
Sutton Benger Parish Character Appraisal



Prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in conjunction with
Bluestone Planning
in respect of the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan

V5.0
Updated Oct 2022

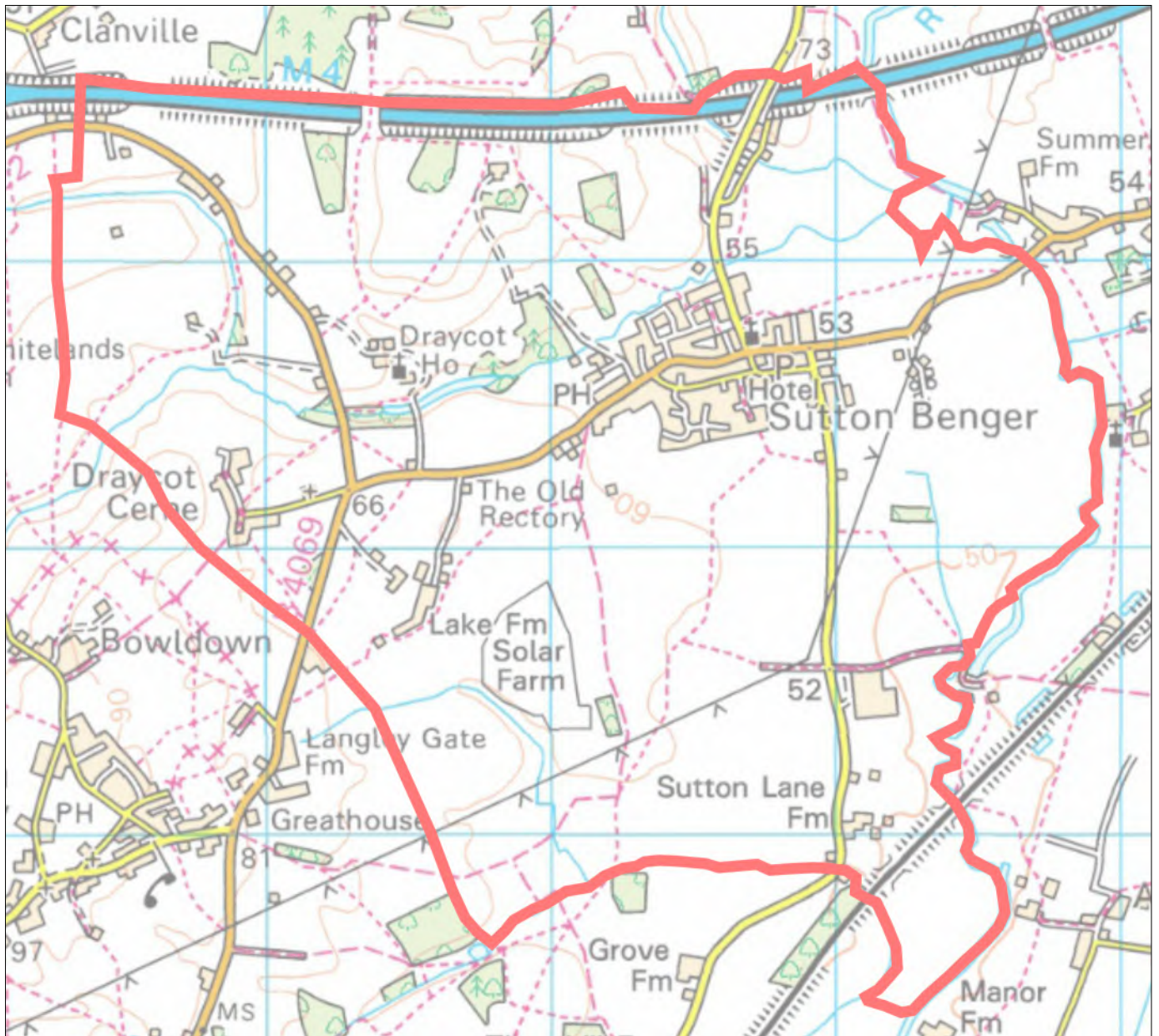
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Introduction



2. Sutton Benger Parish Boundary and Extent of Neighbourhood Plan Area

This character appraisal has been prepared by Sutton Benger Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The aim of the report is to provide evidence regarding the character of the Parish and how it is perceived by its residents.

In order to successfully plan for the future growth and development of the parish it is imperative that there is a clear understanding of its character and what makes it unique.

What is a Character Appraisal?



3. Aerial view of the main settlement areas in the Parish

A character appraisal is a document which sets out the special interest, character and appearance of a particular place to highlight its local distinctiveness and identity.

The Appraisal itself is a factual and objective analysis, which seeks to enable an understanding of the wider qualities of distinctiveness of place by defining those physical elements that contribute to its special characteristics. Essentially it identifies those qualities that help to define and make the place unique: such as open space, materials, property type, maintenance, age of the structures.

In this instance, the study will define the character of the parish's built up area as a series of character areas. Each area is described against a series of common physical characteristics.

Whilst this appraisal seeks to assess the area's special interest as comprehensively as possible, it cannot cover the minutiae of all issues. Consequently, any omission of a particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it has no value or interest. The appraisal is the starting point; any development proposals should fully consider the appraisal, having regard to national and local policies. Such proposals should be informed by an

individual assessment commensurate with the scale of the project proposed.

The information within the appraisal will comprise descriptive text supported by photographs, maps and other graphical material. It will also identify opportunities for future enhancement if considered necessary.

Purpose of the Study

The study has been produced for a number of reasons, but most importantly to inform the preparation of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan

Identification of important issues will help shape the content and direction of that plan. In addition to the above, it could also be used as a development management tool to secure better quality development appropriate to its surroundings. Such a document can be used by residents and developers when preparing a planning application, or for anyone wishing to comment on a current planning application.

The Localism Act 2011 introduces the right for communities to shape their local areas by creating their own Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

What is a Character Appraisal?

The following appraisal was prepared in accordance with The RTPi document entitled *"How to prepare a character assessment to support design policy within a neighbourhood plan - Putting the pieces together"*

The character assessment was then conducted using the character assessment toolkit and pro forma, produced by Oxford City Council in partnership with English Heritage.

Volunteers from the Steering Group undertook the survey work which included:

Recording in detail:

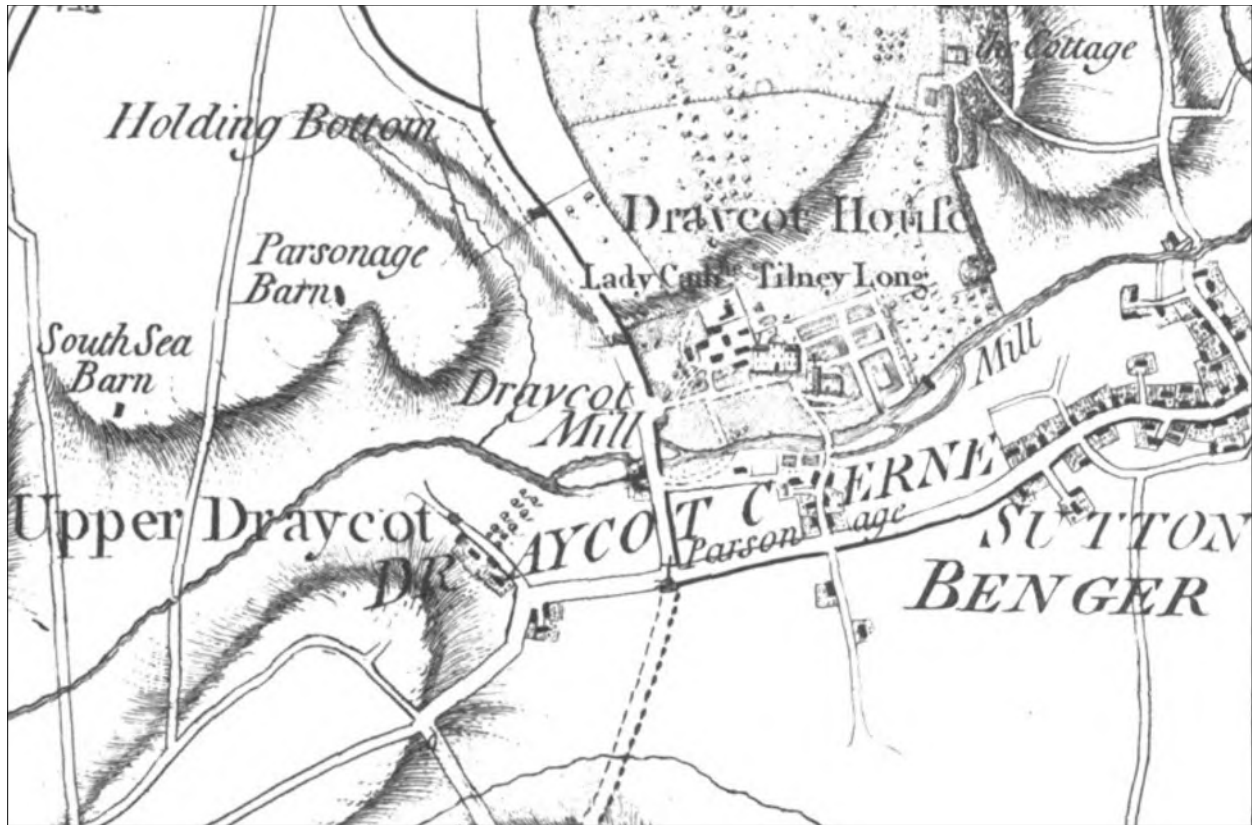
- Buildings, views, use, spaces, greenery and landscape etc as set out in more detail in the character appraisal section
- Noting all visual features of the streetscapes and spirit of the place. All of the above will be recorded using the above pro-forma and large scale mapping.

- Noting historical and cultural influences, by referring to historical maps, photographs, local web-sites and books, archaeological records, archives and talking to residents.
- Collating records and checking against up to date sources and on-site information.
- Obtaining photographic evidence to support this appraisal.
- Reporting and further consultation via a variety of methods to ensure the appraisal encompasses a true reflection of the Parish.
- Publication of a final draft to identify the key features of the Parish character areas and the implications for informing the Neighbourhood Plan process.



4. All Saints Parish Church, Sutton Benger

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time



5. 1773 Map of Draycot Cerne and Sutton Benger

The parish of Sutton Benger was originally two parishes and lies within the former North Wiltshire District and comprises the hamlet of Draycot Cerne in the west, following eastwards to the village of Sutton Benger and out to the River Avon in the east.

The surrounding area is open countryside which contains a number of farms and commercial enterprises as well as the Household Recycling Centre to the north near to junction 17 of the M4. To the south, the parish stretches across a large area of open farmland and now includes a substantial solar array at Lake Farm. There is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest known as Sutton Lane Meadows managed by the National Trust.

For some 500 years Sutton Benger was a small feudal village bordering royal hunting grounds and was controlled entirely by the owner of the Draycot Estate.

The name Sutton Benger was in existence from the late 14th century. It should be noted however that the village was also known as 'Sutton Leonard' or 'Sutton Leonard Juxta Christmalford' as well as 'Sutton Juxta Bradenstoke'.

Part of the Draycot Cerne parish was added in 1884 and most of the village was owned by the Draycot estate until 1920.

A wider land holding including Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne were put up for auction in 1920. Many residents were offered opportunities to purchase land and properties.

The population around this time was about 350; and the village was largely self-supporting with a range of small businesses.

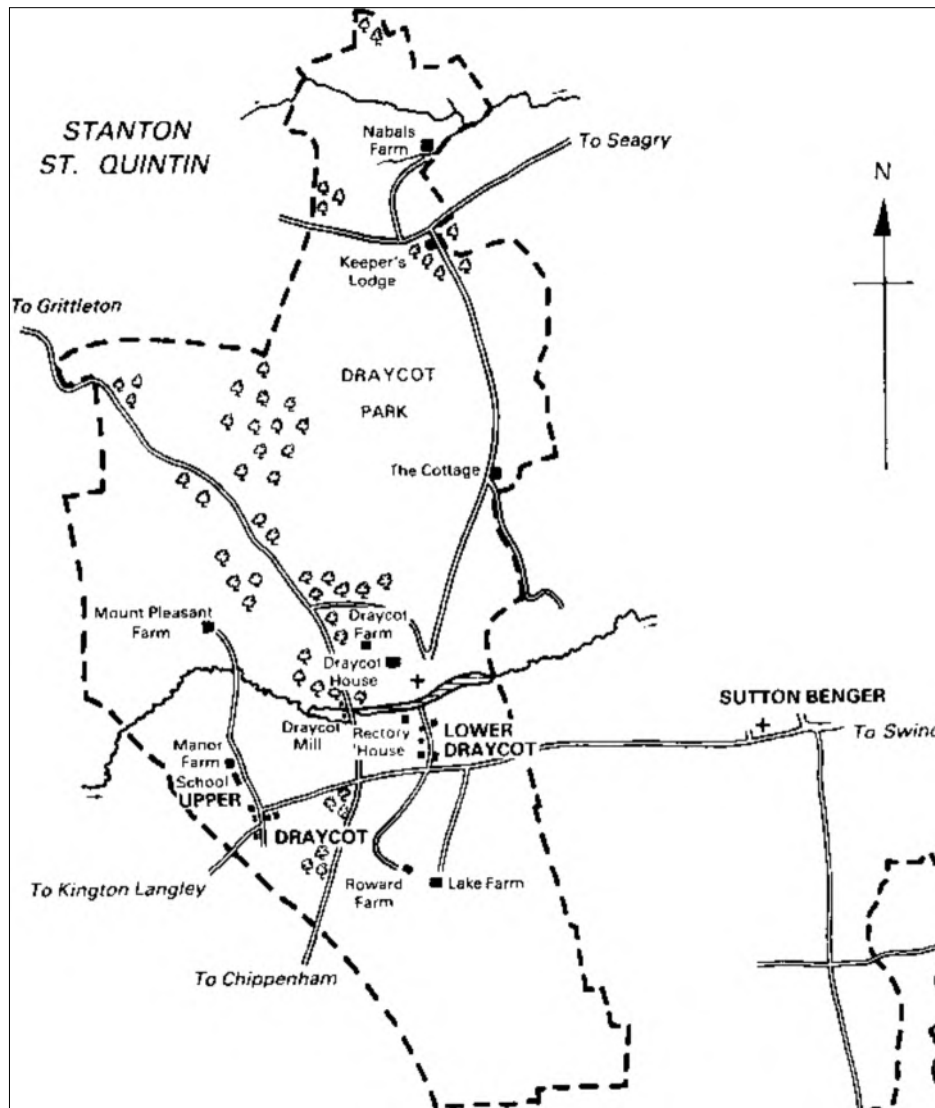
In 1934 the whole of Draycot Cerne and Seagry parishes were added to Sutton Benger Parish, but the Seagry parish was split by the M4 in 1971 and the area to the north of the motorway became a new Seagry parish.

The main roads through Sutton Benger run east to west and the historic layout of the Swindon to Chippenham road is still visible to date.

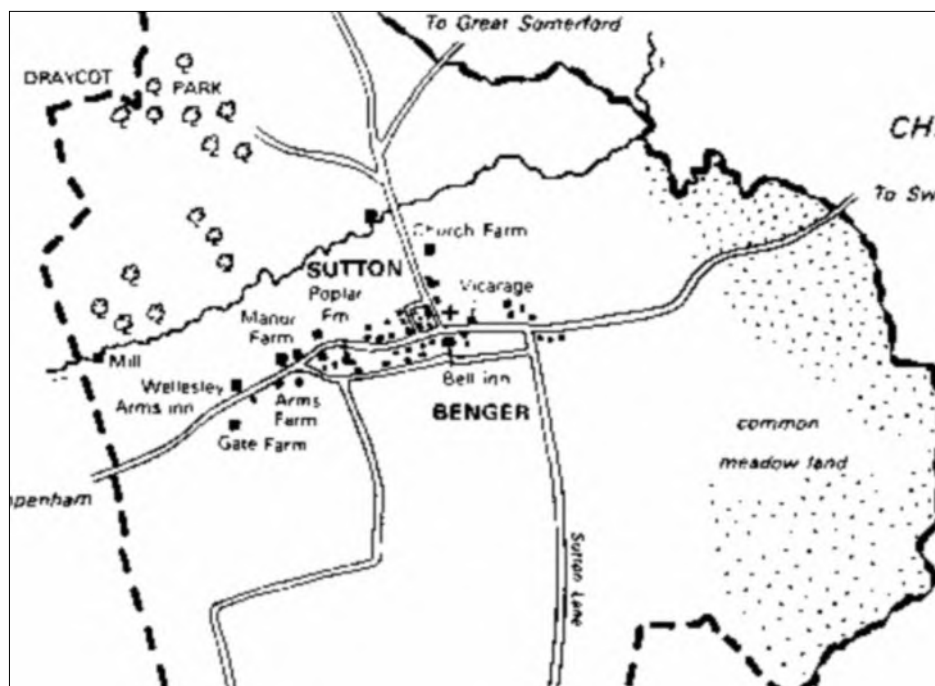
A number of the historic routes are now disused except as footpaths, such as that parallel to Sutton Lane.

