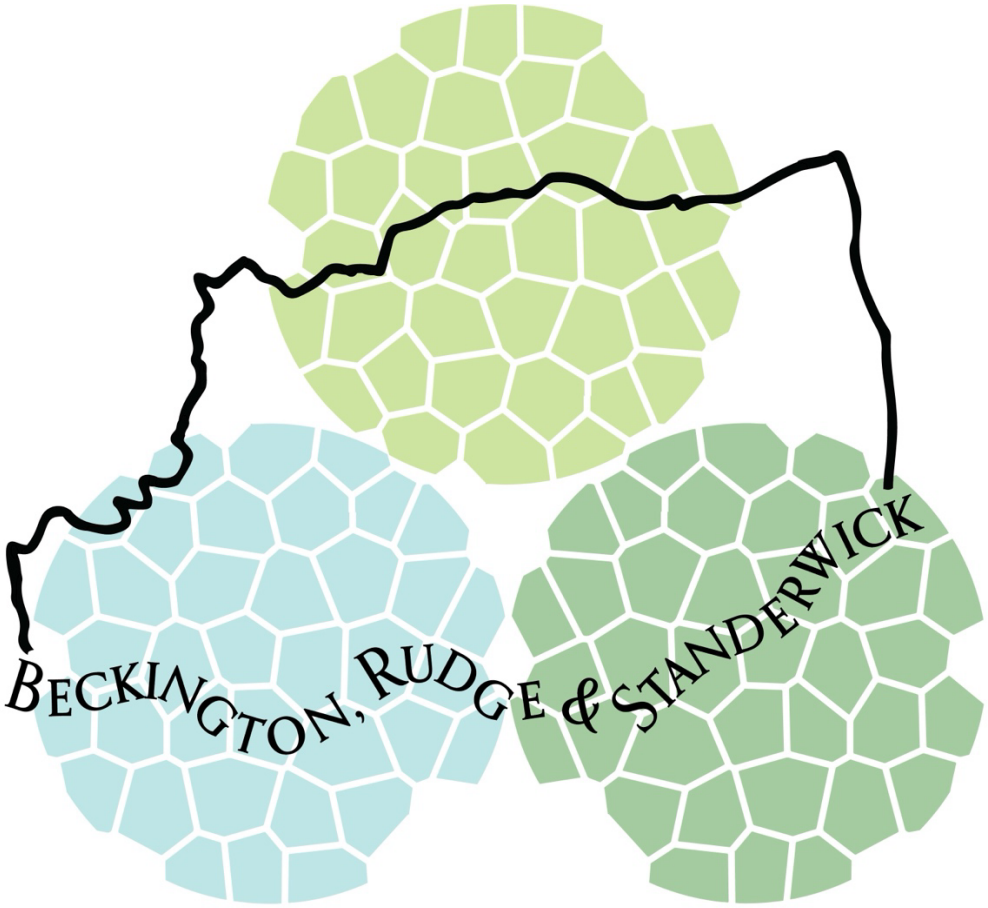


Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2045

Regulation 14 Draft

November 2026

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Contents

Page

Forward 2
Contents 3
Tables 4
Figures 4
1 Introduction 5
2 The Planning Policy Context 8
2.1 National Planning Policy 8
2.2 Local Planning Policy 8
2.3 Plan Period Monitoring and Implementation 9
2.4 Community Involvement 9
3 About the Beckington Neighbourhood Area 12
3.1 Introduction to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area 12
3.2 A Brief History of Beckington 12
3.3 Beckington Conservation Area 13
3.4 Socio-Economic Analysis 15
3.5 Views of the Local Community 16
4 Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives 21
4.1 Developing the Vision and Objectives 21
4.2 The Vision 21
4.3 Objectives 21
5 Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies 23
5.1. Policy HE – Heritage and Historic Environment 23
5.2. Policy EP – Environmental Protection and Sustainability 29
5.3. Policy AT – Active Travel 35
5.4. Policy LGS – Local Green Space 41
5.5. Policy PV – Protected Views 44
5.6. BPL – Beckington Protected Landscape 50
5.7. Policy HM – Housing Mix 57
5.8. Policy HD – Housing Design 61
5.9. Policy HA – Housing Allocation 66
6 Community Aspirations 77
7 Implementation and Monitoring 80
7.1 Implementation 80
7.2 Monitoring 80
Glossary 81
Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base 84

Tables

	Page
Table 1: Summary of Consultation and Engagement	11
Table 2: Age Range of Population in Beckington Neighbourhood Area	15
Table 3: Preference for Each Option by Rank	75
Table 4: Results with Weighting Applied	75

Figures

	Page
Figure 1 Beckington Neighbourhood Area	5
Figure 2: Development Map of Beckington	14
Figure 3: SWOT Analysis	20
Figure 4: Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Vision	21
Figure 5: Landscape, Built Environment, Character and Heritage Objectives	22
Figure 6: Housing Design and Development Objectives	22
Figure 7: Beckington Built Up Area Character Areas	27
Figure 8: Agricultural Land Classification Map (Natural England)	33
Figure 9: Public Rights of Way	35
Figure 10: Designated Local Green Spaces	41
Figure 11: Designated Protected Views	44
Figure 12: Area designated as Beckington Protected Landscape	50
Figure 13: Mendip Character Areas B1.3, B3	55
Figure 14: Community views about new housing development	59
Figure 15: Community views on Scale of Housing Development	59
Figure 16: Community views about Size of Properties	60
Figure 17: Beckington Design Codes	64
Figure 18: Sites subject to Full Assessment	72
Figure 19: Preferred Options Consultation Site Map	74
Figure 20: Map of Preferred Sites by Weighted Rank	57

1 Introduction

1.1 This document is the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out planning and land-use policy for the Beckington Neighbourhood Area over the period 2025 to 2045. It was initially envisaged that the Plan would cover 15 years from 2025 to 2040. This has been revised to 2045 to match the emerging Somerset Local Plan 2025-2045.

1.2 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out 9 non-strategic policies that will guide planning decisions made by the local planning authority in respect of the designated neighbourhood area for Beckington (termed the "Beckington Neighbourhood Area" throughout this document).

1.3 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan makes use of powers that were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and its subsequent regulations. They name parish councils as "qualifying bodies" that may produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan for their area (the parish). The intention is to ensure that the residents of Beckington, Rudge and Standerwick inform the way that the area grows and changes and reflects the needs of local people.

1.4 Somerset Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Beckington Neighbourhood Area on 21 July 2023. Details of the application and its approval are available on Somerset Council's website. The Beckington Neighbourhood Area is shown on the map in Figure 1.

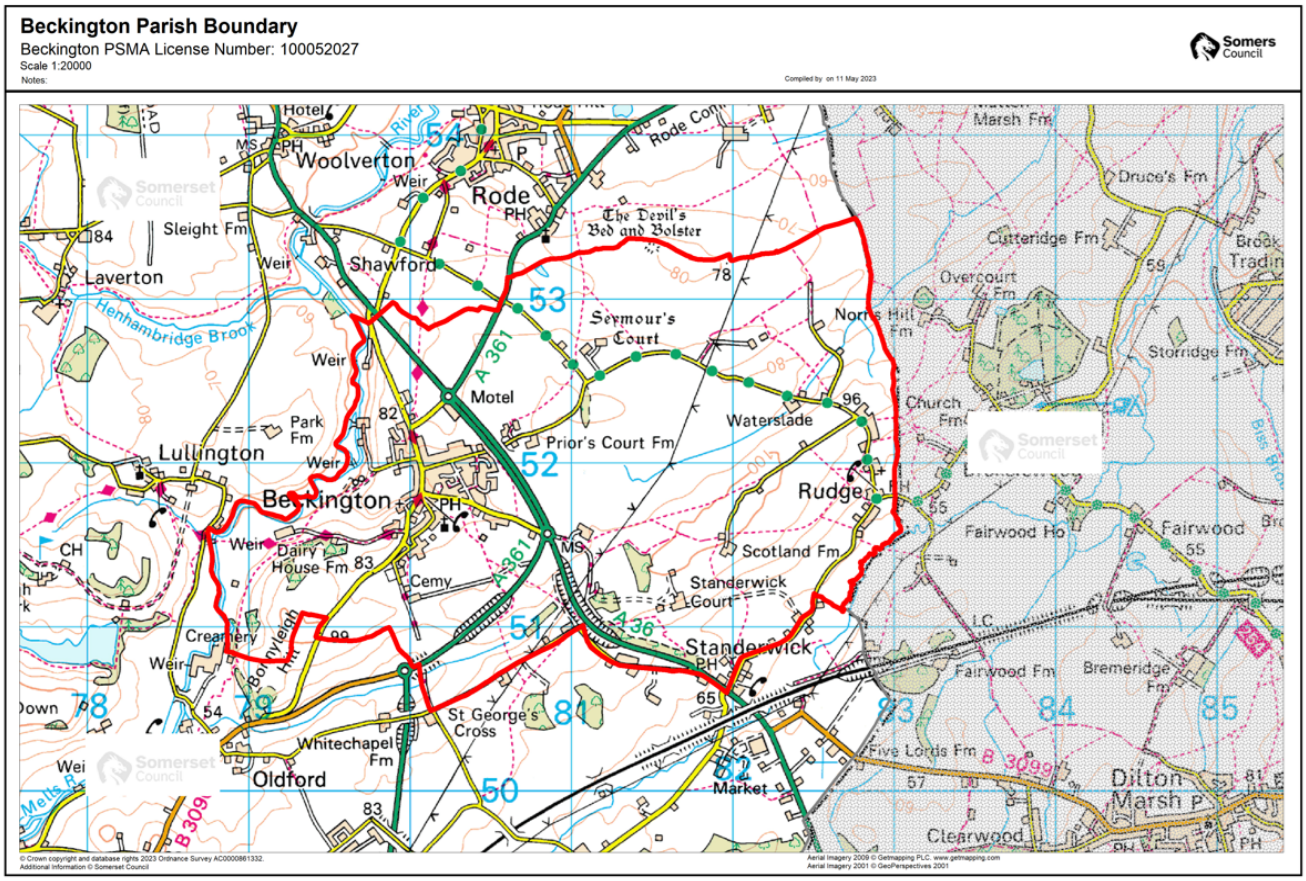


Figure 1 Beckington Neighbourhood Area

1.5 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

2004, the Localism Act 2011, The Neighbourhood Development Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Sections 98 and 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 which came into force on 26 March 2026, by virtue of The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026.

