



SUTTON BENGER AND DRAYCOT CERNE

Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020 - 2035

Submission Version v3.0
March 2024

Produced by Sutton Benger Parish Council and Sutton Benger NDP Group
in collaboration with
Bluestone Planning LLP

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Sources

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Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Protecting the Built and Rural Environment

Policy SB1:	Landscape – The Rural Character
Policy SB2:	Landscape – Maintaining the Separation of Settlements
Policy SB3:	Important Views
Policy SB4:	Trees and Hedgerows
Policy SB5:	Biodiversity and Net Gain
Policy SB6:	Flooding and Drainage
Policy SB6.1:	Conversion of Rural Buildings to Employment Uses
Policy SB6.2:	Renewable Energy
Policy SB6.3:	Polytunnels
Policy SB7:	Design
Policy SB8:	Heritage and Conservation
Policy SB9:	Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Housing

Policy SB10:	Infill Development
Policy SB11:	Affordable and Rural Workers Housing
Policy SB12:	Dwelling Extensions

Transport and Accessibility

Policy SB13:	New Development and Highway Implications
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Open Space and Rights of Way

Policy SB14:	Local Green Spaces
Policy SB15:	Protection of Existing Rights of Way and Cycle Network

Better Facilities for Local People

Policy SB16:	Loss or Change to Community Facilities
Policy SB16A:	Communications Infrastructure
Policy SB17:	Economic Development and Rural Industries

Foreword

This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been developed by residents and others within the Parish of Sutton Benger. For the purpose of this document, it will be referred to as the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Development Plan (SBNDP). The purpose of the SBNDP is to clearly record the views and opinions of the Parishioners and their collective aspiration regarding future developments within and adjacent to our Parish boundary. As importantly, the Parishioners understand that the NDP will form a cornerstone to any future planning decisions and believe it important that their views are appropriately represented.

The SBNDP has taken well over two years to complete and touches on many aspects of Parish life. The SBNDP has been drafted following guidance from Wiltshire Council and is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

The SBNDP considers potential development and other issues over the until 2035 but recognises the significant changes that have occurred within the Parish over the period from 2016 to date.

Throughout the process, a number of individuals have supported the dedicated SBNDP Core Team including:

- Jo Watchman
- Paul Chartier
- Kathy Smedley
- Hugh Bellars
- David Thompson
- Ruth Gaunt
- Peter Oldale
- Martin Verspeak
- Michael Hogben

as well as others who have made a valued contribution to this document:

- Neil Roynon
- Amanda Gregory
- Lesley Cadger
- William McElhinney
- Rob MacNevin
- Iain Craig
- Jake West

Baz Worth Former Chairman, Sutton Benger NDP Core Group
Nicola Hayward, Current Chairman

Section 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan aims to give local people more say and influence about how their local area evolves and develops. This was introduced in April 2012 via the Localism Act 2011, which in turn amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (referred to as the Act). This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Act.

Through Neighbourhood Plans, parish councils are able to inform what new development should look like and what infrastructure should be provided and to introduce measures to preserve and enhance landscape and townscape quality and character. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance website explains that:

*"Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area."*¹

1.2 Submitting Body

This plan is submitted by the Sutton Benger Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

1.3 Land Use and Non-Land Use Issues

Neighbourhood Plans must deal with the development and use of land². This is because once a Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' (i.e., it passes a referendum and becomes part of the statutory development plan), decisions about whether development should go ahead must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate to the contrary³. This means that development proposals must follow policy unless there are good reasons not to.

Although this is a fundamental principle of neighbourhood planning, a number of other issues have been raised during the various public consultation exercises which are not necessarily land use based but which are nevertheless very important to the local community.

1.4 Basic Conditions

Under the terms of the governing legislation⁴ Neighbourhood Plans must comply with what are known as 'Basic Conditions'. These Basic Conditions are as follows:

¹ MHCLG, 'Planning Practice Guidance' Last Updated 25-10-20, Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 41-001-20190509. Revision date: 09 05 2019

² Section 19(1B-1E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

³ Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

⁴ Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to Neighbourhood Plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan);
- The making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)
- The making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations;
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (plan);
- The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.

Schedule 4B (8(6)) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) also indicates that it is necessary to consider whether the neighbourhood plan is “compatible with the Convention rights”. The interpretation section (s.17) in Schedule 4B confirms that “the Convention rights” has the same meaning as in the Human Rights Act 1998.

1.5 Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area

The Neighbourhood Plan Area contains the entirety of Sutton Benger Parish, which encompasses the villages of Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne and the wider rural area. The Parish is located in north Wiltshire bordered on the north side by the M4 motorway and on the east by the river Avon as shown in figure 1.

In accordance with the Regulations⁵, Wiltshire Council (the Local Planning Authority) publicised the application from Sutton Benger Parish Council and advertised a consultation period beginning in 14th Sept 2015 and ending on 28th October 2015. The application was approved by Wiltshire Council on 9th December 2015 and the designation of the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan Area is approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning⁶.

⁵ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations PART 2, 2012 UK Statutory Instruments, 2012 No. 637
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/part/2/made>

⁶ in accordance with section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended and as shown on Wiltshire Council website
<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-neighbourhood-latest-news#S>

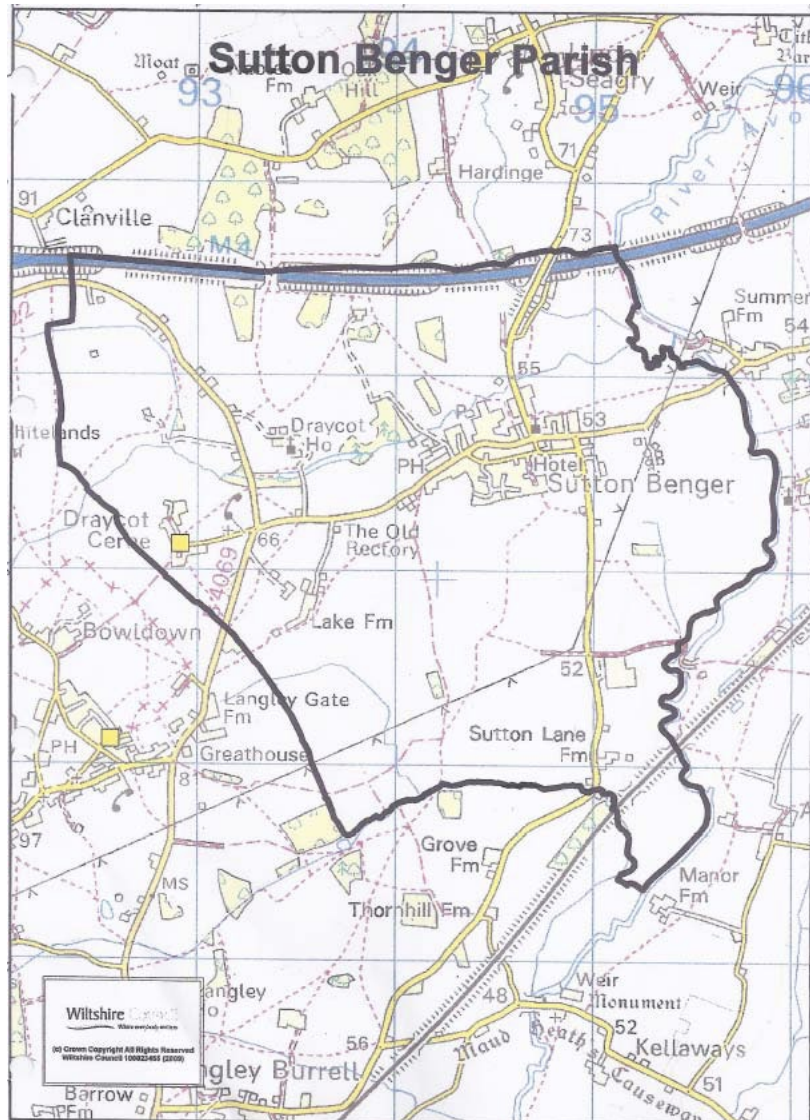


Figure 1 - Map of the Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area as agreed by Wiltshire Council

1.6 Relationship with the Development Plan

The adopted 'Development Plan' for the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan comprises a number of different documents now under the umbrella of Wiltshire Council as a unitary authority.

These include the Wiltshire Core Strategy⁷ incorporating saved policies from district local plans⁸, Chippenham Site Allocations Plan⁹, Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan¹⁰, Minerals and Waste Plans¹¹ and made Neighbourhood Plans.

⁷ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

⁸ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-saved-policies>

⁹ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-site-allocation-plan-chippenham>

¹⁰ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-whsap>

¹¹ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-minerals-waste>

A number of plans are currently in preparation, which include the Wiltshire Local Plan review. This aims to set out a positive vision for the future of Wiltshire for the period to 2036 and a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. This will eventually replace the current range of Adopted Local Plan Documents.

At the time of writing, it is anticipated that the publication of plan for pre-submission consultation and preparation for submission following consultation will take place between late 2022 and spring 2023, with adoption by late 2023.

The current adopted Local Plan Documents contains the strategic policy framework for development in the parish.

The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan will complement the strategic policies in the development plan and, as noted above, one of the Basic Conditions of a Neighbourhood Plan is that it is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plans deal with non-strategic planning matters.

Once 'made' (i.e., approved following a referendum) this Neighbourhood Plan will also form a part of the development plan.

1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment

Wiltshire Council confirmed that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Appropriate Assessment was not required in a screening determination dated October 2022 and February 2023 respectively.

1.8 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

Sutton Benger Parish Council, as the Neighbourhood Development Plan authority, will be responsible for maintaining and formally revisiting the NDP. The intention is to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan on a yearly basis, and to review the plan as necessary.

The SBNDP is for a fifteen-year period from 2020 until 2035, which will tie in with the Local Plan Review. In this regard, the SBNDP is working closely with the Policy Team at Wiltshire Council to ensure that the plan reflects those strategic objectives as consulted upon to date.

A review may also be triggered in response to an external change, such as revision of current Wiltshire Local Plan (including any deviation from work undertaken to date) / publication of new or draft national planning policy / or another event making a significant impact upon the content of policies. The Plan will be reviewed against measurable outcomes in order to determine whether the SBNDP remains relevant and effectively addresses the needs of the local community, or whether any policies need updating.

Where changes (for example revised National or District level planning policies) indicate that major alterations to the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be necessary, these are likely to require full public consultation and examination, as with the current Neighbourhood Plan.

Partial reviews will also need to go through the same process. However, where changes are minor in nature and relate only to the supporting text or community aspirations there may be opportunities for a more limited review process to be undertaken in conjunction with the community and Wiltshire Council.

Section 2 Planning Policy Context

2.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in 2012 and was revised in February, June 2019, July 2021 and again in September 2023.

The document “*provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced*” (paragraph 1).

The central focus of the NPPF is achieving sustainable development, which incorporates economic, social and environmental objectives. The NPPF requires that these objectives be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans. In this respect, the NPPF is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans, and therein the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF.

The following paragraphs of the NPPF 2021 are especially relevant to the issues addressed by this Neighbourhood Plan:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (paragraph 84)
- Good design (paragraphs 126-136)
- Protecting healthy communities (paragraphs 8, 92)
- Protecting local green spaces (paragraphs 101-103)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraphs 174-188)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraphs 189-208)
- Neighbourhood planning (paragraphs 12-14, 28- 30, 37, 66, 67, 70)

2.2 Local Policy

Wiltshire Council is the planning authority for the Plan area as set out in paragraph 1.6. The essence of the overall planning strategy for the former district within the now Unitary area is as described in the various adopted Local Plan Documents. Unfortunately, many of these were written some time ago now as shown below:

Prior to becoming the unitary authority of Wiltshire Council, the Plan Area was located within North Wiltshire District. A number of saved policies from the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 were in continued use beyond 2009 (as set out by the Secretary of State in June 2009). The majority of these were subsequently superseded by later Development Plan documents.

The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document ('the plan') was formally adopted on 20 January 2015 (submitted to the Secretary of State on 10 July 2012 for examination). It covers the whole of Wiltshire and sets out the Council's spatial vision, key objectives and overall principles for development in the County over the plan period 2006 to 2026.

The WCS identifies six key challenges for Wiltshire:

- economic growth to reduce levels of out-commuting from many of Wiltshire's settlements;
- climate change opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the consequences of a changing climate;
- providing new homes to complement economic growth and a growing population;
- planning for more resilient communities;
- safeguarding the environmental quality of the County whilst accommodating new growth; and
- infrastructure investment to meet the needs of the growing population and economy.

Chippenham Site Allocations Plan was adopted in May 2017 and whilst is not directly relevant to the Plan Area, it is one of the documents that make up the adopted Development Plan.

More recently is the adoption of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, which was approved by Council on 25 February 2020.

Finally, as a Unitary Authority, the Wiltshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan also forms part of the Adopted Local Plan for the Plan Area. This includes:

- The two separate Minerals and Waste Core Strategies (both adopted June 2009) sets out the spatial vision, key objectives and overall principles for development covering minerals provision up to 2026
- The Minerals Development Control Policies Development Control Policies (DPD) (adopted September 2009)
- The Waste Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted September 2009)
- The Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Local Plan (adopted May 2013) sets out a schedule of seven sites for future sand and gravel extraction over the period up to 2026.

The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review¹² which is currently targeting adoption in 2024 Q4, in particular considers:

- A new spatial strategy for how to accommodate new homes and employment development
- The level of appropriate growth to be allocated to each location
- Improving rural communities in a way to meet housing needs

¹² <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation>

- Addressing climate change
- Biodiversity net gain

Many emerging policies are of direct relevance to the NP area, and have been taken into consideration in the drafting of the policies.

The consultation draft consisted of a number of topic papers which show the main direction of travel for future policies. The Wiltshire Local Plan is currently (at the time of writing), at the Regulation 19 consultation stage, which runs from Wednesday 27 September to Wednesday 22 November.

2.3 Planning Policy Issues for the Plan Area

Settlement Hierarchy

Core Policy 1 of the Core Strategy (WCS) identifies five types of settlements, namely:

- Principal Settlements
- Market Towns
- Local Service Centres
- Large Villages
- Small Villages

Of these, Sutton Benger is defined as a 'Large Village'. This means that the level of development expected should be *"limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and improve housing opportunities, services and facilities."*

The main objective of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP) was to support the delivery of new housing as previously set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

The focus of the Plan was to:

1. *"Revise, where necessary, settlement boundaries in relation to the Principal Settlements of Salisbury and Trowbridge, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages. Further information is available below"*
2. *"Allocate new sites for housing to ensure the delivery of homes across the plan period in order to maintain a five-year land supply in each of Wiltshire's three Housing Market Areas over the period to 2026."*

Settlement Boundary

The Sutton Benger settlement boundary was shown on figure 2 below. One of the key objectives of the settlement review was:

“To ensure there is a clear definition to the extent of the built-up areas at Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages”

This was undertaken using a consistent methodology set out in Topic Paper 1: Settlement Boundary Review Methodology.

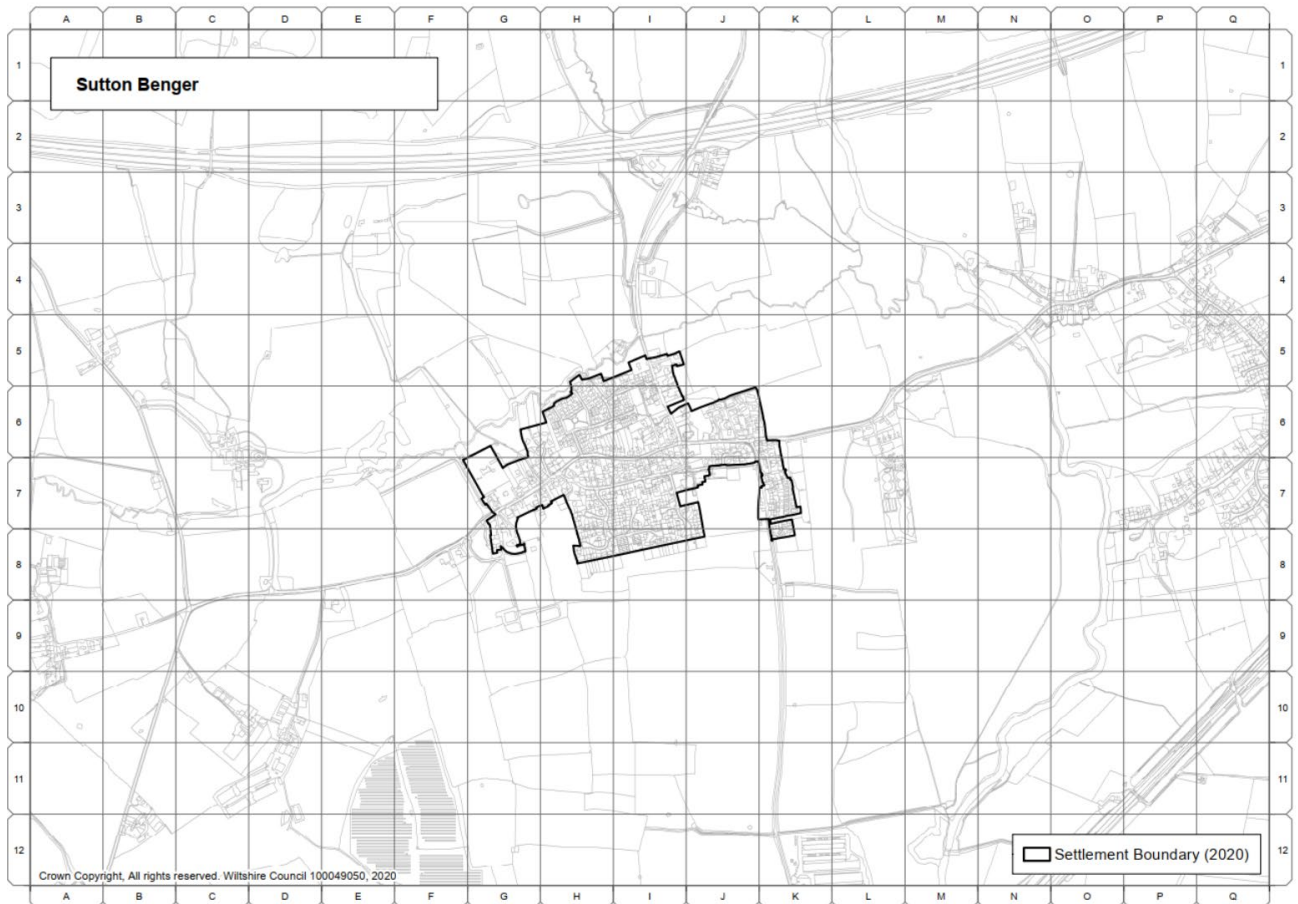


Figure 2 - Map of the Settlement Boundary as set by Wiltshire Council

The WHSAP also clarified in paragraph 2.9 that:

“Other than in circumstances as permitted by other policies listed in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS development will not be permitted outside the defined settlement boundaries.”

Equally it clarified that such boundaries could be reviewed and amended by the community via the Neighbourhood Plan process, should it be necessary.

The emerging Local Plan seeks to retain the existing hierarchy of settlements with no change for Sutton Benger as a ‘Large Village’.

Housing

The Emerging Spatial Strategy¹³ sets out that there are now four different Housing Market Areas (HMA) to cover each of the main settlements. The market areas are examined based on the needs of the population with regard to housing and location of employment. From this, using the Standard Method (as set out by the Government) this gives a minimum housing requirement for the new Local Plan period. Taking into account more locally specific information in a Local Housing Need Assessment, this then gives an upper figure, which should build in a contingency. In this regard, Sutton Benger falls within the Chippenham area which has a standard methodology figure of 17,410 new dwellings between 2016-2036 and a locally assessed need figure of 20,400 further dwellings. Much of these new dwellings will be directed towards Chippenham itself, with growth filtering down through the settlement hierarchy in this market area. The emphasis will firstly be on the use of brownfield sites, but likely to result in large urban extensions at Melksham and Chippenham.

This approach is likely to lead to an expectation of the continuation of the limited growth approach for large villages including Sutton Benger.

Notwithstanding the above, there has been considerable housing development in the Plan Area during the last ten years, further information on this is set out in the housing policy section.

It should also be noted that the emerging Local Plan Review supporting document entitled Empowering Rural Communities¹⁴ sets out:

“3. Planning controls protect the attractiveness of Wiltshire’s open countryside. They prevent sporadic development and manage widespread speculative pressures for new buildings. There is a presumption against granting planning permission outside designated settlements in all but a limited range of circumstances. Nearly all circumstances revolve around meeting local needs; such as to provide affordable homes and for local jobs and services.”

This should be balanced however with sustainable growth and the document sets out in paragraph 8 how villages should:

“...grow in ways that sustain them. This means they should continue to accommodate new homes both on a scale that matches their size and importance and in ways that best meet each community’s needs.”

The extracted table below¹⁴ shows the indicative housing requirement for the Sutton Benger Plan Area.

¹³ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation#Emerging%20Spatial%20Strategy%C2%A0>

¹⁴ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation#Empowering%20Rural%20Communities>

Outputs for Large Villages

Table 2.4: Chippenham HMA Large Village indicative housing requirements

Large Villages Chippenham HMA			
Settlement	Baseline indicative housing requirement 2016-2036	Annualised baseline housing requirement in dwellings per annum	Completions (2016-19) & Commitments (1 April 2019)
Sutton Benger	55	2.8	52

Figure 3 - indicative housing requirement as set out in the emerging Spatial Strategy

The document also notes that housing built since 2016 and any outstanding consents may already meet or exceed those figures set out in the table. As of May 22nd 2022 the recent Gate Farm development of 4 houses has meant that 56 houses have been provided in Sutton Benger.

It should be noted however that there has been public consultation on this Local Plan Review, with significant opposition to the potential for large scale urban extensions as set out. Therefore, at this stage, the housing numbers and scale of development in the Chippenham Market Area has very limited weight.

Further details are set out in the housing policy section.

