUDS	Sustainable Drainage System