1.6 Beckington Parish Council, as the qualifying body, set up a Steering Group comprised of local volunteers from the community to lead on the preparation of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan. In consultation with the community, the Steering Group has established a vision and framework for the future of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area and set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the period 2025 to 2045.

1.7 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan policies are written to form part of the development plan for Somerset and must be considered by any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

1.8 The policies also set out how land should be considered (in planning terms) locally and are a material planning consideration in the determination of applications, alongside the policies of the Somerset Local Plan.

1.9 The process of producing the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has sought to involve the local community as widely as possible, and the different topic areas reflect matters of considerable importance to local people. The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan therefore takes into account and stems from local people's views, detailed in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

1.10 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group also examined existing policies in the National Planning Policy Framework[1] (which provides the framework for how the government sees the planning system in England working in practice with primary and secondary legislation), National Planning Practice Guidance (which provides detailed policy guidance) and the Mendip Local Plan (which until the Somerset Local Plan is adopted is the existing Local Plan which covers the Beckington Neighbourhood Area).

1.11 The remainder of this document:

- Provides information about the planning context
- Gives an overview of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area
- Outlines the Plan's vision and objectives
- Sets out each of the Plan policies and linked aspirations and actions
- Identifies local community projects that are not met through planning policy
- Sets out the Community Infrastructure Priorities
- Comments on future monitoring and implementation work

[1] A major overhaul and structural restructuring of the NPPF was published on August 17, 2026, combining revised plan-making and national decision-making policies into a single document. This draft Plan complies with that version. Some of the supporting documents and references predate the 2026 amendment and reference earlier versions of the NPPF.

1.12 Section 4 sets out the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies; there is a summary of what each policy seeks to achieve and a justification that provides the necessary understanding of why the policy is needed. The policies themselves are presented in highlighted boxes. To understand the full context for any individual policy, it should be read alongside the supporting text and evidence documents that have been compiled to underpin the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

1.13 Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 14 Draft. This document is accompanied by and should be read in conjunction with:

- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Draft Basic Conditions Statement
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Draft Consultation Statement
- The Evidence Base documents supporting the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Somerset Council has screened the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required. Their screening opinion was subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency.

1.14 The Screening Determination Statement (published in April 2026) concluded that there was a requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 14 Draft is therefore accompanied by both SEA and HRA reports.

2 The Planning Policy Context

2.1 National Planning Policy

2.1.1 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, August 2026).

2.1.2 NPPF Policy PM5 (page 10, Plan Making Policies) states the following:

> *"1. Neighbourhood plans allow local communities to plan positively for their areas by identifying and addressing community priorities that can be met or supported through the planning system. They should do this by:*
>
> > *a. Allocating land to meet the development needs of their designated area, where it is appropriate to do so; and*
> >
> > *b. Setting out policies which address particular local issues. These should relate to site-specific matters or, where appropriate, may cover wider issues such as the provision of infrastructure and community facilities, regeneration opportunities, design requirements (including design codes), local environmental improvements and the conservation of local heritage assets.*
>
> *2. The contents of a neighbourhood plan should not result in less development than specified in other parts of the development plan which cover the same area."*

2.1.3 The NPPF also states that *"Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made."* (Page 105, Annex B: Glossary).

2.2 Local Planning Policy

2.2.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans are required to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the local planning authority's Local Plan (Development Plan).

2.2.2 The local planning authority for the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan is Somerset Council. Somerset Council was officially formed on 1 April 2023, merging the functions of the former Somerset County Council and four District Councils (Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, and Somerset West and Taunton).

2.2.3 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to be in conformity with the Somerset Local Plan. Somerset Council commenced the preparation of a new Local Plan for Somerset in April 2023. Until Somerset Council adopt the Somerset Local Plan 2045, existing Local Plans remain in place for the individual geographical areas of the former District Councils (Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, and Somerset West and Taunton).

2.2.4 Beckington Neighbourhood Area was within part of the District of Mendip and therefore the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to be in conformity with the Mendip District Council Local Plan 2006-2029 (adopted December 2014).

2.2.5 Core Policy 1 (CP1) of the Adopted Mendip District Local Plan, Part 1 (LPP1), says that to enable the most sustainable pattern of growth for the Mendip District the majority of development will be directed towards the five principal settlements (Frome, Shepton Mallet, Wells, Glastonbury and Street) and then within 16 'Primary Villages', including Beckington. Primary villages are defined as "*those villages with at least a primary school, a community venue (either a pub or a village hall), a shop able to meet a range of daily needs and a 'journey to work' bus service*".

2.2.6 The Mendip Core Policy 2 (CP2) 'Supporting the Provision of New Housing' set out a housing requirement figure of 55 dwellings for the Beckington parish (the Beckington neighbourhood Area) over the period of the plan (2006 to 2029). Completions and committed development in the plan period as of July 2025 totalled 109 dwellings, a 30.9% increase to dwelling stock and a 198% increase above the initial identified housing requirement of 55. Given this level of growth, no sites were allocated in Beckington in the Local Plan Part II: Limited Update, adopted in September 2025.

2.2.7 On 24 April 2026, Somerset Council gave formal notice of its intention to commence the preparation of a new Local Plan to cover the period up to 2045. Scoping consultation on the spatial strategy and draft vision closed on 9 August 2026 and the timetable published by Somerset Council indicates that adoption of the Local Plan will be in March 2029.

2.3 Plan Period Monitoring and Implementation

2.3.1 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out the development vision, objectives, and policies for the Beckington Neighbourhood Area until 2045.

2.3.2 Section 6: Implementation and Monitoring sets out how progress towards the vision and objectives will be measured; how the effectiveness of the policies will be monitored; and how the projects contained within the non-statutory sections of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented during the plan period.

2.4 Community Involvement

2.4.1 As a reflection of the original intent for the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan to be a community-led plan, the process has involved the community from the very beginning. Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group commissioned a local consultation to set the initial direction for the plan and its policies.

2.4.2 The extensive consultation that has been undergone in preparation of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan is detailed in the Consultation Statement. A timeline of activity is summarised in Table 1.

Date	Commentary
May 2023	Beckington Parish Council sought formal designation of Beckington Neighbourhood Area.
July 2023	Somerset Council designated Beckington Neighbourhood Area.
September 2023 to January 2024	• 13 volunteers came forward and the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was established. • Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group agreed approaches to be used to engage and consult with local people, to collect data, opinion and aspirations. • The Steering Group set out that feedback and consultation on key issues will take place.
February to June 2024	• Public consultation was conducted on 14 March 2024 to launch the Neighbourhood Plan process. • Neighbourhood Development Plan leaflets were distributed to all 557 households in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area and posters were placed in key locations with high resident footfall. • A Residents' Survey was delivered to all 557 households in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area. • Engagement was conducted with Beckington Pre-School, Beckington First School and Springmead School.
July 2024	• 43% response rate recorded to community survey. • Results showed that countryside views and rural character are important considerations and Beckington is considered a safe location, with a good sense of community. However, inappropriate housing development on surrounding fields along with inadequate infrastructure and the lack of facilities shop(s), post office and community hub are challenges to the local community. • The key issues identified by local community help to establish the vision, aims and objectives of the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan.
August/ September 2024	Leaflet distributed to all households explaining the Neighbourhood Plan call for sites, the site assessment and the site allocation process.
October 2024	• Call for Sites launched. • Owners of 86 pieces of land invited to submit development sites.
December 2024 to February 2025	• Independent site assessments undertaken on all sites. • Steering Group agreed the shortlist of 5 sites for public consultation as recommended by the independent consultant.
January to February 2025	• Public consultation on vision, aims and objectives. • 67% response rate on consultation on the draft vision, aims and objectives. • Vision aims and objectives of Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan agreed.
February to May 2025	• Site Assessment report published. • Site preferences consultation on the 5 shortlisted sites was hand delivered to all 557 households in the parish. • 29% response rate to site preferences. • Indicative housing requirement figure for Beckington Neighbourhood Area provided by Somerset Council. • Proposed housing site allocations agreed.
March 2025	• Housing background Paper published.
May 2025	• Public consultation on Protected Views, Local Green Space and Character Areas.

Date	Commentary
	• 19 response forms from the 30+ attendees submitted with support for proposed views to be protected, Local Green Space allocations and Character Area definitions.
July 2025	• Informal feedback from Somerset Council that all proposed housing sites allocations are within band C of a bat consultation zone. Bat activity or suitable habitat on the sites may trigger a need for an Appropriate Assessment. If an Appropriate Assessment is required, this will trigger an automatic need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
June to December 2025	• Steering Group carry out external review on draft policies. • Steering Group prepare first draft of Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan, Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement.
December 2025	• Somerset Council confirmed that sites approved for development after the indicative allocation figure was provided by the local planning authority (i.e.. post February 2025) can be counted towards the indicative housing requirement.
January 2026	• Draft Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan and full evidence based submitted to Somerset Council to obtain a Screening Opinion for SEA.
April 2026	• Somerset Council confirm that both Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment are required.
September 2026	• SEA and HRA reports completed
October 2026	• Beckington Parish Council review Regulation 14 draft of Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying evidence base (including SEA and HRA reports) and approve the draft plan for Regulation 14 Consultation.