Employment

The Emerging Spatial Strategy shows a need for 9 hectares of additional employment land in the Chippenham Market Area.

Of particular relevance to the Plan Area is the employment area adjoining junction 17 of the M4. This area of employment development was originally considered as strategically essential to the wider area and not just the Chippenham Market Area. Any future development here would need to accord with Core Policy 34 of the current Wiltshire Core Strategy. Due to its location on the edge of the parish, any further development here could have considerable local impact and may need new infrastructure. Indeed, a number of applications within the Plan Area have now come forward in recent years.

The adjacent Materials Recovery Facility/Waste Transfer Station, Local Recycling and Waste Treatment site is also a significant issue for the Plan Area. Although on the northwesternmost edge of the parish, the facility, when combined with the employment sites generates significant traffic and noise problems for the Plan Area.

The Emerging Spatial Strategy also sets out:

2.8 The impact of COVID-19 is also likely to increase home working permanently, reducing net out commuting to other settlements and boosting local demand for many goods and services."

These changes are likely to require a different approach in some situations and will need to be reflected in policy wording.

Further details are set out in the employment policy section.

Flooding and Drainage

The River Avon and its Tributaries run through the parish and when combined with the amount of surface water flooding, ensuring that the issues are not exacerbated is key.

Further details are set out in the flooding and drainage policy section.

Design, Heritage and Conservation

The Plan Area has a considerable number of designated heritage assets and buildings of local importance. It is essential that these are identified, and adequate measures are put in place to ensure that their significance is secured for the future.

The Plan Area has a number of different character areas, a Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and a Design Code (Appendix 2) and a has been produced to ensure that the individual and often unique character is maintained and enhanced.

Further details are set out in the Design, Heritage, and Conservation policy section.

Climate Change and The Natural Environment

In February 2019 Wiltshire Council acknowledged a climate emergency and agreed to seek to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

As part of the Local Plan Review an evidence base document entitled 'Addressing climate change and biodiversity net gain through the Local Plan – raising the ambition'¹⁵

Paragraph 2.3 of the document sets out:

"In Wiltshire, long-term meteorological predictions⁹ indicate hotter, drier summers and milder, wetter winters are expected. There will also likely be an increase in the magnitude and frequency of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods and droughts. This could have far-reaching social, environmental and economic impacts and will require appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures."

¹⁵ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation#Addressing%20Climate%20Change%20and%20Biodiversity%20Net%20Gain>

The NPPF states that '*Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.*'¹⁶

Given the adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy there have been considerable changes. The Local Plan Review addresses these points and will lead to new revised policies in the future.

These are likely to cover:

1. Tackling flood risk and promoting sustainable water management
2. Enhancing green/blue infrastructure and biodiversity
3. Delivering sustainable design and construction methods in the built environment
4. Encouraging sustainable renewable energy generation and management
5. Promoting sustainable transport, active travel and improving air quality

Many of these aspects will therefore be covered by the Local Plan and may not need further detail to be included at a Neighbourhood Plan level in terms of specific policies. Instead, these aspects will be woven throughout the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The sustainability themes and objectives table in the evidence base highlights how the policies have been derived from a full analysis of sustainability themes and objectives.

The Emerging Spatial Strategy also sets out:

"2.6 The impacts of COVID-19 are renewing our attention on how well our existing urban areas function. There are immediate lessons for designing space for recreation and exercise and create the right environment to encourage people to walk and cycle. Other impacts may be less obvious or are uncertain.

These changes are likely to require a different approach in some situations and will need to be reflected in policy wording.

With specific regard to Neighbourhood Planning the Emerging Spatial Strategy states:

"Delivery Principles

4. To support the Local Plan, each community will be encouraged to determine themselves where additional development takes place by the preparation of a neighbourhood plan. A task for all neighbourhood plans will be to help manage the use of brownfield land for new uses and for additional homes."

The following policies taken from the aforementioned Development Plan Documents are considered to be pertinent to the Neighbourhood Plan and covering various topic areas. The

¹⁶ www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/14-meeting-the-challenge-of-climate-change-flooding-and-coastal-change

previously saved Local Plan policies are shown in italics and these are now superseded, but helpful to show the policy progression over time relevant to the area in these respects.

Biodiversity

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Water resources and flood risk

Core Policy 68: Water Resources

Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

Climatic factors

Core Policy 41: Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy

Core Policy 42: Standalone renewable energy installations

Landscape/ townscape

Core Policy 51: Landscape

Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure

Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

NE14: Trees and the control of new development

Healthy communities

CF2: Leisure facilities and open space

CF3: Provisions of open space

Education and skills

CF1: Local community and education facilities

Economy and enterprise

Core Policy 34 Additional employment land

Core Policy 36 Economic regeneration

See also Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review - Emerging Spatial Strategy Topic Paper

Air quality and environmental pollution

Core Policy 55: Air Quality

Core Policy 56: Contaminated Land

NE18 Noise and pollution

Historic environment

Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Population and housing

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy

Core Policy 43: Providing Affordable Homes

Core Policy 44 Rural exceptions sites* (see emerging revision)

Core Policy 45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs

Core Policy 46: Meeting the Needs of Wiltshire's Vulnerable and Older People

Core Policy 47 Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers

H4: Residential Development in The Open Countryside

See also Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review - Emerging Spatial Strategy and Empowering Rural Communities Topic Papers

Inclusive communities

Core Policy 48: Supporting Rural Life

Core Policy 49: Protection of rural services and community facilities

Transport

Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport

Core Policy 61: Transport and Development

Core Policy 62: Development Impacts on the Transport network

Section 3 Process Summary

3.1 Neighbourhood Plan Development Process

Figure 4 illustrates the steps involved in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan has reached the stage of submission. This is a key stage formal stage of final public consultation providing an opportunity for the community to comment on the latest draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.

At this submission stage, the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents will be published for consultation by Wiltshire Council for a minimum of six weeks. All comments will be taken into account (including those submitted at pre-submission stage) by an Independent Examiner for consideration as part of the examination process.

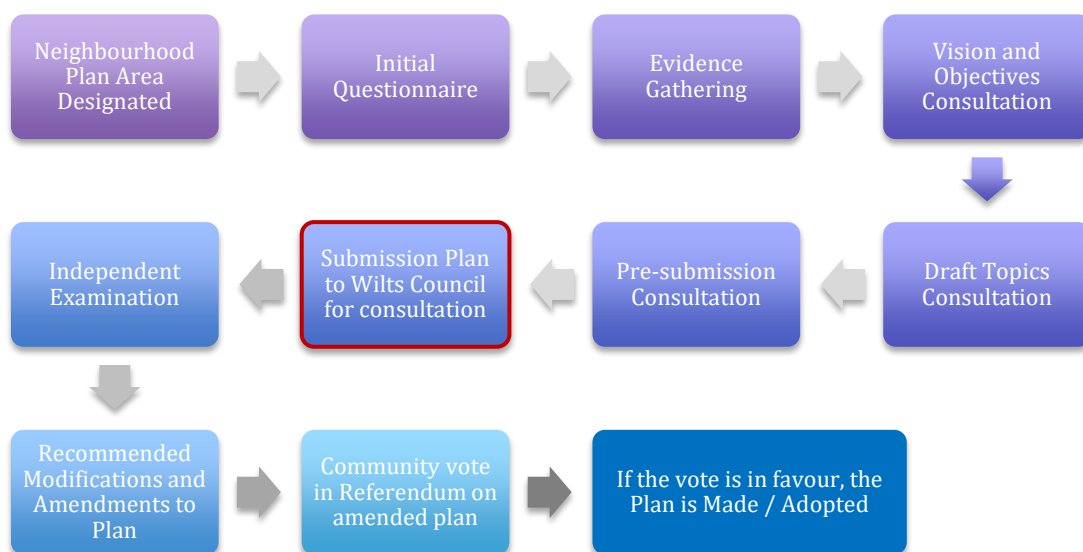


Figure 4 - Diagram of the Neighbourhood Plan Process

Sutton Benger Parish Council resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Sutton Benger Parish in 2015 and opted to do so in conjunction with the wider community through a steering group comprising Parish councillors and other residents. The Core Group Committee began work in mid-2015.

From the earliest stages of public consultation (notably a public meeting attended by over 70 residents on September 30th 2015) the primary areas of focus were clear for our Neighbourhood Development Plan and have changed little from those now set out in the Vision and Objectives in section x:

3.2 Community Engagement

Communication and consultation have played a major role in formulating our Plan. A communication programme was established to:

- promote a high degree of awareness of the NDP, its objectives and scope;
- encourage all stakeholders to contribute to the development of the Plan;
- promote consultation events;
- provide regular updates on the status of the Plan and its development.

3.3 Publicity & Engagement

The NPD Core Group has made considerable efforts to connect and engage with a very wide range of residents and stakeholders.

Methods of engagement include:

1. **Parish newsletter:** regular updates in this monthly publication, which is circulated to all homes in the Parish.
2. **Facebook:** a dedicated Facebook Group has ensured easy, speedy and very widespread engagement with an estimated 30 per cent of homes in the Parish.
3. **Web:** dedicated website to cover the NDP; meeting minutes; draft policies and related content. This has been regularly updated. [\[Link\]](#)
4. **Hard copy information folder:** Ideal for those without internet access and was held at the Post Office.
5. **Poster sites:** Village Hall; Parish Notice Boards; Bell House Hotel; Post Office; Wellesley Arms.
6. **Public meetings:** publicised through all channels outlined above.
7. **Hard copy leafletting:** Flyer drop to all homes and businesses in the Parish (to raise awareness of all Public Meetings).
8. **Parish Council:** NDP updates are given at every Parish Council meeting; these meetings are open to the public and the minutes are available on the Parish Council website.
9. **Annual Village Meeting:** Held in May every year the SBNDP team aims to give a presentation and update to the attendees (it is open to all) followed by a Q&A session.

Please refer to the separate document 'SB NDP Consultation Report V0.1' for details of all Public Meetings & Consultations.

Village website

The Parish Council runs an excellent website as a vehicle for providing notifications and updates. It also provides much useful information about the village to both residents and visitors, under headings such as: Parish Council, Sports, Social and Local History; as well as: Diary, Notice Board, Neighbourhood Development Plan, Local Services, Church, School amongst others.

Social Media

The Parish benefits from a number of lively and active Facebook groups; this includes a managed / facilitated Facebook Group for NDP News and progress and a Village Facebook group which provides a route for the quick and wide dissemination of information.

Village notice boards

There are two notice boards in the Parish to inform villagers of Parish Council news. The Village Hall and the Post Office (prior to its closure in October 2023) also each provide a much-needed 'hub' for posters, information and communications relating to non-council news.

Parish News

The Parish News is delivered monthly to all homes in the Parishes of Sutton Benger, Christian Malford, Seagry and Tytherton Kellaways and is the main means of communication in the village.

3.4 Evidence base overview

The bibliography of documents referred to in compiling this Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the location of evidence base documentation, is set out in detail in the supporting document 'Sutton Benger NDP Evidence Base Overview V0.1'

Section 4: Vision and Objectives

4.1 Vision

Our vision for the Plan Area is:

To maintain the rural character and landscape of the Parish (Plan Area), whilst supporting sustainable development that is of an appropriate scale and design to benefit the local community.

The table below sets out our vision and how it is fed through into topics and objectives identified by the community consultation work.

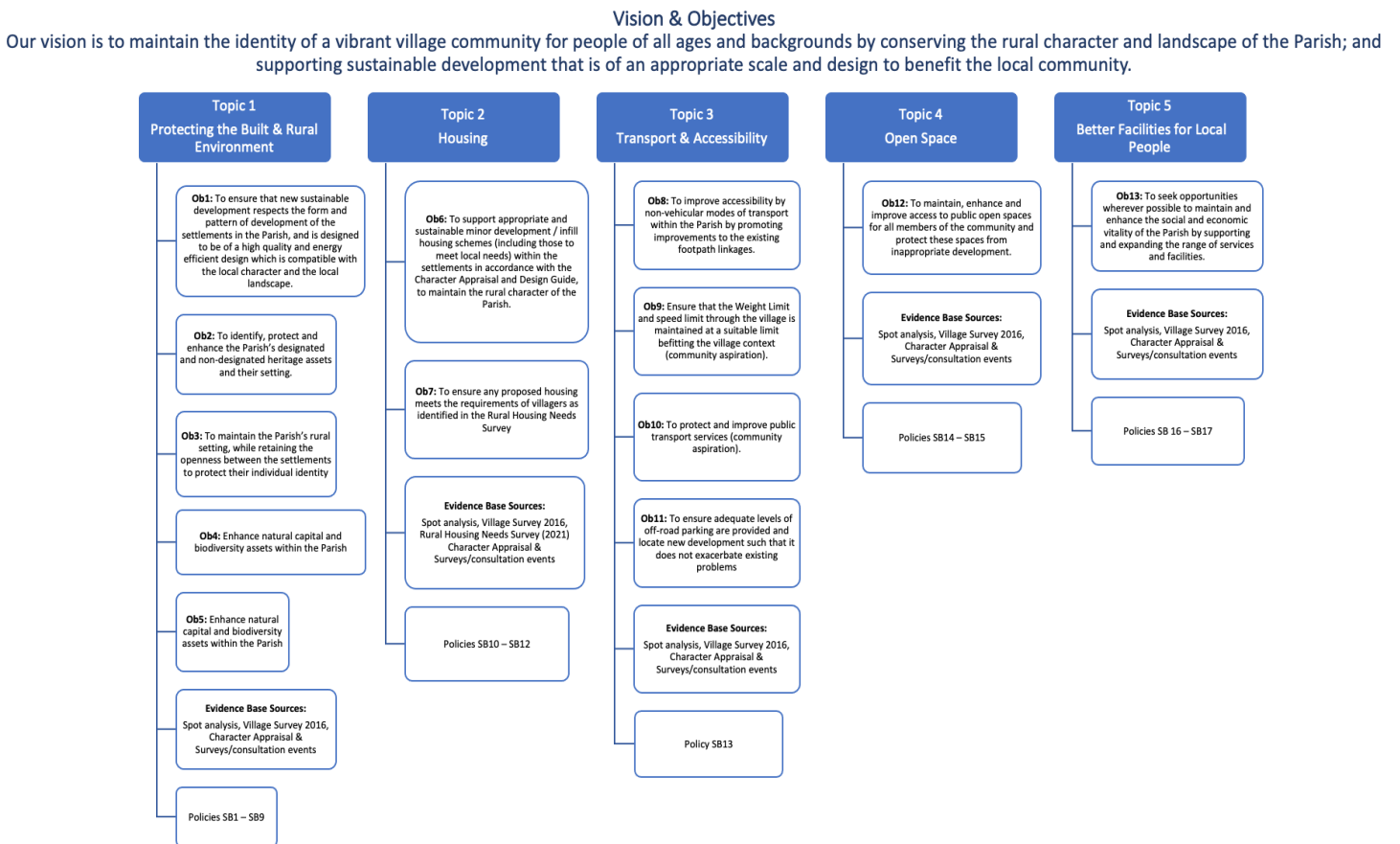


Figure 5 - Vision and Objectives

4.2 Objectives

Topic 1 - Protecting the Built and Rural Environment

- a) To ensure that new sustainable development respects the form and pattern of development of the settlements in the Parish and is designed to be of a high quality and energy efficient design which is compatible with the local character and the local landscape.
- b) To identify, protect and enhance the Parish's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.
- c) To maintain the Parish's rural setting, while retaining the openness between the settlements to protect their individual identity
- d) Enhance natural capital and biodiversity assets within the Parish
- e) To reduce existing and future flood risk to Sutton Benger and surrounding communities

Topic 2 - Housing

- a) To support appropriate and sustainable minor development / infill housing schemes (including those to meet local needs) within the settlements in accordance with the Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 2), and to maintain the rural character of the Parish.
- b) To ensure any proposed housing meets the requirements of villagers as identified in the Rural Housing Needs Survey

Topic 3 - Transport & Accessibility

- a) To improve accessibility by non-vehicular modes of transport within the Parish by promoting improvements to the existing footpath linkages.
- b) Ensure that the Weight Limit and speed limit through the village is maintained at a suitable limit befitting the village context (community aspiration).
- c) To protect and improve public transport services (community aspiration).
- d) To ensure adequate levels of off-road parking provision are provided and locate new development such that it does not exacerbate existing problems

Topic 4 - Open Space

- a) To maintain, enhance and improve access to public open spaces for all members of the community and protect these spaces from inappropriate development.

Topic 5 Better Facilities for Local People

- a) To seek opportunities wherever possible to maintain and enhance the social and economic vitality of the Parish by supporting and expanding the range of services and facilities.

Section 5: Sutton Benger – The Neighbourhood Plan Area

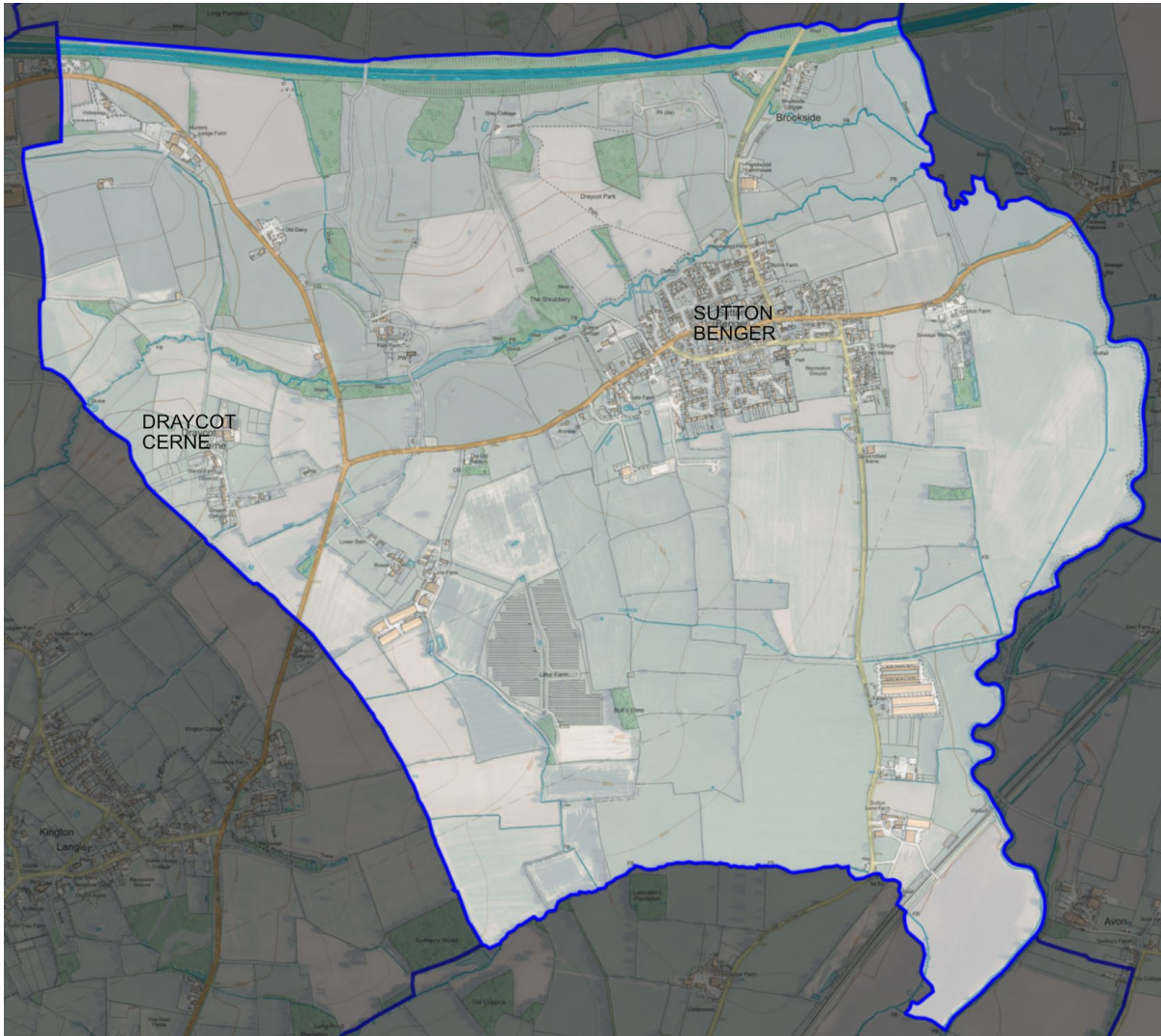


Figure 6 - Parish of Sutton Benger – the Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Parish of Sutton Benger occupies an area of 1,086 hectares (2684 acres) and consists mainly of open farmland with the small hamlet of Draycot Cerne and a Settlement Area of the village of Sutton Benger at the centre of the Parish.

5.1 Location & Connections

The Parish of Sutton Benger is a large village in the county of Wiltshire, located around 5 miles northeast of Chippenham. The parish contains 514 properties in Sutton Benger and a further estimated 35 in Draycot Cerne, as estimated from the 2021 electoral roll register.

By road the village is approximately 4 ½ miles from Chippenham, 9 miles from Malmesbury, 17 miles from Swindon, 18 miles from Bath, and 25 miles from Bristol. Junction 17 of the M4 motorway is 2 miles from the centre of the village, linking the area to London and South Wales.

The medieval layout of the village is still identifiable with a High Street (B4069) and parallel back lane (Chestnut Road) and a staggered crossroads next to the 13th Century parish church.

The B4069 High Street bisects the village, with the church and a new housing estate on the former poultry processing factory on the north side. The Post office, coffee shop, village primary school, village hall, recreation field, doctor's surgery, and more housing to the south. Around a dozen houses on Seagry Hill form a small outpost detached from the main village settlement boundary.

There is a small development of 14 sheltered housing bungalows for the elderly, and a small permanent mobile home site, adjacent to Sutton Lane. There are a number of permanent traveller pitches at Frampton Farm at the East of the edge of the Parish.