As you can see from the maps above and overleaf there are a number of important and identifiable features which still exist or are referred to today.

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time



6. Draycot Cerne originally consisted of two settlements as shown on the map and this remained from the 1300s until the late 19th Century.



7. 1836 Map of Draycot Cerne and Sutton Benger Parishes

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time - Lower Draycot

Lower Draycot during the 1700s and early 1800s consisted of Draycot House, the rectory as well as other houses east and west of the lane between the church and the main road.

Draycot House was originally medieval in origin and re-built and subsequently remodelled, and further rebuilt in 1784, with the Long family (and successors) living in the house from the 15th Century to the 19th.

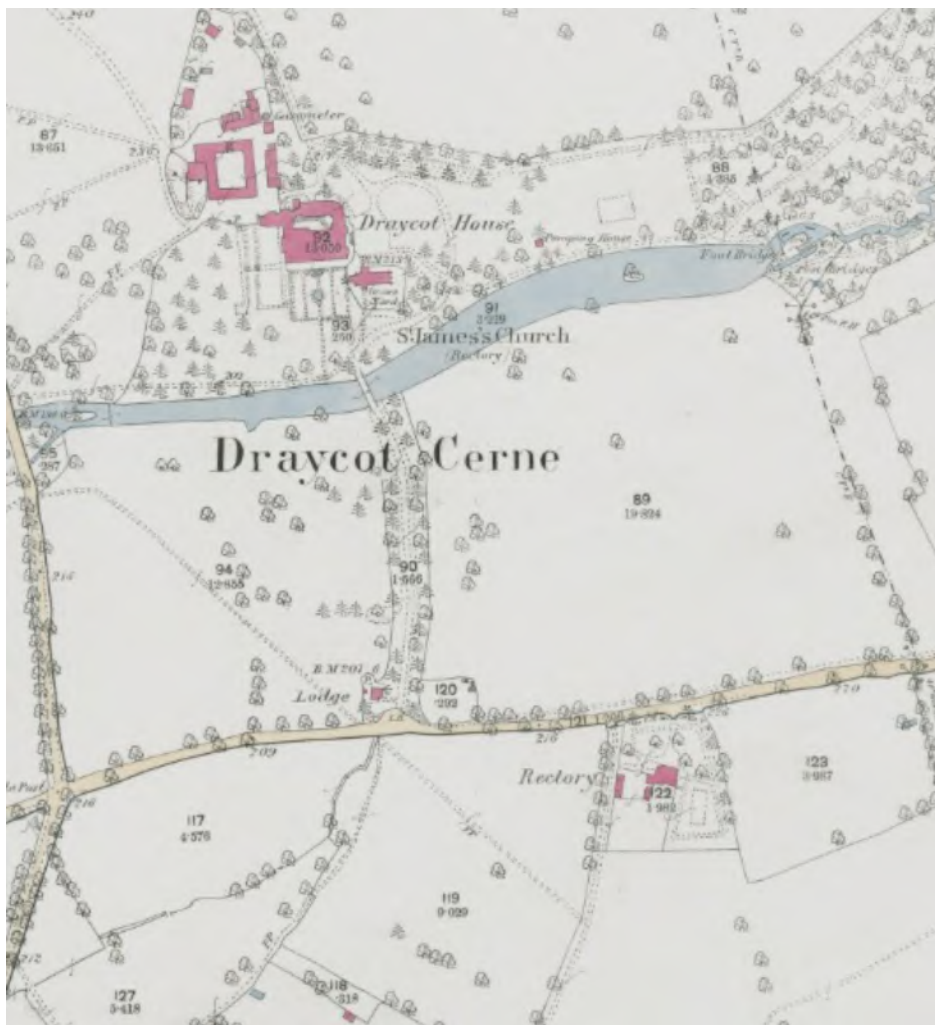
The plans show the ornamental fishpond (that is still evident today) which was formed in a feeder of the Avon as a feature of gardens laid out to the south of Draycot House. In 1773 a bridge carried the lane over the pond, north of which the lane was then the main drive of Draycot House.

At some point between 1839 and 1885, the land between the pond and the Swindon—Chippenham road was taken into the grounds of Draycot House. At the same time, the rectory and all the other buildings beside the lane were demolished, and gate piers, a gate, and a lodge were erected on the north side of the main road. The lane again became the main drive of Draycot House. The bridge across the pond was rebuilt in stone around 1956.

A separate rectory was built to the southeast and Gothic stone lodges were also built on the east side of the Stanton St. Quintin road in 1869 and 1889.

A farmstead called Draycot Park Farm was built between them in the period 1885–99.

Draycot house, except the cellars, was demolished around 1955. The resulting stone was used to adapt a north—south range of outbuildings as a single house, also known as Draycot House.



8. The 1885 map of Draycot Cerne



9. The 1938 map of Draycot Cerne

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time - Upper Draycot



10. Upper Draycot/ Draycot Cerne map - 1885



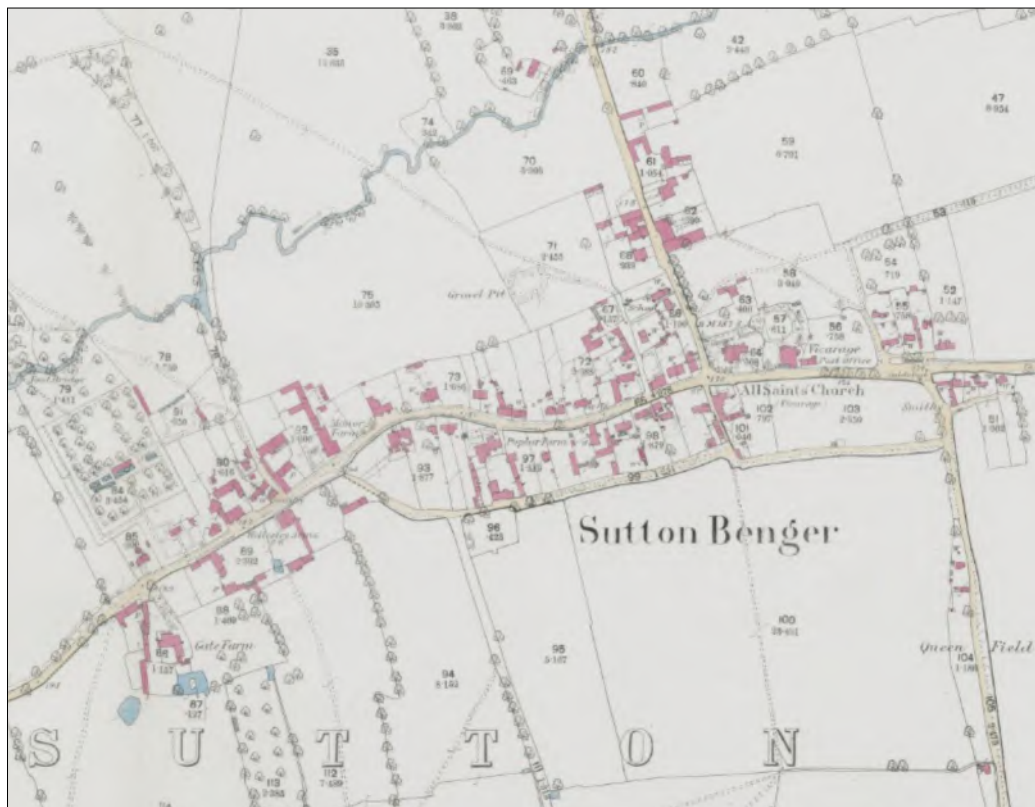
11. Present day map

Originally known as Upper Draycot, the hamlet has changed little over time from the late 1800s, with the exception of modern farm buildings and limited modern development.

The Manor house is the main focal feature, which is a substantial farmhouse built around 1700, constructed of rubble stone with ashlar dressings and stone slate roof, which is partly hipped.

The area originally formed part of the Draycot estate until 1920.

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time - Sutton Benger



12. Sutton Benger map 1885



13. Sutton Benger map 1938

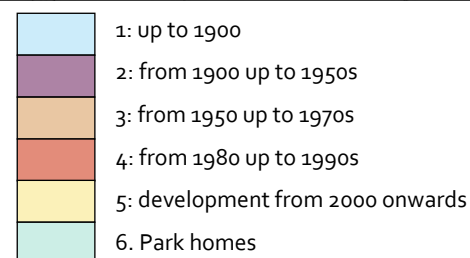
Sutton Benger itself has a discernible medieval village layout, consisting of a High Street with a parallel Back Lane (now Chestnut Road) and a staggered cross roads beside the 13th century Parish Church formed by Seagry Road. The original Bell Lane is also still clearly identifiable, irrespective of the 1970s housing estate to the south.

On the northern edge of the village, the former poultry factory has been replaced by housing, again creating a considerable addition in terms of built form. Further comparisons of how the parish has evolved to present day can be seen in the relevant plans overleaf.

Village Evolution Over Time - Sutton Benger



14. Development in Sutton Benger over time



Following greater employment opportunities in nearby Chippenham during the 1970s, this led to a greater demand for housing in the area. In response, one of the greatest periods of change in the village took place during this time with the development of the land south of Chestnut Road. This altered what was essentially a historic linear settlement.

The village school was also built to replace the one in Seagry Road and has been substantially extended over time to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

Additional development took place at Sutton Lane in the form of retirement bungalows. Their name College Green stems from the ownership of the land purchased after the 1920s sale - whereby it was bought by an Oxford College as an investment.

In the early 2000s further affordable housing was built on the southern edge of the Village in Sutton Lane. At the same time the allotment movement in the Village was

able to procure land alongside for that purpose (the first allotments covering just under 14 acres, founded in 1895, were lost in 1944).

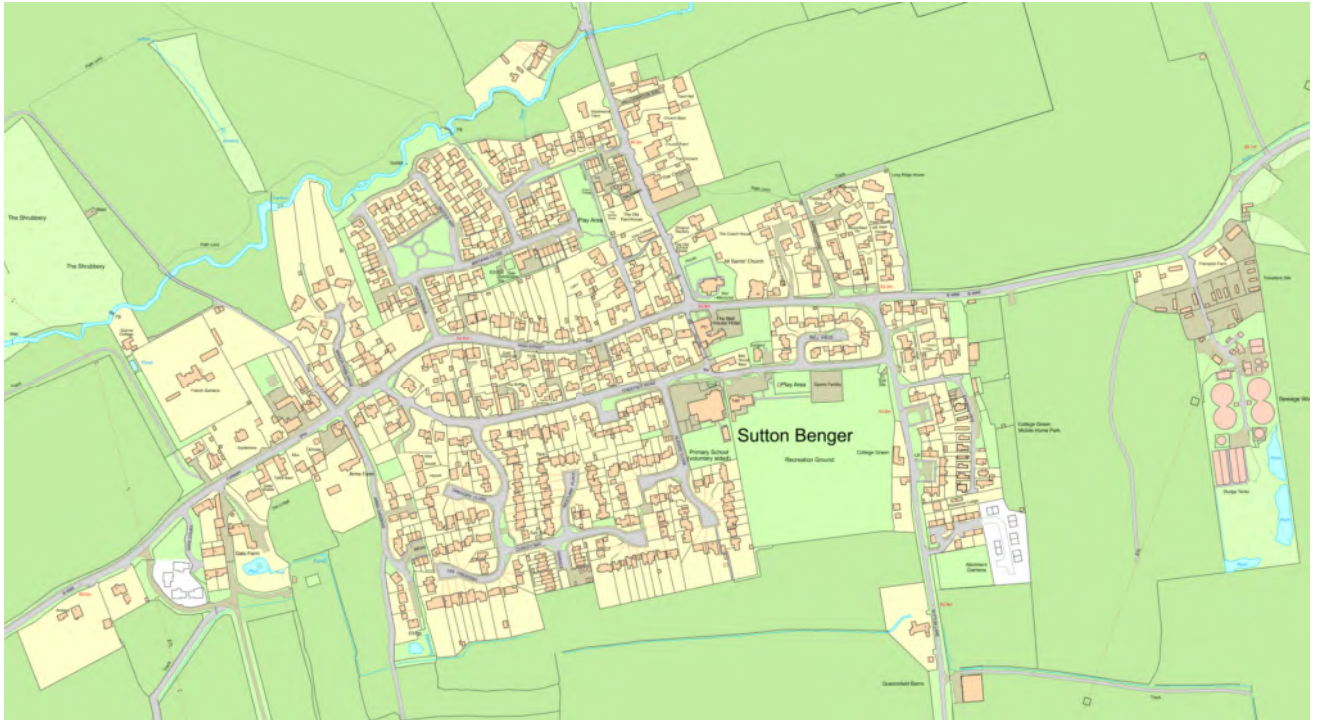
In 2008, the Faccenda Group chicken processing plant within the village announced closure. The village lost approximately 450 jobs and the site was subsequently redeveloped for housing in 2016. When combined with the adjacent sites, this totals just under 100 dwellings.

New development consisting of a mix of open market housing (8) and affordable houses (6) was also approved at Arms Farm in the village.

A further extension to the affordable housing site in Sutton Lane was granted permission in 2020 for an additional 10 units.

In total since 2000, the village has seen a substantial level of growth with just under 150 dwellings.

Evolution of the Settlements Over Time



15. Sutton Benger village - Present



16. Draycot Park - Present Day

Draycot Park Farm as it is now referred to was split up and sold off following demolition of the manor house. It has however retained much of the older layout and other than the removal of the house, retains the

features of the 1920s layout, with many of the historic elements still in existence today.

Further modern day analysis is set out in the individual character areas.

Heritage Assets - Sutton Benger Village



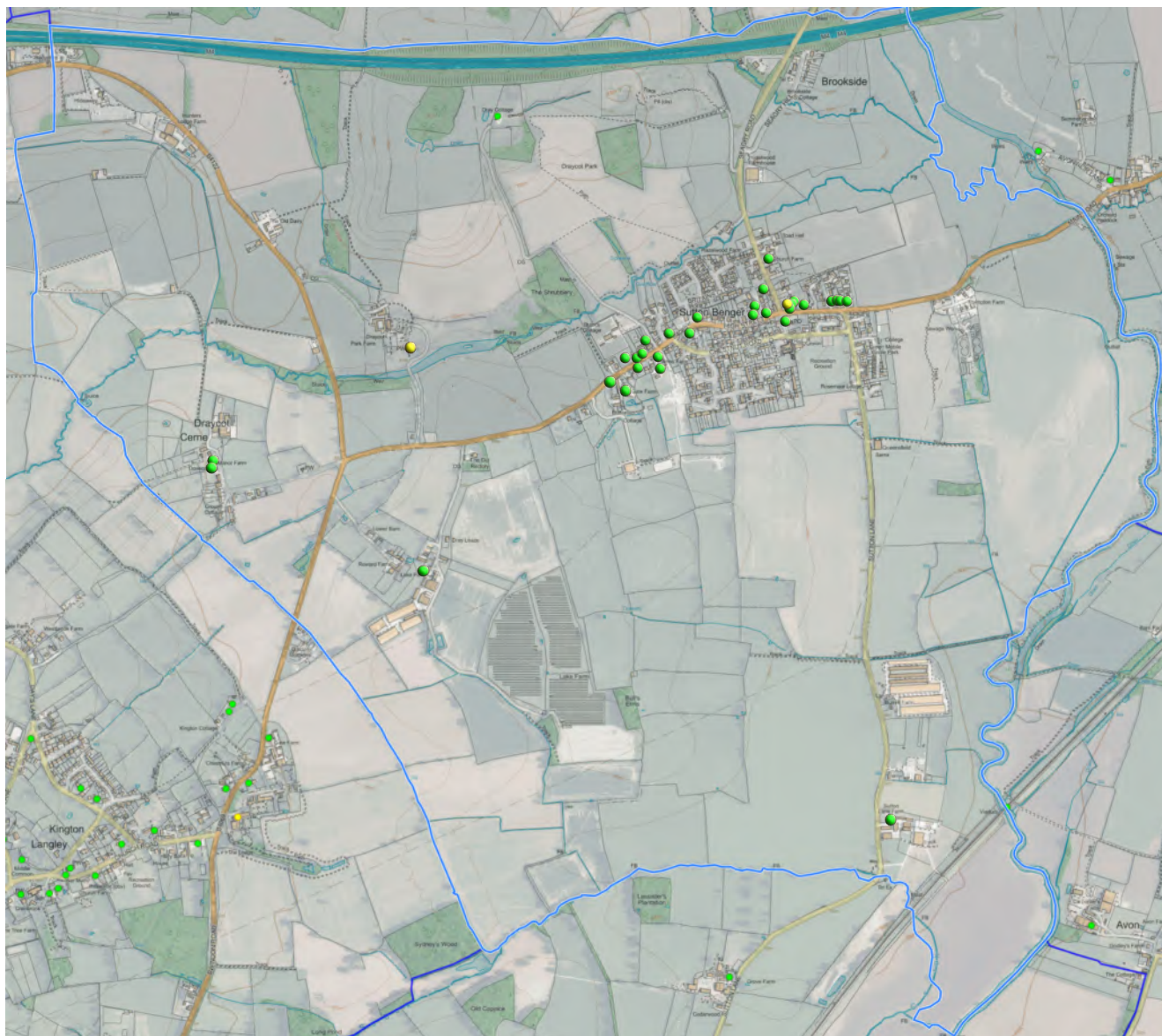
16. Heritage Assets and landscape features of amenity value in Sutton Benger

The Parish has numerous designated heritage assets. These include a conservation area for Sutton Benger village (as shown above). It should be noted that this also confers protection to trees within this area (subject to criteria).