Table 1: Summary of Consultation and Engagement

3 About the Beckington Neighbourhood Area

3.1 Introduction to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area

3.1.1 Beckington Neighbourhood Area is comprised of the civil parish, the village of Beckington and the rural hamlets of Rudge to the East and Standerwick (of which only a small part of is within Beckington parish) to the South along the A36.

3.1.2 The Beckington Neighbourhood Area has a land area of approximately 741 hectares located in the Northeast of Somerset, on the eastern edge of the previous Mendip District. It is 3 miles north of Frome and 10 miles south of Bath. In addition to boundaries with the Somerset parishes of Rode, Lullington and Berkley, Beckington Neighbourhood Area also shares a boundary with Wiltshire Council to the East. It is bisected by the River Frome in the West and the A36 which runs north/south linking Bath with Portsmouth.

3.1.3 The Beckington Neighbourhood Area is set in rolling hills with a number of long-distance rural views, for example towards the Westbury White Horse. There are also a variety of important views in the Neighbourhood Area, considered valuable because they contain distinctive buildings or land features.

3.1.4 The Beckington Neighbourhood Area is largely rural, with Beckington village and the hamlets of Rudge and Standerwick set within a landscape of farmland and open countryside. The wider landscape is characterised by a mixture of arable farming and livestock grazing. Fields are divided by ancient hedgerows and woodland with smaller areas of deciduous and ancient woodland scattered across the Neighbourhood Area.

3.1.5 Beckington, Rudge and Standerwick are well serviced by a range of community and retail facilities. Beckington village has one church, two primary schools and a children's' nursery, and there are two public houses and a cafe within the village core. There are a sports field and recreation ground and a fine village hall that is used for functions and by local clubs and societies.

3.1.6 At the northern end of Beckington village, Beckington Services is located off the A36/A361/Bath Road roundabout. The site includes a fuel station, an M&S Simply Food store, a Starbucks coffee shop and a Travelodge hotel. The popular White Row Farm Shop and Café is nearby, accessed from the A36/A361/Warminster Road roundabout to the southeast. A wider range of facilities, including supermarkets and a railway station, is available in Frome, approximately 10 to 15 minutes away by car.

3.1.7 Beckington village is served by bus services to Frome, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham and Bath, with journey times varying according to the destination, time of day and days of the week.

3.2 A Brief History of Beckington

3.2.1 Beckington has a long history. In Anglo Saxon England Beckington was part of the Frome Hundred. The Hundreds, of which there were many, were centres of administration and judiciary. The Frome Hundred, named after its connection to Frome, was the largest and wealthiest in Somerset, with Beckington the seat of a

considerable cloth manufacture, including 'woollens axe' (thick woollen clothing used for protection in warfare).

3.2.2 Beckington is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086), at which time the land was owned by Roger Bushell and taxed at ten hides. Whilst the meaning of a hide is not known, it is believed to be a measure of land value. Taxed at ten hides suggests that the value of the land at Beckington was significant. In addition to its mention in the Doomsday Book, the Church of St George has a Norman diagonally buttressed four stage tower.

3.2.3 Into the 15th century Beckington's cloth manufacture and wool processing continued and numerous spinning and weaving cottage industry established. By this time several mills (for example Clifford's Mill, Eden Vale Mill and Carpenter's Mill) lined the River Frome for the cleaning and beating of woollen clothes.

3.2.4 During the 17th and 18th centuries the local woollen industry resulted in prosperity for some, as evidenced by the larger houses in the centre of Beckington village and the clothiers' marks seen in the church. However, as a result of in increased mechanisation during the later 18th century, Beckington, along with communities across England, experienced civil unrest. During 1766 rioters set fire to Clifford's Mill and other properties. Although the mill was saved, cheaper imported textiles (including those from the North of England) brought an end to the processing of wool and the manufacture of woollen goods in the 19th century when the last mill closed.

3.2.5 Today the many medieval buildings that survive in Beckington village show the wealth that came from its major role in the wool trade and contribute to the distinct character of the village.

3.3 Beckington Conservation Area

3.3.1 Beckington's character results from its rich and diverse heritage. Evidence has been found of Roman settlement in the area and St George's Church has impressive Norman features in its tower and chancel. From the street it appears that there is a prominence of 17th and 18th century stone built houses with well-lit upper floors, which is typical of cloth-producing areas in the Mendips.

3.3.2 The historic character of Beckington village is supported by the Conservation Area designation that much of the village falls within. Originally designated in 1973 and extended in 1996, the existing heritage is one of the most highly valued assets in the parish.

3.3.3 The Conservation Area is densely populated with terraced and detached houses with pitched roofs and stone and brick facades. The historic village core comprises narrow streets and lanes typically defined by housing frontages on the back edge of generally narrow footpaths. Building lines are generally consistent and follow the meandering form of the streets.

3.3.4 Whilst the historic part of Beckington village demonstrates a linear growth pattern more recent developments are large estate areas generally with a single access point to the road network.

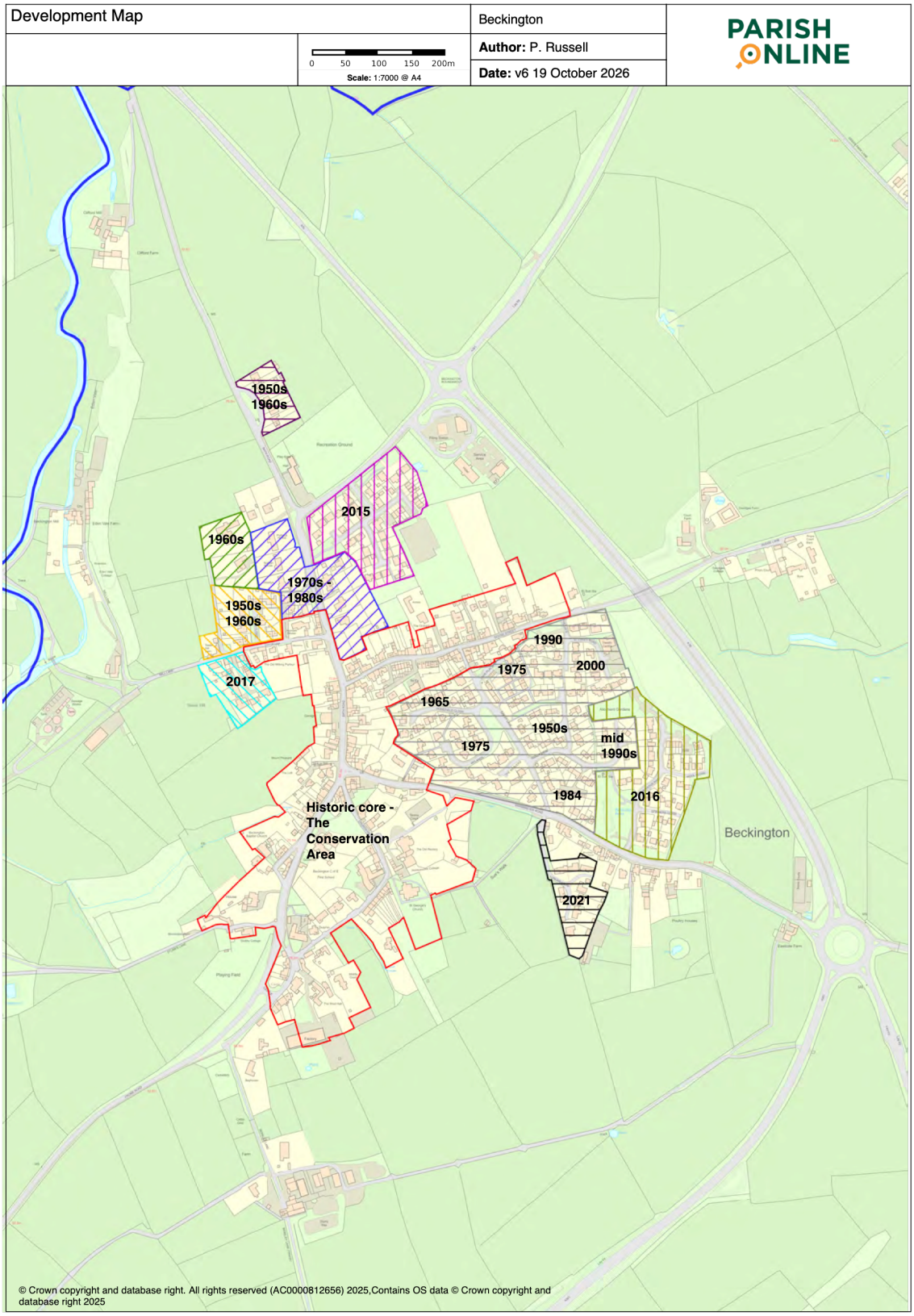


Figure 2: Development Map of Beckington

3.3.5 There are 105 listed buildings within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, with 85 of them located within the Conservation Area.

3.4 Socio-Economic Analysis

3.4.1 The 2021 Census indicates that the population of Beckington parish was some 1,172, compared with 983 in 2011. This represents an increase of around 19.2%. Over the same period, the population of the former Mendip district increased by 6.2%, and that of England increased by 6.6%. The 2021 Census data show that Beckington had a higher proportion of residents aged 45–84 than Somerset and England. It also had a slightly higher proportion of children than Somerset, but a lower proportion than England as a whole.