The small hamlet of Draycot Cerne has just 35 houses and sits within a rural and agricultural setting to the west of Sutton Benger. The Draycot Estate which until 1920 was the 'owner' of much of the village, was broken up and sold into individual ownership at auctions in 1920 and 1922, sits between the Village Sutton Benger and the Hamlet of Draycot Cerne. The north-eastern part of the parish which includes a few properties and businesses including the new Modwen industrial development sits alongside the B1422.

There is great diversity to the architectural character of the village with development spanning several centuries, including very recently.

5.2 Parish Profile: -

The parish of Sutton Benger is in Chippenham Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

There is a population of approximately 1,200 based on the 2011 Census, updated by the current housing number of some 514 recorded households (at a population rate of 2.33 residents per dwelling as per 2011 census). Based on the data from the 2011 census the age range is noticeably lower than the national average for the ages 45 to 59 (a difference of 5%) and is noticeably larger for the ages 20 to 29 (a difference of about 9%). For all the other age bands identified, the percentage of the local population is nearly matching the national figures (broadly within 2 - 2.5%). With such small numbers, it is difficult to see any great differences from the national picture.

The parish of Sutton Benger stretches from the hamlet of Draycot Cerne in the west, through the village of Sutton Benger to the River Avon in the east, and from the Stanton Household Recycling Centre & Chippenham Pit Stop in the north, to the National Trust's sites of Special Scientific

Interest and County Wildlife in the south. The village straddles the B4069 (Chippenham to Lyneham Road) and is in close proximity to junction 17 of the M4, giving easy access to Swindon, Bath and Bristol, as well as benefitting from the more local amenities either in Chippenham to the southwest or Malmesbury in the north. No more up to date reliable information will be available until the 2021 census data are released.

The medieval village layout of a High Street and parallel Back Lane (now Chestnut Road) and a staggered crossroads beside the 13th Century Parish Church, All Saints, formed by Seagry Road and Bell Lane is still clearly visible, even with the addition of a large housing estate that doubled the size of the village in the 1970s. The Wiltshire Strategic Planning team note that Sutton Benger has had a very high level of growth with nearly 130 properties built in recent years. Whilst a number of these are on an old chicken factory, we have had a large number of houses built elsewhere around the village. Even now we have new houses going up in Gate Farm with no immediate need in the village.

Housing numbers now stand at 514 households according to Parish Council voting records. In the 2011 (census data), more than 4 out of every five houses were owned outright or owned with a mortgage. One house in eight was rented with 60% of those rented within the private sector.

Cost of housing broken down by type

In early 2022, Wiltshire Council carried out research on house prices in the area, from the HM Land Registry Open Data. (Please note that the SN15 postcode covers a wider area than Sutton Benger parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.) Using this data, it is possible to estimate the average property prices in the Sutton Benger area. The results are: -

Property Type	Feb 2021 to Feb 2022
Flat	£170,611
Terrace	£217,283
Semi Detached	£287,913
Detached	£506,205

Housing developments in the last ten years

The number of dwellings has increased to most recent data from the Parish Council showing the number of dwellings as 514 (Dec 2021). Previously the 2011 census showed 403 dwellings. This indicates an increase of 111 properties (27.5% increase) in the last ten years. 63 of these were on Faccenda (Chicken Factory) site and a further 23 on Hazlewood Farm site.

Recent Planning Appeals have been allowed and outline planning permission has been permitted for 24 dwellings with access onto the B4069 on a site to the east of Church View. A further appeal led to the granting of permission for 21 dwellings. 8 of the proposed units would be affordable. The associated infrastructure, landscaping, and construction of new access onto Sutton Lane at Land at Sutton Lane, Sutton Benger were also included in the consent.

In addition to these 8 Market Housing and Affordable Housing, two further sites have been identified for social rent: -

1. Arms Farm, Sutton Benger – White Horse Housing Association

3 x 2 bed and 1 x 4 bed houses for affordable rent and 2 x 2 bed houses for shared ownership at Sutton Benger, nr Chippenham.

2. Sutton Gardens, Sutton Benger, - Stonewater (RSL)

This small scheme will consist of 10 units, eight- three bed houses and two -two bed houses, all for Social Rent. – March 2022

Despite these recent developments two recent Rural Housing Needs Surveys 2021 and previously in 2015 showed continuing demand for three further affordable housing units. It may be that the respondents were not aware of the rental ownership mix on these two sites. It is also the case that Wiltshire’ housing list will have many families who are seeking accommodation away from their current location. So, it is expected that all these units will be taken up.



Figure 7 - Locations of development sites since 2011 for 5 or more dwellings

Education

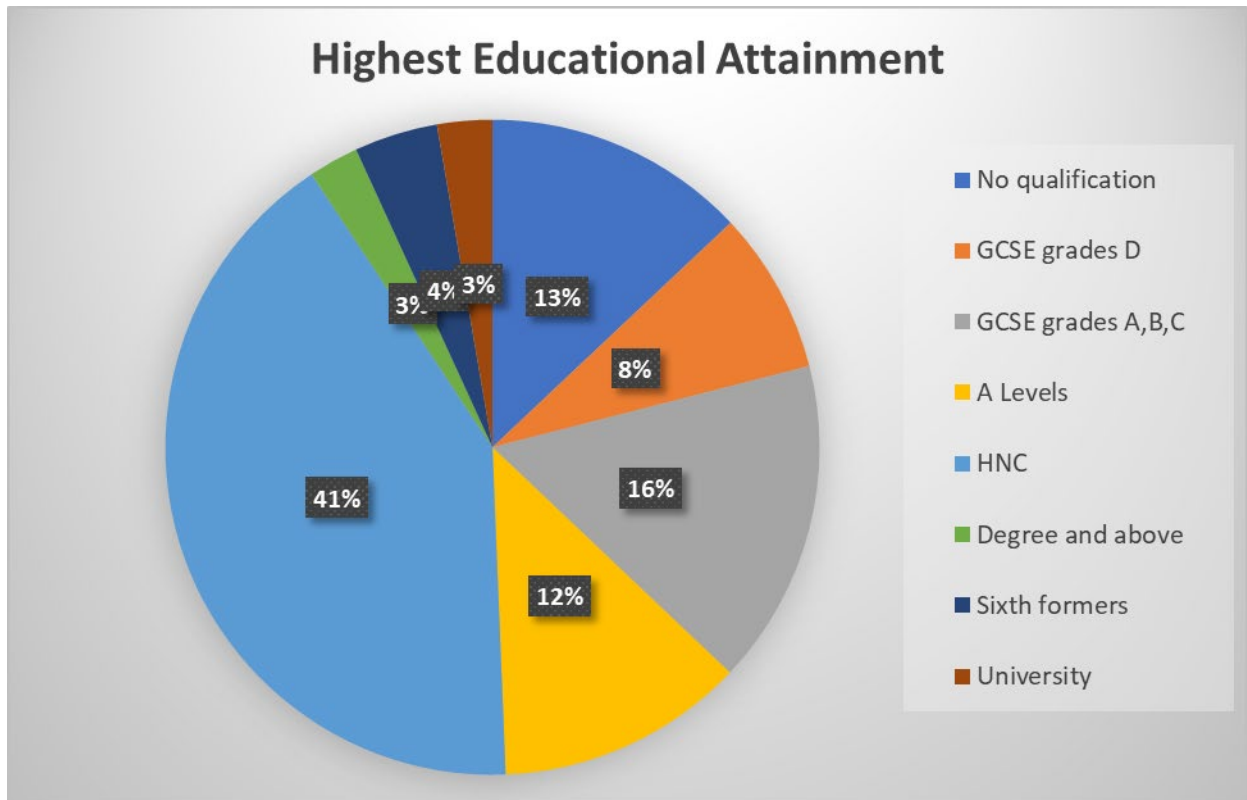


Figure 8 - Education levels in the Parish

The 2011 census refers to four levels of qualification and attainment, and then refers to “Other qualifications” which includes university degrees and further educational achievements. There is some double counting in the data, and some categories – e.g., apprenticeships are included in the census but not in the figures shown. It should be noted, that along with other data in this report the information is historic and is likely to have changed over the intervening years.

Economic activity levels

The 2011 census indicated that there was 2% of residents who considered themselves unemployed, with a further 2% being long term sick or disabled. 3% of residents were economically inactive as a student, with a further one in four considered economically inactive because they had retired. One in eight residents were self-employed and more than half (56%) of them were employed, either in full time work or in part time work.

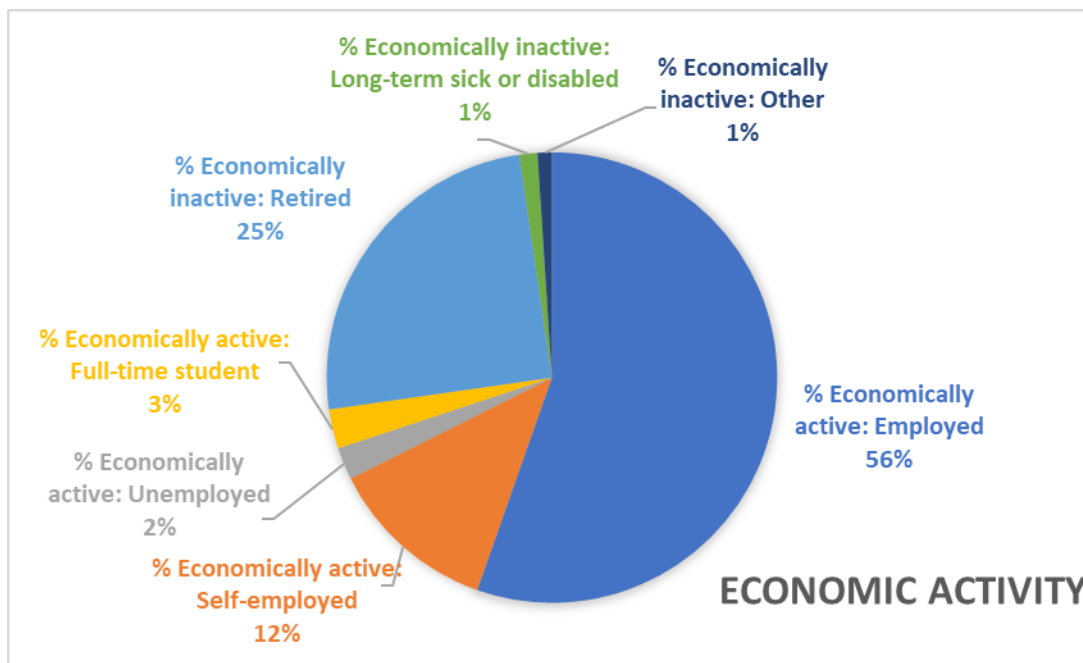


Figure 9 - Economic activity levels

Types of employment

Seventeen business sectors were identified for employment in the 2011 census. Of those, nine were identified as their main type of employment by more than 5% of the working population (2011 census data). These included.

Employment Sector	%Age
Manufacturing	8.96
Construction	6.22
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.33
Information and communication	6.95
Professional, scientific and technical activities	10.79
Administrative and support service activities	5.85
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	7.68
Education	11.70
Human health and social work activities	8.96

These account for almost 80% of the working population.

Sutton Benger has a wide range of local amenities: an excellent primary school, a very convenient doctor's surgery, a well-appointed village hall and recreation ground with multi use games area,

allotments, plus leisure and pleasure businesses - Wellesley Arms pub, La Flambé restaurant, the Bell House hotel & restaurant which prior to its closure in October 2023 operated the Post Office from its coffee shop & deli, and Hazelwood Beauty salon. A village shop would make this the complete village for its residents.

All Saints provides regular Church of England services and is also popular with tourists visiting its famous green man carvings and medieval embroidery.

This vibrant, friendly, and characterful village supports (amongst others) tennis, cricket, football, and rugby clubs; amateur dramatics and village singers; toddler groups, child minders, and a thriving pre-school, Benger Bears. There is an over-60's group, a dynamic WI, and even a local internet radio station, ITfm. To find out more about what is going on in this parish, please visit www.suttonbengerparishcouncil.gov.uk

In the north-west of the Parish, is an industrial area comprising a major haulage operating depot with shopping, eating and showering facilities; an auction house; workshops, council recycling depot; and a Highways England Traffic Officers depot. In addition, just outside the Parish area, a new warehouse and distribution centre is being constructed with good access onto the M4. This was granted permission despite local concerns about flooding and traffic, and consequently, a weight limit was placed on the B4069 High Street through the centre of the village. Whilst perhaps not relevant to housing – these developments and others already under consideration, are relevant to local village life and to growing traffic concerns.

Section 6: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

6.1 Protecting the Built and Rural Environment

The Natural Environment

6.1.1 NPPF paragraphs 118 and 170 – 177 deal with the effects of development on the landscape and biodiversity, establishing a wide range of criteria against which development will be assessed and also the means by which policies in development plan documents can protect these important assets.

6.1.2 The Sutton Benger Plan Area lies within the Avon Vales National Character Area (117)¹⁷ see figure 10 below.

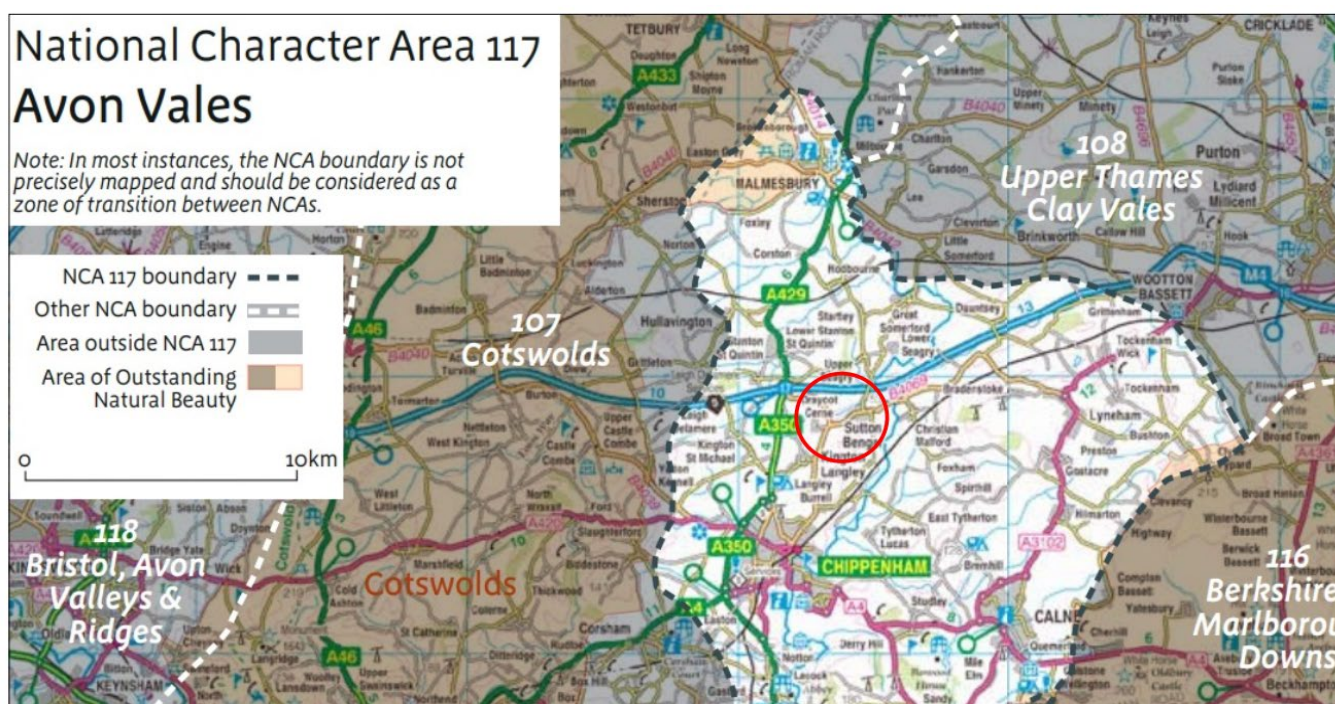


Figure 10 - The Plan Area within the National Landscape Character Areas

6.1.3 The Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005)¹⁸ designates the Parish as falling within two different LCAs: the Avon Open Clay Vale Landscape Character (LCA 12B) and 16A: Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands – see figure 11 below.

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

¹⁸ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-landscape-conservation>

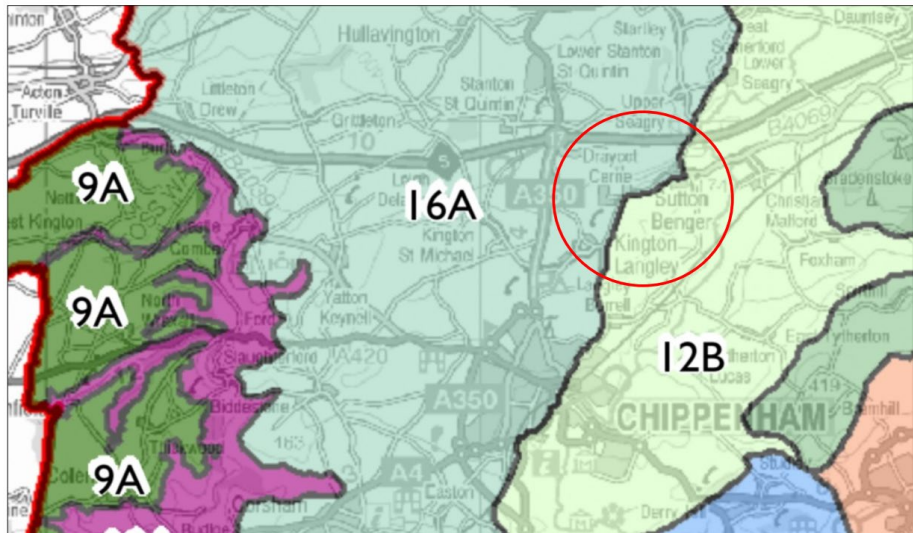


Figure 11 -The Plan Area within the Wiltshire Landscape Character Areas

6.1.4 It is key to sustain the sensitive landscape setting of the villages and preserve and enhance the areas of natural landscape and agriculture existing between the settlement areas, whilst also conserving the existing network of trees, hedgerows, watercourses, public community spaces and rights of way so as to protect and enhance wildlife sites/habitats/bio-diversity.

6.1.5 A number of issues and concerns are raised within these areas relating to the character of the landscape and rural landscape as discussed above and in detail in the Sutton Benger Parish Character Appraisal (SBPCA, (Appendix 1)), these have been incorporated into the range of policies below:

- Agricultural intensification threatens the remaining small-scale field patterns and traditional pastoral landscape.
- Loss of hedgerows boundaries and particularly mature hedgerow trees, plus poor management of remaining hedgerows.
- Intensification in farming leading to loss of water meadows
- Pressure for further expansion of settlement and new development threatening the character of the small villages and scattered farmsteads.
- The presence of major transport corridors particularly the trunk roads has brought pressures for development and associated amenity planting and signage.
- Increasing road use which will further diminish the rural tranquillity of the vale landscape.
- Pressure to upgrade roads through additional kerbing and signage to accommodate an increase in traffic volume.
- Encourage management and restoration of the historic parkland landscapes that are characteristic of the area.
- Retain the distinctive character of the villages; ensuring any change respects the traditional stone-built character and vernacular form.

6.1.6 A summary of the key valued characteristics taken from the SBPCA are set out below.

- Wide open skies and views to ridges and downs.
- Rich variety of rivers, tributaries, drainage channels and open water bodies, including scarce marl water habitats.

- Watercourses lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows (some pollarded).
- Hay meadows with unimproved grassland of ecological interest.
- Peaceful rural landscape.
- Strong network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and occasional woodland copses.
- Dry stone walls.
- Remaining areas with medieval field pattern.
- Historic parklands.
- Distinctive traditional limestone villages with a nucleated settlement pattern visibly dating to the medieval period and earlier.
- Network of rural roads.

These are demonstrated in figure 12 below.

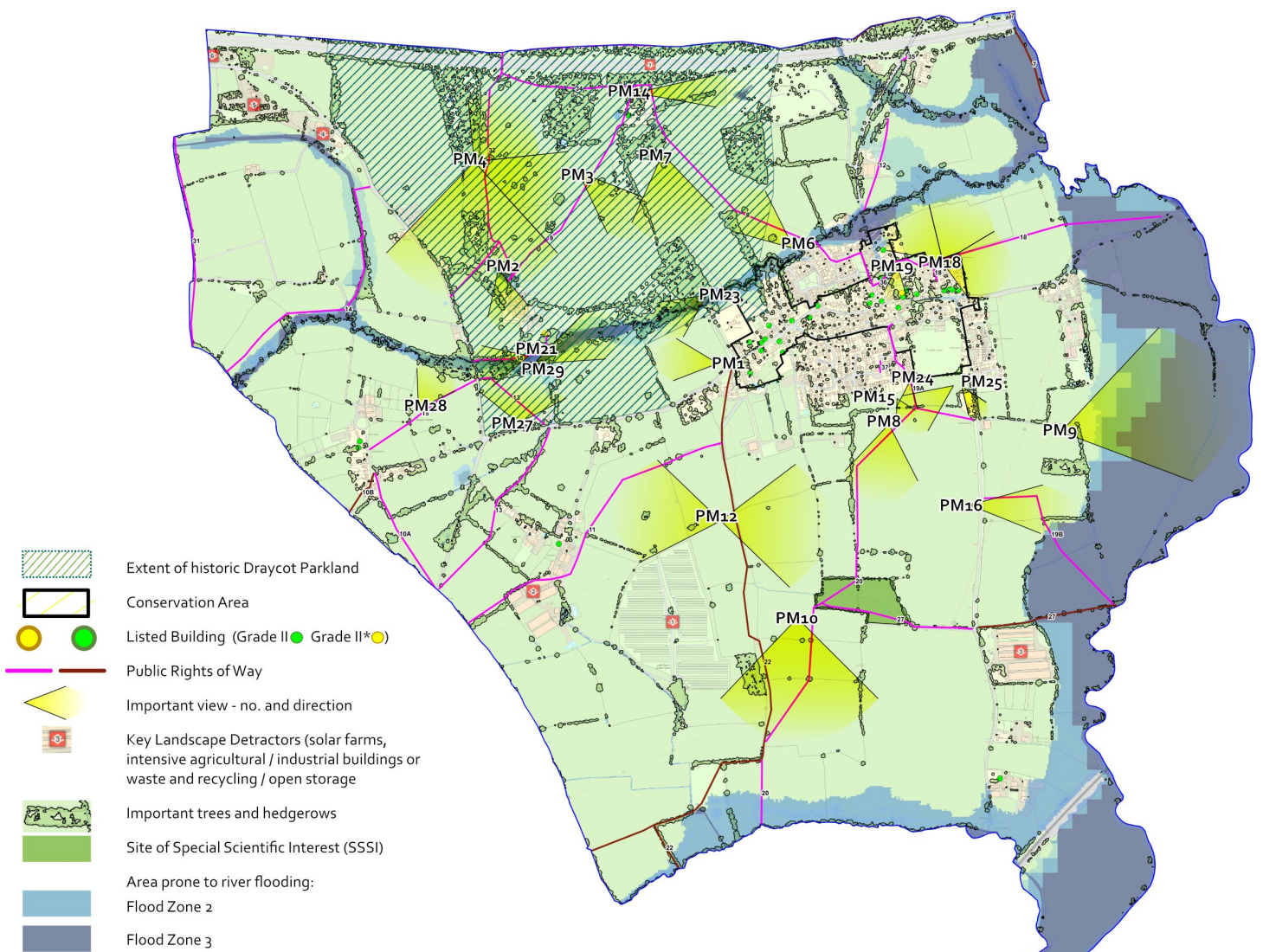


Figure 12 - Key Elements within the Landscape

POLICY SB1: LANDSCAPE - THE RURAL CHARACTER

Development proposals should demonstrate how they preserve or enhance the features which positively define the character of the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan Area, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment and Sutton Benger Parish Character Appraisal (Appendix 1).