The village also has the following Grade II Listed Buildings and structures:

1. SUTTON HOUSE, 48, HIGH STREET
 2. SUTTON LANE FARMHOUSE, SUTTON LANE
 3. ROSS COTTAGE, HIGH STREET
 4. CHURCH FARMHOUSE, SEAGRY ROAD
 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,
 9. 5, HIGH STREET,
 10. TYTHE BARN HOUSE, HIGH STREET,
 11. VINE COTTAGE, SEAGRY ROAD,
 12. 22, HIGH STREET
 13. 74 AND 76, HIGH STREET
 14. ARMS FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET
 15. 66, HIGH STREET,
 16. 1 AND 2, PARK LANE
 17. THE WELLESLEY ARMS INN, HIGH STREET
 18. 68 AND 70, HIGH STREET
 19. APPLE TREES, HIGH STREET
 20. MANOR FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET
 21. LITTLE MANOR THE OLD POLICE HOUSE, HIGH STREET,
 22. GATE FARMHOUSE, HIGH STREET,
 23. THE OLD RECTORY, HIGH STREET,
 24. THE BELL HOUSE HOTEL, HIGH STREET,
 - THREE MONUMENTS IN CHURCHYARD SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET
 - THREE MONUMENTS IN CHURCHYARD EAST AND NORTH EAST OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET
 - CHURCHYARD CROSS IN CHURCHYARD OF CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET
- As well as the Grade II*
- CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, HIGH STREET

Heritage Assets - Sutton Benger Parish



17. Heritage Assets within the wider parish and surrounding areas

KEY

- GRADE II LISTED BUILDING (in parish)
- GRADE II* LISTED BUILDING (in parish)
- GRADE II LISTED BUILDING (out of parish)
- GRADE II* LISTED BUILDING (out of parish)

There are also a number of other designated heritage assets located throughout the wider Parish as shown above. The setting of assets on the Parish boundary are also an important consideration

Grade II:

1. DRAY COTTAGE,
2. DOVECOTE AT MANOR FARM, UPPER DRAYCOT,
3. LAKE FARMHOUSE, DRAYCOT CERNE,
4. MANOR FARMHOUSE, UPPER DRAYCOT,
5. SUTTON LANE FARMHOUSE, SUTTON LANE

Grade II*:

6. CHURCH OF ST JAMES, DRAYCOT CERNE,

Heritage Assets - Images



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,

Non Designated Heritage Assets - Images



View of the village street taken around 1911



View of the village street present day



The National School built in 1850 as taken in 1905 - now a private dwelling



The National School - now a private dwelling

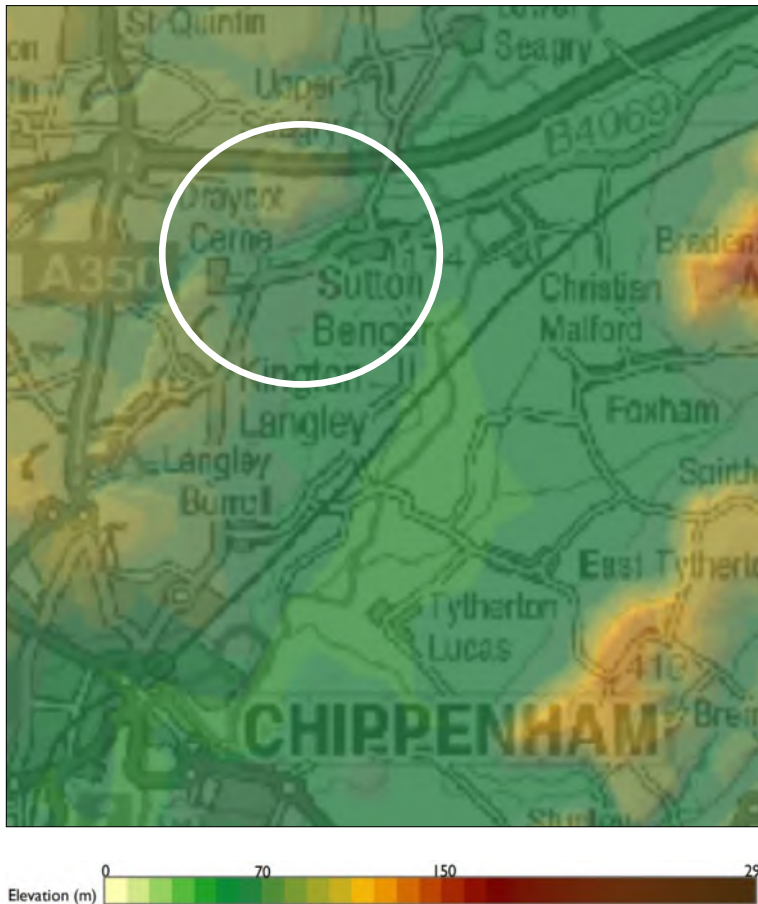


Draycot House as taken in 1860s built in 1784 and finally demolished in 1955.



Roward Farm - which today has had the former associated farm buildings converted to dwellings

Topography



18. Elevation of the parish in the wider context

As shown by the general elevation map (left), the Parish is situated in a low lying area, influenced by the proximity to the River Avon and its tributaries.

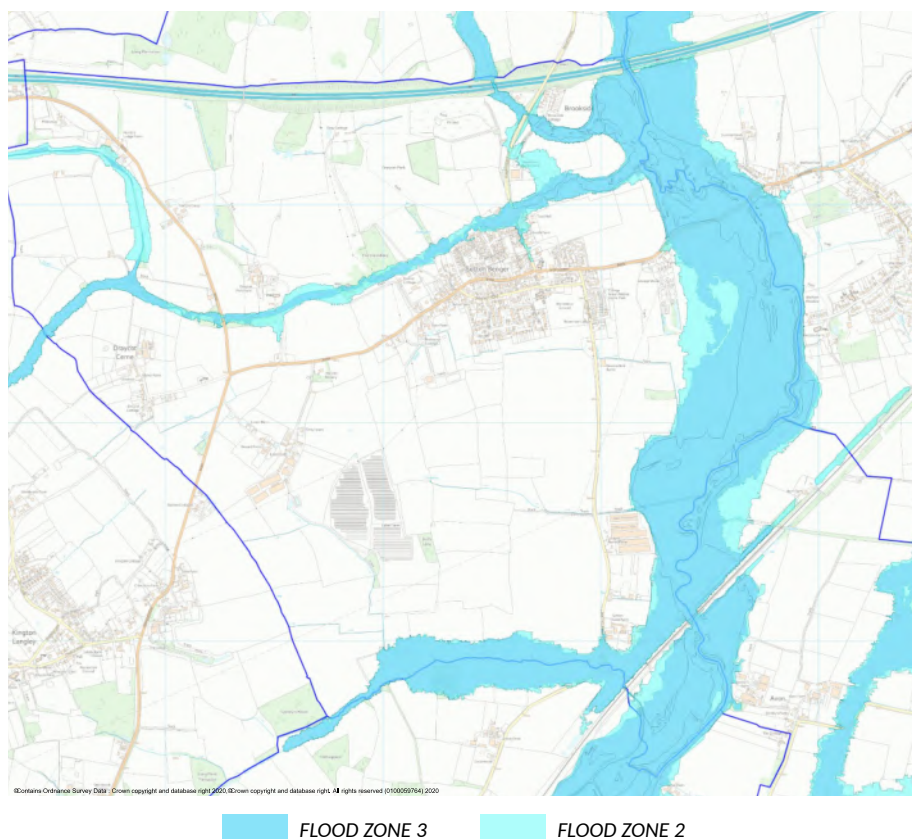
A more detailed map of the settled areas of the Parish showing contours below highlights that:

1. Sutton Benger Village is set around 55 AOD,
2. Draycot Park higher at 70 AOD,
3. Draycot Cerne between 70 and 80 AOD,
4. Farms to the southwest around 67 AOD,
5. Farms along Sutton Lane around 52 AOD
6. Waste / Industrial Area to the north around 80 AOD
7. Highest point in the parish 97 AOD



19. Detailed elevation plan with contours and spot heights marked

Flooding and Drainage



20. Map of flood zones 2 and 3

The wide low lying clay vales of the Bristol Avon and the Thames contrast with the narrow chalk valleys with their wide areas of alluvium and river terrace gravels forming a level landscape of fields drained by systems of ditches and threaded with tributary streams.

The flood zones highlighted on Figure 20 are found within the flood plains of the River Avon and the associated tributaries.

This affects much of the eastern area of the parish, the southern boundary and to the north of Sutton Benger village, stretching east-west.



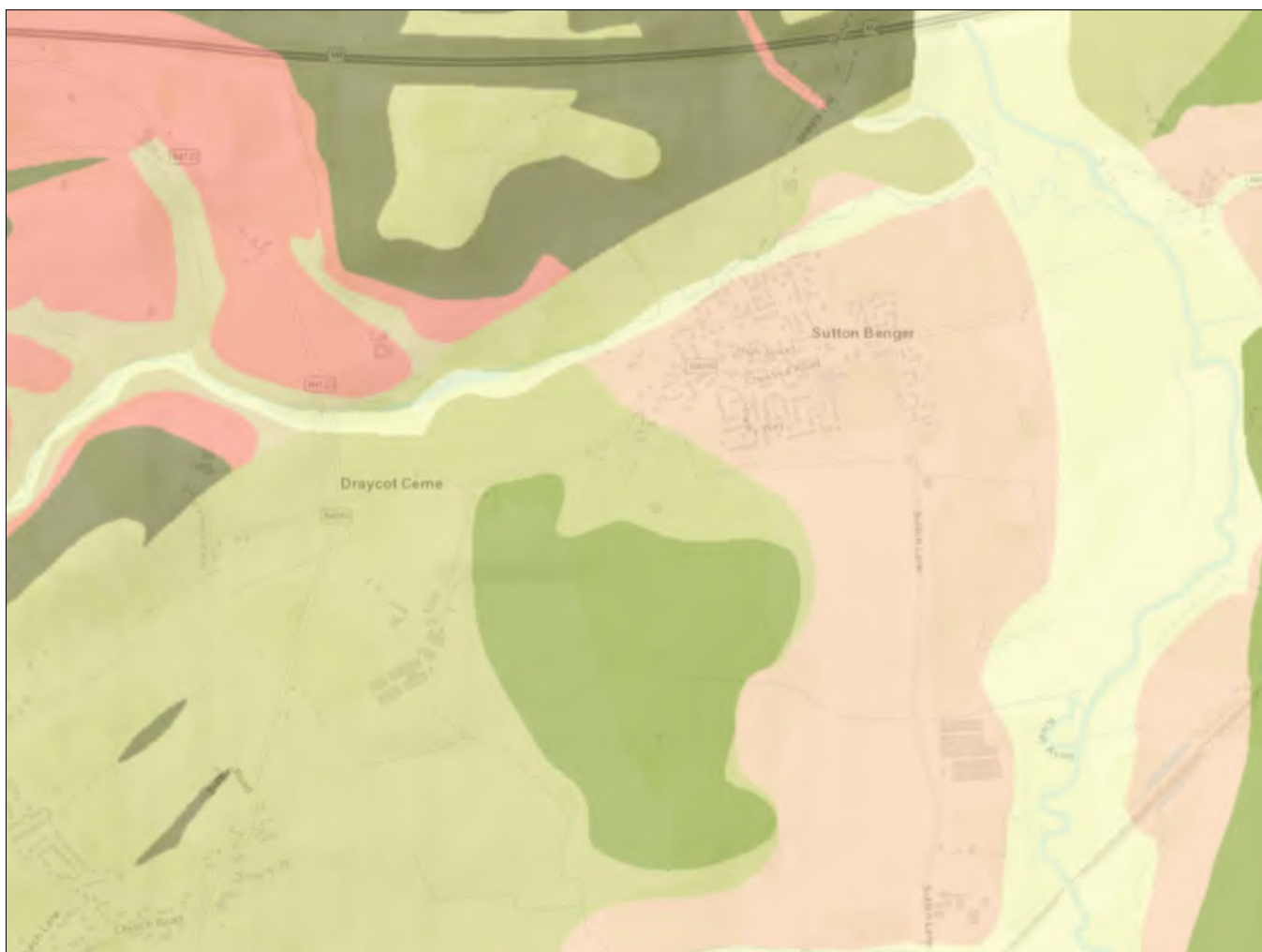
21. Map of flood Surface water flooding

The adjacent map of surface water flooding highlights those areas where rainwater does not drain away through the normal drainage systems or soak into the ground, but lies on or flows over the ground instead.

Both plans are produced by the Environment Agency on behalf of government, using information and input from lead local flood authorities.

Together they highlight those areas in the parish which may be inappropriate for future development or areas which may need further details to be submitted alongside any planning application.

Geology



22. Map of local geology

The above geological map highlights the influence of the River Avon and its tributaries. River deposits cover one third of the old Sutton Benger parish.

A small amount of Oxford clay is found in the centre of the parish, with Kellaways sand found in much of the remainder. Kellaways Sand yield areas of free draining soils contrasting with the generally seasonally wet deep clay soils found outside of the parish.

Vineyards were noted in the gravelly soil at Sutton Benger in the 16th century.

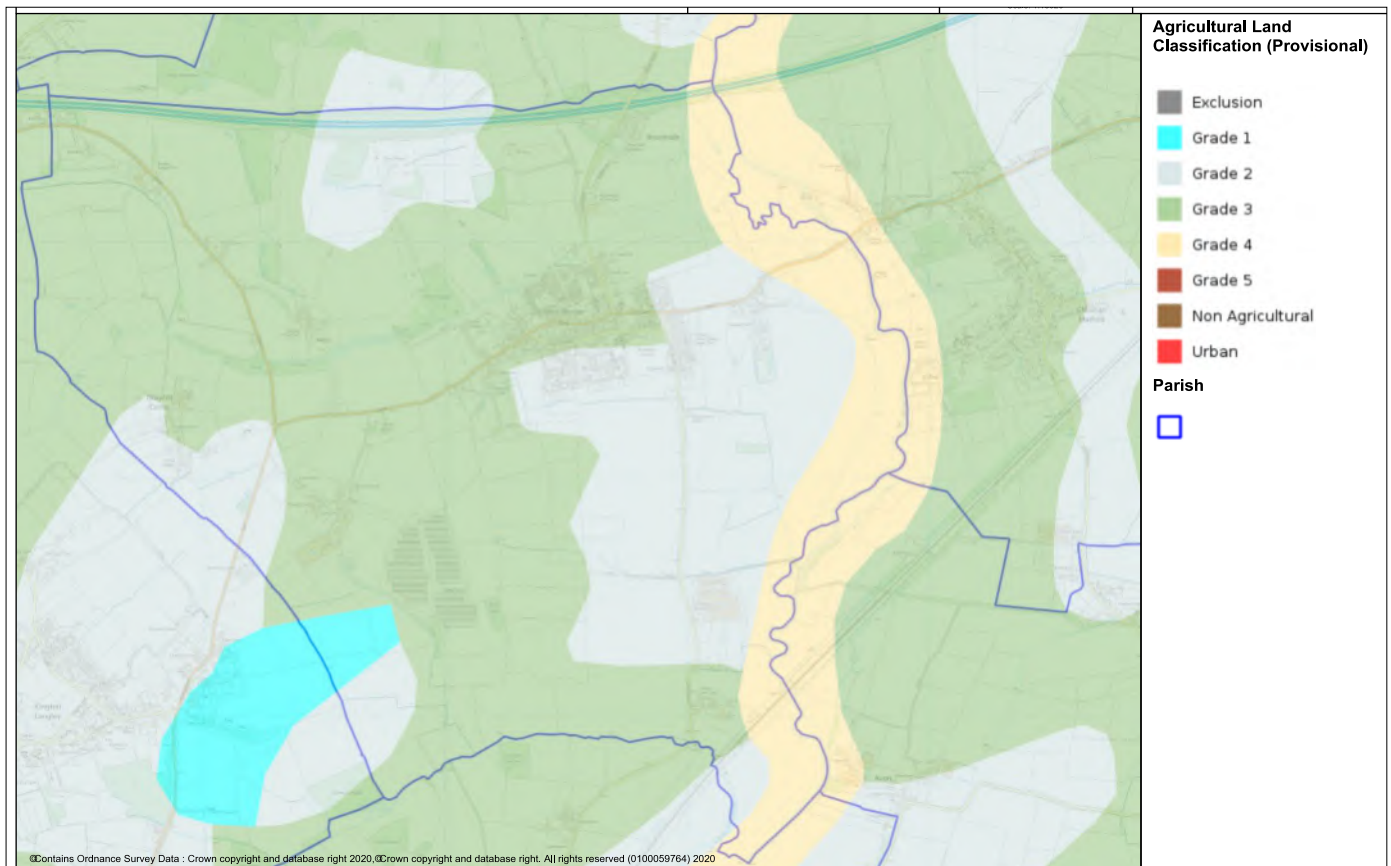
Alongside the river is a gravel terrace with alluvium deposits.