3.4.2 The age range of those living in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area reported in the table below indicates a trend towards aging within the Beckington population, counterbalanced by a robust replacement population of children. The 2021 Census data show that Beckington had a higher proportion of residents aged 45–84 than Somerset and England. It also had a slightly higher proportion of children than Somerset, but a lower proportion than England as a whole.

Age group	2011 number	2011 proportion	2021 number	2021 proportion	Change in number
0–14	163	16.6%	188	16.0%	+15.3%
15–24	90	9.2%	89	7.6%	−1.1%
25–44	192	19.5%	203	17.3%	+5.7%
45–64	314	31.9%	357	30.5%	+13.7%
65–84	197	20.0%	308	26.3%	+56.3%
85 and over	27	2.7%	27	2.3%	0.0%
Total	**983**	**100%**	**1,172**	**100%**	**+19.2%**

Table 2: Age Range of Population in Beckington Neighbourhood Area[2]

3.4.3 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 (IMD 2025), which combines information from the seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation, shows that Beckington Neighbourhood Area has an IMD rank of 19,212. Whilst the Beckington Neighbourhood Area has overall lower levels of deprivation compared to Somerset (16,980) and England (16,746), there are a number of areas, including Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment and Employment where the Neighbourhood Area shows higher levels of deprivation than the rest of England.

3.4.4 The Barriers to Housing and Services Domain in the Indices of Deprivation 2025 (IoD 2025), which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, shows a rank of 5,304. This means that the Beckington Neighbourhood Area has higher levels of housing deprivation compared to Somerset (10,915) and England (16,492). Overall, 12.14% of people in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area are recorded as living within the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods nationally on the IoD Barriers to Housing and Services Domain.

3.4.5 The Barriers to Housing and Services Domain considers Geographical Barriers, which measures the physical proximity of local services and amenities, and Wider Barriers, which measures issues relating to access to housing, such as affordability. The

[2] Source: ONS 2011 and 2021 Census data; AECOM calculations, Beckington Housing Needs Assessment, Table 5-5, page 36. Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Beckington Neighbourhood Area shows higher levels of deprivation on the Geographical Barriers Sub-domain, indicating that for some members of the population access to services and facilities is challenging.

3.4.6 It is not surprising that some residents experience greater challenges in accessing key services. There is a higher population of older people, 6.86% of all households in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area have no access to a car or van, and the average travel time to the nearest accident and emergency unit is 32 minutes, which is similar to the worst time for Somerset (30-40 minutes) but longer than the average travel time in England (10-20 minutes).

3.4.7 The average price of properties sold in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area between September 2024 and August 2025 was £605,718. Approximately 34.03% of dwellings were built before 1900, compared with 18.43% in Somerset and 15.06% in England. Census 2021 data also indicate that approximately 3.9% of households in the area used to approximate Beckington lived in accommodation with nine or more rooms. Beckington has an Indices of Deprivation (IoD) housing in poor condition score of 0.36, higher than the score in Somerset (0.24) and England (0.16). This estimate should be interpreted with care, as it is based on the characteristics of housing in a wider statistical area rather than an inspection of each property in the Neighbourhood Area.

3.4.8 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 (IMD 2025) indicate that the proportion of households in fuel poverty in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, has increased, from 10.3% in 2011 to 12.67% in 2023. This latest figure is higher than in Somerset (10.49%) and England (11.4%). With many properties in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area having a higher overall insulation need compared to properties in Somerset and England it is not surprising that 3.37% of Energy Performance Certificate lodgements were rated F-G in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area (the lowest energy efficiency) compared to 4.97% in Somerset and 2.55% in England.

3.4.9 The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES, 2022) shows that job density (the number of jobs located in the local area as a ratio of the working age population in that area) in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area has increased from 1.12 in 2009 to 3.04 in 2023. This latest figure is higher than the proportion in Somerset (0.77) and higher than the proportion in England (0.79). It is likely that this increase relates to a growth in lifestyle business and reflects a greater number of people working from home since Covid-19.

3.4.10 Lastly, the Community Life Survey (2023/2024) shows that Beckington Neighbourhood Area has an active and engaged community. 50.09% of people are reported as taking part in civic engagement activities, compared to 45.99% in Somerset and 45.19% in England.

3.5 Views of the Local Community

3.5.1 To inform development of the plan, a survey of residents living with in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area was conducted in April 2024. Questionnaires were delivered to all 557 households.

3.5.2 The survey recorded a 43.6% response rate with 243 completed questionnaires returned, with 236 respondents identifying their location (Beckington 223, Rudge 9 and

Standerwick 4). The responses to the questions and issues covered in the survey provided a valuable insight into how respondents felt about living in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area in 2024. The key findings are summarised below.

3.5.3 **Sense of Community:** 28.9% of respondents valued the sense of community. This clearly resonates with the socio-economic data which indicated an active and engaged community. 50.09% of people are reported as taking part in civic engagement activities.

3.5.4 **Housing:**

a. Housing development and expansion and particularly the threat of building on surrounding fields, over-development, inadequate infrastructure and inappropriate housing were common themes.

b. Just over a third of respondents supported more development versus just under half against. The views of the '*not sure'* could tip the balance either way. There was, however, a consensus over the type of housing preferred with a preference for individual plots (58%), smaller developments (43%) and affordable housing (30%).

c. When specifically asked about housing shortages, the most pressing types, in order of priority, were: first homes (90%), affordable rent (56%), private to buy (49%), self-build (48%), private to rent (40%), retirement (38%).

d. Two- and three-bedroom homes were favoured over those with one or four or more bedrooms. A quarter of respondents knew of young families or young people raised in the community (who have either moved away or still live at home) or downsizers who are seeking housing in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

3.5.5 **Design Considerations**: The most important design factors for any development, favoured by more than half of respondents, were compatibility with local character (84%), provision of adequate parking (76%), energy efficiency (68%), use of renewable or low carbon energy (58%) and provision of adequate storage areas (53%). The limitations of current infrastructure for any future development were also raised.

3.5.6 **Natural Environment and Green Space**:

a. The rural setting (42%) and access to open countryside (40%) were important for many respondents to the 2024 Residents' Survey. At the launch consultation in March 2024, 42% of respondents stated that views were the thing they most wanted to be protected. This was the highest item people wanted to be protected. 38.6% mentioned views as being of what gave the parish its unique sense of place.

b. The top priorities for the natural environment within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, all with more than 50% support in the Residents' Survey, were:
   - Protection and improvement of existing green spaces and recreational areas (63.2%)
   - Promoting preservation and restoration of local habitats and wildlife diversity
   - Protection of trees and hedgerows
   - Improved flood prevention measures

- Manage the scale and location of alternative energy installations

c. Specific green spaces cited for protection included the recreation ground at the memorial hall, tennis courts and adjacent fields, fields on both sides of Sue's Walk and next to St George's church, fields to the south of Mill Lane and the 'Beckington Loop' permissive path.

3.5.7 **Facilities**:

a. All facilities in Beckington are well used. However, the lack of facilities was highlighted by nearly 20% of all respondents with shop(s), post office and community hub being cited by most respondents as the most needed facilities.

b. The memorial hall, playing fields and tennis club were deemed in need of improvement. Facilities for teenagers and young adults were considered inadequate, with provision of diverse additional sports and a youth club suggested.

3.5.8 **Transport:**

a. The five predominant modes of transport used by respondents are (in order): car, walking, bus, train, cycle with three main purposes: leisure, shopping and visiting people. Bath and Frome are the main commuting destinations.

b. 47% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the reliability of bus services. More off peak services, earlier or later bus times, faster journeys and better access to timetable information were also flagged. The lack of car parking available near to bus stops in Beckington, was also a disincentive to using the bus services for those living in Rudge.

c. Those who would like to cycle more wanted safer roads and provision of cycle lanes on main roads and/or dedicated cycle routes. Those who would like to walk more raised issues relating to rural walking: upkeep of footpaths, better footpath information, difficulty and danger of crossing the A36 and walking in built up locations (the need for improved lighting and better path or pavement surfaces).

3.5.9 **Road Network and Parking**: Respondents reports that they disliked traffic (37% of respondents). Notably excessive traffic and congestion, traffic speed and road noise (from the A36) were the key issues. Related to this parking issues, on Bath Road and Goose Street, with congestion, limited access and lack of suitable parking were highlighted by 26% of respondents.

3.5.10 **Infrastructure and Services**:

a. Most respondents expressed satisfaction with gas and electricity supplies (more than 95%) and waste/recycling services (83%), with lower satisfaction levels for broadband availability (66%) and health care provision (63%). There was much less satisfaction with street cleaning (42%) and only a third of respondents were satisfied with sewage/drainage systems (35%).

b. There was considerable support for small-scale development of solar (83%) and wind energy (66%). Other ideas put forward include hydroelectric power from

water turbines on the River Frome, community ground source heat pumps, and solar panels on the village hall roof or any new developments.

3.5.11 **Employment**:

a. Half of survey respondents expressed a preference for more retail and hospitality businesses (45%) and creative workshop spaces (44%), with less support shown for small starter office units (24%) and community business hubs (22%).

b. Other suggestions again included a community hub/café/post office or banking hub, with repurposing of existing buildings favoured. Of those working from home, more than half wanted faster broadband. 11% of those responding indicated that they wanted no further commercial development.