Such characteristics include:

- The wide, open skies views towards the ridges and downs, and views of the River Avon;
- The River Avon, tributaries, drainage channels and other ponds and water bodies, and associated habitats (including floodplain grazing marsh). Such watercourses are commonly lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows (some pollarded);
- Lowland hay meadows with unimproved grassland of ecological interest;
- Strong network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees;
- Traditional limestone nucleated settlements with scattered farmsteads;
- The historic parkland / estate marked by stone estate walls, grand entrances, water features and parkland trees and avenues;
- The historic field pattern, which is predominantly large geometric with some earlier small scale irregular fields of medieval pattern closer to the settlements; and
- The network of informal rural lanes with limited urbanising features such as road markings, street lighting, kerbs or excessive signage.

POLICY SB2: LANDSCAPE - MAINTAINING THE SEPARATION OF SETTLEMENTS

New development should respect the rural landscape setting of the neighbourhood area and preserve the distinctive separation between the settlements of Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne.

Proposals on the land between the settlements, including additional non-allocated employment uses, should be supported by a landscape and visual impact assessment which demonstrates that the development will not erode the physical or visual separation of the settlements.

The following policy sets out views that have been determined to be significant within the parish following consultation with local residents.

These views have been submitted individually, assessed, and marked on figure 13 to show their location and general direction of important view (see Views on Views evidence base document). They can also be found on the landscape elements plan (figure 12) to highlight the context of surrounding features.

POLICY SB3: IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following important views as set out below and in figure 13.

In particular, proposals should respond positively to the identified views and demonstrate consideration of matters relating to design, height and massing either individually or cumulatively.

Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an identified Important View as listed below will not be supported.

- PM 1 View looking north west towards Draycot Park Farm & St James Church
- PM 2 View looking south east towards Draycot Park Farm from SBEN9
- PM 3 View looking south west from SBEN9
- PM 4 View looking in four directions from SBEN32
- PM 5 Views from SBEN8 near Dray Cottage
- PM 6 View looking north from SBEN8/36
- PM 7 View looking south from footpath by lost oak
- PM 8 View of witchy tree field looking north, south, and west from PROW SBEN 19a & 20
- PM 9 View across 'airfield' from permissive footpath east of the village towards CM church
- PM 10 View from near Badger Sett from SBEN20
- PM 11 View from SBEN22 towards Kington Langley
- PM 12 View SBEN22 near Gate Farm, looking in all directions
- PM 14 View looking towards Barbary Down from SBEN8
- PM 15 Cornfield adjoining rec looking west from PROW SBEN37
- PM 16 View east from start of SBEN19b across rural field towards a copse containing Deer
- PM 17 View of the allotments
- PM 18 View North, South, East and West from SBEN18
- PM 19 View South from SBEN18 with All Saints Church

- PM 21 View from road and footpath by Draycot Church
- PM 23 Views towards Church and Seagry Road and the old Rectory
- PM 24 View looking south from the recreation ground with village landmark (witchy tree) in distance
- PM 25 View looking west from Sutton Lane across the field adjoining the recreation ground
- PM 26 View from Public Right of Way SBEN14 looking southwest
- PM 27 View from SBEN 13 looking SE, NW and NE
- PM 28 View from Public Right of Way SBEN15 looking northeast
- PM 29 View from SBEN16 NE Draycot Park Lake

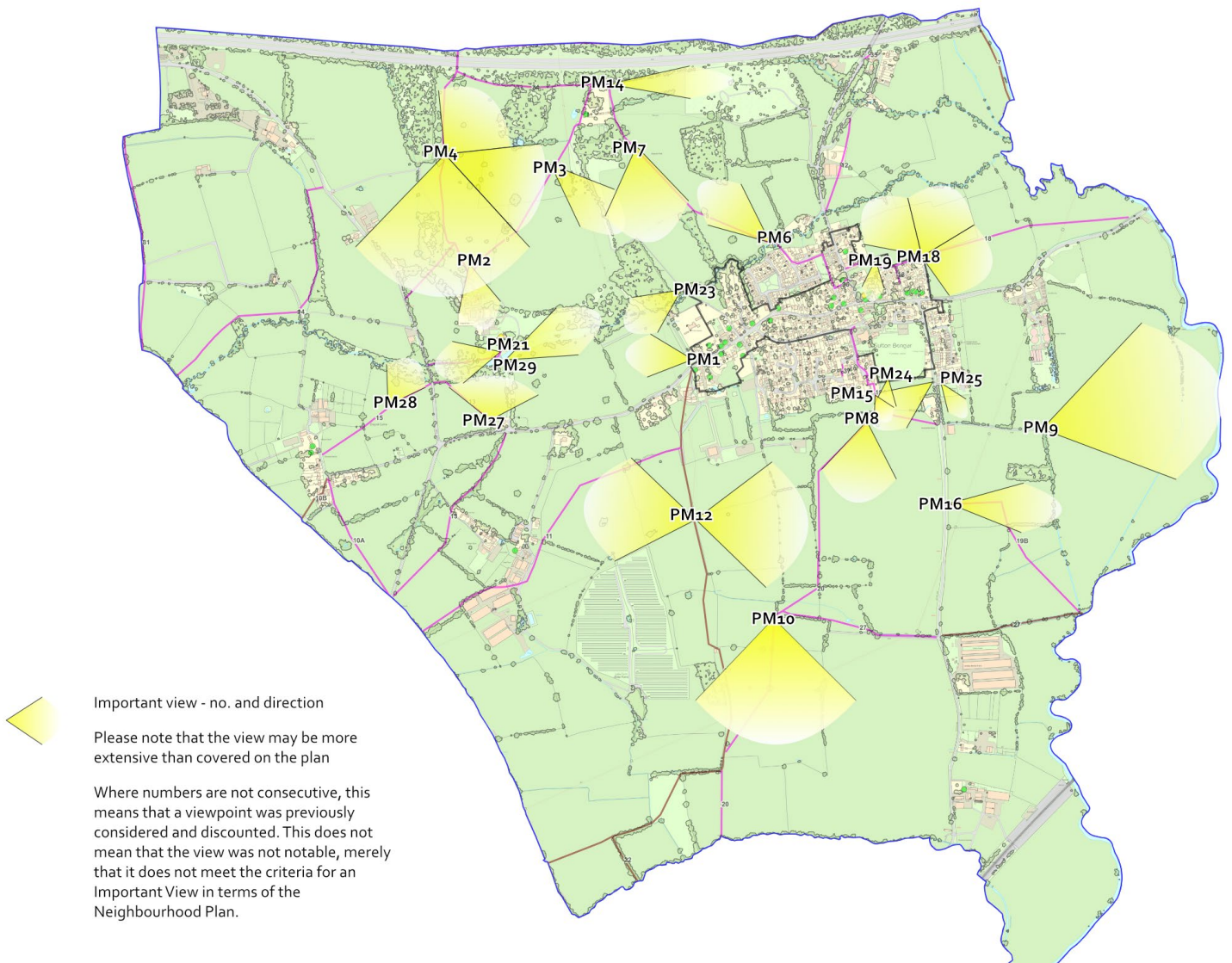


Figure 13 - Location of Important Views within the Parish



Figure 14 - Some of the Key Landscape Views within The Plan Area

POLICY SB4 TREES AND HEDGEROWS

Proposals must be designed to retain ancient, veteran and notable / mature trees and hedgerows in the Plan area (as identified within the Character Appraisal) and shown on figure 12 above and 15 below. The Conservation Area and Draycot Parkland in particular contain many notable and important trees.

Development proposals which affect trees and hedgerows must be accompanied by information proportionate to the application which establishes the health and longevity of

any affected trees and hedgerows in accordance with the survey requirements of BS 5837- Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction – Recommendation.

Where trees must be lost as a result of development, these must be replaced at a ratio of at least 3:1 within the site, with a preference for native locally found trees and fruit / nut trees. Replacement trees with a large canopy cover that provide increased shading opportunities will also be supported.

The responsible planting of additional trees that reduce or absorb air pollution from traffic will be supported throughout the Plan area. Development proposals will also be expected to be accompanied by a tree maintenance/care plan that will require the maintenance of proposed trees, including their replacement when necessary, for a period of at least 5 years.

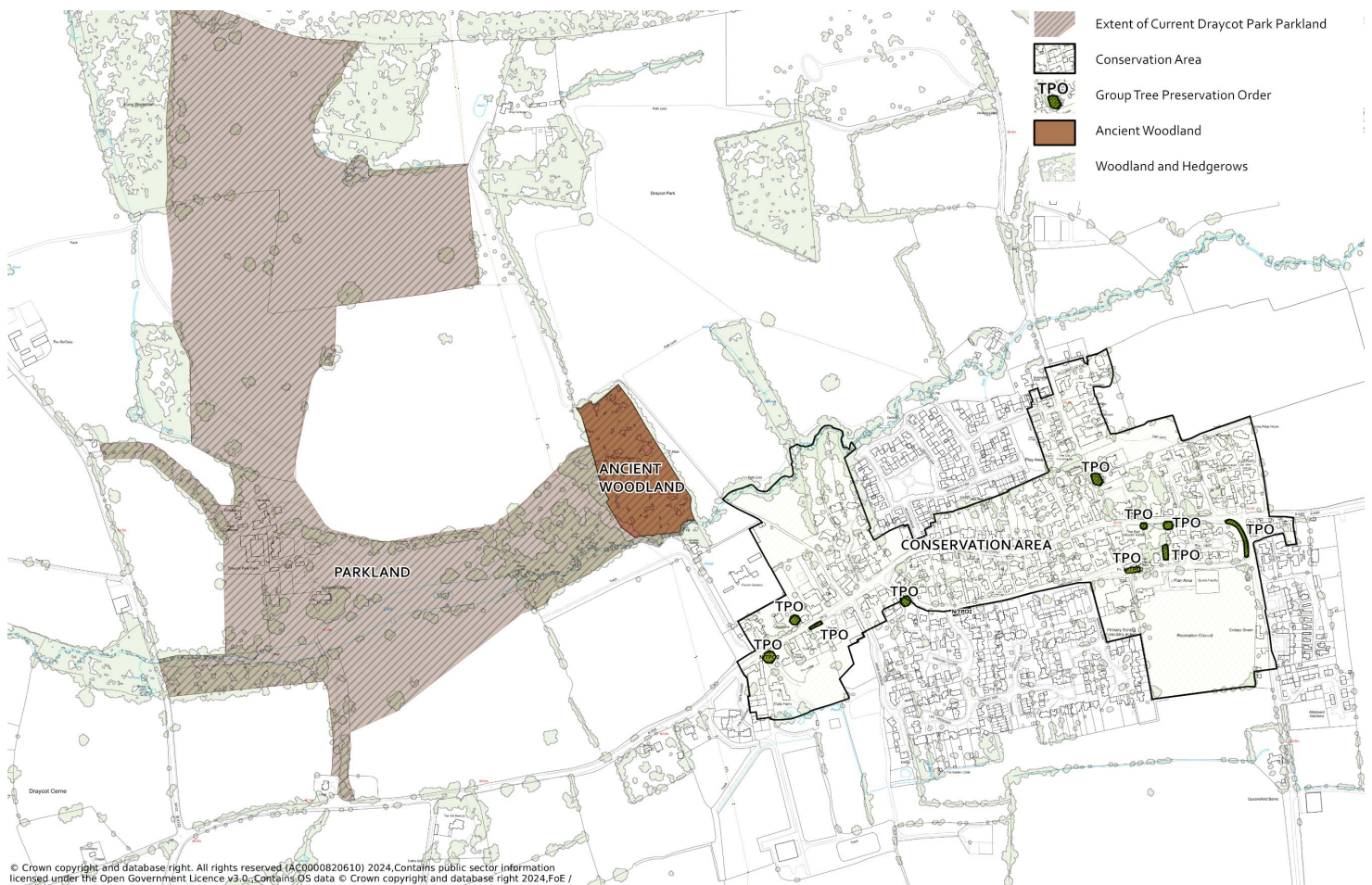


Figure 15 - Detailed view of Woodland, Tree Preservation Orders, Ancient Woodland, Parkland and Trees Protected by virtue of the Conservation Area

The area contains the existing Draycot Park Parkland, which has significantly reduced over time from the original parkland as shown on figure 12. However, there is still a notable area with parkland features and specimen, veteran trees, with ornamental features and landscaping. It is essential that the parkland character is not eroded further to ensure its longevity into the future.

The Conservation Area has a number of groups of trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), although it should be noted that trees are already protected by the virtue of the Conservation Area designation.

The retention of ancient or veteran trees on or near a proposed development site is covered by Natural England and Forestry Commission 'standing advice'¹⁹ and is a material consideration when Local Planning Authorities are making planning decisions.

Biodiversity

The parish also contains a number of important biodiversity areas. This includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest known as Sutton Lane Meadows²⁰, managed by the National Trust. It comprises of three enclosed fields of exceptionally species-rich, unimproved, neutral grassland, managed as traditional hay meadows. The citation for the designation sets out that the meadows support a rich community of plants typical of damp neutral to mildly acidic hay meadows. This type of grassland, once widespread, is now very uncommon due to agricultural improvement. The meadows are also bounded by hedges or woodland which provide shelter and add diversity of structure valuable to a wide range of insects and nesting birds.

Sutton Lane Meadows is considered to be one of the best meadow sites in Wiltshire. Two of the fields are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the other is a designated County Wildlife Site. With its fantastic population of green-winged and southern marsh orchids this is an exceptional site and much valued by the community.

The figure 17 highlights the impact zones where development may have a potential adverse impact.

Overleaf are areas with important habitats which are easily accessible or viewed from the settlements. These often create an important backdrop and form part of essential views out of the built-up area. The plan highlights the area of parkland at Draycot Park, the deciduous woodland mainly to the north of the parish (including Ancient woodland at Weir Wood) as well as the floodplain grazing marsh alongside the River Avon.

The key principles that have emerged and which have informed the development of policies are:

- Achieving a net biodiversity gain through a variety of alternative approaches to managing the impact of development on species, areas of ecological value and habitats
- Landscaping and greening the environment through management of the green and blue infrastructure network and the public rights of way that pass through the network
- Encouraging tree and hedgerow planting
- Ensuring the replacement of vegetation and habitat lost through development
- Managing surface water run-off

Biodiversity net gain is established by using a biodiversity metric to assess the value of a project or development in measurable terms. The metric is a habitat-based approach used to assess an

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions>

²⁰

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1003995&SiteName=sutton%20&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=IFCAA>
rea=

area's value to wildlife. There are different metric tools available, however Natural England produce the latest version of a recognised metric, which is regularly updated as required²².

A green or wildlife corridor is an area of land that provides habitat for plants and animals to move and disperse across the landscape. They can be natural features, such as rivers, hedgerows, and woodland, or they can be created by humans, such as greenways, railway lines, and canals. They help to connect isolated populations of animals, and provide a safe route for animals to move between different habitats, such as foraging areas and breeding grounds. This is especially important in fragmented landscapes, where areas of natural habitat have been divided up by human development. These are shown on figure 17 below and use existing features and habitats.

New development must be considered in the context of both biodiversity implications as well as visual impact on these landscape features. NPPF paragraph 177 is clear in setting out that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development could affect the integrity of these areas.

POLICY SB5 BIODIVERSITY AND NET GAIN

Development must achieve a biodiversity net gain of at least 20% for the designated neighbourhood plan area. New development will be supported where proposals:

- Incorporate public and private green amenity spaces using high quality landscaping to balance gardens and community spaces.
- Create and conserve natural and green corridors as shown on figure 17, using landscape features and habitats. In particular, opportunities to join up currently isolated green and blue infrastructure assets will be supported.
- Introduce new or improve existing trees, wetlands, grassland, parks, woods, orchards and allotments, based on an understanding of those in the Plan Area as shown in figures 15 and 16.
- Do not have a significant adverse impact on priority habitats or result in the loss of woodlands, amenity trees or hedgerows including those as shown in figures 15 and 16. Any significant adverse impact in this regard will not be permitted unless the need for, and the benefit of the development at that location clearly outweighs the loss, and suitable mitigation measures are put in place.
- Do not have an adverse impact on protected species. Any significant adverse impact in this regard will not be permitted unless the need for, and the benefit of the development at that location clearly outweighs the loss, and suitable mitigation measures are put in place.

²² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-metric-calculate-the-biodiversity-net-gain-of-a-project-or-development>

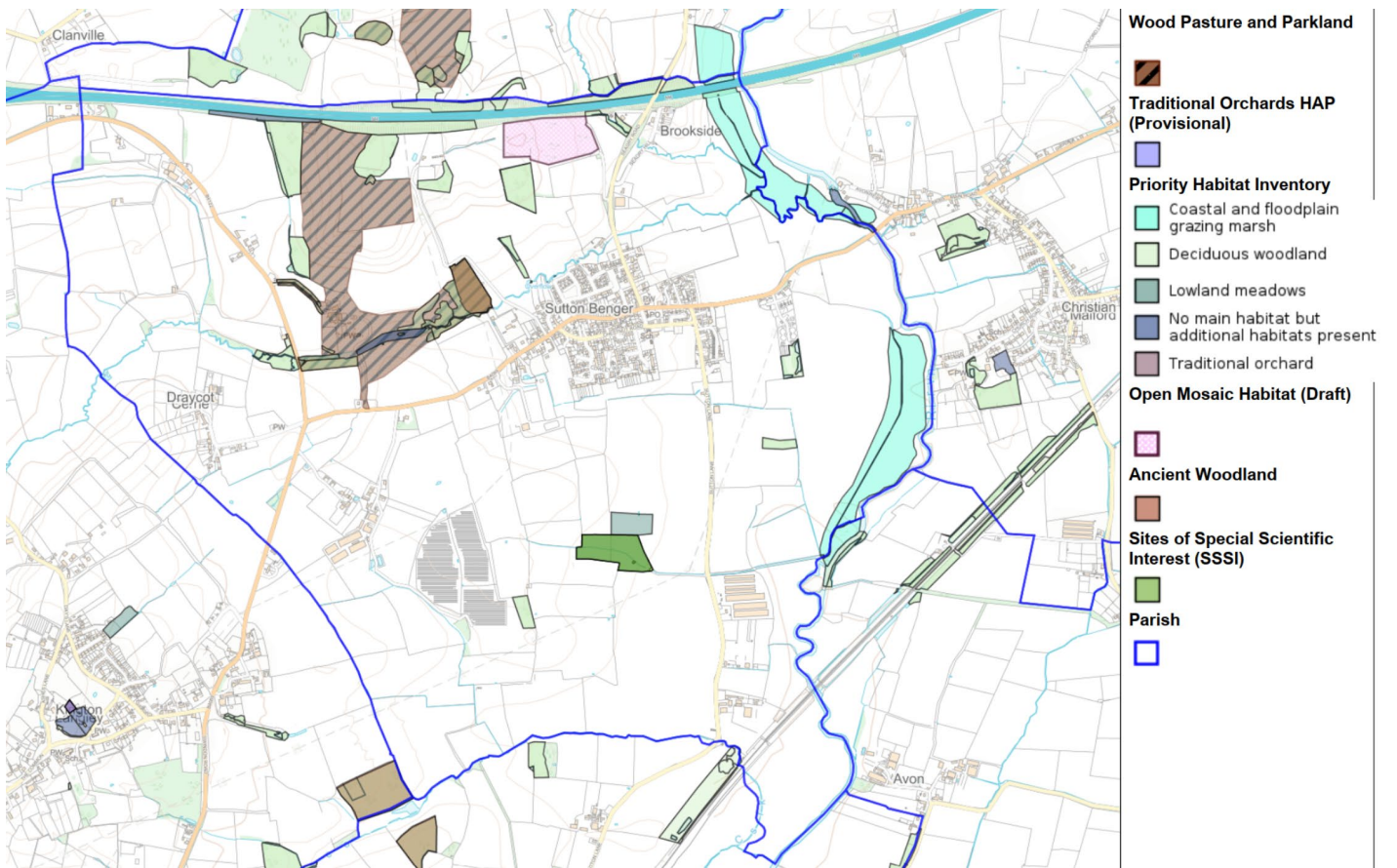


Figure 16 - Biodiversity Assets, Habitats within and adjacent to the Plan Area



Figure 17 - Proposed green corridors (green arrows) linking the identified assets / habitats

Flooding and Drainage

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guides development to areas with minimal flood risk, the following policy aims to identify flood-prone areas within the Parish, regardless of whether the flooding originates from rivers or groundwater / surface runoff.