Soils vary from loam over gravel to seasonally wet deep clay and land use reflects this in a concentration of arable in the free draining soil over sand and gravel and of pasture on the wet Alluvium and Clay.

This information is helpful when combined with the previous flood map plans to highlight water issues and ground conditions.

	Superficial deposits: River Terrace Deposits, 1 - Sand and gravel. Bedrock geology: Kellaways Sand Member - Sandstone
	Superficial deposits: Alluvium - Clay, silt, sand and gravel. Bedrock geology: Kellaways Sand Member - Sandstone
	Superficial deposits: None recorded. Bedrock geology: Oxford Clay Formation - Mudstone
	Superficial deposits: None recorded. Kellaways Sand Member - Sandstone
	Superficial deposits: None recorded. Bedrock geology: Cornbrash Formation - Limestone.
	Superficial deposits: None recorded. Kellaways Sand Member - Mudstone

Land Classification



23. Agricultural Land Classification

The above plan highlights the agricultural land quality in the parish. The best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land and soils in England should be protected from significant, inappropriate or unsustainable development proposals.

The NPPF requires considering the economic and other benefits of BMV agricultural land. It supports proposals which try to use areas of poorer quality land instead of higher quality land.

Any proposal which causes the loss of 20 hectares or more of BMV land, will require consultation with Natural England.

ALC is graded from 1 to 5. BMV agricultural land is graded 1 to 3a.

There is a small pocket of Grade 1 - excellent quality agricultural land, which is land with no or very minor limitations.

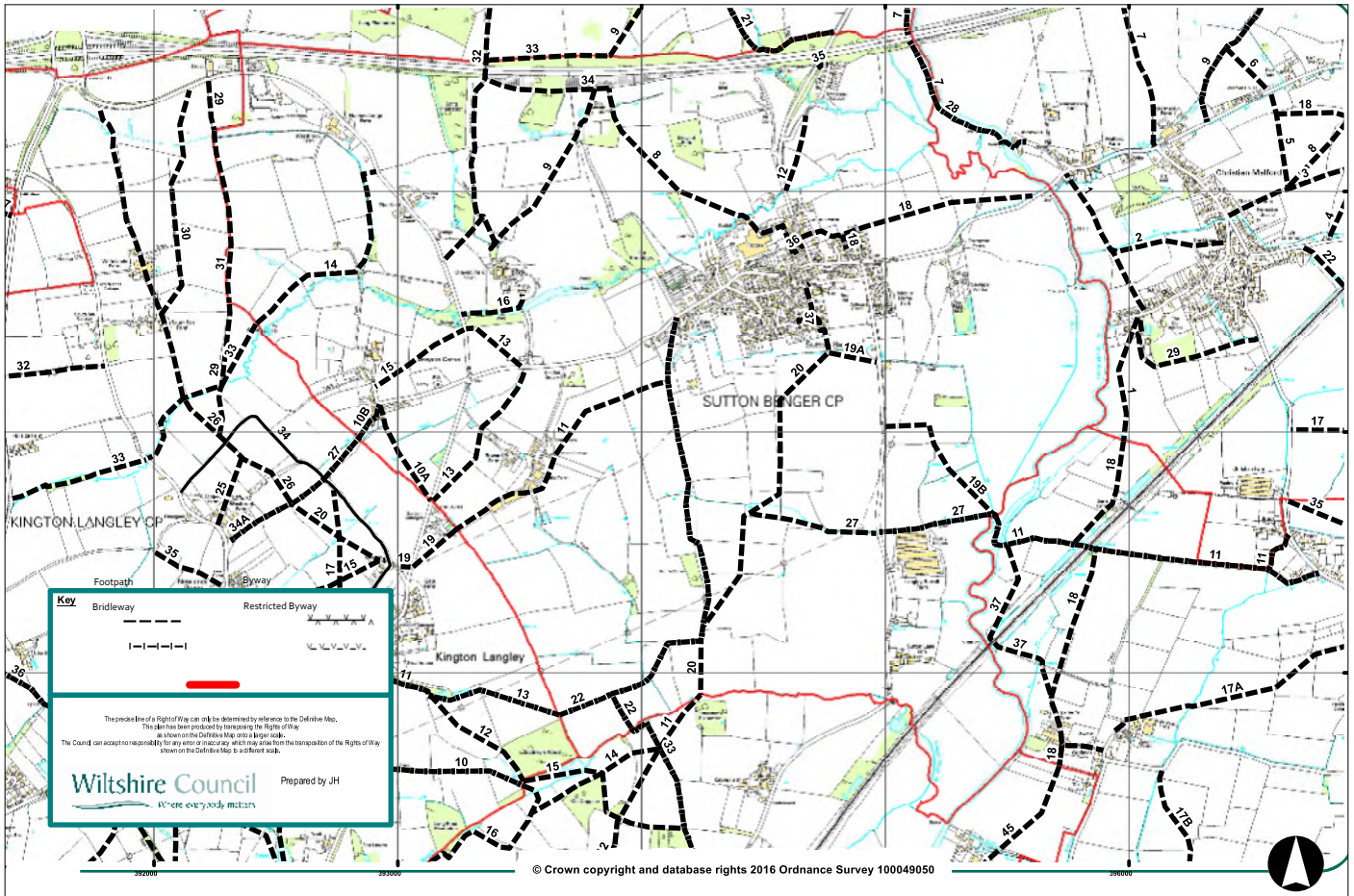
To the south of Sutton Benger village, there is a significant tract of grade 2 agricultural land which is very good quality agricultural land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. There is also further tract of grade 2 land surrounding Draycot Cerne.

The remainder is grade 3 which is good to moderate quality agricultural land, with an area of grade 4 land alongside the river.

The plan highlights that the most significant amount is grade 3, but does not differentiate whether it is grade 3a or 3b, which is key as the latter is not classed as BMV land.

The field patterns as shown on the aerial photograph enable long distance views from public vantage points including the number of Public Rights of Way in and around the parish as shown overleaf.

Public Rights of Way



24. Public Rights of Way

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 above highlights the individual routes and their numbers.

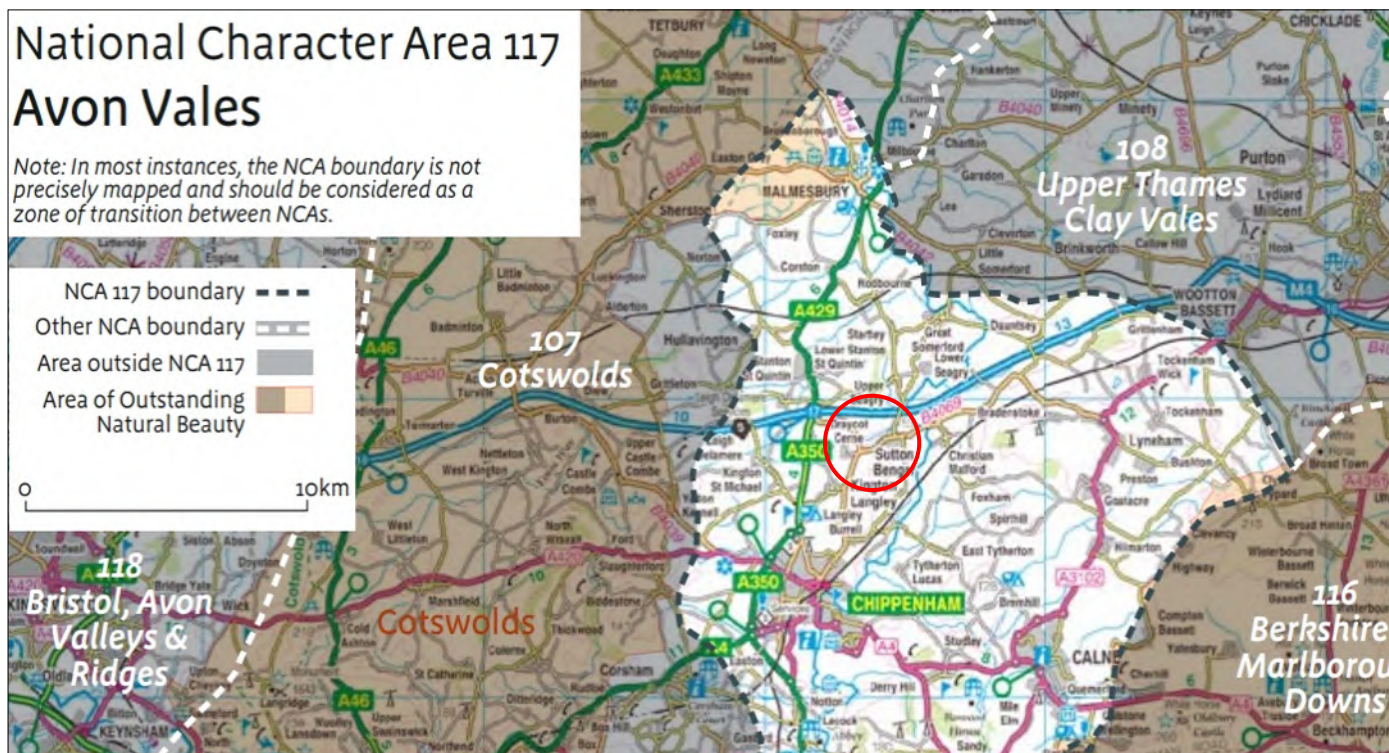
Many of the route also provide opportunities for long distance views across the Parish and local views into the Conservation Area (these are explored in more detail in the relevant section below).

It should also be noted that the Parish website contains detailed lists of walks around the area, with a number of hand drawn maps see:

<http://www.suttonbengerparishcouncil.gov.uk/community-hub/walks-around-sutton-benger/>



Landscape Character Assessment



25. National Character Areas

National Character

Sutton Benger Parish lies within the Avon Vales National Character Area (117). The most notable characteristics of the area are:

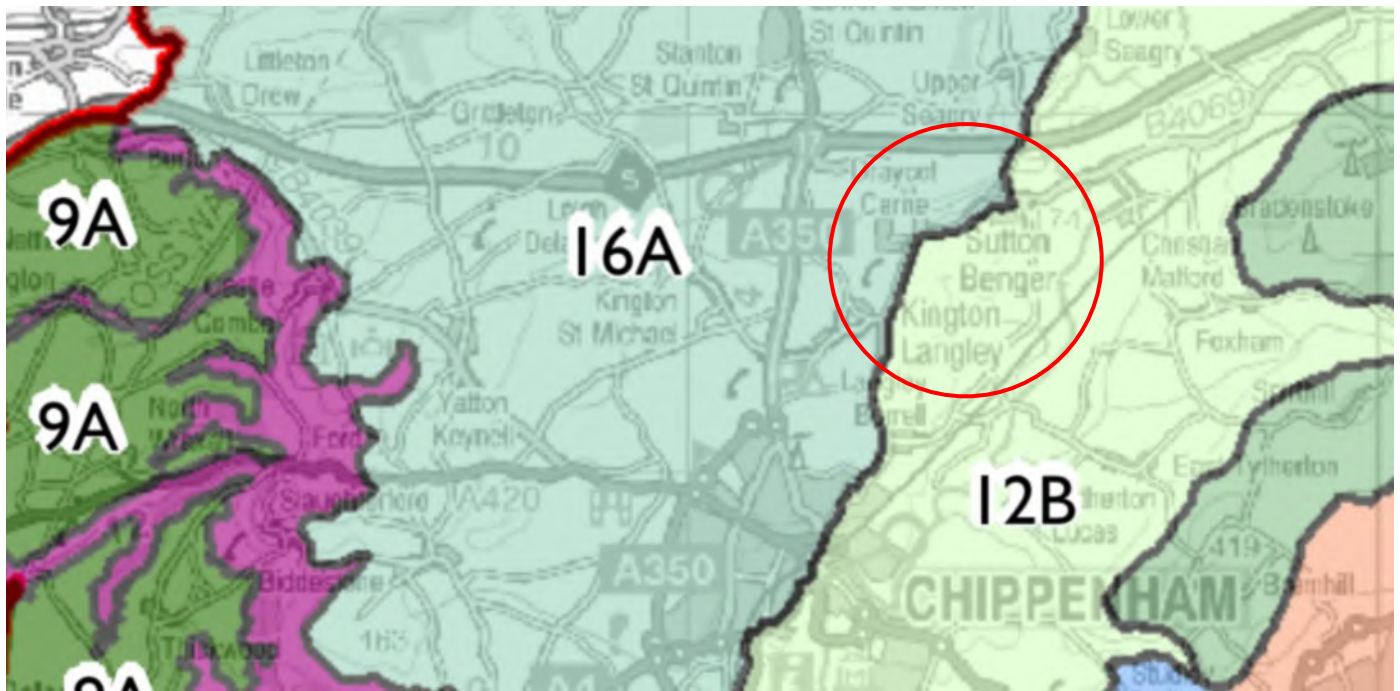
- An undulating clay vale with a mix of arable and pasture.
- Small- and medium-sized fields with mostly hedgerow boundaries with few hedgerow trees, varying in shape from irregular piecemeal enclosure to rectilinear planned enclosure.
- Numerous low ridges with local views over towns and villages.
- Wide River Avon corridor, with an ancient pattern of flood meadows and closely associated settlements and more recent development.
- Transport corridors along roads and watercourses, heavily influential on all development in the NCA.

- Large historic parks and mansions, often established from former monastic establishments.
- Attractive stone-built centres to market towns that reflect the former agricultural productivity and wealth of the area.
- Wide views across whole area from higher areas of surrounding chalk downs.

The Statements of Environmental Opportunity make it clear that:

- There will be actions and measures taken in favour of the protection and enhancement of the semi-natural habitats (SEO1).
- Enhancement of the woodlands and significant ecological assets of the area will be sought (SEO2).
- Plans for the creation of new landscapes associated with expansion of some towns will be promoted (SEO3).
- Protection of the varied rural landscape of small urban areas will be set as a priority (SEO4).

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment



26. Wiltshire Landscape Character Areas

Local Character

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

The Avon Open Clay Vale Landscape Character (LCA 12B)

Area 12B has the following essential characteristics.

- Level land form with wide open skies and views to ridges and downs
- Pastoral land use with some arable.
- Large scale geometric fields with hedgerows or open drainage channels defining boundaries.
- Presence of rivers and tributaries
- Watercourses lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows
- Settlement pattern varies from large towns and small scattered villages to sparse farmsteads.
- Buildings in varied materials of render and stone.

- Crossed by major transport corridors, and a network of minor roads linking settlements.

Various forces for change are identified, such as:

- Agricultural intensification resulting in loss of field boundaries.
- Poor management of hedgerows.
- Expansion of settlements.
- Increasing road use.
- Upgrading of roads.

The condition and strength of character of the LCA is assessed as Moderate. The strategy is to conserve characteristic elements, and improve elements in decline.

Broad management objectives identified include:

- Retaining hedgerow network and nurturing new hedgerow trees.
- Sensitive management of arable land.
- Retaining/managing hay meadows.
- Providing tree planting along watercourses.

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- Minimizing small-scale changes along road network.
- Developing design guidance for new/extended buildings to ensure consistency with local character and settlement structure.

It then goes on to set out a number key factors which are essential to the understanding of the landscape character in this part of the Parish.

The following details from the WLCA are of most relevance.

Local Physical Influences

Landform: Landform is level or very gently shelving largely ranging from 50m to 80m AOD.

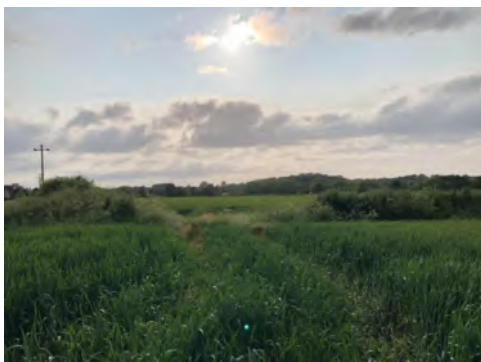
Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

The Open Clay Vale landscape type is predominantly intensively farmed pasture and arable however there are some unimproved hay meadows that are nationally significant for their diversity of grassland plants. These include Sutton Lane Meadows SSSI.

Settlement Pattern

Small, nucleated villages and 19th century isolated farmsteads, usually sited on slightly elevated land to avoid flooding.

In Sutton Benger, render and Oolitic Limestone, predominate, with a mixture of the latter and the local brick in more modern developments. Settlements are prominent in the level vale landscape. This is combined with visible major roads throughout such as the M4.



Key Valued Characteristics

- 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.
- Settlement pattern of nucleated villages.
- Villages and farmsteads with vernacular mix of local stone.
- Visible archaeology in Roman roads, pattern of medieval villages.

Key Detractors and Issues for the future

- 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.

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

To conserve the elements that contribute to the rural, tranquil landscape.

Landscape Objectives

- Retain and manage the hedgerow network and nurture new hedgerow trees.
- Promote appropriate management of arable land and hay meadows.
- Introduce new tree planting along watercourses using typical riparian species such as alder and willow.
- Take opportunities to extend and enhance the varied wetland habitats.
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network which could change the rural peaceful character of the landscape.
- Consider developing guidance for built development to ensure both future construction and changes to existing buildings are designed to integrate with the existing character and structure of settlements.
- Consider screening views to intrusive urban edges through planting new woodland.