3.6 SWOT Analysis

3.6.1 A review of socio-economic data together with the feedback and commentary from the local community resulted in the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis.

[see next page]

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- **Rural Setting**: Beckington's countryside views and green spaces are highly valued by residents (41.8% of survey respondents). - **Community Engagement**: Active and engaged community, with 50.09% of residents participating in civic activities. - **Historical and Architectural Character**: Conservation Area and listed buildings contribute to the village's unique charm. - **Proximity to Larger Towns**: Easy access to Frome, Bath, and Trowbridge for amenities and employment opportunities. - **Public Rights of Way**: Extensive network of footpaths and the Beckington Loop, providing recreational opportunities and wildlife corridors.	- **Infrastructure Challenges**: Sewage system issues, including foul water flooding and untreated wastewater entering the River Frome. - **Traffic and Parking Issues**: Congestion, excessive traffic, and parking problems, especially on Bath Road and Goose Street. - **Limited Local Facilities**: Lack of shops, post office, and community hub. Facilities for teenagers and young adults are inadequate. - **Housing Affordability**: High property prices (£605,718 average) and limited affordable housing options. **- Environmental Vulnerabilities**: Pollution risks to the River Frome and surrounding soils, as well as flood risks in cultivated fields.
Opportunities	**Threats**
- **Sustainable Development**: Opportunity to integrate renewable energy solutions (solar panels, wind energy, hydroelectric power). - **Improved Infrastructure**: Potential to address sewage, drainage, and traffic issues through targeted upgrades and developer contributions. - **Community Facilities**: Potential to repurpose existing buildings for community hubs, creative workshops, and meeting spaces. - **Active Travel**: Enhance cycling and walking infrastructure to improve connectivity and reduce reliance on cars. - **Biodiversity Conservation**: Protect and enhance local habitats, wildlife corridors, and native planting to maintain ecological balance.	- **Overdevelopment**: Risk of losing greenfield land and countryside views to housing estates, impacting the rural character. Risk of loss of community cohesion if new housing is not accompanied by appropriate infrastructure. - **Environmental Degradation**: Concerns about the impact of sewage discharges on water quality in the River Frome, and the capacity of wastewater infrastructure to accommodate existing and future development. - **Loss of Heritage**: Inappropriate development (including poor design that is not in keeping with the existing character) could harm the existing vernacular, Conservation Area and historic assets. - **Climate Change**: Increased risk of flooding and environmental damage due to changing weather patterns. - **Traffic and Safety**: High-speed roads like the A36 and A361 pose safety risks for pedestrians and cyclists.

Figure 3: SWOT Analysis

4 Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

4.1 Developing the Vision and Objectives

4.1.1 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group began drafting Vision and Objectives in December 2024, based on residents' views and feedback, analysis of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area alongside consideration of policies and objectives in the NPPF and Mendip Local Plan Parts 1 and 2.

4.2 The Vision

4.2.1 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Vision reflects the views and aspirations of residents whilst meeting the challenges and issues faced by the Beckington Neighbourhood Area and its residents.

Beckington Parish will be a thriving, friendly and inclusive rural local community and a tranquil and attractive place to live, work and visit. The historic rural setting and rich traditional character of Beckington village, the hamlet of Rudge and part of Standerwick will have been conserved retaining their unique charm.

New sustainable housing development will have met local requirements promoting our development as a compact and sustainable community.

The parish will increasingly recognise the impact of climate change and the need for sustainable upgrades and environmental solutions.

Figure 4: Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Vision

4.3 Objectives

4.3.1 The objectives of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan are the high-level goals that set out what needs to happen to make the vision a reality. They are grouped under two main headings:

a. Landscape, Built Environment, Character and Heritage, and

b. Housing development and design.

4.3.2 The objectives lead naturally into the Neighbourhood Plan policies described in detail in the next section. Each policy is accompanied by an account of relevant justification for and intent of the policy, along with a list of evidence sources which are linked to their relevant documents in the evidence base for this Plan.

Landscape, Built Environment, Character and Heritage Objectives

1. Development, whether traditional or contemporary, should protect and enhance the traditional rural and historical character of the parish.
2. New Development should integrate well with its historical architectural character, particularly within the Conservation Area which contributes so much to the character of Beckington village.
3. The valued countryside views from the approaches to, and from within, the settlements should be protected and not adversely affected by development.
4. New development should reflect the best of the local vernacular, utilising varied designs and local materials to retain, or enhance with innovative design, the distinctive character of the built environment.
5. New development should seek to improve and enhance foot and cycle paths through and around the village including those with links to the Macmillan Way and the River Frome valley.
6. Existing facilities and areas of important local green space should be safeguarded for current and future generations. The parish should gain public green space proportionate to the scale of any new development.
7. The Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land surrounding settlements in the parish should be protected.
8. Development should protect and where possible supplement areas of key habitats, particularly those that support endangered species.
9. New development must be supported by appropriate infrastructure to avoid damage to the Environment.
10. The parish should gain community facilities including public green space proportionate to the scale of any new development.

Figure 5: Landscape, Built Environment, Character and Heritage Objectives

Housing Development and Design Objectives

1. The location, nature, scale and layout of development of new housing should maintain the rural character of the parish, which contributes to its friendly, village feel.
2. New development should reflect the best of the local vernacular, utilising varied designs and local materials to retain, or enhance with innovative design, the distinctive character of the built environment.
3. Future development should provide sufficient sustainable housing stock to maintain a diverse community, including small starter homes, affordable housing and homes for the elderly.
4. Development applications should take into account and be assessed against the guidelines and codes contained in the Design Guidance and Codes report that forms part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan.
5. Drainage and sewerage infrastructure should be fully capable of assimilating any new development and mitigate any pre-existing over-capacity issues.
6. Additional traffic resulting from any new development should be mitigated by appropriate road/junction upgrades within the village and interconnectors to the A36 and A361.
7. Suitable off-road parking for residents and visitors should be provided for every new dwelling.
8. Any new development should be accompanied by appropriate new or upgraded infrastructure and community facilities.
9. Energy efficient technologies should be incorporated into both existing and new buildings to contribute to a more sustainable environment.

Figure 6: Housing Design and Development Objectives

5 Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies

5.1. Policy HE – Heritage and Historic Environment

Policy HE - Heritage and Historic Environment

HE1. Development proposals must preserve or enhance the special architectural and historic interest of heritage assets, including listed buildings and the Conservation Area and architectural legacy of Beckington's wool trade.

HE2. Proposals must demonstrate how they respect the setting of heritage assets and the Conservation Area, ensuring compatibility with the Beckington Design Guidance and Codes and the Beckington Character Assessment.

HE3. Development proposals that may impact heritage assets must provide evidence of how they will mitigate harm and enhance the historical significance of the area.

5.1.1. The rich heritage is a huge part of the makeup of Beckington Neighbourhood Area's character. Evidence has been found of Roman settlement in the area and St George's Church has impressive Norman features in its tower and chancel. From the street it appears that there is a prominence of 17th and 18th century stone built houses with well-lit upper floors, which is typical of cloth-producing areas in the Mendips.

5.1.2. Beckington's historic wool trade has led to an architectural legacy form across the Neighbourhood Area that establishes a unique character, making a robust, dedicated heritage policy vital for the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

5.1.3. As a premier "clothier village" in Somerset during the medieval and early modern periods, Beckington's built environment serves as a rare, highly visible record of the English wool and textile industry's golden age. The heritage policy seeks to ensure that future development respects, preserves and enhances this irreplaceable historic fabric.

5.1.4. During the 15th through to the 17th centuries, Beckington was a thriving hub of the West Country woollen industry, powered by its proximity to the River Frome and major trade routes. Unlike typical agricultural villages, Beckington was dominated by wealthy clothiers (cloth merchants) who managed the production, dyeing and sale of high-quality woollen cloth. The immense wealth generated by this trade was directly channelled into the village's infrastructure, creating a high concentration of affluent, high-status buildings that define the settlement's footprint today.

5.1.5. The legacy of the wool trade is directly legible in the architecture of Beckington's surviving historic buildings:

a. The Clothiers' Houses: the village boasts magnificent examples of merchant architecture, such as The Abbey House and Beckington Castle. These structures display the transition from late-medieval timber-framing to grand seventeenth-century stone masonry, featuring steep gables, fine mullioned windows, and

ornamental plasterwork that reflected the immense wealth of their original owners.

b. Industrial Vernacular Footprints: beyond grand houses, the village contains integrated architectural features specific to textile production. This includes wide windows designed to maximize natural light for weaving, open loft spaces for wool drying, double mansard roofs to accommodate larger looms, and rear courtyards that once housed ancillary workshops, dye houses and fulling facilities.

c. Material Authenticity: the widespread use of local oolitic limestone and traditional clay tile creates a highly cohesive visual identity. The preservation of these traditional materials and construction techniques is essential to maintaining the village's historic integrity.

5.1.6. Compatibility with local character is the most important design factor for the local community for any new development that comes forward. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that the village remains a living, breathing historical asset for future generations while allowing for sustainable, character-led growth.

5.1.7. **Intent**: Policy HE - Heritage and Historic Environment seeks to ensure that change within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area is managed so that the special character of the built environment of the Neighbourhood Area is identified, conserved and enhanced for the future.

5.1.8. **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The NPPF (August 2026) seeks to ensure through plan-making Policy HE 1 that plan making includes an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places. The NPPF states that a heritage asset is a "*building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes but is not limited to designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)*."