Additionally, applicants should assess soil and geological conditions to determine the suitability of implementing a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SuDS).

As illustrated in Figures 18 - 20 below, several areas within the Parish are susceptible to fluvial flooding from the rivers and watercourses throughout the Parish. It should be noted that surface water flooding is also a potential concern that may not be readily apparent to those proposing new developments. In locations prone to flooding, any new development should be designed to avoid exacerbating existing drainage challenges.

The flood zone maps show the areas within the Parish that are at risk of flooding from rivers or surface water.

- Flood Zone 1: This zone has a low probability of flooding. This means that in any given year, there is less than a 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea.
- Flood Zone 2: This zone has a medium probability of flooding. This means that in any given year, there is a 1% to 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers.
- Flood Zone 3: This zone has a high probability of flooding. This means that in any given year, there is a 1% or more chance of flooding from rivers.

In addition to the flood zone maps, the surface water flooding risk maps show the areas within the Parish that are at risk of flooding from surface water.

- Low risk: This means that the area has a 0.1% to 1% chance of flooding from surface water each year.
- Medium risk: This means that the area has a 1% to 3.3% chance of flooding from surface water each year.
- High risk: This means that the area has a greater than 3.3% chance of flooding from surface water each year.

Flooding from surface water is difficult to predict because rainfall location and volume are difficult to forecast. Additionally, local features, such as topography and soil type, can greatly affect the chance and severity of flooding.

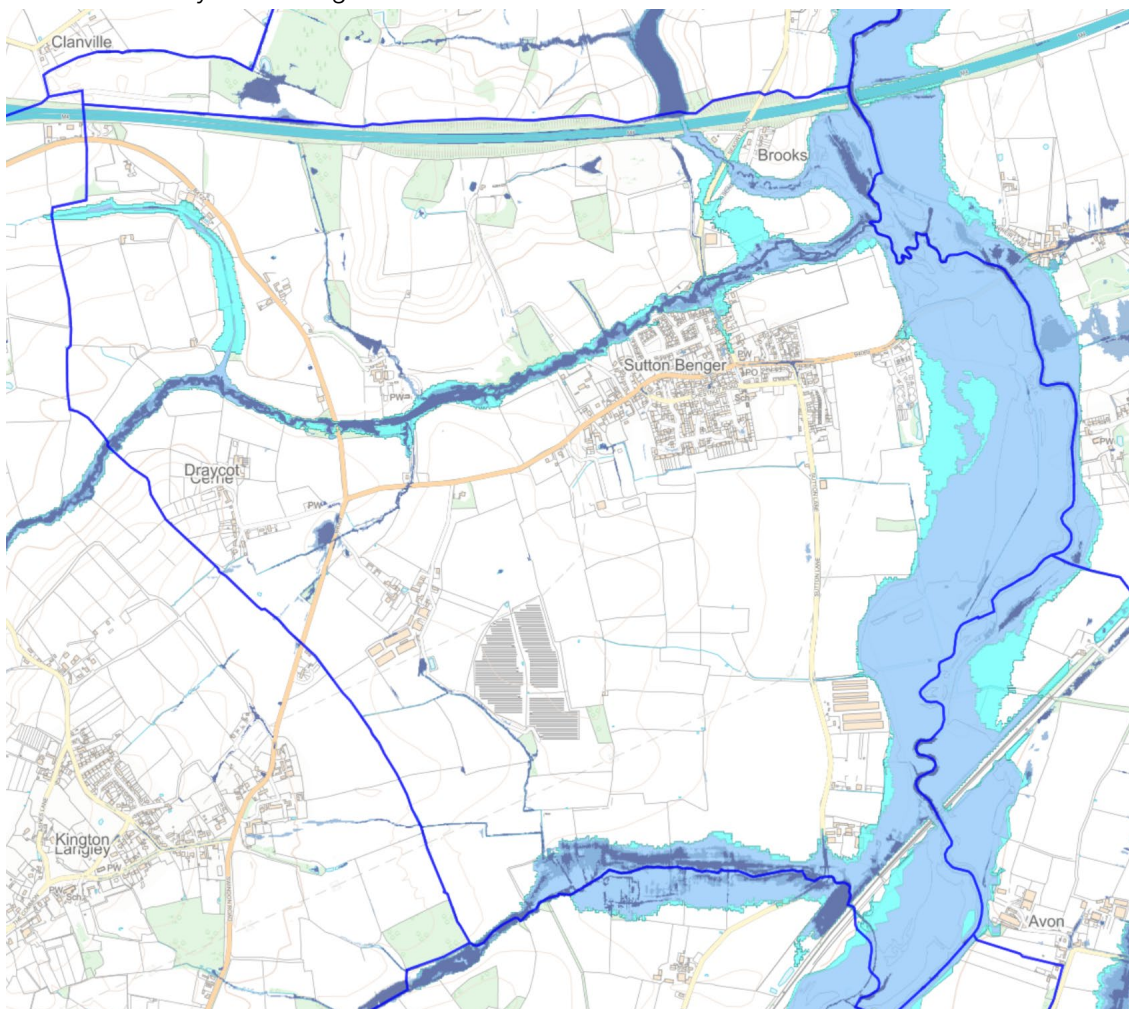


Figure 18 - Fluvial and Surface Water Flooding within The Plan Area

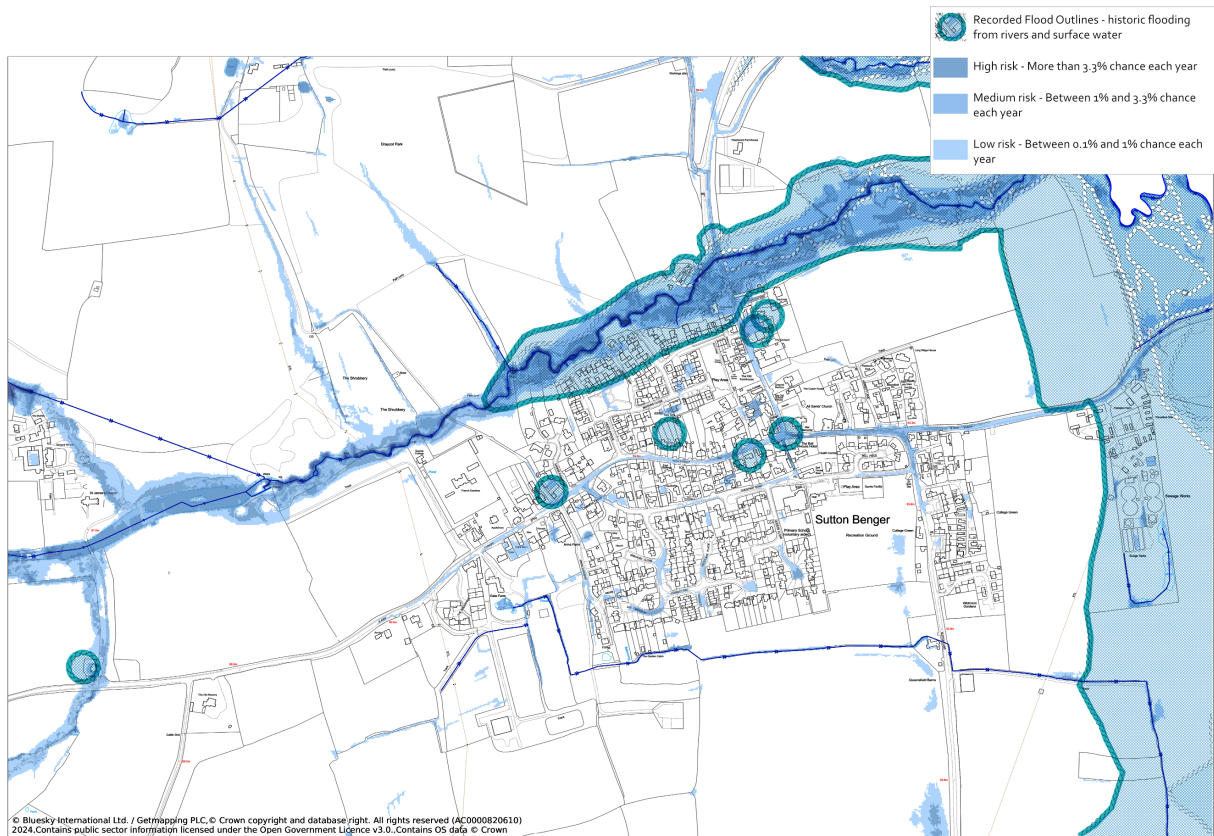


Figure 19 - Detailed view highlighting surface water issues and recorded flood outlines

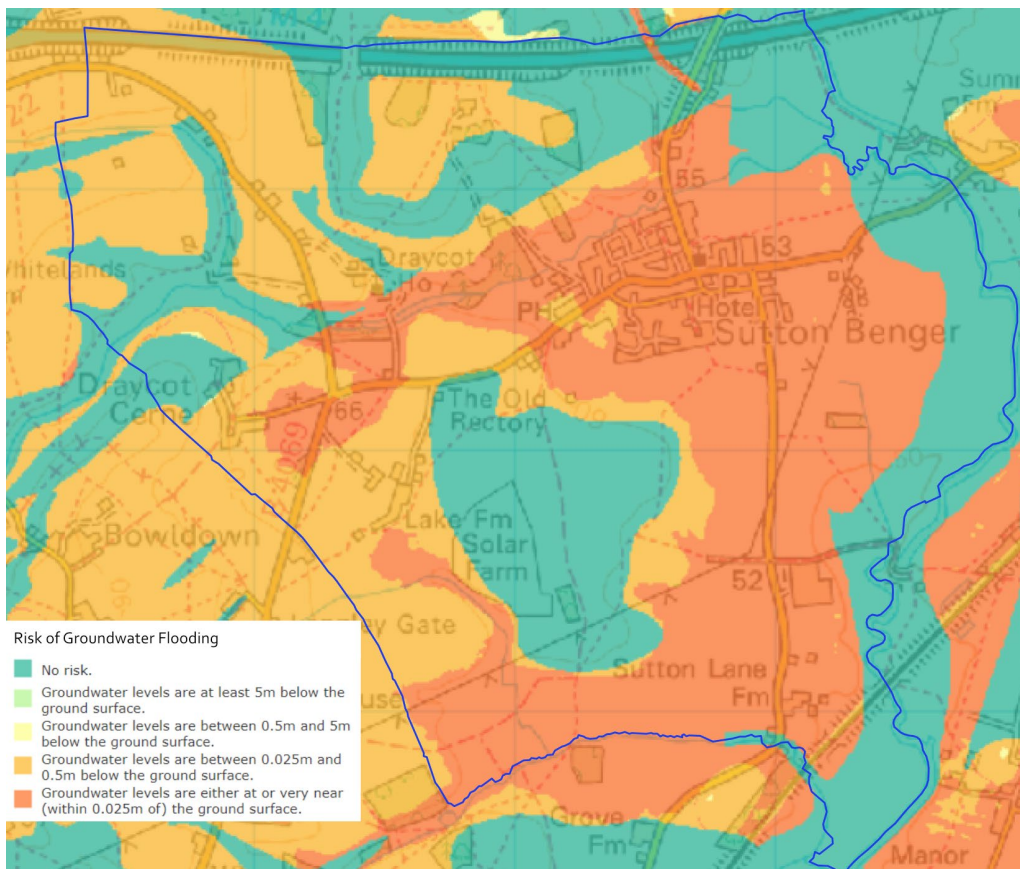


Figure 20 - Risk of Groundwater Flooding within the Plan Area

POLICY SB6 FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

Development will be supported where it is demonstrated that surface water drainage will not add to the existing site runoff or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties and surrounding environment.

Where sites fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3 they shall follow the sequential approach as set out in the NPPF. Additionally, there are a number of sites that have historical evidence of flooding, such areas are highlighted below.

The following areas have been identified as particularly vulnerable to flooding (as shown on figures 18 to 20):

Fluvial Flooding

- Land north of Seagry Road and Willowbrook End (Fluvial River Avon Flooding).
- Land south of Hunters Lodge Farm (Fluvial tributary River Avon Flooding).
- Land south of Draycot Park Farm (Fluvial tributary River Avon Flooding).
- Land to the south of the parish around Sutton Lane Farm

Surface Water Flooding

- The B4069 to the south of Barret Lane
- The junction of High Street and Chestnut Road.
- South of Gate Farm

Groundwater Flooding

- The village of Sutton Benger
- The village of Draycot Cerne
- Sutton Lane and its surrounding areas
- Land surrounding Sutton Lane Farm
- Land crossed by Stein Brook

In order to sustainably manage flood risk on site and to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere, development will be required to incorporate a Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) scheme, unless it is demonstrated to be inappropriate. Schemes will be detailed within a site-specific flood risk assessment and designed to current policy and best practice, including taking account of climate change, to manage rainfall run-off rates and volumes to existing pre-development rates and mimic the natural drainage regime of the site.

SuDS where possible must be designed so as to contribute towards the landscaping and biodiversity of the sites and provision must be made for their future maintenance. Additional green space must be provided on site in addition to areas contributing to SuDS.

The Built Environment

The analysis of the built form undertaken in the Sutton Benger Parish Character Assessment and Design Code provided a detailed understanding of its evolution and the historical character and significance of the development to date. The character of the settlements is expressed on the ground in its layout, buildings, spaces and through its relationship with its surrounding landscape.

The Steering Group has undertaken community consultation in the form of a village questionnaire.

The village questionnaire comprised of structured questions and invited free comments. Several themes were prevalent in analysis of the results which can be summarised as below.

- Too many new houses being built
- The greenbelt should be protected
- Amount and speed of traffic on the high street
- Creeping urbanisation
- Flooding

An overview of the heritage and setting of Sutton Benger Plan Area is provided below, however more detailed information is set out in the Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 2) which identifies the essential character of different parts of the parish, The historical development of the village and how it is inextricably linked to the countryside are also described.

The key issues highlighted from the Appraisal are to:

- Protect the distinctive form of the original settlements and their setting (see figures below).
- Retain the parkland setting of the Draycot Estate setting (see figure 11 above).
- Where possible, restore levels of tranquillity and reduce dominance of highway, renewable energy, and electricity infrastructure.
- Reinforce existing local features and enhance sense of place, particularly alongside the River Avon and its tributaries and encourage riverside character planting, where appropriate
- Maintain and further enhance the network of open spaces in the parish
- Reinforce the edge of the built-up area through appropriate landscape planting and avoid deterioration in the settlement fringe arising from poor design and intrusive development

The aforementioned settlements have each been individually appraised. Each area has been looked at in detail and where there are common attributes, these areas have been unified by their common themes and features. These are recorded in detail in the Parish Character Appraisal (Appendix 1), with a summary of relevant aspects highlighted below.

Sutton Benger Village



Figure 21 - Aerial view of Sutton Benger Village

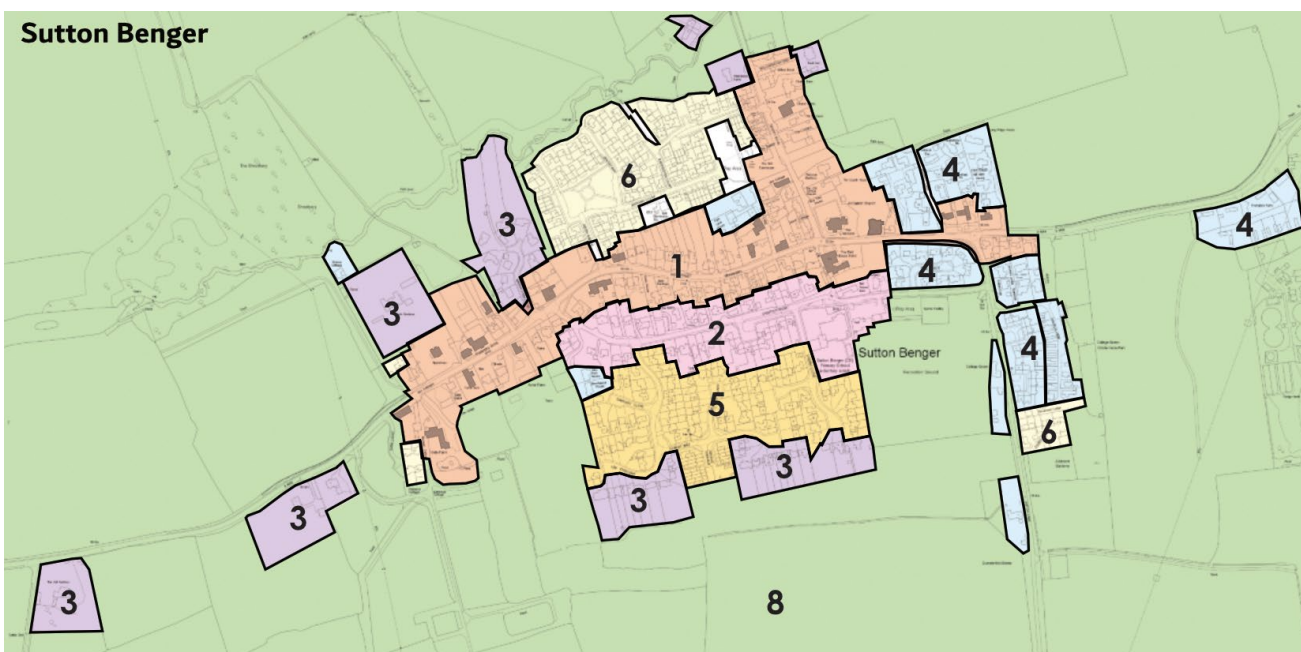
Sutton Benger parish was formed from several different smaller parishes merging together with the name “Sutton Benger” first appearing sometime in the latter 14th Century. Draycot Cerne was brought within with the Sutton Benger Parish in the latter 19th Century with the majority of both villages being owned by the Draycot estate.

Sutton Benger village has built up around the main road running east-west, which used to be the on the Bristol to Oxford route. The majority of the houses along the main road are historic in nature, many being estate cottages and generally fall within the conservation area with many also being listed. The traditional building material of the area is Cotswold stone which is used in great abundance locally.

Many notable examples of heritage buildings have been identified and as a result a large number of buildings within the village are listed, including the Church of All Saints which is Grade II*.

Whilst once it was a mixed-use area with many shops and services, these have declined over time and it is now predominantly a residential area.

Sutton Benger village has been subdivided into a number of character areas as shown in figure 22 below. The historic core of Sutton Benger Village, centres around the main historic roads that run east-west and north-south and has been designated a Conservation Area.



Character Areas:

- 1. Area 1: Historic Core
- 2. Area 2: Chestnut Road
- 3. Area 3: Edge of Settlement - individual properties
- 4. Area 4: Modern infill - larger plots
- 5. Area 5: Late 20th Century - higher density
- 6. Area 6: development from 2000 onwards
- 7. Area 7: Draycot Cerne
- 8. Area 8: Wider Parish / Rural Development

Figure 22 - Character Areas in Sutton Benger

Historic properties are generally set in good sized plots, although many have now been subdivided for infill. Development closely follows the road layout, with more in-depth development occurring from later infill or conversion of former agricultural buildings. Buildings are usually set back from the road to provide small front gardens, often surrounded by low stone walls.

Later development is often more suburban in form and appearance and gradually becomes more so as the age of development nears the present day.

The key to successful integration between modern and historic development focuses upon the quality and levels of landscaping with appropriately sized gaps between buildings to allow views through to vegetation or the countryside / conservation area beyond.

The density and scale of development is of key importance. Building heights are generally 1.5 to 2 storeys with historic focal dwellings up to 2.5 storeys in height. Modern development has tried to use the instances of 2.5 storey dwellings to justify such development on a wider scale, however this is not representative of the historic pattern and should be used on landmark buildings.

The majority of the village character areas are relatively low density by modern standards. The average density figures do not include individual properties, but it is clear that the lowest density areas are those on the edge of the settlement (with the exception of the most recent developments).

It is clear from the character assessment that the majority of areas are low density, with only the more modern development rising to a more medium density figure. Where recent modern development has taken place, the density has increased with low levels of landscaping and or a proliferation of visible car parking, this has also had a negative impact.

This is not to say that all modern development is considered unfavourably. The Design Code (found within the evidence base), contains a number of examples of new development within the Plan Area which are considered positive examples.

New development should respect the density of the surrounding area as shown in figure 23 below, but should also refer to the Design Code details on page 11 with regard to plot coverage and the form and type of development by setting. It includes details on appropriate countryside, edge of settlement and village locations including space for landscaping.









-  Area 1: Historic Core - 11 DPH
-  Area 2: Chestnut Road - 16 DPH
-  Area 3: Edge of Settlement - individual properties - 6-12 DPH
-  Area 4: Modern infill - larger plots - 11-17 DPH
-  Area 5: Late 20th Century - higher density - 23 DPH
-  Area 6: development from 2000 onwards - 20-23 DPH

Figure 23 - Average Density Figures by Area

Draycot Cerne



Figure 24 - Draycot Cerne hamlet within the open countryside



Figure 25 - Manor House and Draycot Cerne Chapel

Draycot Cerne has a slightly different history in that the village has been much reduced from its original size. Lower Draycot (located around St. James Church) being demolished in the mid 19th Century by Henry Wellesley, 1st Earl Cowley. Upper Draycot was then renamed Draycot Cerne.

Much of the architecture however is similar to that in Sutton Benger as the parish was also owned by the Draycot Estate.

As well as historic building other examples of heritage can be seen in the land, particularly on the south side of the parish where there are good examples of open-field (strip) farming. Historical accounts of the village show that agriculture was a huge part of life and livelihood for the parish, quite typical of a north Wiltshire village. Most of the population effectively living a subsistence lifestyle up to the early part of the 20th century.