16A: Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands

Area 16A has the following essential characteristics.

- Gently undulating lowland farmland.
- A peaceful and rural landscape with subtle variations in character relating to the varied geology, topography and water courses.
- Mix of permanent pasture and arable farmland.
- Strong network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

- Dry stone walls field boundaries in some areas and around settlements.
- Field pattern predominantly large geometric field typical of eighteenth and nineteenth century enclosure with small scale irregular fields of medieval pattern closer to settlements.
- Numerous rivers forming shallow valleys, with the watercourses sometimes lined with willows.
- Settlements in the form of historic, villages and scattered farmsteads distributed throughout the type linked by network of rural roads.
- Traditional buildings of local limestone buildings an outstanding feature.
- Presence of historic parkland and estates marked by stone estate walls, grand entrances and parkland trees and avenues.

Local Physical Influences

Landform: The landform undulates, rising from around 60m to 90m AOD

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

There is a strong network of hedgerows and frequent hedgerow and standard trees including veteran oaks, ash and willow along water courses.

Settlement Pattern

Scattered villages and farmsteads, connected by a network of rural roads, and constructed almost universally of limestone to the west of the area with occasional use of brick on the eastern edges of the area.

Buildings are traditional in style, with many dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. Large stately homes and manor houses also occur throughout the landscape, often with large parkland estates. Dry stone walls occur more frequently around and close to villages in western areas but are less common as field boundaries elsewhere. This is a distinctive pattern and style of settlement.

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

Most of the roads in the type are modest rural roads, with the exception of the M4 motorway, which passes through the Plan Area from east to west with an increased sense of movement and localised noise in this location.

Key Valued Characteristics

- 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.
- Network of rural roads.

Key Detractors and Issues for the future

- Continued amalgamation and enlargement of fields.
- Some hedgerow field boundaries have been intensively flailed.
- Some dry stone wall field boundaries are becoming overgrown.
- Increasing traffic on narrow rural lane network leading to urbanisation through kerbing, additional lighting and signage.
- Pressure for new development along rural lanes and around existing settlements.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

The condition and strength of character of the LCA is assessed as Good to Moderate. The strategy is to conserve characteristic elements, and improve elements in decline, such as the distinctive stone villages, the areas of ecological importance and the historic parkland and to strengthen

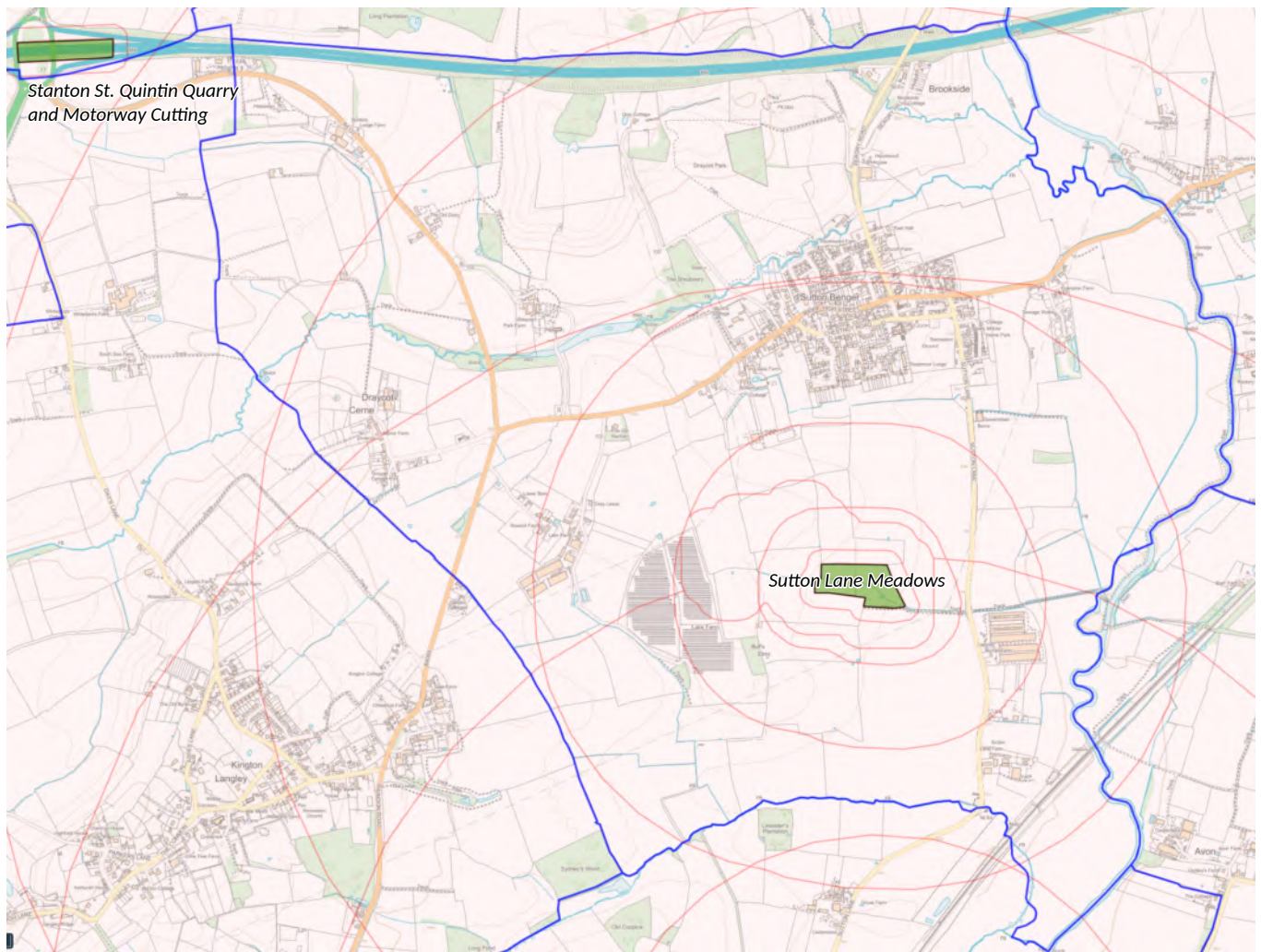
locally degraded elements such as the flailed hedgerows and overgrown stone walls.

Landscape Objectives

- Conserve the network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland copses and take opportunities for new planting where this will strengthen local character (for instance avoiding planting that will affect the open views in the high ground at the west of the area).
- Encourage conservation and rebuilding of dry stone wall field boundaries, particularly close to settlement.
- Conserve the remaining areas of ecological interest such as those with statutory designations, areas of ancient woodland, veteran hedgerow trees and chalk grassland.
- Maintain the subtle variations that occur throughout the landscape, encouraging local distinctiveness for instance in the variation in field boundaries from hedgerows to stone walls.
- 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.
- Resist urbanisation of the country lanes through addition of road markings and concrete kerbs or lamp posts or excessive signage that detracts from the rural character of the area.

These points have been transposed onto the landscape character plan overleaf.

Ecological Designations



Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)

27. Nationally Designated Ecology Sites

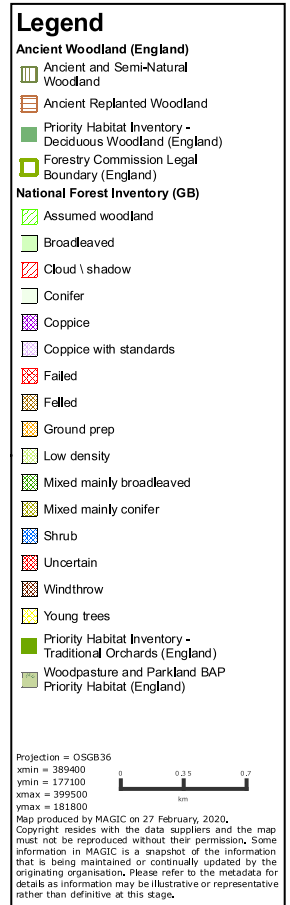
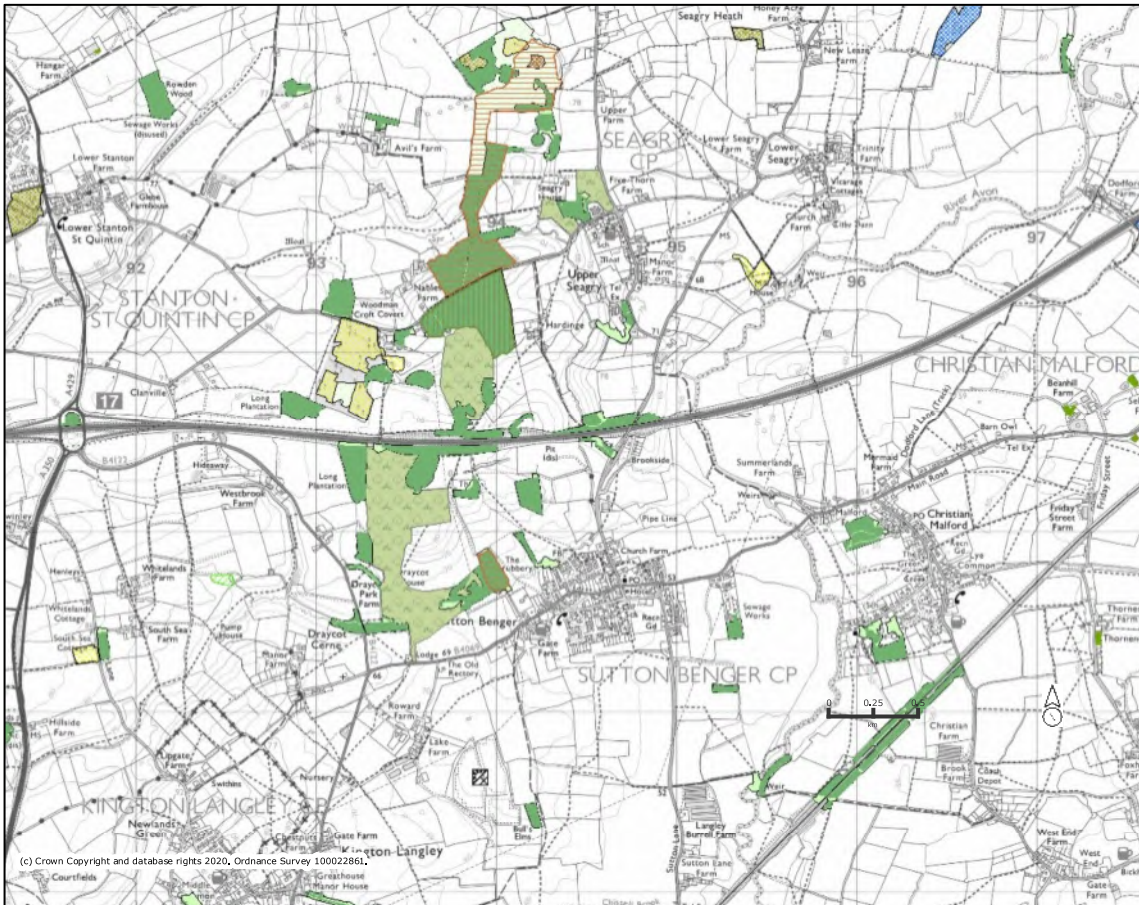
The parish contains a number of important biodiversity areas. This includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest known as Sutton Lane Meadows, managed by the National Trust.

The plan above highlights the impact zones where development may have a potential adverse impact. The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a mapping tool developed by Natural England to enable a quick assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals. The zones shown are set at various distances to highlight how close a proposal is to a protected site.

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.

New development should be considered in the context of both biodiversity implications as well as visual impact on these landscape features.

Ecological Designations



28. Ancient Woodland and Priority Habitats

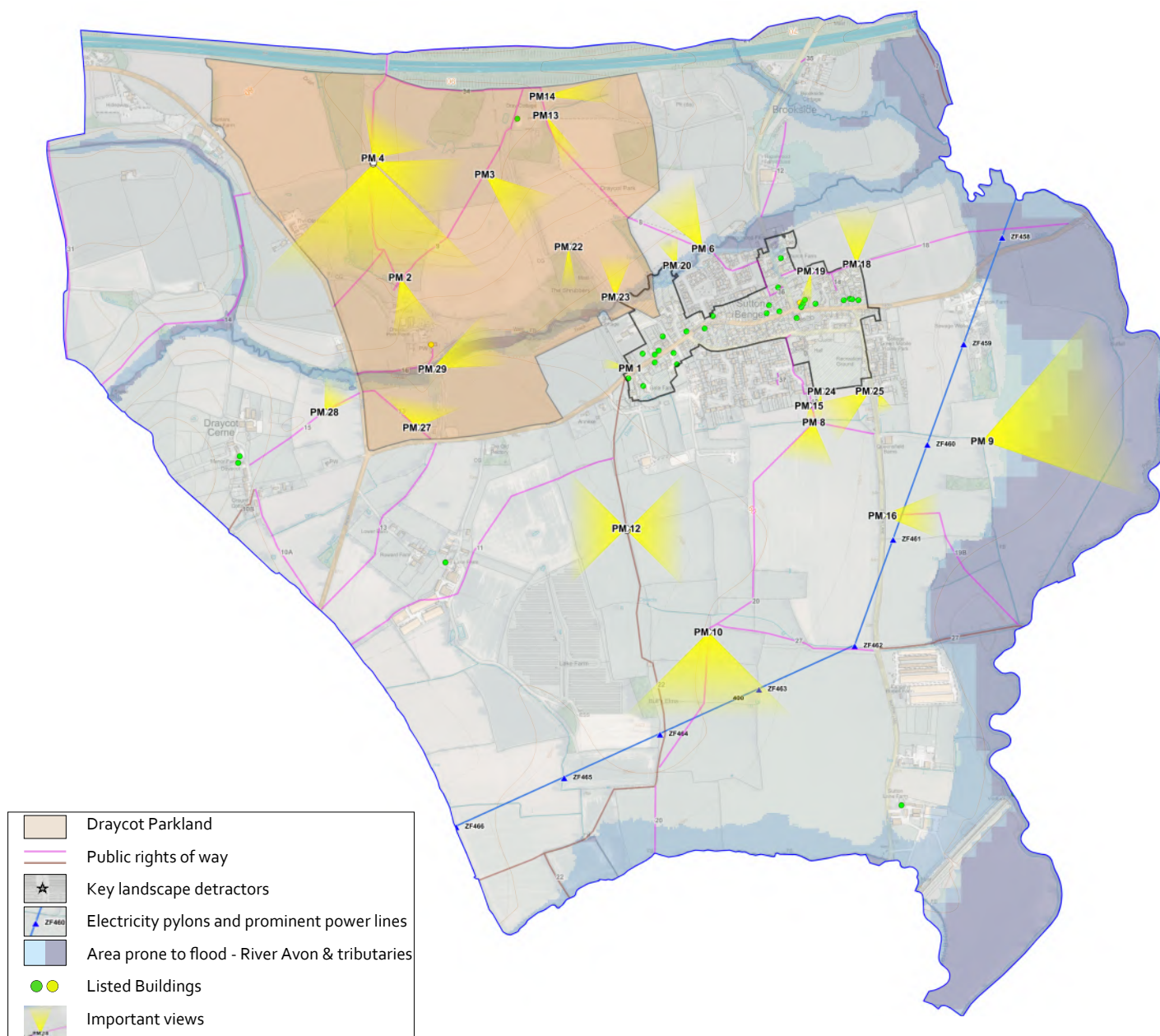
Important Views

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

These views have been submitted by the community and assessed. The location and general direction of the view is marked on the plan below.

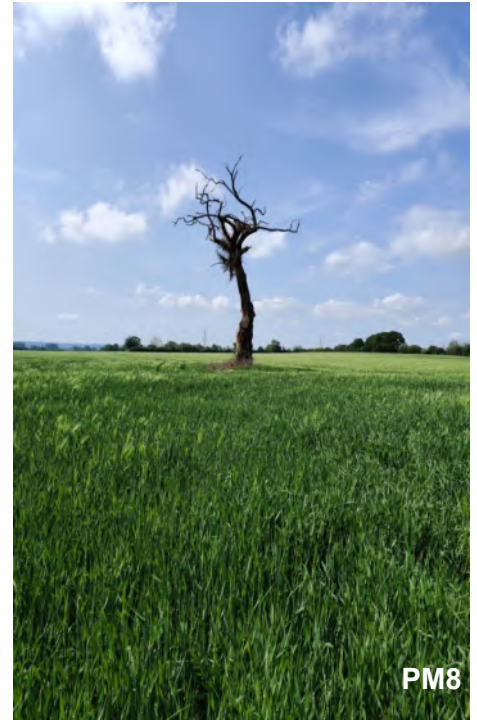
It is considered that the following viewpoints are considered to be part of the key character of the parish and should not be adversely impacted upon by new development.

The views that are considered key are shown on the figure below, photos overleaf and in more detail in the separate Important Views Assessment.