(2) NPPF national decision-making policy HE4 (Securing the conservation of heritage assets) recognises the importance that design guidance and codes can make in ensuring that the character and quality of development conserves, enhances and fosters greater enjoyment of the historic environment. Policy HE4 also states the need to avoid and minimise the harm to the significance of heritage assets and that developers must provide clear and convincing justification in relation to "*any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting)*." The Beckington Design Guidance and Codes describes distinct local character contexts, including the Beckington Conservation Area, later 20th-century housing areas, dispersed rural settlement patterns in Rudge and Standerwick, with settlement edges and the countryside interface characterised by views and soft transitions to open landscape. The Beckington Character Assessment recognises seven unique and distinctive character areas of Beckington village. The Heritage and Historic Environment

policy seeks to ensure that change with the unique character of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area is managed sensitively.

(3) A generic national or district-level planning policy cannot adequately protect the local distinctiveness of Beckington's historic core. A bespoke heritage policy is justified because it:

(a) Prevents Incremental Loss: the policy should support the protection of a considerable number of non-designated heritage assets, such as historic boundary walls, wool-drying lofts and outbuildings, which are vulnerable to unsympathetic alterations but crucial to the village's collective historic narrative.

(b) Guides Sympathetic Design: The Beckington Design Codes require any new development or extension to match the scale, materials (local limestone), roof pitches, and fenestration patterns of the historic clothier vernacular.

(c) Preserves Historic Street scenes: the policy should help to safeguard historic building lines and dense, organic layout of the village centre, which evolved specifically to accommodate the domestic and industrial needs of the wool trade.

(4) The policy ensures that the local distinctiveness of Beckington is acknowledged and in this way does not duplicate national or local plan policies.

b. **Historic England Planning Practice Guidance on Historic Environment**

(1) Historic England state that *'setting'* is the surroundings in which the historic asset is experienced and can include any elements like views, spatial relationships or historical context which contribute to an asset's significance, regardless of its immediate proximity or broader placement. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Its contribution to the asset's significance, whether positive, negative, or neutral, must be taken into account.

(2) Historic England Planning Practice Guidance on Historic Environment defines non-designated heritage assets as follows: "Non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) are 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". It is further noted that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

c. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**

In relation to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, the following policies are of relevance:

(1) Spatial Strategy and CP1: Under Core Strategy 1, Beckington is designated a Primary Village for development as it offers key services. The site allocation process states: '*Landscape, biodiversity and heritage impacts must be key considerations in the selection of sites for development*'.

(2) DP1: Local Identity and Distinctiveness: All development proposals should contribute positively to the maintenance and enhancement of local identity and distinctiveness across the district. *'Proposals should be formulated with an appreciation of the built and natural context of their locality recognising that distinctive street scenes, townscapes, views, scenery, boundary walls or hedges, trees, rights of way and other features collectively generate a distinct sense of place and local identity. Such features may not always be designated or otherwise formally recognised.'*

(3) DP3: Heritage Conservation: Development proposals must Justify any harm to a Heritage Asset and demonstrate the overriding public benefits which would outweigh the damage to that Asset or its setting. The greater the harm to the significance of the Heritage Asset, the greater justification and public benefit that will be required before the application could gain support.

(4) DP7: Design and Amenity of New Development: Proposals for new development should demonstrate that they are of a scale, mass, form and layout appropriate to the local context.

d. **Character of the Built-up Area**

(1) The village of Beckington has evolved over time. At its core is the historic Conservation Area that has many buildings dating back to the 16th and 17th Centuries. The built form varies significantly depending on the era of the development. It ranges from linear streets lined with historic properties with varying setbacks from the street in the Conservation Area, to higher density estate style development in the Shepherds Way development. Detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings can all be found in the neighbourhood area with most of them being two storeys in height, allowing woodland to dominate the skyline.

(2) The historic character of Beckington village is supported by the Conservation Area designation that much of the village falls within. Originally designated in 1973 and extended in 1996, the existing heritage is one of the most highly valued assets in the parish. There are 105 listed buildings within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, with 85 of them located within the Conservation Area and 8 located in Rudge. The Conservation Area includes landmark buildings such as The Abbey, Beckington House, Beckington Castle, Monmouth House, St George's Church, The Cedars, the Wool Hall and The Woolpack, which are examples of vernacular and polite architecture.

(3) The AECOM Beckington Design Guidance and Codes (2024) provides a parish-wide character and context analysis, including the Conservation Area, later housing areas, Rudge, Standerwick and settlement-edge landscapes. The Beckington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010 identified three areas of distinct character (CA 1-3) in Beckington village. The Beckington Character Assessment (2025) identifies and describes a total of seven character areas are shown in Figure 8.

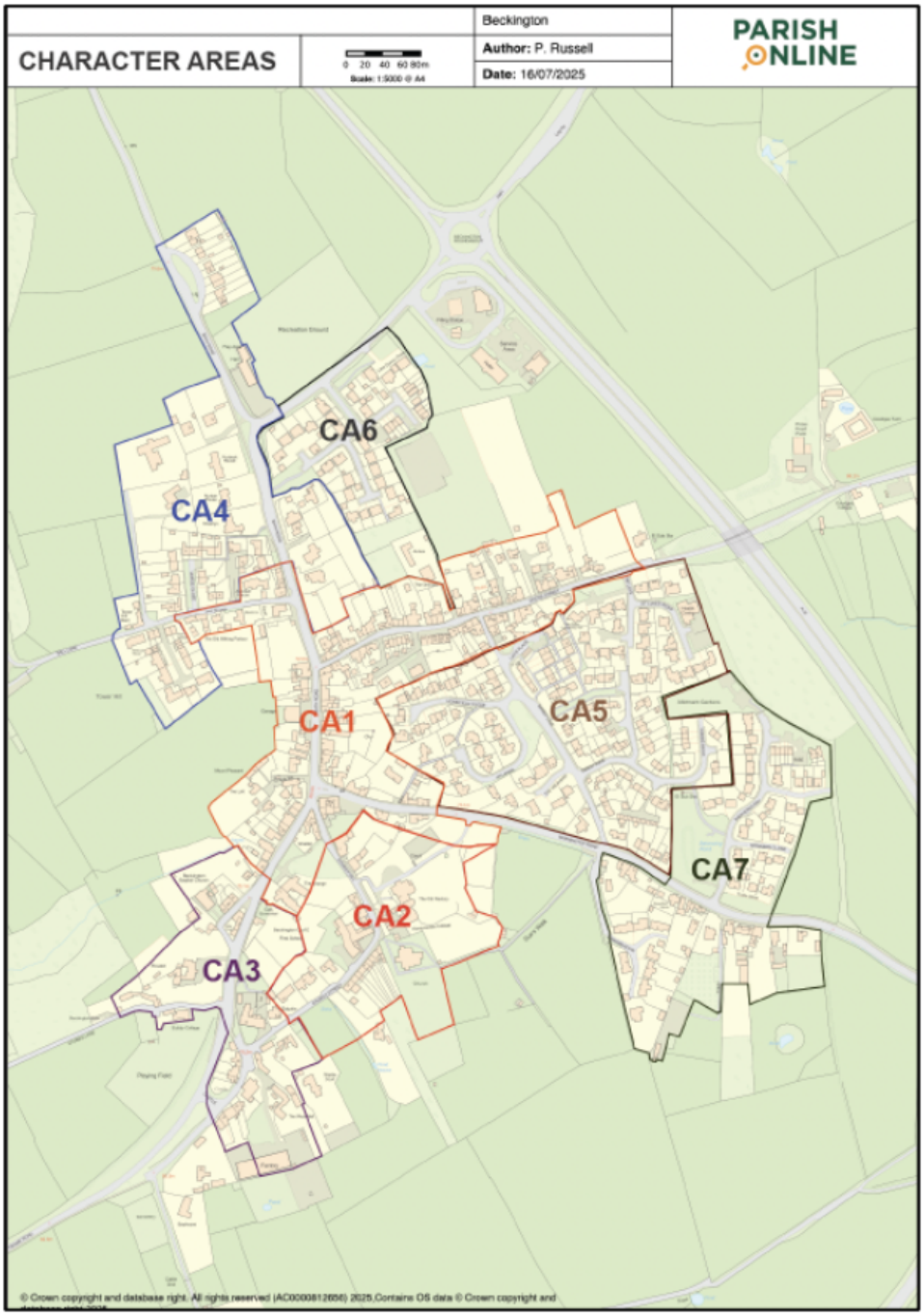


Figure 7: Beckington Built Up Area Character Areas
Source: Beckington Character Assessment

e. **Consultation with the Local Community**

Consultation with residents in 2024 and 2025 identified the following themes:

(1) Rural Setting: across all character areas, the green fields and rural surroundings are consistently highlighted as the most valued elements, contributing to the village's identity and sense of place.

(2) Community Concerns: traffic congestion, parking issues, and the impact of modern developments on the historic character are recurring concerns.

(3) Views and Green Spaces: fields adjacent to the built-up areas are seen as integral to the character and significance of the Conservation Area.

(4) Residents value the preservation of the village's historic character and rural setting, emphasizing the importance of protecting architectural and historic features.

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020
- Beckington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment, 2025
- Beckington Landscape Value Statement, Georgina Harvey, August 2025
- Beckington Protected Views Assessment Report, July 2026
- Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement
- Assessment of Sewage Pollution in the River Frome, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford, Final Report, June 2025
- Beckington Design Guidance and Codes, Final Report, July 2024
- Historic England, Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic England Advice Note 11, second edition, published 5 April 2022
- The Beckington Story, 4th edition, February 2025

5.2. Policy EP – Environmental Protection and Sustainability

Policy EP - Environmental Protection and Sustainability

EP1. Development proposals must demonstrate that they will not exacerbate the risk of untreated wastewater entering the River Frome.