Draycot Cerne dates back to the 1700s when it was known as Upper Draycot. It is a historic hamlet surrounded by agricultural fields. The built form centres around Manor Farm, which potentially dates back to the 16th century.

The Draycot Cerne Chapel was given to the village in the late 1800's. In the past it has always been maintained by village residents on a voluntary basis.

Residential properties are low density two-storey semi-detached and short terraces of estate houses.

The properties are all very similar in form and built of stone with similar features as is common in estate villages. The properties have generous gardens with front gardens bounded by stone walls.

Key issues:

Retain the low density Estate character of the village in terms of form, layout and design detailing.

Draycot Park



Figure 26 - Draycot House and Park Farm

The Draycot Park area relates to Draycot Park Farm and St James Church. The history of the estate has been referred to in detail above. The farm buildings and Church form an identifiable estate identity and are surrounded by a rural parkland landscape dominated by a formal lake to the south

The farm is laid out in a traditional courtyard form with housing to the east and further more modern buildings to the north.

The parkland character of the area is dominant with heavily treed areas situated at each of the lake.

Key issues:

Retain the character, form and style of the existing estate buildings and church character. Their setting and significance is to be maintained and enhanced where possible. Applications shall ensure the limited introduction of domestic paraphernalia and the visual softening or screen of existing non-traditional / modern features.

Rural Areas



Figure 27 - Pockets of development associated with farmsteads within The Plan Area

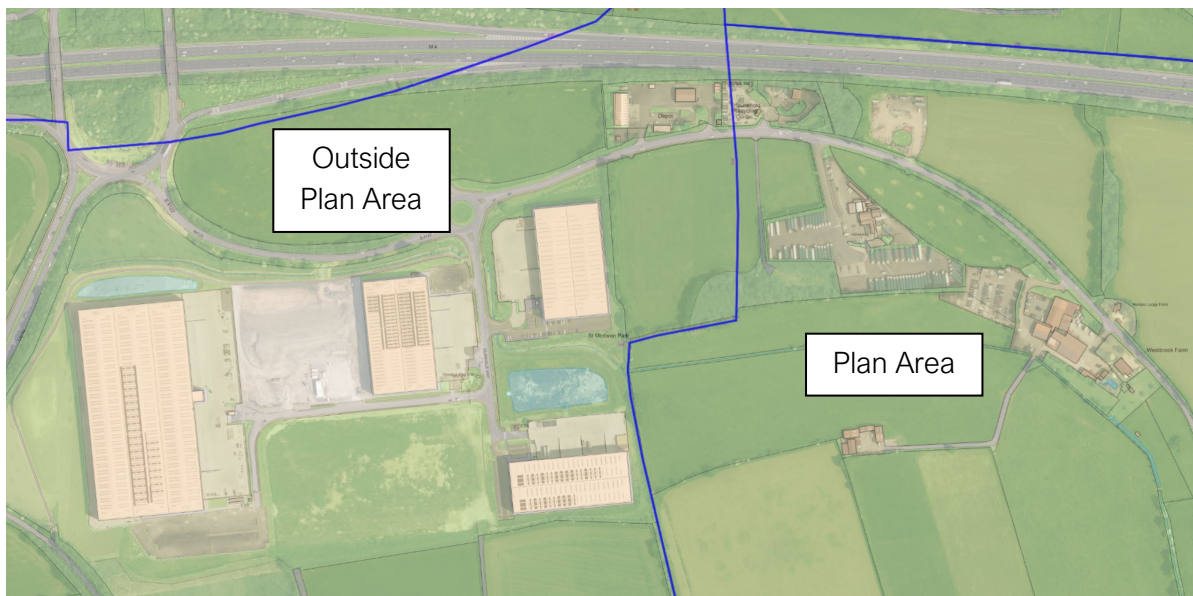


Figure 28 - The new development taking place at J17 of the M4, The Household Waste Recycling Centre and other employment uses on the edge of or within the Plan Area Boundary (blue line)

Open Storage/ Household Waste and Recycling Centre / Conversion of Agricultural Buildings to Light Industrial Use

The use of former agricultural buildings for industrial and storage uses can cause significant issues, with open storage being a particular problem. Changes of use or applications for General Industrial Use (B2) or distribution and storage uses (B8), or other uses which could cause a potentially adverse visual impact, shall demonstrate with the assistance of a Landscape and Visual Impact assessment that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the parish.

POLICY SB6.1 CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS TO EMPLOYMENT USES

Proposals for the change of use of rural buildings to General Industrial Use (B2) or distribution and storage uses (B8) will be supported if it can be demonstrated that they will not have an adverse visual impact on the landscape or the local character of the parish.

Planning applications will need to be accompanied by sufficient information (proportionate to the scale of development) to identify any harm in landscape and highway terms that the proposal may have on the NP Area and recommend mitigation measures accordingly

Holiday Letting

Over time, there can be issues with conversions of buildings for holiday accommodation. Whilst this can be an important element of farm diversification for example, it can also cause other issues where the amenity of local residents is adversely impacted upon. Detailed consideration shall be given as to whether the location is suitable for holiday use and potential for its longer-term conversion to full time residential occupation.

Solar Farms

Larger-scale solar power generation infrastructure can have considerable environmental and aesthetic implications and requires careful siting. Where new development is proposed the proposal should be considered in the context of whether the array is visible from any valued and accessible viewpoint 250m metres or more from the proposal site, or from any private or residential property. In addition to whether reflection (glare) is evident from any viewpoint.

POLICY SB6.2 RENEWABLE ENERGY

Proposals for the installation of new renewable energy facilities will be supported where it can be determined that it will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape, Public rights of way, biodiversity and / or the residential amenity of neighbouring

properties. Further details on renewable energy can be found within the Design Code (Appendix 2).

Proposals for new solar farms are to be removed after an agreed period of time with the land to be returned to its former use.

Proposals are to be well screened and do not have an adverse impact on the setting of the landscape and the important views that have been identified in the NP nor result in higher levels of glint and glare.

Nurseries and Polytunnels

Large scale and intensive farming can often have a significant adverse impact on the landscape. In particular there is concern that, particularly given the long-distance views in the area, any proposals for permanent polytunnels or glasshouses should be adequately screened from view.

Furthermore, given the potential flooding impacts in these farmland areas, such structures should also be designed to ensure that they do not exacerbate the current flooding issues.

As with any larger scale traffic generating use, consideration should be given to HGV and other similar vehicles passing through Sutton Benger village.

POLICY SB6.3 POLYTUNNELS

Proposals for the construction of new polytunnels will be considered acceptable if it can be demonstrated that they will support the rural economy by employing local workers and ensure that:

- they will not have an unacceptable harm to local biodiversity and obstruct any important views that have been identified in the NP Area;
- they are located in an area that is at low risk of flooding from fluvial and pluvial sources;
- they will not result in increase on vehicular traffic;
- any irrigation system or hardstanding area associated with the use will not be located in close proximity to a conservation area or heritage asset. This is to ensure that the archaeological interests of the local area are protected.

Design - Materials and Detailing

Materials used in new infill and redevelopment should complement the materials typical of the existing buildings in the street.

Materials proposed for the use in building extensions shall complement those used in the existing building. A typical palette in Sutton Benger Parish includes those elements listed below, however the Design Code should be consulted for further detailed information.

Materials used for the repair or alteration of buildings, for new buildings, and for surfacing and boundaries shall complement the existing high-quality palette of materials that typifies the character of the area.

Differing materials on an extension or a different design approach may result in a development appearing incongruous. Whilst, exceptionally, an extension may intentionally be designed to be contrasting, such an approach will need to be carefully justified and its success will rely on a high-quality design.

In particular, there has been some applications proposing red facing brick as an appropriate material for the area. It is envisaged that there are few locations if any, where this would be appropriate.

Proposals for innovative and complementary material options should also be encouraged, but must be well justified as to why they are appropriate in the specific location, with reference to the materials palette.

Materials that are durable, high quality and easy to maintain are preferable. See materials palette below and within the Design Code.

Parish Wide Local Materials and Detailing

Good quality materials are those which will stand the test of time, by being robust, durable, visually attractive and interesting, sustainable and that complement the local vernacular.

The examples below highlight those materials and design elements appropriate to the Parish:

- Stone - rubble and coursed, stone with contrasting quoins
- Plain and double roman clay tiles red/orange and red/brown
- Stone slates (later Welsh slate also in evidence as a replacement)
- Timber windows (sash and cottage casement) - older properties with stone surrounds
- Dormer windows either wholly within the roofslope or breaking the eaves line
- Plain fronted cottages
- Focal gables
- Timber Porches - open and enclosed
- Simple detailing
- Influenced by farm buildings, cottages and parkland estate properties

Contemporary design must be informed by a contextual analysis. Designers should create proposals which will complement and enhance Sutton Benger with designs which are positively distinctive and rooted in an understanding of their context.



Figure 29 - Materials Palette - See Design Code for more details

General Design Principles

In order to support appropriate forms of development in the future, Policy SB7 seeks to reinforce the locally distinctive built form. The objective is to retain the character of our Parish through sensitive, appropriate design.

To ensure that future developments (including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings) are sympathetic to the heritage and overall character of the Parish and its surrounding environment by encouraging good design and the use of appropriate materials.

- A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings.
- New development should be finished in a manner, which complements the visual character of the locality, where stone is the predominant material.
- Where permitted, designs which incorporate a high level of sustainability will be encouraged.
- Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.
- Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of our Parish.
- Designs must demonstrate a positive contribution to the existing landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.
- Designs must demonstrate efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and the local context to deliver an appropriate development which relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the Parish.
- The design of industrial buildings should incorporate the traditional rural characteristics of the area, especially concerning height and materials. The renovation of existing structures is preferred. Where uncharacteristic design features are unavoidable they should be masked by tree or hedgerow planting with native species.
- New buildings should conform with existing building lines and be fronted by low walled or open gardens. Off-street parking at the front of houses is accepted, but should be behind the building line and not dominate the street frontage or result in the removal of important front garden areas, particularly where this is a key characteristic of the area.
- Rooflines should match the levels and material of neighbouring buildings. New housing should have pitched roofs rather than flat roofs.
- Rendered finishes to buildings should not be used sparingly, to maintain continuity or when rendered buildings are repaired or improved.

- Red or orange facing brick covering entire facades would be considered out of keeping with the surroundings and unacceptable.
- Any new development should be designed to hide power and other cabling feeding into new properties thereby reducing the visible overhead network of cables.
- Windows should match the scale and proportion of traditional buildings.
- Buildings should be of similar size and spacing as existing dwellings (single, one point five and two storey buildings).
- New roads and pavements should retain existing historic features and use traditional materials such as stone to retain and enhance the historic appearance of the village.
- New buildings should respect the historic layout and form of the Parish.

POLICY SB7: DESIGN

Development proposals should be of a high standard of design, in keeping with the character of the area as identified within the Sutton Benger Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 2), and the setting of the Conservation Area. It should be demonstrated that proposals:

1. Are in-keeping with the scale, form, layout (including plot size), appearance and density of adjacent development.
2. Make a positive contribution to local character as identified.
3. Respond positively to the applicable key issues of the relevant character area as set out.
4. Do not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses or give rise to the potential for harm to the amenity of proposed dwellings.
5. Are built to a high standard, using appropriate materials and construction methods that reflect the requirements set out in the Design Code.
6. Avoid the loss of important vegetation.
7. Include appropriate landscape mitigation measures to reduce the impact of newly introduced built form and ensure that development is in keeping with the existing landscape features of the Plan Area.

Where the proposed development is significantly different from the surrounding identified character, adequate explanation should be provided to support the proposal with a clear contextual analysis and design justification.

Heritage

Policy SB8 seeks to enhance or better reveal the significance of the heritage assets as identified. The Parish has numerous designated heritage assets. These include a conservation area for Sutton Benger village. The village also has numerous Grade II Listed Buildings and structures as set out in Table below.

A number of non-designated but nevertheless historically and/or aesthetically valuable buildings, structures and remains also make a very important contribution to the character of the village. Table 1 sets out the location of all the heritage assets in the village.

Historic England defines non-designated heritage assets as *'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.'*²³

It is considered within the NPPF that such assets should be taken into account in determining planning applications. This includes having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.



Church of St James - Draycot Cerne Grade II* - c1300 with C16 west tower, altered in mid C19, rubble stone, ashlar tower, stone slate roof



Barn at Arms Farm - recently converted to residential use. Late C18, rubble stone with stone slate half-hipped roof - south side hipped projecting cart-entry



War memorial - built 1920 by H. Brakspear, on stone steps, probably the base of medieval cross



68/70 High Street - Pair of houses, C18, roughcast rubble stone with pantiled roof



Ross Cottage dates from 1782 - rubble stone with stone slate roof



62/64 High Street - C17, rubble stone with thatched roof with later extension



Wellesley Arms Public House - mid C18, rubble stone with stone slate roof

Figure 30 - Designated Heritage Assets

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#non-designated>

Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets	
GRADE II	WIDER PARISH
SUTTON BENGER VILLAGE	29. DRAY COTTAGE,
1. SUTTON HOUSE, 48, HIGH STREET	30. DOVECOTE AT MANOR FARM, UPPER DRAYCOT,
2. SUTTON LANE FARMHOUSE, SUTTON LANE	31. LAKE FARMHOUSE, DRAYCOT CERNE,
3. ROSS COTTAGE, HIGH STREET	32. MANOR FARMHOUSE, UPPER DRAYCOT,
4. CHURCH FARMHOUSE, SEAGRY ROAD	33. SUTTON LANE FARMHOUSE, SUTTON LANE
5. BELL COTTAGE, 16, HIGH STREET	
6. 50, HIGH STREET	
7. BARN AT ARMS FARM TO SOUTH, HIGH STREET	
8. 62 AND 64, HIGH STREET,	GRADE II*
9. 5, HIGH STREET,	SUTTON BENGER VILLAGE
10. TYTHE BARN HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	34. CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET
11. VINE COTTAGE, SEAGRY ROAD,	
12. 22, HIGH STREET	DRAYCOT PARK
13. 74 AND 76, HIGH STREET	35. CHURCH OF ST JAMES
14. ARMS FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET	
15. 66, HIGH STREET,	
16. 1 AND 2, PARK LANE	Scheduled Monuments
17. THE WELLESLEY ARMS INN, HIGH STREET	A. Dovecote at Manor Farm, Draycot Cerne
18. 68 AND 70, HIGH STREET	

19. APPLETREES, HIGH STREET	
20. MANOR FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET	NON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS
21. LITTLE MANOR THE OLD POLICE HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	THE NATIONAL SCHOOL (NOW PRIVATE DWELLING)
22. GATE FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET,	ROWARD FARM
23. THE OLD RECTORY, HIGH STREET,	DRAYCOT CHAPEL
24. THE BELL HOUSE HOTEL, HIGH STREET,	PILL BOX 1 ADJACENT TO RIVER AVON WEST OF CHRISTIAN MALFORD CHURCH
25. THREE MONUMENTS IN CHURCHYARD SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET	PILL BOX 2 NORTH OF FRAMPTON FARM
26. THREE MONUMENTS IN CHURCHYARD EAST AND NORTH EAST OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET	
27. CHURCHYARD CROSS IN CHURCHYARD OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET	

Table 1- Heritage Assets within the Parish

With regard to national and local heritage and conservation policies, any development, extensions, conversions or alterations are expected to fulfil the following criteria:

- Styles, proportions, materials and finishes used for new build and conversions of both residential and commercial properties must be in harmony with their historic surroundings, in particular when these are in close proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- Commercial signage displayed should minimise visual impact and employ materials and finishes appropriate to the environment.
- Street furniture (including signage) should be kept to the minimum necessary to provide for the safety of road users. 'Finger-post' rather than placard signage is to be preferred.
- New residential development should be appropriate to the surrounding historic context in terms of scale, density, layout, height and massing.

Not land use planning matters, but the following are **community aspirations**:

- **Covenants will be enforced where it can be proven that there has been an**

infringement of an open space frontage condition by the addition of walls, fences, hedges, shrubs, or trees.

- Wherever possible, utilities companies will be encouraged to place their services underground.

POLICY SB8: HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

The Plan Area's designated historic heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground including archaeological sites, designated and non-designated heritage assets (as shown on plans 31 and 32 and described in Table 1) will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

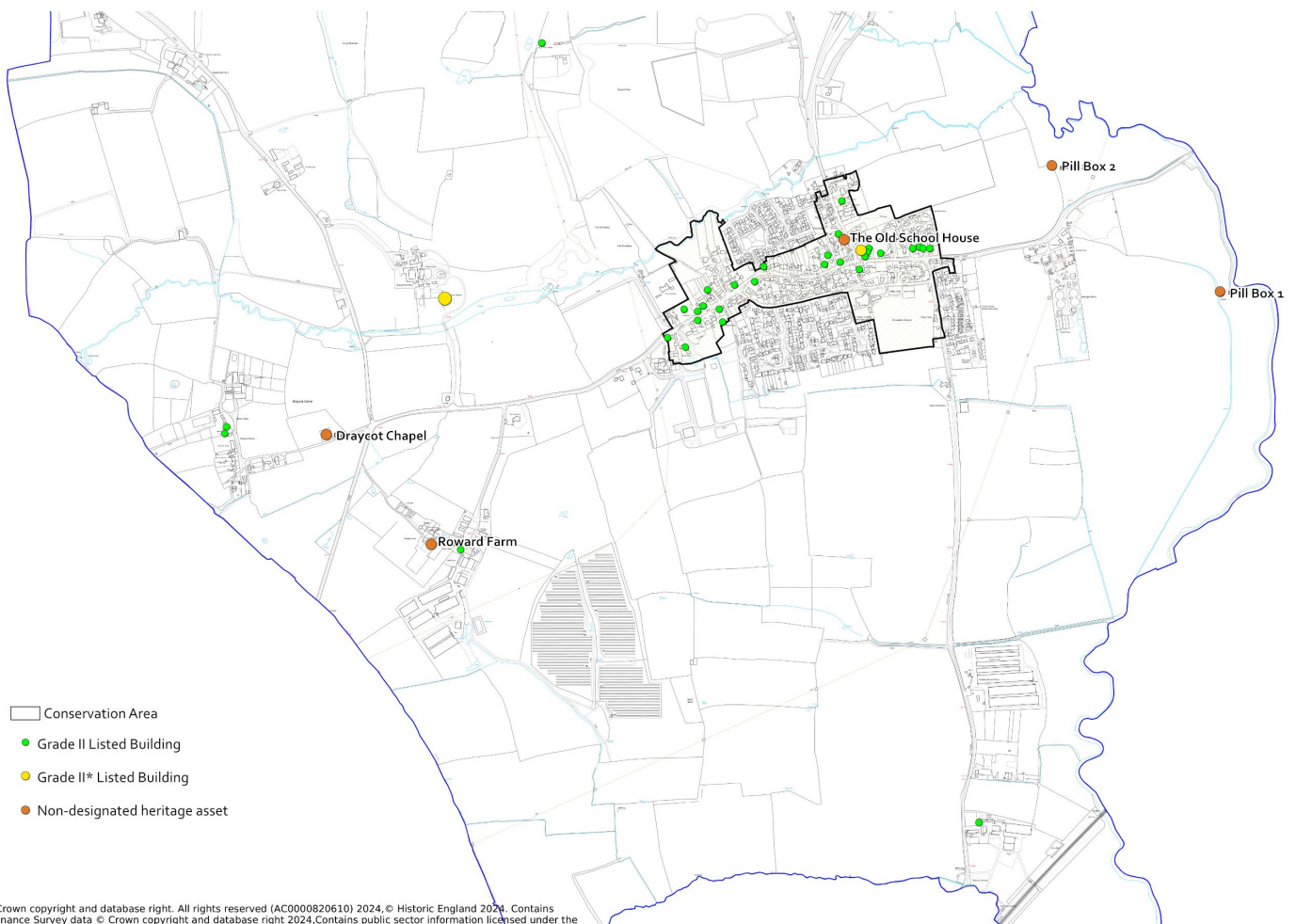


Figure 31 - Location of Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets in the wider Plan Area

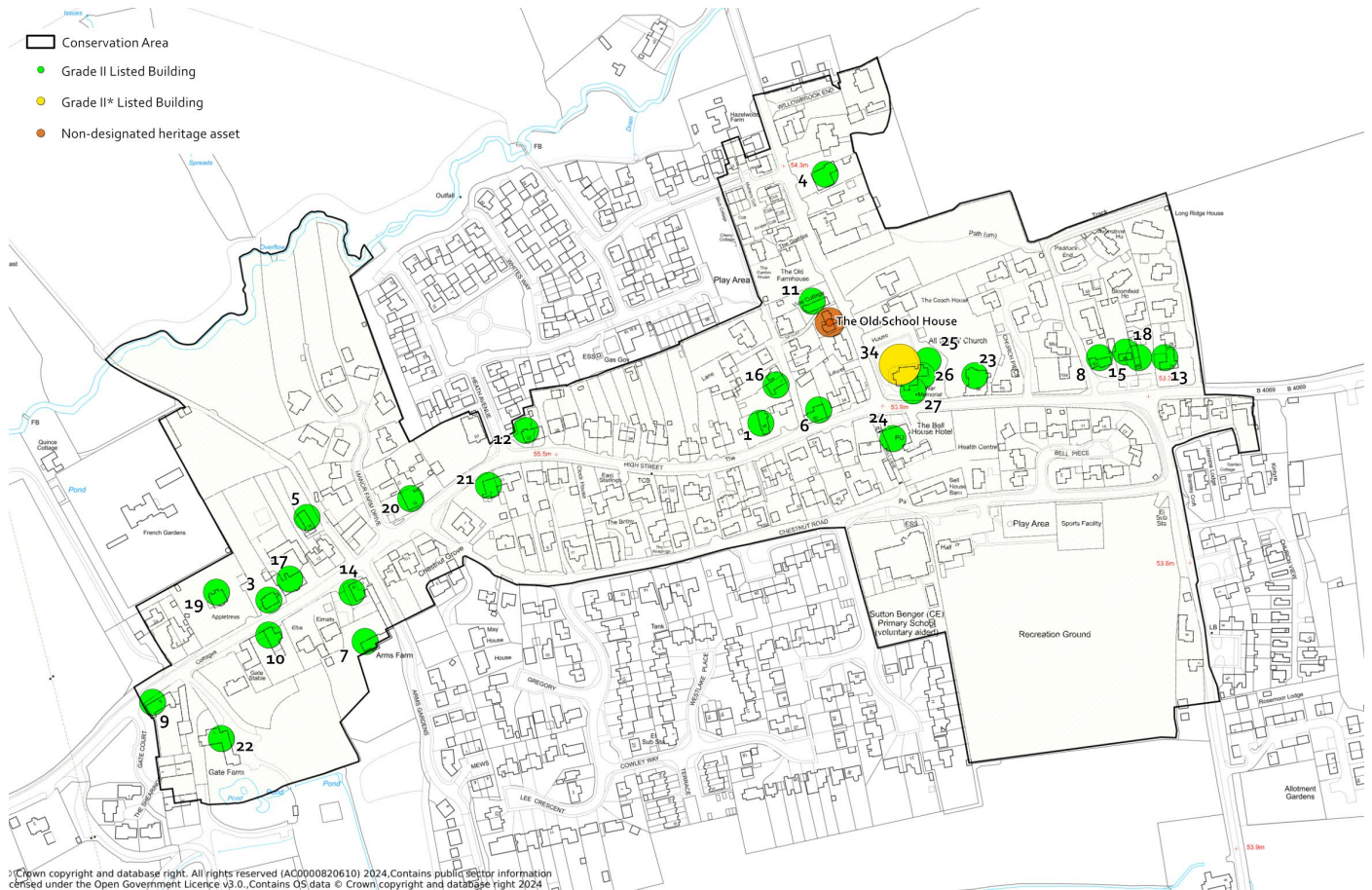


Figure 32 - Location of Listed Buildings in Sutton Benger village (see table 1)

Climate Change

Sustainability is a cornerstone of both national and local planning policy. A climate emergency was declared by Wiltshire Council administration at Full Council in February 2019. As part of this declaration, the Council has resolved to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. As a consequence of this and in recognition of the importance of climate change as an issue, sustainable development is a key focus of the Neighbourhood Plan.