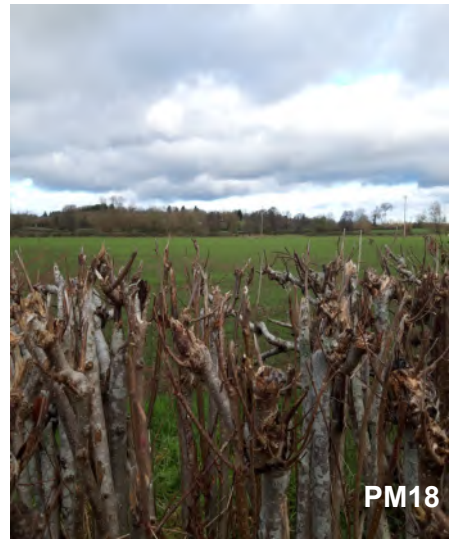


29. Important Views

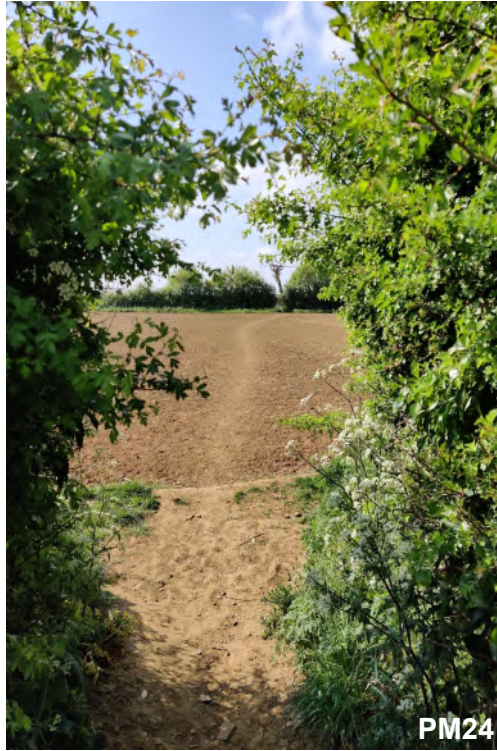
Important Views



Important Views



Important Views



Open Space



There are a number of important green spaces within the parish, the majority of which are within Sutton Benger village as shown on the plan above.

The following green spaces are considered to make an important visual contribution to the village and its setting. Many of which are key spaces either within or give views in and out of the Conservation Area.

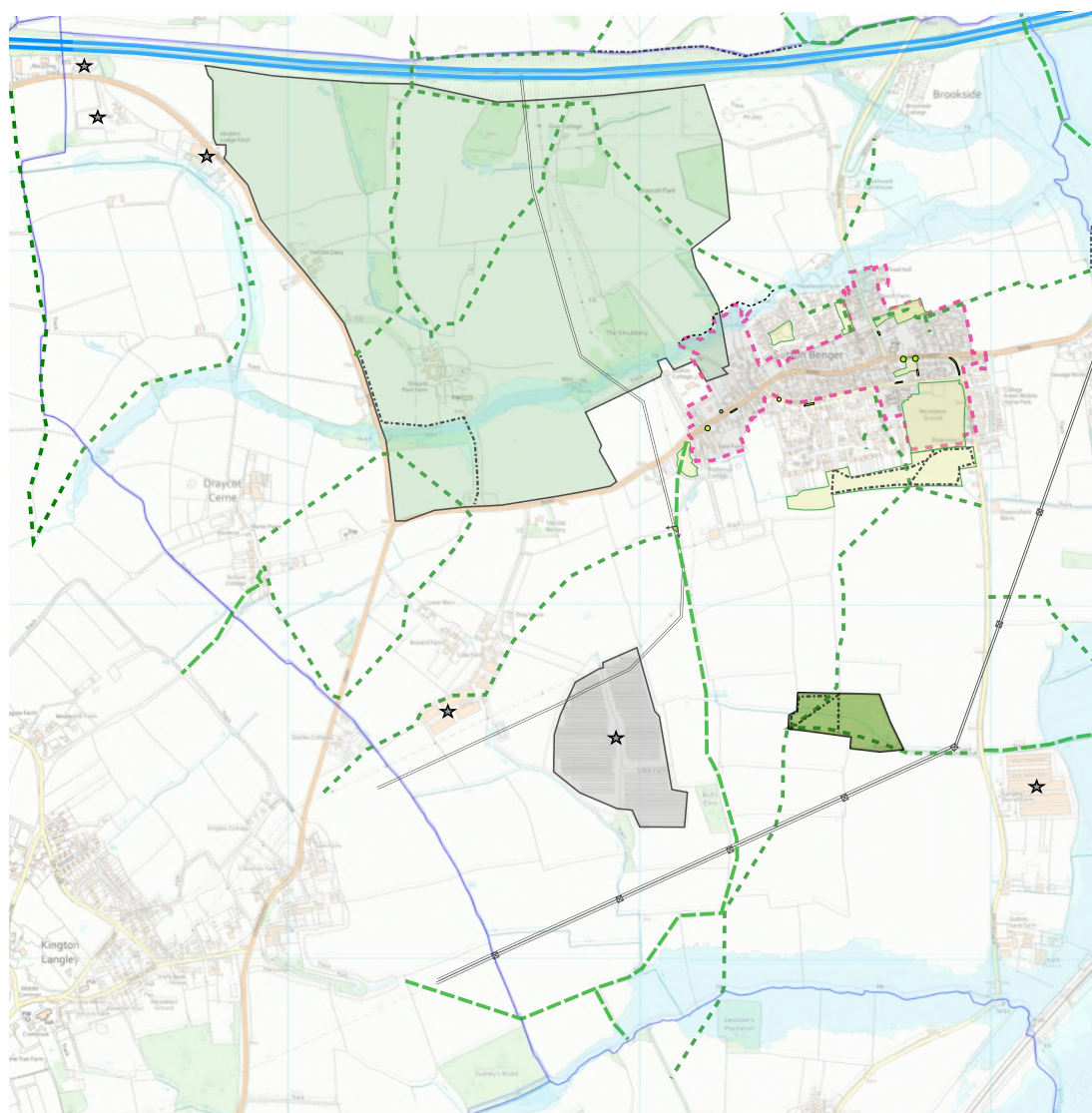
The land forming the recreation ground today was donated in perpetuity by the nephew heir of the last Lord Cowley to the Village in 1920. The terms of the gift include a covenant restricting building on the land. It therefore remains an immensely important asset with provision for football rugby tennis cricket and simply walking.

The other area of importance to residents is the Big Field as it is known locally. This field to the south of the recreation ground, plays an important role to many local people. As can be seen overleaf, it is used extensively for recreation, with a number of informal paths around and across the site. It is also used as part of the annual parish firework display, but is privately owned land.

The spaces highlighted here do not form part of the Local Green Space Assessment. This is a separate document which also includes smaller spaces of importance. Other important vegetation and tree preservation orders are also shown for context, but may not be complete.



Analysis Conclusion

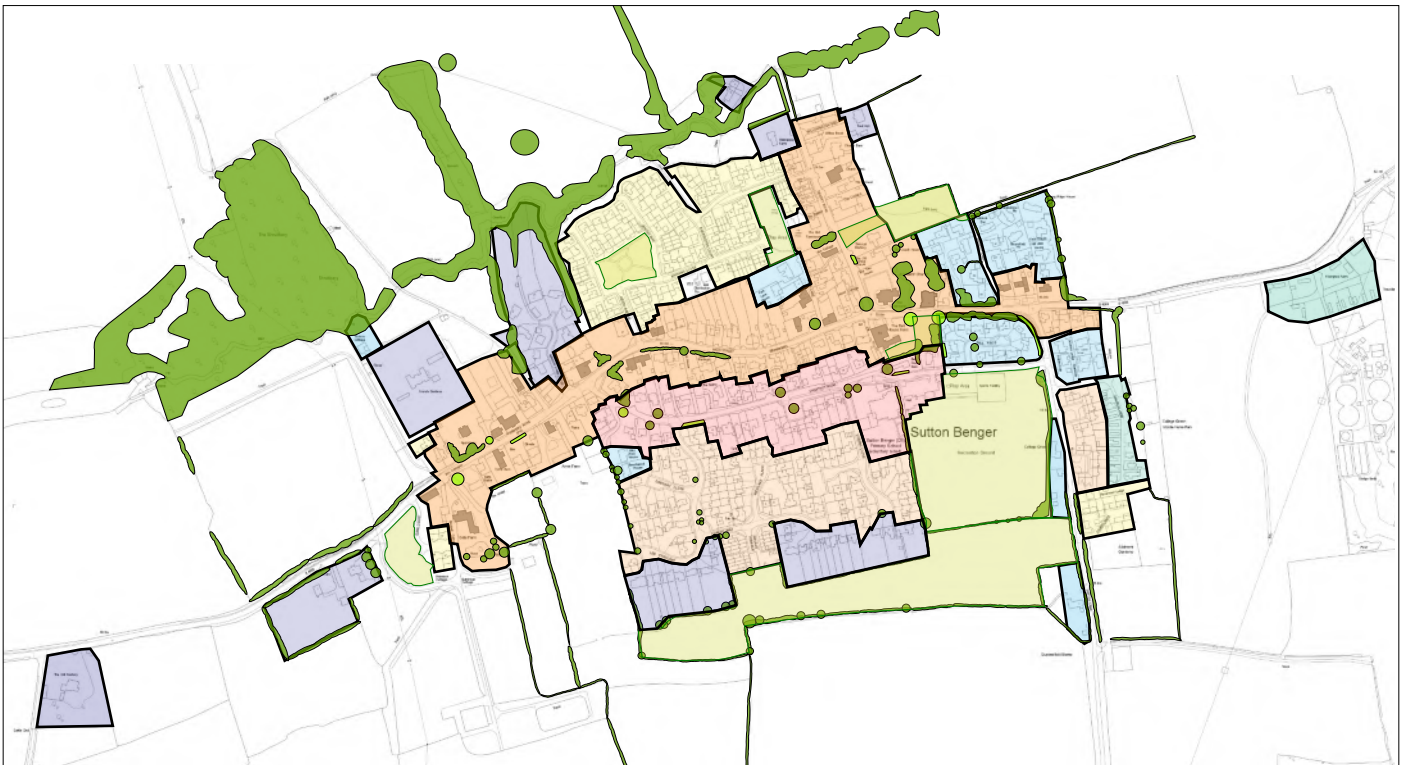


The key issues for consideration in the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Protect the distinctive form of the original settlements and their setting.
- Retain the parkland setting of the Draycot Estate.
- Where possible, restore levels of tranquillity and reduce dominance of highway and electricity infrastructure.
- Reinforce existing local features and enhance sense of place, particularly alongside the River Avon and its tributaries.
- Maintain and further enhance the network of open spaces in the parish
- Encourage riverside character planting, where appropriate
- 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

- Draycot Parkland
- Conservation Area
- Best and most versatile agricultural land
- Public rights of way & permissive paths
- Key landscape detractors
- Electricity pylons and prominent power lines
- Important views
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Area prone to flood - River Avon & tributaries
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Important Vegetation
- Open Space

Settlement Character Areas - Sutton Benger Village












The existing built up area of Sutton Benger has above been analysed as set out in the methodology.

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.

The following pages set out the analysis of each of the character areas, with a summary of their key qualities and characteristics.

Any issues have been identified, particularly where they can be addressed by a relevant Neighbourhood Plan policy.

-  Area 1: Historic Core
-  Area 2: Chestnut Road
-  Area 3: Edge of Settlement - individual properties
-  Area 4: Modern infill - larger plots
-  Area 5: Late 20th Century - higher density
-  Area 6: development from 2000 onwards
-  Tree Preservation Orders
-  Important Vegetation
-  Open Space

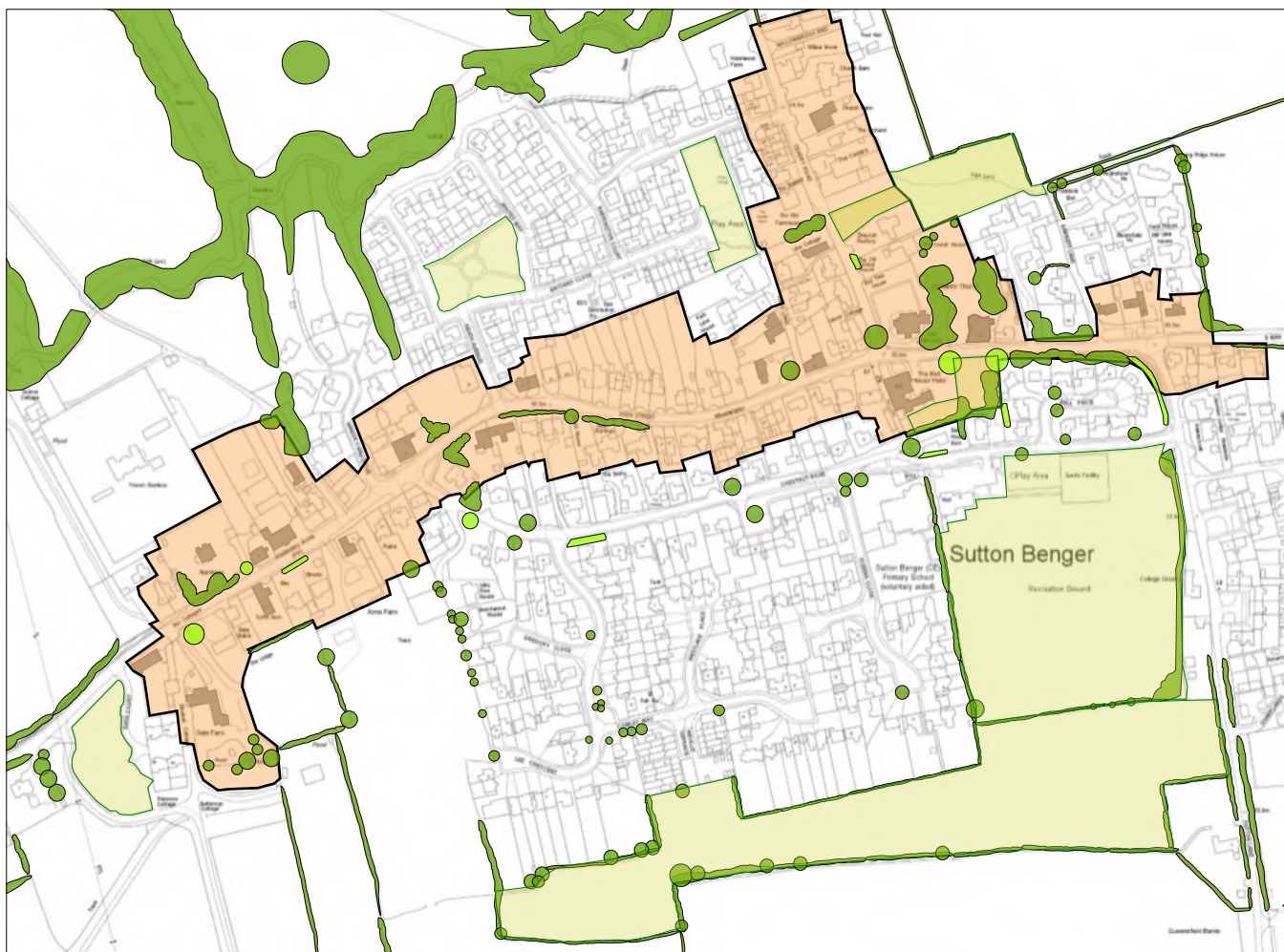


Draycot Park



Draycot Cerne

Area 1: Historic Core - Sutton Benger



General Overview of Character

The historic core of Sutton Benger Village, centres around the main historic roads that run east-west and north-south.

Whilst once it was a mixed use area with a number of shops and services, it is predominantly a residential area punctuated by The Wellesley Arms, The Bell House Hotel (also housing the Post Office), La Flambe restaurant and All Saints' parish church.

The area is within the designated Conservation Area with a mixture of different property types and styles which are reasonably well spaced apart.

Traffic through the village, including use by large vehicles, and speeding is an issue for the local residents.

Layout

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.

Historic properties are generally set in good sized plots, although many have now been subdivided for infill.



Area 1: Historic Core - Sutton Benger

Topography

The landscape is relatively flat, ranging between 55 and 60 AOD. With views out ranging to the hills in the distance.

The buildings are at a similar level on both sides of the road with no areas where the houses are elevated from road level

Roads, Streets, Routes

The main east-west route is High Street/ Main Road, with the north-south routes comprising Seagry Road and Sutton Lane.

When approaching Sutton Benger Village, from either Kington Langley or Christian Malford, the speed limit changes from 50 MPH to 30mph. This is a problem when entering Sutton Benger Village as many drivers do not reduce their speed to 30 MPH.

The High Street through Sutton Benger is used as a rat-run for traffic, including large lorries, to avoid congestion on the M4.

Green and natural features

This character area contains a number of key features (see green infrastructure map on page 33).

The field between the Church and La Flambe restaurant, which gives views out of the Conservation Area and forms an important and historical gap in the built form.

The churchyard, which contains numerous mature trees and an important setting to the listed building.

Land adjoining The Bell Hotel, which contains numerous mature trees and an important setting to the listed building.

Numerous mature trees and boundary planting within front gardens.



Area 1: Historic Core - Sutton Benger

Buildings and details

There are a range of building types and uses which include the pub, restaurant, hotel and church as mentioned above.