EP2. Development proposals must include measures to mitigate environmental impacts, such as on-site wastewater treatment, water efficiency measures, and phased development.

EP3. Development proposals must protect and enhance local biodiversity, including the retention and enhancement of native planting to support wildlife corridors and maintain the traditional landscape character.

EP4. The integrity of sites which are designated for bats must be protected. Developers must take sufficient steps, including surveying for bats, to ensure development works do not have an adverse effect on a Habitats site. Failure to provide the necessary information in support of an application is likely to lead to delays in registration and determination, and the application may need to be withdrawn. If insufficient information is submitted to allow the local planning authority to assess the application in accordance with the Habitats Regulations, the application is likely to be considered unacceptable.

5.2.1. The River Frome valley and surrounding landscapes, which are home to diverse wildlife and priority habitats, is of ecological significance. However, there is need for proactive measures to mitigate environmental impacts, particularly in light of the existing sewage infrastructure challenges and the vulnerability of local soils and water systems.

5.2.2. The local community have also expressed strong support for biodiversity conservation and a desire to see greater protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Aside this there is also a recognised need to ensure that the natural landscape is appropriately managed through farming and land use (in part recognising Beckington's historical past connection with the wool trade). Maintaining agricultural land is therefore also seen as a priority.

5.2.3. **Intent**: Policy EP - Environmental Protection and Sustainability seeks to ensure that new development that comes forward within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area contributes to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and does not have a negative impact on the natural environment.

5.2.4. **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) sets out the importance of nature recovery and safeguarding important habitats, species, and landscapes. It requires development plans and proposals to:

(a) Use Local Nature Recovery Strategies and other evidence to identify and protect sites of environmental value.

(b) Enhance and restore habitats, create ecological networks, and support biodiversity net gain.

(c) Integrate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions into new developments.

(d) Avoid, mitigate, or compensate for harm to biodiversity and irreplaceable habitats.

(e) Protect and enhance trees, landscapes, and areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity.

(f) Steer development to land of least environmental value and avoid high-quality agricultural land where possible.

(2) Policy N1 (Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards): Requires plans to use Local Nature Recovery Strategies and other evidence to set out a hierarchy of designated sites, identify opportunities for conservation, enhancement, and recovery of habitats and species, and set standards for green infrastructure.

(3) Policies CC1 (Planning for climate change), CC2 (mitigation of climate change) and CC3 (Adaption to climate Change): Promote green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, and habitat creation for carbon storage and resilience.

b. **Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

(1) Local Nature Recovery Strategies are spatial strategies required by law (Environment Act 2021). The Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) provides a plan to reverse the decline of wildlife, restore natural habitats, and connect important green spaces.

(2) The Somerset LNRS identifies priorities and opportunities for conserving, enhancing, and restoring nature, and to inform local planning decisions and development plans. Its main aims are:

(a) Protecting and Restoring Biodiversity: safeguarding existing habitats and species and reversing declines in biodiversity across Somerset.

(b) Enhancing and Connecting Habitats: improving the quality, extent, and connectivity of natural habitats to create resilient ecological networks.

(c) Supporting Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Change: using natural processes and restored habitats to help mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, such as flooding and drought.

(d) Improving Water and Soil Quality: reducing pollution and enhancing the health of Somerset's rivers, streams, and soils.

(e) Engaging Communities and Landowners: involving local people, landowners, and stakeholders in nature recovery efforts, fostering stewardship and collaborative action.

(f) Delivering Multiple Benefits for People and Nature: ensuring that nature recovery delivers wider benefits, including improved health, wellbeing, recreation, and resilience for local communities.

(3) The Somerset LNRS Local Habitat Map indicates areas that could be of particular importance to biodiversity including freshwater (the River Frome), low wetland, grassland and woodland habitats. The Local Habitat Map also includes a number of areas of woodland within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, in the vicinity of Standerwick Court.

c. **The Water Framework Directive**

(1) The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is European legislation designed to protect and restore the health of aquatic ecosystems. In England, it is enacted through the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.

(2) A key component of the WFD is the preparation, updating, and enforcing of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). The River Frome is covered by the South West River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan, 2022. The main aim of RBMPs is to prevent the deterioration of water bodies and restore them to a "good" overall ecological status.

d. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**

In relation to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area the following policies are of relevance:

(1) DP5: Biodiversity and Ecological Networks: All development proposals must ensure the protection, conservation and, where possible, enhancement of internationally, nationally or locally designated natural habitat areas and species.

(2) DP6: Bat Protection: Planning Applications for development on sites within the Bat Consultation Zone will require a 'test of significance' under the Habitats Regulations to be carried out.

(3) DP8: Environmental Protection: Development (either cumulatively or individually) will be required to demonstrate that it does not give rise to unacceptable adverse environmental impacts on ambient noise levels; air quality; the quality of water resources, whether surface river or groundwater; biodiversity; light pollution; land quality and ground stability; residential amenity; and public health and safety.

(4) DP23: Managing Flood Risk: Development will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to the development of sites with the lowest risk of flooding. The development of sites with a sequentially greater risk of flooding will only be considered where essential for regeneration or where necessary to meet specific local requirements.

e. **Assessment of Sewage Pollution in the River Frome (June 2025)**

Evidence demonstrates a direct link between untreated wastewater discharge and environmental degradation in the River Frome, particularly at the designated Bathing Water site at Farleigh Hungerford. The following are noted:

(1) 78% of Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) events upstream of Farleigh Hungerford originate from Beckington and Rode Sewage Treatment Works (STWs).

(2) The STWs are under capacity and unable to handle the wastewater load, leading to untreated sewage being discharged into the River Frome.

(3) In 2024, 55 CSO events occurred, totalling 854 hours of untreated sewage discharge into the River Frome.

(4) Elevated sewage indicators (e.g., Escherichia coli levels) were found at Farleigh Hungerford Bathing Water during CSO events, with 89% of high contamination events directly linked to discharges from Beckington and Rode STWs.

(5) The report concludes that further residential development in Beckington will exacerbate sewage treatment issues, as the STWs are already over capacity.

(6) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are used to manage surface water runoff, but they are not a direct replacement for natural drainage and may not be effective in all situations.

(7) The report also recommends initiatives such as on-site wastewater treatment, water efficiency measures, and phased development to reduce pressure on the existing sewage infrastructure.

f. **Beckington Landscape Value Statement, 2025**

The Beckington Landscape Value Statement includes the following:

(1) The soils in Beckington are vulnerable to pollution run-off and rapid through-flow to streams, which can impact water quality.

(2) The River Frome's floodplain soils are prone to leached pollutants, such as nitrates and pesticides, which can exacerbate water quality issues.

(3) The River Frome valley includes priority habitats such as floodplain grazing marsh, calcareous grassland, and lowland meadow, which are concentrated around the river corridors.

(4) The area supports a wide variety of wildlife, including otters, water voles, kingfishers, herons, egrets, swans, badgers, roe deer, foxes, mink, brown hares, bats, owls, snakes, fish, freshwater pearl mussels, slow worms, toads, newts, and crayfish.

(5) The importance of protecting and enhancing these habitats to maintain biodiversity and the traditional landscape character.

g. **Agricultural Classification**

Agricultural land in the vicinity of Beckington is a mix of livestock grazing and arable production. The greater proportion is in arable production, with grazing concentrated on the steeper sections of the valley sides. The Natural England Agricultural Classification map (Figure 9) shows Beckington has a large area of Grade 1 quality land (excellent), with the remainder Grade 3 (good to moderate).

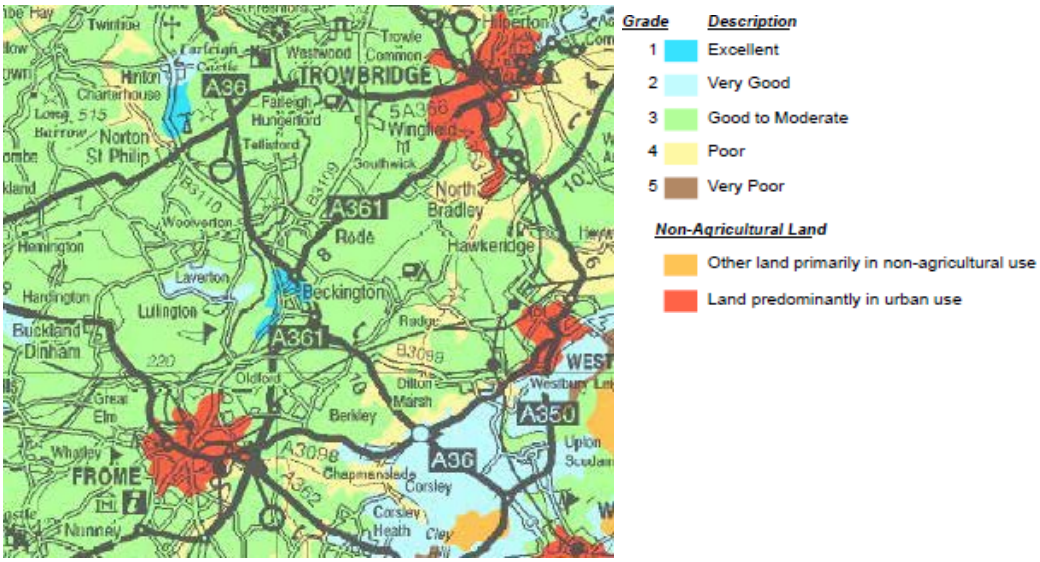


Figure 8: Agricultural Land Classification Map (Natural England)
Source: Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Value Statement, Chapter 6

h. **Consultation with the Local Community**

(1) Respondents to the Residents' Survey in 2024 raised the following:

- 50% of residents prioritized the preservation and restoration of local habitats and wildlife diversity.
- Comments from respondents emphasised the importance of wildlife diversity and the preservation of natural habitats.
- 58.5% of residents supported the protection of trees and hedgerows.