No specific question was asked in the village questionnaire on climate change, however indirectly residents expressed concerns about items which would have an environmental impact.

- Creeping Urbanisation
- Loss of the green belt
- Flooding
- Increased traffic

Work has been done within the village to improve environment impact; a recent example is the installation of solar panels on the village hall.

The key is to maximise and encourage opportunities for innovative, sustainable construction techniques, use of renewable energy sources and ensuring buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy.

With increasing energy prices, it is essential that new buildings are well insulated and retain heat in winter and can be cooled in summer months.

Specifically, this could be achieved by use of a variety of measures including:

- Appropriate orientation - such as orientating windows of habitable rooms within 30 degrees of due south;
- Locating windows at heights that allow lower sun angles in the winter and installing shading mechanisms to prevent overheating during summer months;
- Using soft landscaping, including deciduous tree planting, to allow natural sunlight to pass through during the winter months whilst providing shade in the summer;
- Integrating passive ventilation, for example wind-catchers installed on roofs or trombe walls;
- Planting green roofs or walls to moderate the temperature of the building to avoid the need for mechanical heating and/or cooling systems; and
- Where appropriate, use water-recycling measures for energy efficiency and conservation of resources; and
- Plan for renewable energy at an early stage and incorporate this into the overall scheme design.

- Using sustainable, thermally efficient and locally sourced (where possible) materials. Where possible, this should be above standards set out in Building Regulations.

This has been set out in policy below.

POLICY SB9: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change should, where appropriate, be incorporated into the design of new developments and through conversion or extension proposals, opportunities to retrofit such measures into existing housing should be taken as appropriate to the site and could include²⁴:

- i. Careful site layout and orientation to maximise solar gain and take advantage of natural shelter, this however must be balanced with the existing pattern of development, including building lines.
- ii. Adopt passive solar heating and cooling measures. including building orientation, glazing positioning, thermal mass, roof overhang and natural ventilation.
- iii. Select materials to maximise heat retention in winter and minimise overheating in summer.

²⁴ List is not exhaustive

- iv. Use soft landscaping to provide shelter and shade as well as measures such as green roofs to moderate temperatures.
- v. Incorporate rainwater harvesting measures and SUDS measures.
- vi. Carefully integrate renewable energy and low-carbon technologies, including solar PV, solar thermal, micro wind generation and heat pumps.

A sensitive approach will need to be taken to safeguard the special character of the conservation area and to avoid harm to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets (as shown in table 1).

6.2 Housing

Paragraph 69 of the NPPF emphasises how important small and medium sized sites are to meeting the housing requirement of an area. Paragraph 70 goes on to state that Neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (sites no larger than one hectare).

In the instance of the Sutton Benger Plan Area, there has been considerable development in recent years and the village has grown by approximately 27%. It is therefore considered that there has been valuable contributions made by major development to the overall County housing need from this area.

It is considered that the focus should be upon allowing new development an opportunity to integrate with the existing built form and for infrastructure requirements to keep pace with the change.

It is therefore anticipated that new housing in the Plan Area will come forward as a result of windfall development. There remains a number of locations in the Plan Area which could be subject to redevelopment, infill development or conversion from other uses.

It should be noted that where housing or general development density within the Parish increases over time, due to infill or 'garden grabbing', it leaves less space for mature trees to act as important shading. The Design Code sets out details on page 11 with regard to plot coverage and the form and type of development by setting. It includes details on countryside, edge of settlement and village locations. There are also details on suburban developments, but such a response is rarely acceptable, particularly within the Parish.

The plot coverage examples, when combined with looking at the density of development in the wider area, highlight how to plan for development whilst allowing for sufficient space for landscaping including mature trees on the plot to address this problem.

POLICY SB10 - INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Within the built-up area of the villages as shown by the settlement boundary in figure 2, infill development and redevelopment of previously developed land or buildings will be supported, subject to compliance with other applicable policies including those in the Development Plan as a whole and the Sutton Benger Parish Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and Design Code (Appendix 2).

Affordable Housing

A request for a housing needs survey was made to Wiltshire Council and questionnaires were made available online on 22 November 2021. And residents were asked to complete the online survey by 20 December 2021. The online forms were recorded and analysed by the Residential Development Officers at Wiltshire Council. All responses were anonymous.

The survey was split into two parts, the first covering households currently living in the parish and the second was aimed at householders requiring accommodation in the parish.

The 2021 Housing Needs Survey for the parish concludes as below:

The survey's recommendations concentrate on households unable to afford accommodation on the open market. The following indicates the minimum need over the next three years for new affordable housing development in the parish, based on the responses to the survey. The recommendations describe a snapshot of the need for affordable housing at the time the survey was conducted and do not take account of future changes in need, for example arising from the changing housing needs of employees of local businesses, or changes to households' sizes or health needs for example. The recommendations may not represent the parish's full housing need as responses were not received from every household. In order to fully assess the housing need in the parish, the recommendations need to be considered alongside evidence provided by Wiltshire Council's Housing Register, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the advice of allocation staff who manage the Register.

Subsidised rented housing: 2 x one bedroom homes

Shared ownership / discount market homes: 1 x three bedroom home

Sheltered housing for older people: none

- In December 2021, there were eight households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking housing in Sutton Benger parish. Two households seeking 1-bedroom accommodation, three households seeking 2-bedroom accommodation and three households seeking 3-bedroom accommodation.

- The 2011 Census recorded twenty-two social homes in the parish. These properties represent 5.5% of the total housing in Sutton Benger, which is lower than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.
- Nevertheless, the social housing in Sutton Benger had a 50% re-let rate in the past year: from the first quarter 2021 to third quarter 2021 eleven social homes were re-let in the parish. This is likely to be a result of a new Affordable Housing development in Sutton Benger.
- The levels and turnover of social housing in the parish suggest that some of the households responding to section two of the survey and in need of affordable accommodation could meet their needs through accessing the existing social housing of the parish.

The Sutton Benger Parish Housing Needs survey will be updated together with the Neighbourhood Plan, following the adoption of the new Wiltshire Local Plan review, and then will be regularly updated to ensure that future development can take into account the latest housing evidence on local housing trends and needs.

POLICY SB11 - AFFORDABLE AND RURAL WORKERS HOUSING

Proposals for affordable housing, such as infill development, or as part of a larger rural exception sites or community led schemes, would be supported if it can be shown to meet the recommendations of the Sutton Benger Parish Housing Needs Survey, reported in January 2022 (and any subsequent survey or assessment). This includes:-

- Subsidised rented housing – 2 x one bedroom homes
- Shared ownership / discount market homes – 1 x three bedroom home

POLICY SB12 - DWELLING EXTENSIONS

Proposals for extensions to existing dwellings will be supported provided that they are designed taking into account the guidance in the Sutton Benger Parish Character Appraisal (Appendix 1) and Design Code, in particular CODE SB.15 (Appendix 2), therein.

Such proposals should not lead to over-development of the site, the loss of important gaps between buildings, key views into or out of the settlement or vegetation of amenity value.

6.3 Transport and Accessibility

Traffic in and Around the Parish

The road network within the Plan Area consists of the M4 motorway (which is not covered by this Plan), which lies to the north of the area. This connects to Junction 17 just to the west of the Plan Area, but links into the Plan Area via the B4122. This is a busy route (particularly with HGVs) leading to the new Chippenham Gateway employment site, the Household Waste and Recycling Centre, Pitstop Services and other local businesses.

This leads into the B4069, which is an east-west route through Sutton Benger village that links Chippenham to Lyneham, via Christian Malford. The speed limit of the B4069 within Sutton Benger Village is 30mph and a 20mph limit was introduced within the housing estates during 2016.

There is an active Community Speed Watch team within the village, set up in response to concerns about road safety and the increase in volume, speed and weight of traffic. Community Speed Watch is very well supported by numerous volunteers who have made a positive impact.

Within the survey, conducted as a part of the NDP process, our Residents expressed concerns with regard to the following issues:

- Speeding through the village of Sutton Benger
- Haphazard parking outside of the village primary school
- The number of heavy vehicles passing through the village
- The number of heavy vehicles using the local roads as a major link to the M4 motorway

The plan below highlights the reported road traffic incidents within the last 20 years:

- Red – involving fatalities
- Orange – serious injuries
- Yellow – minor injuries

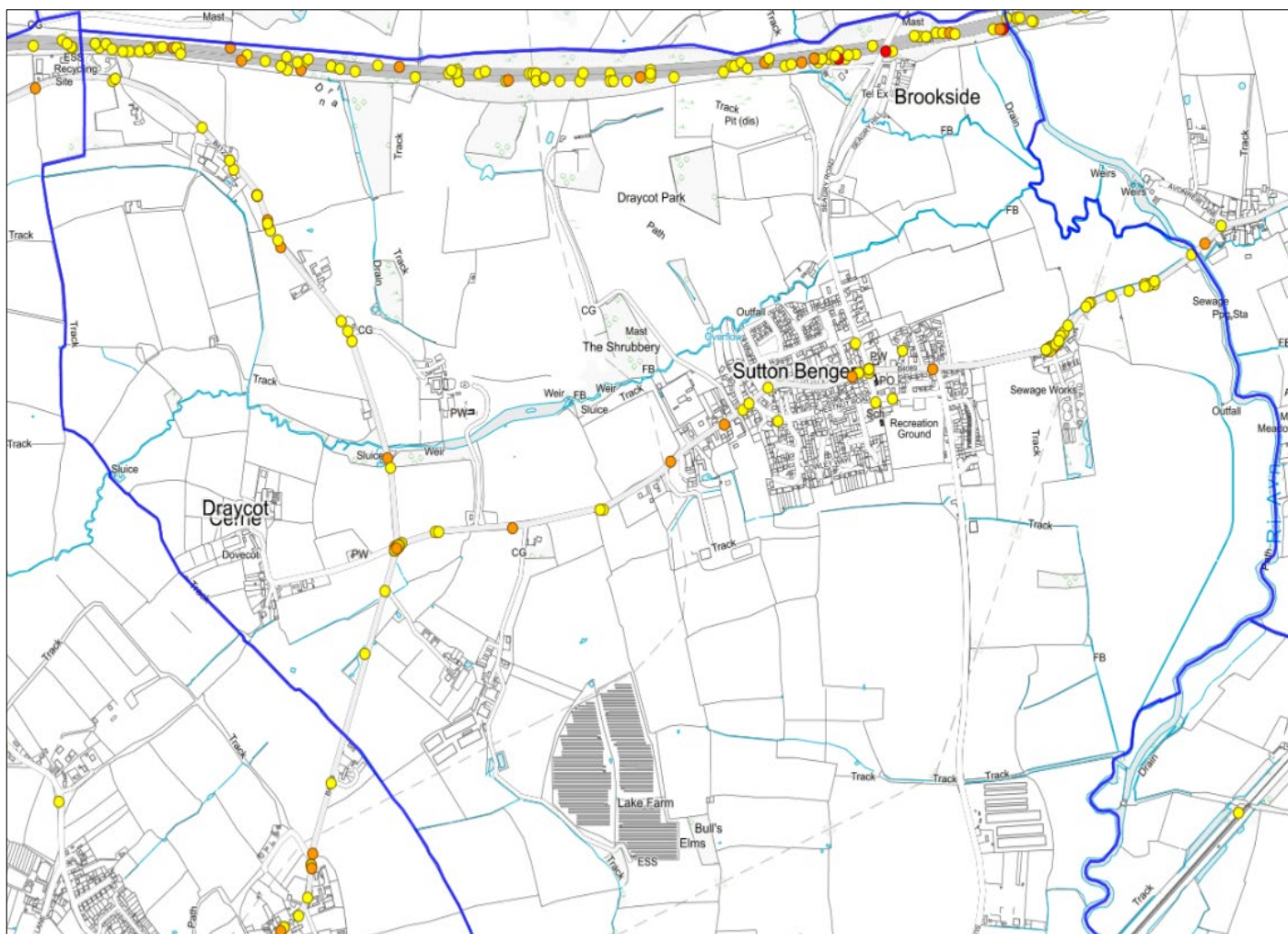


Figure 29 Location of reported traffic incidents in the Parish since 2000 - marked by severity

It is clear that are number of problems areas, which are discussed in more detail below.

Junction Between B4122, B4069 & Draycot Cerne

The junction between the B4122 and B4069 is of particular concern as this is the route that links numerous villages to the M4 motorway and is therefore extremely busy at main commuter times. The priority at this unusually configured crossroads follows the route between Chippenham and Lyneham allowing the motorway traffic to join at the same location as the Draycot Cerne village traffic. Priorities are not clear, and some vehicle approach speeds can be high. That same junction also serves Draycot Cerne making access to, and egress from, the Draycot Cerne Village extremely difficult and potentially dangerous. This has the potential to be exacerbated by the recent large developments by St Modwen Park, a 78.2-acre (30.1 ha) development site located on J17.

Whilst these are not necessarily a land use planning matter, they are if it is linked to future development and the capacity of junctions and highway safety impacts.

The highway capacity data (Appendix 3.1) illustrates a steady increase in traffic in the local area, in 2014 there was an annual average daily flow of 3664 motor vehicles, and in 2019 this had risen to 4488. (Source: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/947634>).

Comments in the village questionnaire pertaining to traffic and safe pedestrian access are detailed in Appendix 3.2. Comments from the questionnaire highlight the general concern for pedestrian safety and emphasise a few areas of particular concern.

Capacity and traffic calming measures should be considered and incorporated as part of any new development. Equally it should be noted that new development should not exacerbate current issues mentioned above.

Parking

The majority of houses in the Parish have off-road parking, and generally, on road parking is not a particular problem other than outside of the Village Primary School during pick-up and drop-off times.

Improved road markings and signs have been put in place outside the school to limit parking to safe areas. Other suggestions would be to promote walking to school, parking at the village hall rather than in the residential roads and enforcing the 20mph speed limit.

Local Travel (Public Transport)

Buses

There is a no. 91 local bus service that runs between and the villages of Dauntsey, Christian Malford, Sutton Benger and Kington Langley and on into Chippenham. There are currently a total of seven services per day, with it taking on average 30 minutes to reach Chippenham. There are no late evening services beyond around 6pm.

Trains

The nearest mainline railway station is in Chippenham, approximately five miles away, providing fast direct trains to London and Bristol. The bus service provides a direct route to the station.

The key objectives are to ensure that:

- motorists, cyclists and pedestrians have safe routes throughout the Parish;
- the roads & pavements are well maintained;
- street lighting is appropriate, effective and well-maintained;
- traffic and pedestrians, especially children, are 'managed' as safely as possible during the school commuting times;

New development must provide off-street parking in accordance with Wiltshire Council's adopted standards so as to avoid increasing demand for on-street parking. Where parking are proposed either greater or lesser than those required, a change to such standards may be justified subject to the provision of a parking survey of the area in question.

POLICY SB13 - NEW DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHWAY IMPLICATIONS

All new development proposals that require permission, should:

- Ensure that it does not lead to the loss of front gardens to accommodate parking. Where it has already been lost, opportunities should be taken in any new proposal to

establish or reinforce planting to act as a screen to vehicles, whilst ensuring that highway safety is not undermined.

- Be designed to avoid adverse impacts on road safety within the Neighbourhood Plan area and, where justified, to secure road safety improvements particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. In particular, development proposals should avoid exacerbating problems on the following roads / junctions as set out:
 - a. Junction of Queens Close and Chestnut Road where the school is located
 - b. Seagry Hill, particularly across the bridge where it narrows and there is no pedestrian access.
 - c. Sutton Lane as there is no pathway from Sharplands
 - d. Junction of Lyneham Road with Draycot Straights
- Maximise opportunities for sustainable transport, pedestrian and cycle movements both within and between the settlement and the surrounding area, including securing improvements to the Public Rights of Way that connect the settlements in the area.
- Be accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate how an increase in traffic (including HGV movements) which may be generated by a proposal has been taken into consideration either individually or cumulatively, in line with the findings of traffic surveys.

Where traffic calming measures are proposed, these should be designed so as not to have an adverse impact upon visual amenity, to increase noise or have an adverse impact on residents or users of the route.

6.4 Open Space

The NPPF states in paragraph 101 that *“The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them.”*

The NPPF goes on to state at paragraph 102 that “The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”

These criteria form the basis of the assessment that has been undertaken for each potential Local Green Space and which is detailed in the Local Green Spaces Assessment, March 2021 evidence document. This document evaluated the following for potential designation as Local Green Spaces, which fell into one (or more) of four distinct categories:

- Those (generally small) areas of Sutton Benger’s “built environment” which are considered most vital.
- Those sites are used for sports and other recreational activities.
- Those on the immediate periphery of the settlement with public access and in regular use by those on foot.
- Those which (without necessarily offering public access) fulfil a specific function (from the NPPF list) to the local community, that is reflected in the aspirations and policy objectives of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

The following sites were considered for assessment:

- LG-1 Allotments
- LG-2 Recreation ground & sports facilities
- LG-3 Natural green space to the north of The Park Development along stream, west & east of footpath bridge
- LG-4 Play area and two amenity green areas in The Park Development
- LG-5 The Big Field an arable field to the south of the recreation ground
- LG-6 Church Piece field between the Flambe restaurant and the Rectory
- LG-7 Gossip areas in Cowley Way, Queen's Close and Neville Terrace
- LG-8 Grass area to the east of the Bell House Hotel

Four other open spaces were considered within the Parish but not included in the Green Space listing for the following reasons:

i.) Grass verges along the High Street. Given their size & location these are unlikely to be developed or prove of great recreational value, and consequently an enhanced level of protection is not considered appropriate. Nevertheless, they are considered to add beauty value to the community and therefore any attempt to diminish them would be resisted as if it were any other Parish amenity.

ii.) The model plane airfield. - It was decided to investigate the possibility of formalising the permissive pathway which traverses this area to be upgraded to a public right of way.

iii.) Sutton Lane Meadows. – This is already a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is therefore already protected.

iv.) Fishing pegs along the river Avon. It was decided to rather investigate the possibility of formalising a pathway on the Sutton Benger side of the river between the bridleway near the weir to the B4069

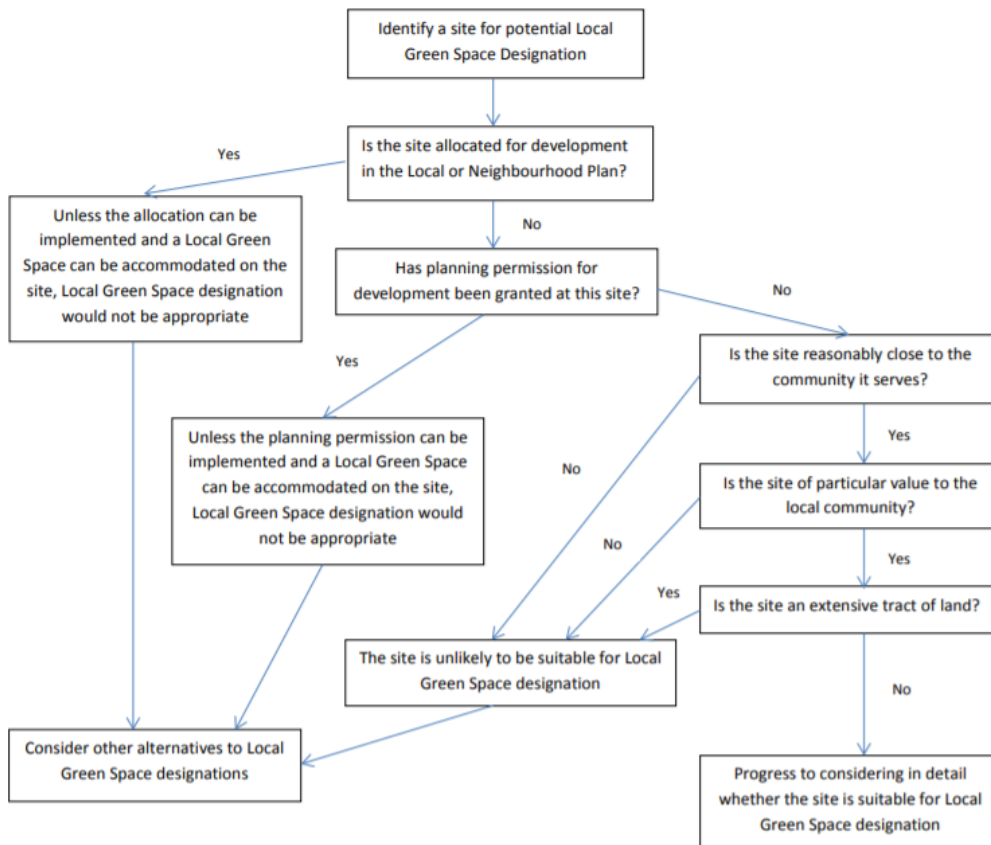


Figure 33 - Decision Tree for Designation of Local Green Space

From this assessment, a conclusion was reached as to whether spaces should be designated. It should be noted that whilst many open spaces are considered important to residents, not all qualify for Local Green Space status. Some spaces were considered for different reasons, but failed the NPPF tests. The detailed evidence for the identification and assessment of potential Local Green Space sites is set out in the evidence base. Figure 31 identifies all the open spaces in the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan area proposed for designation.