There is a mix of different types of residential properties of different styles, size and age, including:

- Victorian and earlier stone cottages, farmhouses and former commercial properties - usually with stone slate roofs
- Converted stone farm buildings - often with clay tile or later concrete tile roofs depending on conversion date.

Buildings are usually set behind low stone boundary walls and hedges with no intrusive close board fencing.

There have been alterations to some properties over the years which are largely keeping with the surrounding properties.

The majority of properties have off road parking and/or garages and so there are seldom cars parked on the road.

Windows and doors are usually timber often with stone reveals.

Where dormers exist these currently cut the eaves line or are small dormers fully within the roof slope.

Streetscape features

Pavements line both sides of Main Road/ High Street and are often made narrower by protruding stone walls. This also means street lighting is limited. There are no pavements or street lighting on Seagry Road and limited paving on Sutton Lane.

The majority of properties are served by overhead telephone and electricity cables.

Land use

This is predominantly a residential area with a post office and other limited village facilities.



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Historic Core of the village.

Mix of small scale cottages, farmhouses, agricultural barns and shops and services

Plot sizes are more generous

Dwellings set back with in depth front gardens

Building heights generally 2 storey with historic 2.5 storey focal dwellings

Materials:

- Stone with different coursing - random and coursed
- Stone quoins
- Stone plinths
- First floor brick bands
- Stone slates, clay tiles
- Gables, limited hipped designs except for agricultural buildings

Stone boundary walls and hedgerows

Key issues:

Maintain important green spaces

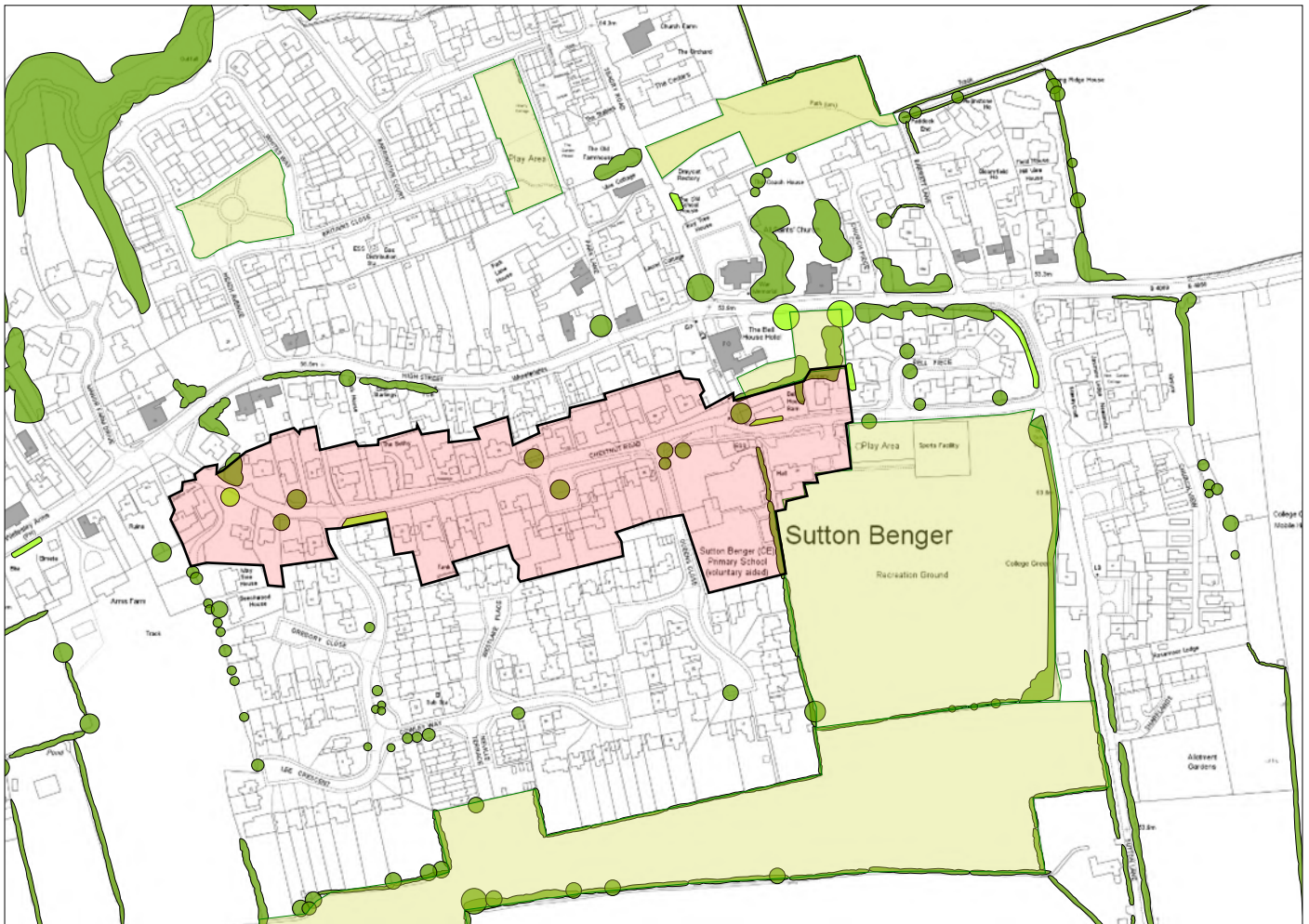
Retention of boundary walls/ resist loss of front gardens to parking

Support removal of inappropriate development/ materials - such as concrete and UPVC.

Retain gaps between buildings

Resist inappropriate subdivision of plots

Area 2: Chestnut Road - Sutton Benger



General overview of character

This area covers Chestnut Road and can be characterised as a lower density housing area.

Chestnut Road is a leafy lane where it joins the High Street and becomes more sub-urban in nature as one reaches the Primary School.

Layout and Spaces

Houses to the north of the road are generally set back into their plots and defined by vegetation and trees. Development is loose knit and individual, with some older properties and conversions interspersed.

To the south of the road, the street scene is more sub-urban, with development largely from the 1960s onwards.

To the north, the majority of buildings are detached, with small gaps giving glimpsed views to vegetation and other dwellings beyond.

To the south, the area consists of a mix of detached and semi-detached, generally following a building line with an inset modern terrace from 24-30 Chestnut Road.

Topography

Largely level, around 55 AOD.

Roads, streets, routes

Chestnut Road is one of the original village lanes running east to west. No pavement exists on the northern side of the road. The southern side of the road features a pavement.

It is an unimpeded street with good visibility, with the exception of on street parking.

Green and natural features

The western end of Chestnut Road is more sylvan in nature. The northern side contains numerous well established trees and vegetation along the roadside which are important to the streetscene. Most of the dwellings have significant amount of shrubs and greenery.

Along the southern side there are fewer street trees, with the majority of features located within clearly defined gardens themselves. Wide grass verges are key feature.

Area 2: Chestnut Road - Sutton Benger

Buildings and details

At the western end, the majority of buildings on the northern side are individual properties dating from the 1900s onwards. Some are conversion of farm buildings or feature farm buildings as significant older buildings. The majority of buildings are constructed in stone with more limited render. Properties range from single to 2 storeys in height.

To the south, there is more uniformity in age and style, with the majority being 2 storey houses faced in reconstituted stone in the 1950s to 1970s.

Streetscape features

There are no traffic calming measures located on this section on the road.

There is a standard size pavement solely on the southern side of the road. Properties have fed by overhead electricity and telephone cables, but these are limited in number.

There is an off road parking area by the village hall and school. Otherwise parking is found on-street. Properties to the western end largely all have off-road parking, with the lack of on plot parking more prevalent to the the east.

Street lights are few in number and largely found in the centre of the area.

Land use

The road is used residential with the exception of businesses operating from home, the Primary School and the Village Hall.



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Mix of largely detached properties to the north with boundary outbuildings

Semi-detached, plain fronted 2 storey predominate to the south

Plot sizes are more generous to the south

Dwellings set back and contained within vegetation to the north.

Clearly defined in depth front gardens to the south

Building heights 1-2 storey

Materials:

- **Stone and render**
- **Hipped and Gabled tiled and slate roofs to the north**

Key issues:

Maintain important vegetation

Retention of boundary walls/ resist loss of front gardens to parking

Support removal of inappropriate development/ materials - such as concrete and UPVC.

Retain gaps between buildings



Area 3: large Edge of Settlement Plots - Sutton Benger



General overview of character

Edge of settlement dwellings set in substantial plots. A variety of different dwelling types, largely 2 storey detached properties, visible from public vantage points.

Layout, Spaces

Dwellings to the south of Lee Crescent, Cowley Way etc are tight knit and formally arranged. Their rear gardens however are extensive and highly visible from public vantage points. Manor Farm Drive is similar in that the dwellings are formally arranged with significant rear gardens adjacent to the countryside.

Other properties are individual and again highly visible in terms of the boundaries being viewed from public vantage points in the open countryside.



Area 3: large Edge of Settlement Plots - Sutton Benger

Topography

To the south, the properties cover an area which is fairly level in topography. To the north however, the land rises northwards to 60 AOD.

Roads, streets, routes

Properties are either accessed directly via the High Street or in culs de sac off of the High Street or Chestnut Road.

Green and natural features

It is the landscape containment of these properties which is the important factor.

The buildings have a view of either fields or woodland beyond.

Buildings and details

Buildings to the east are modern in design and largely 1.5 storey chalet style homes predominantly finished in render. There is sufficient space between the buildings to give an open feel.

Manor Farm Drive is set in deeper, landscaped front gardens with more substantial gaps between dwellings. These 2 storey dwellings are more traditional in appearance and draw cues from the farmhouse and cottages. A number have dormers or gables which cut the eaves line.

Other individual properties are generally older dwellings which again are more traditional in appearance and constructed in coursed stone.

Streetscape features

The buildings are contained by landscaping, which is the dominant feature

KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Low density, detached

Garden depths and plot sizes are substantial

Visible from rear of property to open countryside

Building heights 1.5 to 2 storey

Materials:

- Stone, buff brick or render (painted)
 - Plain tiles (mix of concrete and clay)
 - Native hedgerow planting
- Key issues:**

Retain important gaps between buildings, particularly where there are views through to the Conservation Area.

Resist the removal boundary walls and garden planting along the frontage.

Consider protecting any boundary trees which make an important contribution to the landscape.

Consider impact on development in rear garden of properties when determining planning applications due to high visibility.



Area 4: Modern Infill, Larger Plots - Sutton Benger



Land use

Residential use

General overview of character

These residential areas were constructed in the late Twentieth Century and largely consist of detached two storey houses set in open landscaped gardens.

Layout, Spaces

Church Piece and Bell Piece are both formally laid out cul-de-sac developments, whereas the remaining properties are individual infill.

Subdivision has taken place in former larger garden and open spaces to achieve the present form of development.

Topography

Largely level throughout.

Roads, streets, routes

With the exception of Bell Piece which is a cul-de-sac designed to adoptable standards. The remaining area

are accessed via narrow, often single width lanes and drives. There is limited space for on street parking unless in on-plot.

Green and natural features

As infill plots within the existing settlement area, these developments are often more formal and sub-urban due to the limited space available. This often leaves less space for structural or dense vegetation, with smaller gardens in many areas.

Buildings and details

The buildings are modern and largely constructed of composite stone or faced with render. A number have gable details and stone or composite lintels above doors and windows. Quoin detailing is also apparent. Roof forms are generally simple with some dormer and gable

Area 4: Modern Infill, Larger Plots - Sutton Benger



Streetscape features

Bell Piece is the only formally adopted road and has limited street lighting at the entrance. There are standard sized pavement lining both sides of the road, with trees set in grass verges. Properties have few overhead electricity and telephone cables.

Other areas are all accessed via private drives, which leave limited space for any streetscape features. Church Piece for example has limited front gardens with all dwellings set around a central courtyard area.

Land use

The road is used residential with the exception of businesses operating from home.

KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Courtyards of new infill development

Plot ratios of built form to plot size are low, but in keeping with those of surrounding area.

The dwellings sizes are larger than average

Building heights 2 storey

Materials:

- Composite stone and render
- Plain fronted and gabled concrete tiled roofs

Key issues:

Retain boundary planting

Maintain plot size ratios with those of the surrounding area

Ensure high quality, natural materials are used

Removal of poor quality materials to be supported

Area 5: Higher Density, South of Chestnut Road



General overview of character

Residential areas built in the 1960s to 80s.
Dwellings south of Chestnut Road are two-storey, while those situated east of Sutton Lane are bungalows.

Layout, Spaces

College Green comprises two courtyard layouts off Sutton Lane. These consist of bungalows set in average plot sizes including small, open front garden areas.

All other roads are accessed via Chestnut Road, via Cowley Way or Queens Close.

The dwellings are generally set well back from the roads in open plan front gardens. Parking is on plot and gaps between dwellings are relatively small compared to other areas of the village.

The exception is Neville Terrace, which as the name implies is two rows of terraced dwellings, set in more limited plots. There is no on-plot parking and a parking court is provided beyond.

Topography

Relatively level.

Roads, streets, routes

Much of the development is accessed via Chestnut Road, with an internal layout of culs-de-sacs beyond, including Gregory Close, Queens Close, Cowley Way, Westlake Place and Lee Crescent. To the east, Sutton Lane gives access to College Green.

The area is laid out either in a series of culs-de-sac which follow a loose, curving form, unlike the more historic routes in the village. Or in courtyards such as Neville Terrace and College Green.

Area 5: Higher Density, South of Chestnut Road

Green and natural features

Focal trees are dotted around the culs-de-sac, with dwellings benefiting from private gardens to the front and rear.

Corner properties are often set back deeply into their plots and benefit from much larger front garden areas.

Smaller front gardens are provided for those living in Neville Terrace and College Green with limited planting.

Boundaries are lower and more open, with hedges and grass that replaces the stone boundaries of other areas within the village.

Buildings and details

The dwellings are a mix of detached and linked semi-detached properties. Either of 1.5 storey chalet design or 2 storey plain fronted appearance. The latter in particular are generic designs relating to their time period. The exception of the terraced bungalows at College Green.

Largely constructed of composite stone or render with plain concrete tile roofs. The chalet style buildings generally have feature windows cutting the eaves line or dormers within the roof space. Other properties are plain with little detailing.

Land use

The land use is residential.



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Low density, detached

Garden depths and plot sizes are substantial

Visible from rear of property to open countryside

Building heights 1.5 to 2 storey

Materials:

- Stone, buff brick or render (painted)
 - Plain tiles (mix of concrete and clay)
 - Native hedgerow planting
- Key issues:**

Retain important gaps between buildings, particularly where there are views through to the Conservation Area.

Resist the removal boundary walls and garden planting along the frontage.

Consider protecting any boundary trees which make an important contribution to the landscape.

Consider impact on development in rear garden of properties when determining planning applications due to high visibility.



Area 6: Development from 2000 onwards



General overview of character

The character area includes the most recent development that occurred the last 20 years. Development that took place mostly involved the replacement of agricultural buildings and filling of vacant plots.

The most major development in the village on the site of the former Poultry Factory. In its place, a scheme of 63 dwellings together with a further additional 21 units on the Hazelwood Farm site, created a considerable addition to the village.

Layout, Spaces

Sites are set on cul-de-sac and courtyard housing patterns. Dwellings are predominantly 2 storey with some exceptions of bungalows and 2.5 storey being evident in the area as focal features.

Properties are within plot sizes which reflect the size of dwelling, with front gardens that contain a variety of vegetation including focal trees.

openings between properties are generous in many areas and afford views to the countryside beyond.

The majority of developments area medium to higher density, particularly in comparison to the remainder of the village.

Topography

The area is predominantly level, but rises away to the north of the village.

Roads, streets, routes

The area contains three main developments: Sharplands, Gate Court and the former poultry factory site. The first two developments are formal courtyards and small scale in nature. The latter is accessed via Heath Avenue and leading onto Whites Way, Barrington Court and Britains Close.

Green and natural features

A large focal green space is found alongside Whites Way, with additional formal playspace at the end of Britains Close.

The dwellings all have limited front garden planting, with those properties adjacent to the open countryside benefiting from additional planting in transitional spaces.

Area 6: Development from 2000 onwards

Buildings and details

The dwellings are largely two storeys in height, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced forms. The scale and design of the dwellings are sited to respond to the previous and adjacent uses of the site

A number of properties take design cues from the surrounding form of cottages, although there are a number of more generic estate properties. The more successful properties echo the simple plain fronted cottages and those with dormers in and below the eaves line.

Reconstituted stone (panels and individual blocks) in irregular horizontal coursed pattern and render are used on the elevations. Roof tiles are plain or double roman in orange, brown or grey concrete.

Land use

The land use is residential.



Area 7: Park Homes



General overview of character

There are two separate areas of mobile homes within the parish: College Green Mobile Home Park also known as Church View and a gypsy caravan site at Frampton Farm.

Layout and Spaces

Church View is a formally laid out area with 12 static units currently on site.

Frampton Farm also contains a number of static and mobile units.

Topography

Largely level, around 55 AOD.

Roads, streets, routes

All internal roads - not to adoptable standard.