It should also be noted that some areas were deemed to be sufficiently protected by other designations, such as certain recreation facilities. In this instance it was considered that designation as a Local Green Space was not the most appropriate approach to take.

POLICY SB14 – LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following areas are designated as Local Green Spaces.

New development will not be supported on land designated as Local Green Space except in very special circumstances.

- LG-1 Allotments
- LG-2 Recreation ground & sports facilities

- LG-3 Natural green space to the north of The Park Development along stream, west & east of footpath bridge
- LG-4 Play area and two amenity green areas in The Park Development
- LG-5 The Big Field an arable field to the south of the recreation ground
- LG-6 Church Piece field between the Flambe restaurant and the Rectory
- LG-7 Gossip areas in Cowley Way, Queen's Close and Neville Terrace
- LG-8 Grass area to the east of the Bell House Hotel



Figure 34 - Location of Local Green Spaces

The Parish benefits from numerous Public Rights of Way, a number of which follow historic routes. There are also a number of informal paths and areas in which local people have used for recreation and exercise for many years.

The plan below highlights the individual routes and their numbers.

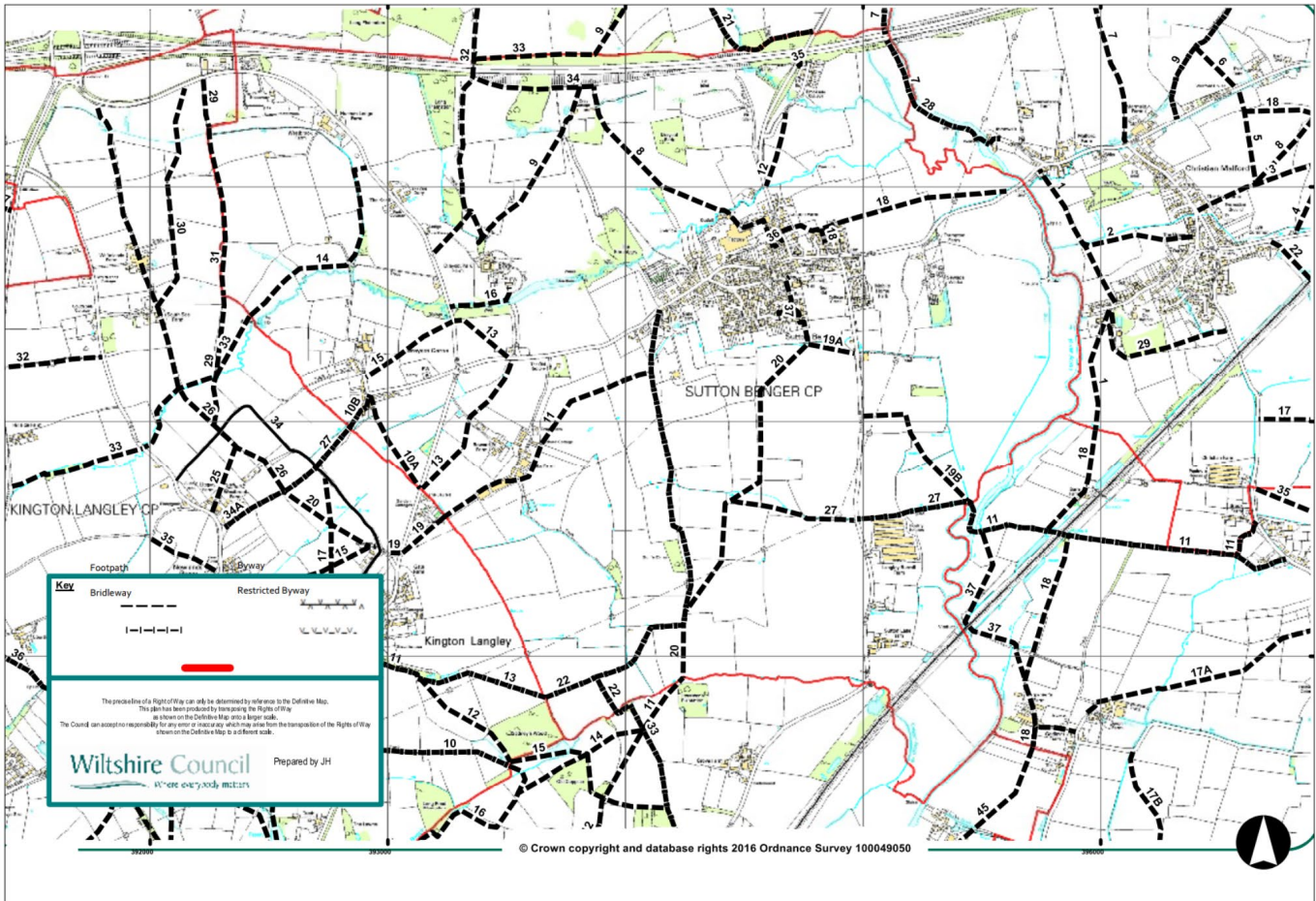


Figure 35 - Wiltshire Council's Public Right of Way Network Map

POLICY SB15 PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS OF WAY AND CYCLE NETWORK

Development proposals which affect rights of way or the cycle network in the Plan area will be supported where they improve:

- Safety;
- Directness;
- Accessibility and Connectivity;
- Attractiveness;
- Convenience;
- Adjacent features such as trees and hedgerows, ponds or watercourses.

Proposals for development adjoining a public footpath or bridleway shall ensure that the rural character of the footpath or bridleway is maintained.

Any proposals that result in the obstruction or requires the diversion or urbanisation of a public footpath, bridleway or cycle way to the detriment of the community will be resisted.

6.5 Better Facilities for Local People

Community and Recreational Facilities

There is strong community support for the safeguarding of important village assets. Sutton Benger is blessed with high quality open spaces with opportunities for sport and recreation alongside well used public spaces such as the village hall. All of which make an important contribution to the health and well-being of a community. These spaces serve different community needs and are accessible to all residents in the local community.

Village Hall

Sutton Benger is fortunate to have a superb Village Hall. It is very much the centre of Parish life. It provides a central location for a large proportion of Parish events and fund-raising activities. Built in 2000, the Village Hall has an open plan main area, an 'anteroom' for smaller meetings, a separate kitchen, two changing rooms and gents' and ladies' toilet facilities. It also has an integrated storage area. In addition, there are several detached storage sheds which are used by the Parish user groups.

Run by a team of Trustees (and supported by representatives of many of the Hall's Stakeholder User Groups) the Village Hall is self-funded through rental income, donations and fundraising. The main fundraising event is the Annual Firework display that takes place on the Rec.

The Trustees are concerned to protect the Hall and Recreation Ground from any negative impact of future parish development that may adversely affect its ability to earn income / raise money to continue providing for the community.

All Saints Church

Our parish church can be found at the junction of High Street and Seagry Road. Early records indicate that there was a Saxon church in the village and there has certainly been a church on this site since the 12th century. It is Grade II Listed.

All Saints is well attended by Parishioners of all ages. It is used as a place of worship throughout the year. It is also used for village fundraising events such as a Christmas Fayre and regular concerts.

Sutton Benger Post Office

The Post Office was situated in the middle of the settlement area within The Bell House Hotel complex and was open daily until its closure in October 2023. It was a vital and highly valued 'hub' of the neighbourhood.

Public Houses, Restaurants & Hotels

Sutton Benger Parish benefits from two public houses (one of which is a hotel) and a popular restaurant.

All three establishments provide a valued resource to locals - as location to eat, drink and relax. The Bell House Hotel and The Wellesley Arms also act as a much-valued 'unofficial' meeting venue (without charge) for any village gatherings which do not require the larger space available at the Village Hall. Note: The Bell House Hotel closed in October 2023 and is currently for sale, it is hoped that under new ownership that it will remain as a community hub.

It is also worth noting that all three establishments have provided opportunities for employment to local people, most noticeably young people looking for weekend and evening work. All of which contributes to the local economy with visitors using the eateries and hotel for work and pleasure.

Convenience Stores

Residents travel locally to Christian Malford Post Office or the Pit Stop, or further afield to Chippenham, Calne, Malmesbury or Royal Wootton Bassett to shop in larger supermarkets.

The Recreation Ground

Sutton Benger's Recreation Ground is a high-quality open space at the heart of the Parish. It is very heavily used and is comprehensively equipped with a wide range of facilities. This includes a maintained cricket pitch, cricket practice nets, a rugby/football pitch, a recently refurbished children's play area and a multi-use games area. The multi-use games area (MUGA) provides tennis, basketball, netball and 5-a-side football. The Recreation ground and MUGA is managed by the same registered charity and trustees who are responsible for the Village Hall.

Allotments

The Sutton Benger Allotments and Gardens Association provides 22 allotments. It is well used by locals and visitors alike. The annual summer fayre is always well attended and provides a showcase for the local, green-fingered community.

A key objective of the Plan is to ensure that future developments (including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings) do not have negative impacts on the Parish's recreational assets including those mentioned above.

Sutton Lane Meadows

As described previously, the meadows is a special place for both Parishioners and visitors to the area in terms of quiet recreation. Overuse of this site however could cause damage and is to be balanced.

It is considered essential by the community to:

- maximise the opportunity for physical activity, including sports and leisure.
- to preserve and safe-guard important Parish assets for future generations.
- Protect green and open spaces for communal and social use with good access to the natural environment.
- Protect existing (and provide more) spaces for growing local food.

Health and Health Care

The respondents of the 2011 Census suggest that the health of the residents of Sutton Benger Parish is generally better than that of the average person in England.

The village benefits from a GP's surgery (run by the Patford House Partnership based in Calne) in the Parish. It also benefits from dispensing pharmacy on site. Villagers without transport may use the Dautsey Vale Link, a good neighbour scheme, where drivers take clients to and from medical and other appointments on request.

The nearest hospital, optician and dental facilities are in Chippenham, 5 1/2 miles, or Malmesbury, 7 miles.

Communications Infrastructure

Residents benefit from various options for internet access including fibre to the cabinet via traditional providers such as BT, and fibre to the property via Gigaclear thanks to the scheme to connect rural properties which in part was enabled by the Government-subsidised Broadband Delivery UK programme (BDUK).

Education

Within the Plan Area, Sutton Benger Church of England Primary School (Academy) caters for children aged 4 to 11 from both within and outside the Parish. At the time of updating (December 2023) there are 170 children on roll (NoR) with a capacity of 210.

An academy is a public funded independent school; (not maintained by a LA) and accountable to the Department for Education (DfE). It is funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rather than Wiltshire Council.

The school is close to capacity but it is understood that the existing School facilities are adequate for the known growth, but any large-scale unplanned development in the Plan Area has not been accounted for.

Children leaving Sutton Benger Primary School will, most often, then go to one of the three secondary schools in Chippenham which is approximately 4 miles away and travel by bus.

Also within the Plan Area there is Benger Bears Pre-School that caters for 2, 3 and 4 year old children. Benger Bears is based within the Village Hall in Sutton Benger and has approximately 30 children on their 'books' with 15 or 16 children attending each session.

The Village Hall is not an ideal venue given it is restricted in size and is not dedicated solely for the use of the Benger Bears. This creates difficulty in that play and other equipment must be tidied away after every session given that the Village Hall has numerous other user groups.

In order for the community of the Sutton Benger Plan Area to continue to flourish in the future, it is necessary to ensure that an appropriate level of infrastructure is maintained commensurate with the needs of the community. Active support will be given to development which is consistent with the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan where it secures the provision or funding of infrastructure that mitigates the effects of the development, with particular regard to school capacity, sustainable transport measures, healthcare provision, sewage treatment capacity, water supply, public open space and utility connections.

Name of Facility
The Wellesley Arms
The Flambé Restaurant
Sutton Benger Primary School
Village Hall
The Bell House Hotel
Allotments
Recreation Ground and MUGA
GP Surgery
Allotments

Table 2 Table of Community Assets and Facilities

POLICY SB16 LOSS OR CHANGE TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Loss of Community Facilities

Development proposals that will result in either the loss of or significant harm to a community facility as defined in Table 2 Community Assets and Facilities will not be

supported, unless it can clearly be demonstrated that the operation of the asset, or the ongoing delivery of the community value of the asset, is no longer financially viable.

Change to Community Facilities

Proposals for the extension, adaptation or redevelopment of the community facilities identified in Table 2 Community Assets and Facilities for community purposes will be supported, provided the resulting improved facilities offer at least the same level of provision as previously existed and are appropriate in design terms and will not unacceptably impact the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

POLICY SB16A COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Applications for major residential development must contain a 'Connectivity Statement' highlighting the proposed connections to essential services, such as water, electricity, gas, and telecommunications. This should also include details of suitable ducting to enable more than one service provider to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from connection chambers located on the public highway, or some alternative connection point available to different service providers.

6.6 Employment and Business

Planning for employment is addressed in section 6 of the NPPF. In particular, paragraph 84 supports the expansion of all types of businesses in the rural areas through:

- conversion of buildings;
- well-designed new buildings;
- agricultural diversification; and
- sustainable rural tourism and leisure.

Paragraph 84 explains that planning policies should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It explains that the use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

This Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 34 - Additional Employment Land looks at land within the principal settlements, market towns and local service centres. As a 'Large Village' Sutton Benger does not fall into this category. Notwithstanding this, the Strategy does however support developments which are:

- i. "Are adjacent to these settlements and seek to retain or expand businesses currently located within or adjacent to the settlements; or*

- ii. *Support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification; or*
- iii. *are for new and existing rural based businesses within or adjacent to Large and Small Villages; or*
- iv. *Are considered essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire, as determined by the council."*

In this regard, the future development of land alongside junction 17 of the M4 known as Chippenham Gateway would be considered a wider strategic interest. Although the allocated land is outside of the Plan Area, any future increase in development within the Plan Area could have significant impacts upon the community, particularly given the constraints on the rural road network and impact on highway safety without appropriate mitigation measures.

Proposals for new employment development could include Use Classes B2 General Industrial or B8 Storage or Class E (Light Industrial, Research and Development and Offices (formerly Class B1)).

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) establishes circumstances where permitted development rights exist to convert buildings into commercial uses. For example, Part R allows conversion of agricultural buildings to flexible commercial uses; Part S allows conversion of agricultural buildings to a state-funded school or nursery; and a wide range of other commercial uses may be permitted as a result of a change of use by other parts of this Order.

Given the above context, the aim of the Plan is to:

- Encourage small-scale, low traffic generating businesses that will provide start-up opportunities and have little traffic impact on the nature of the Plan Area.
- Ensure that any new proposals within the Plan Area adjacent to the Chippenham Gateway site south of the motorway junction have adequate lorry routing agreements in place to manage the traffic arising from both the construction and development of the site as well as daily operations, such that HGV movements are all directed to the north and use wither the motorway or the A350 as their access routes rather than through the village or wider parish rural lanes.
- Ensure that developments resulting in associated significant traffic movement are supported by a Transport Assessment which examines the cumulative impact upon the area in detail. Such developments, where are considered appropriate should be prepared to enter into both HGV routing agreements as well as travel plans for their employees.

The number of home workers continues to increase which puts pressure on the speed and consistency of the broadband service although the village now benefits from the availability of FTTP via the Gigaclear network. The feedback from the NDP questionnaire indicates that the villagers are not strongly supportive of new business development within the settlement area. It should be noted however that support was evenly split on the reservation of land for businesses suited to the rural environment to encourage local employment opportunities. Similarly, support was evenly split on additional office employment.

There are 9 active farms in the Parish. Some of the land is also used for crops for farms outside the Parish. There has been evidence of diversification with Farmers turning land over for small business units, housing, and holiday lets.

POLICY SB17 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL INDUSTRIES

Notwithstanding any strategic employment allocations, new employment development should be focused upon providing workspace for existing or new small-scale businesses where these:

- a. Are not on the best and most versatile agricultural land (except where it forms part of the conversion of existing buildings), and
- b. Do not involve the loss of a residential dwelling; and
- c. Would not unacceptably impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or other residents by way of noise, vibration, light or smell.
- d. Would not lead to a harmful increase in traffic (particularly HGV or other commercial traffic) on narrow rural roads and lanes, particularly on those lanes and junctions identified in Policy SB13.

Given the constrained road network in the Plan Area, it is anticipated that major development proposals should be accompanied by a Transport Statement and Travel Plan. Applicants will be expected to enter in lorry routing agreements to ensure that the rural road network is not adversely impacted.

24 hour operation/ lighting will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact to the community.

Not a land use planning matter, but the following are **community aspirations**:

Existing weight and speed restrictions should be maintained or reduced to ensure that new development does not prejudice existing traffic controls. Commercial activities that require

The Parish Council will continue to engage with the Highway Authority to ensure such matters are reviewed.

Appendices

Appendix 1- Character Appraisal

Please refer to separate document

Appendix 2 – Design Code

Please refer to separate document

Appendix 3. Transport and Accessibility

Highway capacity data

Site details: 947634

Region	South West
Local authority	Wiltshire
Road name	B4069
Road classification	'B' road
Managed by	Local authority
Road type	Minor
Latitude, longitude	51.51204600, - 2.05584770
Main Road, Christian Malford (1 m from Sutton Benger)	

Annual Average daily flow								
Year	Count method	Pedal cycle s	Two wheeled motor vehicles	Cars and taxis	Buses and coaches	Light goods vehicles	Heavy goods vehicles	All motor vehicles
2019	Manual count	4	46	3570	13	713	146	4488
2018	Manual count	19	57	3150	12	650	126	3996
2017	Manual count	27	26	3238	15	733	173	4185
2016	Manual count	10	59	3148	15	623	141	3986
2015	Manual count	26	61	3039	27	587	196	3910
2014	Manual count	13	45	2764	28	699	129	3664
2013	Manual count	10	27	2858	35	723	245	3887
2012	Manual count	7	38	2847	45	628	145	3703
2011	Manual count	23	45	2757	45	618	278	3743
2010	Manual count	19	42	3085	43	594	193	3957
2008	Manual count	8	51	2930	61	640	164	3846

Source: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/947634>

Appendix 3.2 Pedestrians and Pavements

Comments from the questionnaire highlight the general concern for pedestrian safety.

Pavements, examples of those comments include:

- 30 mph section at the end of Sutton lane is not observed, no pavement and is dangerous

- High Street before 09:00 and 16:00 to 18:00 and 22:30 to 24:00 heavy traffic. Sutton Lane south of Chestnut Road - narrow road. Seagry Road - from High Street junction to Willowbrook bridge lacks pavement
- Lack of adequate pavements
- Speeding vehicles entering the village down Seagry Road, there isn't a pavement and the traffic doesn't slow until it is well past Willowbrook End making it extremely dangerous for pedestrians as the road is very narrow.
- Lack of safe crossing places over B4069
- Speed of drivers can be very alarming for pedestrians - and the pavements are so poorly maintained and narrow this a real worry.
- A traffic calming scheme is needed at the bridge over the brook as cars come speeding down the hill and often fails to slow down before reaching The Flambe. There is no pavement and this makes it dangerous for pedestrians.
- As a person with walking problems (two speeds: very slow or stop!) crossing all roads can be a problem at certain times. Failure of traffic travelling south from Seagry to observe restricted pedestrian area. As I am one of the several people obliged to use a scooter, it is impossible to pass along the High Street south side due to large kerb drops at Starlings on a scooter on the High Street. Where mobility scooters or wheelchairs have difficulties on pavements and crossing roads, mothers with pushchairs and other children have difficulty.
- Coming from the M4 there are a large number of heavy good vehicles using the roads. For such narrow and poorly kept roads (especially SB high street) I think this present a real danger to other road users and pedestrians.
- West of the village boundary the footpath is generally neglected which leads to pedestrians walking along the road in a 50mph speed zone....here the default speed seems to be 50mph+

Improvements to the network to improve safe pedestrian access should focus on the below areas:

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1. Sutton Lane - there is no pathway from Sharplands until you get to the bungalows. With additional housing this is not acceptable, and any development should include the extension of the pavements.
2. To walk into the village from Gate Farm means you have to cross the road onto a narrow pavement, this could be improved
3. Continuation of the pavement from Sutton Benger to Draycot Cerne linking the villages and providing a safe access between villages for walkers and cyclists.
4. Seagry Hill currently has a line denoting a pavement/cycle lane; this should be re-drawn and surfaced, and additional signage put in place.
5. Outside of the school on Chestnut Road and Queens Close.