Green and natural features

Edge of countryside setting. A wide grass verge with planting adjacent to Church View is considered to be a key feature.

Buildings and details

Static mobile home units of various ages and sizes.

Streetscape features

None of note.

Land use

Mobile homes

Density









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).

The latest developments are becoming higher density and where these take place on the edge of the settlement, care should be taken to ensure sufficient landscaping takes place. High density development can result in landscape harm where there is a hard urban edge to an otherwise verdant landscape setting.

New development should respect the character of the surrounding area.

-  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 - 20-27 DPH

Area 8: Draycot Cerne



General overview of character

A historic hamlet at the end of a lane surrounded by agricultural fields. The area contains a 19th century Chapel, to the east of the hamlet and Manor Farm to the north. Originally the estate village and farms relating to Draycot House as such there is a strong correlating character between the properties within the hamlet.

Draycot Cerne dates back to the 1700s when it was known as Upper Draycot, with Manor Farm potentially dating back to the 16th Century.

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.

Layout, Spaces

The buildings are set out in T-shape along the east-west lane then spreading north-south in a linear form. The village is low density and verdant in form with well proportioned gardens.

The north-south axis of the village has a more regular form set back from the road behind enclosed front gardens (some converted for parking).

The houses along the east-west axis are spread out further apart along the southern side of the road with the Chapel of Rest set separately from the village and is the only building positioned on the north side of the road. It was recently renovated with a new roof at the end of 2015. The 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. A charity has since been set up to repair and maintain this important and much loved, feature of the community.

Area 8: Draycot Cerne

Topography

The village is broadly level but with a slight rise to the west.

Road, Streets, Routes

There is a single track lane into Draycot Cerne and there are no through routes with formal road layout ending at the farm buildings of Manor Farm.

Green and Natural Features

Between the Chapel and the centre of the village is a mature hedgerow giving a good degree of enclosure. The boundaries of the residential gardens abutting the fields have high level field hedges and the trees along them creating a screened perimeter to the village.

Buildings and details

The properties are predominantly well proportioned 2 storey semi-detached or short terraced buildings with regular features including front facing gables, open eaves and stone mullioned casements creating a verticality to the rhythm of the building form.

The bulk of each building is off-set by the proportionally large spacing between them.

Streetscape Features

The containment of the village within the rural setting and the strong 'estate' character of the housing stock.

Land Use

Residential, Agriculture and Ecclesiastical



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Low density two-storey semi-detached and short terraces of estate houses.
Generous rear gardens
Dwellings set back behind front gardens (some converted to parking) with stone walls boundaries.

Materials

- Limestone
- Red clay roof tiles

Gable, steep pitched roofs with open eaves.

- Stone walls to road facing boundaries with garden planting and greened boundaries with some traditional fencing facing the fields.

Key issues:

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

Area 9: Draycot Park



General overview of character

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

Layout, Spaces

The farm is of a traditional courtyard form with housing to the east and some more modern buildings to the north. There is an area of formally laid out gardens to the east of these buildings which sits within the curve of the estate road.

The road continues down to the south with St James Church on the west side before it crosses the formal lake. A further drive leads westwards to a gate lodge on the B4122, as well as a lodge on the B4069.

Topography

Largely flat.

Road, Streets, Routes

There is a singular estate road leading from the B4122, east across the park, curving around the farm and the church towards the south, crossing the formal lake before joining the B4069.

Green and Natural Features

The parkland character of the area is dominant with heavily treed east and west ends to the lake.

The northern section of the estate road runs through an avenue of mature trees and although this isn't as profound along the southern section there are a number of mature specimens along its length.

Area 9: Draycot Park

Buildings and details

The buildings are traditional in form and within the estate style. They are predominantly built of stone (from the former manor house) with clay roof tiles.

The buildings relating to the farm are predominantly single storey with additional space in the roof with small feature dormers or upper storey gable windows. There are however some two storey elements within the complex.

Streetscape Features

The relationship between the farm and church is evident with all buildings being traditional in form and location relating to the estate road.

Land Use

The farm is converted to residential and the Church is still in use.



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Buildings of specific use originally relating to the farm or church.

Conversions to residential of some buildings has retained their original context and form. Limited use of domestic paraphernalia within the setting of the buildings

Materials

- Limestone with some brick corbelling
- clay roof tiles

Private gardens are very small and directly linked to the property in question the majority of the residential elements are surrounded by shared garden spaces.

Key issues:

Retain character, form and style of the existing buildings. Due to the historic heart of the estate. Retention of the farm and church character and their setting is to be supported with the limited introduction of domestic paraphernalia and the visual softening or screen of existing non-tradition features, such as the tennis court.

Area 10: Buildings in Rural Areas



Prior to the 1920s all of the farms formed part of the Draycot Estate. Since that time the farms were sold off and many have subsequently been converted to other uses. In 2009, the Parish Plan appraised the remaining farms in the Parish. Listed below is each farm with its status, some eleven years on.

1. Westbrook Farm, Draycot Cerne - now an industrial estate with surrounding land rented out to a farm located outside of the parish.

It should also be noted that in addition to the household waste recycling centre (**1a**) which is located on the Parish boundary is the newly

constructed St Modwen Park industrial estate (**1b**). The new significant scale development is just outside the parish, but has significantly altered the former rural landscape in this area. This will become more significant over time as the area develops further.

2. Sutton Lane Farm, Sutton Benger - Farmed in conjunction with Manor Farm Langley Burrell. (dairy and arable farm, with the milking taking place in Langley Burrell, not on Sutton Lane Farm).

3. Manor Farm, Draycot Cerne - now private residence with approx 15 acres. Remainder of land was sold to Lake Farm and Whitelands Farm, Kington Langley in the mid 1990's.

Area 10: Buildings in Rural Areas



4. Lake Farm adjacent to the B4069 -farmed by the same family since being bought from the Draycot estate in circa 1923. A mixed arable, beef and poultry farm, with around 6 members of staff. The site is also now the location of a significant solar farm (4a).

5. Roward Farm, Draycot - Former equestrian use now residential. Barns converted to provide holiday lets also permitted and sold for residential use.

Hazelwood Farm, Seagry Road - Farmyard now converted to residential development. A new smaller farmyard has been established in the northern part of the village on Seagry Road. Some stock still farmed but large portion of the land rented out to farm in Seagry.

Arms Farm, High Street. In 2009 it was an historic working farm including a barn that should be protected from possible future development. It was considered that Arms Farm was in need of protection



as the land has not been subjected to modern farming methods. The buildings however have now been converted to residential use.

Gate Farm, High Street - Farmyard now converted to residential and some office space. Land rented out.

Langley Burrell Farm, Sutton Lane – mainly in the neighbouring parish.

Poplar Farm, Sutton Benger. Originally on Chestnut Road and now fully developed as the Lee Crescent and Queens Close estates, as well as the school, village hall, and recreation ground.

Church Farm, Sutton Benger. Farmyard now residential.

Area 10: Buildings in Rural Areas



KEY FINDINGS TO INFORM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

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.

The NP should consider policy setting out that any proposal requiring planning permission to change the use of land in the Parish to General Industrial Use (B2) or distribution and storage uses (B8), or other uses which could cause a potentially adverse visual impact, should demonstrate with the assistance of a Landscape and Visual Impact assessment that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the parish.

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 should be given as to whether the location is suitable for holiday use and potential 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.

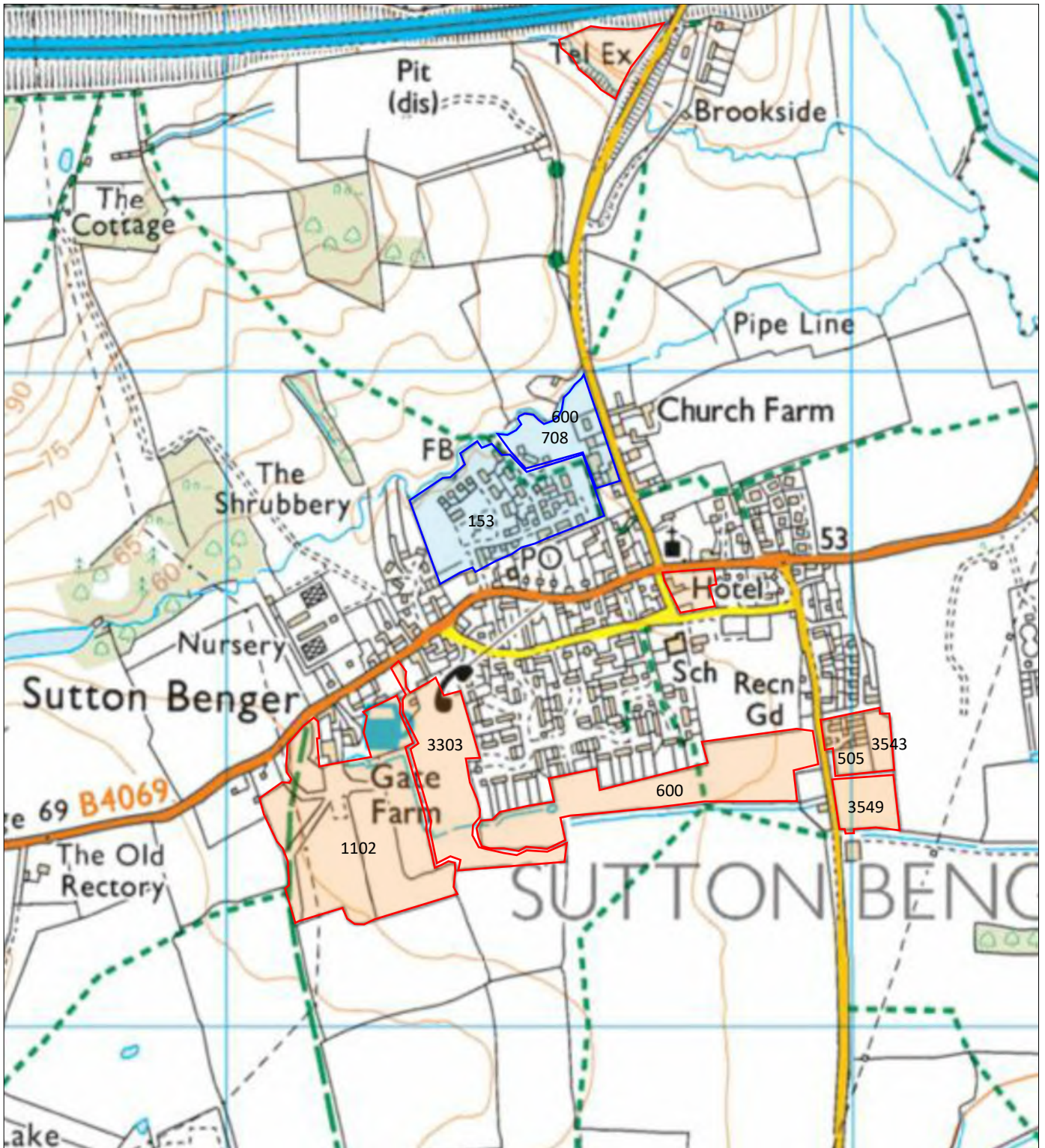
The NP should consider what scale of solar energy generation is appropriate.

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.

Nurseries and Polytunnels

Consider establishing a planning policy context for the determination of proposals for polytunnel development which balances economic and environmental factors

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Sites



The above plan highlights all the sites around the Neighbourhood Plan area which were examined in 2017 for development potential in the District's Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The sites were examined in Planning Policy terms to determine whether or not they were suitable, available and achievable during the Development Plan period.

Whilst this appraisal does not seek to provide further analysis of the development potential of each site, it demonstrates with the preceding page the likely points of future development pressure.

Sites outlined in blue are those which have been redeveloped at the time of writing.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Sites



The main areas of development pressure largely centre around Sutton Benger village.

Following the redevelopment of the former poultry processing factory site to the north of the village, the areas to the south of the village are being put forward for the future.

Where any new development proposals are put forward, the findings of the analysis conclusions, the adjacent character areas, the key issues and conclusions as well as the Design Code should be taken into consideration in any submission.



Key Issues and Conclusions

It is clear from the character assessment that the majority of areas are low density, with only the more modern development raising 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. On page x are a number of examples of new development within the villages which are considered positive examples.

Below is a summary of the key issues which have been identified and should lead to a range of policy principles being established to inform the Neighbourhood Plan.

These recommendations should be read in addition to those set out in the individual character areas.

SB1 - Design and Access Statement - Local Requirements

- Proposals for new development, redevelopment, infill development and replacement dwellings need to be based on an understanding of the local area. All new development should be based on a full and detailed contextual analysis and justification behind the proposals and how it has been designed to integrate and enhance the site and the wider area. It is recommended that the NDP policy sets out that such proposals will be accompanied by a Design and Access statement which includes reference to this document and a contextual analysis to highlight how the design has taken into account the characteristics of the site and its surroundings.

SB2 - Flooding

- Large areas of the Parish suffer from flooding and drainage issues, any future development should not exacerbate this problem. NDP policies should highlight this and ensure that applications should be designed to take into account both fluvial and surface water flooding as well as geology.

SB3 - Local Character

- A number of areas in the Parish are considered to warrant further protection due to their unique or special characteristics, which could be adversely

impacted upon by inappropriate development either on a large scale or cumulatively by smaller piecemeal development. The NDP should highlight these areas and refer back to this document to set out what elements should be retained and enhanced.

SB4 - Density

- The average density of the Parish is extremely low. Recent replacement dwellings, extensions and infill development, have not always respected the density of the area in which it is located. This has led to incongruous modern development which is dominant and discordant in the street scene. New proposals must demonstrate how they are in keeping with surrounding densities. Given the relatively low density of much of the Parish, a balance must be struck between making best use of land and the adverse impact on these character areas. A significant increase in density, is unlikely to be acceptable. Over-development of plots should be resisted. The density figures highlighted in this document should be referred to in the NDP policies.

SB5 - Landscaping

- It is recommended that NDP policies seek to retain the mature, sylvan landscaped setting. Unsympathetic modern development has led to the removal of key vegetation, this is particularly a problem where the built form is contained by the landscape and its reduction reveals a hard, urban edge which is out of keeping with the remaining verdant character. New development should minimise the removal of vegetation, particularly in areas where it is identified as a key characteristic in this document.
- Modern development on the edge of the built up areas of the settlements must be contained by the landscape. Whilst glimpsed views may be appropriate a harsh, urban edge would not be in keeping with the character of the area.

SB6 - Layout and Spacing

- The gaps between buildings are of importance, particularly where they allow views in out of the

Key Issues and Conclusions

conservation area or countryside beyond. Equally they allow for sufficient space for appropriate planting to soften the built form. NDP policies should refer to the appropriate spacing where these are a key feature of the area as identified.

SB7 - Local Vernacular

- The older properties and cottages in the parish make a positive and distinctive contribution to the character of the area. Their use of traditional building, forms, materials and detailing are key to this. Where possible, new development should be encouraged to retain features of interest, original building forms and materials. New development should allow for the original building to still be read and understood.
- Building forms and layouts as well as appearance and materials, which do not draw any influence from the local vernacular, giving them a generic appearance, should not be supported.
- NDP policies should refer specifically to the character areas and the details set out in this document.

SB8 - Conversion of Farm Buildings

- The Parish contains a number of historic farms which are still in use or the former buildings retain many agricultural elements. There are some redundant farm buildings however. These are often converted under permitted development (where appropriate), it is essential that the key features of the building should be retained in any development proposal. The introduction of urbanising features would not be appropriate, as would the loss of key vegetation.

SB9 - Noise Pollution and Acoustic impact

- Some areas are marred by the impact of the motorway, which creates a visual intrusion in addition to noise and traffic congestion through

the village. Any proposals adjacent to the motorway would have to be carefully considered in terms of noise and amenity.

SB10 - Important Views

- The character areas on the edge of the settlement and around the farms, benefit from surrounding rural views, many of which are long distance. Any new development should provide sufficient assessment of the impact on such views.
- Important views into and out of the conservation area must be maintained.

SB11 - Settlement Coalescence and protection of the open countryside

- The land between settlements contain limited pockets of built form. These are usually relating to farm buildings and cottages, which are considered appropriate to the rural context. The land between Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne is former parkland. In view of this, it is considered that unless sufficient justification exists, there should be a presumption against development (with the exception of agriculture and some quiet recreational uses).

SB12- Traffic Calming

- The historic core can at times be marred by the significant traffic levels passing through the Parish. This is a physical barrier to residents wishing to use the services and facilities of each settlement and prevents accessible car and cycle use. Traffic calming measures and a pedestrian crossing may be considered appropriate, but should not be urbanising features in this environment.

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:

- Stonework (walls) - rubble and coursed, stone with contrasting quoins
- Plain and double roman clay roof 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.



Examples of local detailing, fenestration, boundary treatments and materials

Examples of Positive Modern Development



Continuing the street frontage and boundary



High quality materials. Dormers are low key and break the eaves line



Conversions of agricultural buildings should be undertaken sensitively. Using design cues from these buildings assists with successful integration



Examples of positive modern development. These range from redevelopment sites to replacement and infill dwellings. The key is that each one has a design which has been justified based on an analysis of the local surroundings. The majority are influenced by the predominant style of building in the area, mixed with high quality architectural materials/ design.