- Widespread dissatisfaction with sewage system problems, including foul water flooding in Beckington village and untreated wastewater entering the River Frome.

- Concerns about the environmental impact of rising foul water discharge due to capacity issues at the Beckington Waste Water Treatment Plant.

(2) Feedback from the local community at consultations has also highlighted the importance of countryside views and the agricultural landscape in maintaining the village's character and quality of life. There has been strong support for protecting the agricultural fields and green spaces, particularly those adjacent to the Conservation Area. These areas are seen as vital to preserving the rural and agricultural setting of the village.

5.2.5. These policies are linked to the Travel Corridors and Biodiversity Policy, emphasizing the importance of wildlife corridors and native planting.

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020
- The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017
- Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey Results, 2024
- Beckington Landscape Value Statement, Georgina Harvey, August 2025
- Assessment of Sewage Pollution in the River Frome, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford, Final Report, June 2025
- Natural England Agricultural Classification maps
- Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy, 2026

5.3. Policy AT – Active Travel

Policy AT - Active Travel

AT1. Development Proposals must consider how residents will be able to move around the parish without reliance on a motor vehicle. Measures should include:

a) Enhancing and improving active travel corridors (including footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, and restricted byways) which are located in, traverse, or border the proposed development site.

b) Providing new corridors that link a proposed development site with key village infrastructure and exiting travel corridors.

AT2. Delivery of the Beckington Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Development proposals must demonstrate how they will support the phased delivery of the Beckington Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), including:

- Enhancing or extending the identified walking and cycling network
- Providing safe, accessible connections to key destinations
- Incorporating design standards for footways and cycle lanes as set out in the LCWIP
- Supporting provision of secure cycle parking at all new community, retail, and educational facilities

5.3.1. The parish is criss-crossed with a network of Public Rights of Way as shown in Figure 9. These routes enable the community to take pleasant short cuts within the parish and provide access into to the wider countryside. The extensive network of public rights of way shows the value of the landscape and rural setting surrounding the villages. This is a significant recreational resource.



Figure 9: Public Rights of Way

Source: Explore Somerset https://roam.somerset.gov.uk/roam/map

5.3.2. In addition, the very well-used and popular route called 'The Beckington Loop' follows the Macmillan Way footpath FR 1/4 on Stubbs Lane, turns right onto a permissive path then links to footpath FR 1/3 that joins Mill Lane.

5.3.3. These footpaths also form important wildlife corridors and are habitats to a wide variety of flora and fauna. They are an important feature and asset within the parish and there was community support for enhancements, in particular the provision of a link from Shepherds Way to the Doctors' Surgery.

5.3.4. **Intent**: Policy AT - Active Travel seeks to encourage further active transport by those living and working in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area. The policy seeks to ensure that new development protects and enhances the existing active travel corridors and links any new development to the existing network.

5.3.5. **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) requires plans and development proposals to prioritise sustainable transport from the outset and design places that make walking and cycling attractive and safe.

(2) Policy TR4 (Street design, access and parking): states that transport considerations must be integral to the design of development and "*give priority to walking, wheeling and cycling.*"

(3) Policy TR8 (Public rights of way): seeks to

(a) protect and enhance the network of public rights of way, including through suitable diversions agreed with the highway authority; and

(b) take opportunities to extend, link or improve the quality of existing routes where this enables one or more of the following:

- Improved access to green spaces and the countryside;
- New direct and circular routes and connections between local and long-distance footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes;
- The provision of accessible, safe and convenient links to services and facilities; and
- Improved connections with public transport stops and interchanges.

(4) Policy CC2 (Mitigation of climate change); Requires development proposals to prioritise sustainable movement (walking, cycling, public transport) and support the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

(5) Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places): Prioritises good design to support walking, cycling, and public transport, and integrate green infrastructure.

(6) Policy HC1 (Planning for healthy communities): aims to promote healthy, inclusive places by locating development to support walking, cycling, and public transport.

b. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**

The Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029 recognises that the loss of key facilities in villages has led to an increase in unsustainable travel as villagers travel to other places to access services and facilities.

c. **Beckington Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP), 2023**

(1) The Beckington Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP) prepared by Moss Naylor Young notes the following:

(a) The village is served by several unclassified roads and is bypassed by major routes (A36, A361).

(b) There are currently no dedicated off-road cycle routes within the parish, but some restricted byways and footpaths exist.

(c) Footways are present but often narrow, poorly maintained, or obstructed by parked cars.

(d) key destinations for both cycling and walking, such as Frome College, Rode High Street, the facilities at Beckington Services, Whiterow Farm, local schools, and pubs.

(e) The cycle network aims to connect these destinations via a mix of on-road priority measures, signage, and, where possible, off-road or segregated routes.

(f) The walking network focuses on journeys up to 1km, prioritizing safe, accessible footways between key local amenities.

(2) Consultation revealed strong support for improving footpaths (80% of respondents) and safer cycle routes to Frome (63%). The key concerns include:

(a) Safety of cycling, especially on Bonnyleigh Hill and at major road crossings (A36, A361).

(b) The need for better walking connections to Frome and across the A36 to Whiterow Farm shop.

(c) Accessibility issues for pushchairs, wheelchairs, and those with limited mobility.

(3) The key recommendations of the LCWIP are as follows:

(a) For Walking:

- Widen and enhance footways, especially on routes to schools and local amenities.

- Address pinch points and maintenance issues, particularly on the route to Frome.

- Improve crossings at hazardous junctions (e.g., B3090, A36 roundabout).

(b) For Cycling:

- Implement road markings and signage to create safer on-road routes.

- Develop appropriate cycle lanes where feasible.

- Promote cycle parking at key destinations.

(c) General:

- Co-ordinate improvements for walking and cycling, especially on routes to Frome.

- Engage with National Highways and local stakeholders for complex schemes.

d. **Bettering Beckington Parish Council survey 2016**

(1) In 2016 the Bettering Beckington Parish Council survey was hand delivered to all households. When asked about desired improvements/investment the highest response rate of 80% was to maintain and improve the footpath network and the 2nd with 75% of respondents was to document walks. 66% of respondents asked for a footpath route map in the village and 63% asked for a safer cycle route to Frome. Open ended comments as well as a focus group for teenagers demonstrated safety concerns about cycling in the parish.

(2) In response to this parishioner feedback Beckington Parish Council commissioned a Parish Cycle Strategy in 2020 and a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in 2023.

e. **Parish Cycle Strategy in 2020**

(1) In 2020, Beckington Parish Council commissioned a feasibility study into ways to improve cycling connectivity with local destinations including Frome College, Rode High Street, and Beckington First School. The aim was to attract people to the use of walking and cycling as a mode of transport and thus reduce reliance on the private car. Key recommendations were to:

- Implement cycle priority measures to Frome College and Rode High Street.

- Introduce advisory cycle lanes and signage within Beckington.

- Promote awareness of cyclists on Goose Street and Rudge Lane.

- Develop Safe Routes to local schools.

f. **Consultation with the Local Community**

(1) Walking (85.4%) was the top response in the residents' survey question *"In which community activities do you and members of your household regularly participate within the Parish"*.

(2) Comments in response to the survey questions "*Are there any new or existing facilities or services you feel should be considered for future development and investment in or around Beckington, Rudge or Standerwick?"* and "*What would encourage you to walk more in the Parish?"* included:

- *"Invest in the footpath network. Maintain better as often overgrown which is unfortunate as the views are amazing."*

- *"Better signage for public footpaths and rights of way, e.g. The Beckington Loop."*

- *"Accessible walking routes into the countryside"*

- *"Some kind of safe pathway to the Farm Shop, maybe via the other side of the underpass in Goose Street"*.

(3) Parishioners were also asked what would encourage them to cycle more within the parish. There was strong demand for safer cycle routes on the main roads, speed restrictions for vehicles and improved road crossings. Representative comments included:

- *"safe cycle route to Frome and Rode"*

- *"Getting across the main roads is a problem, i.e. at the end of Green Park Lane by Fussels, crossing the A36 at the end of the old Bath Road and particularly across the dual C/W to Whiterow where traffic coming fast after the roundabout is hidden by vegetation coming from Standerwick /Frome direction"*.

- *"Safety features. Dangerous at night on the rural lanes between Beckington and Rudge and cycling to Frome from Beckington doesn't feel safe"*.

- *"The provision of dedicated cycle lanes"*.

- *"Somewhere to store a bike"*.

- *"The ability to stay away from the busy roads that surround us".*

- *"I regularly use my bicycle however I can understand why people are reluctant to cycle due to the speed of traffic and cars passing without adequate care and attention"*

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey Results, 2024
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Protected Views Assessment, Open Plan, August 2025
- Bettering Beckington Parish Council survey 2016
- Beckington Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2023
- Parish Cycle Strategy in 2020

5.4. Policy LGS – Local Green Space

Policy LGS - Local Green Space

LGS 1.1 The following sites, as shown in Figure 10, are designated as Local Green Space in accordance with Policy HC2 (Local Green Space) of the National Planning Policy Framework:

LGS 1: Recreation Field (Memorial Hall)
LGS 4a: Glebe Field, adjacent to Sue's Walk
LGS 5: Fields adjacent to St George's Church
LGS 6: Fields south of Mill Lane / Beckington Loop

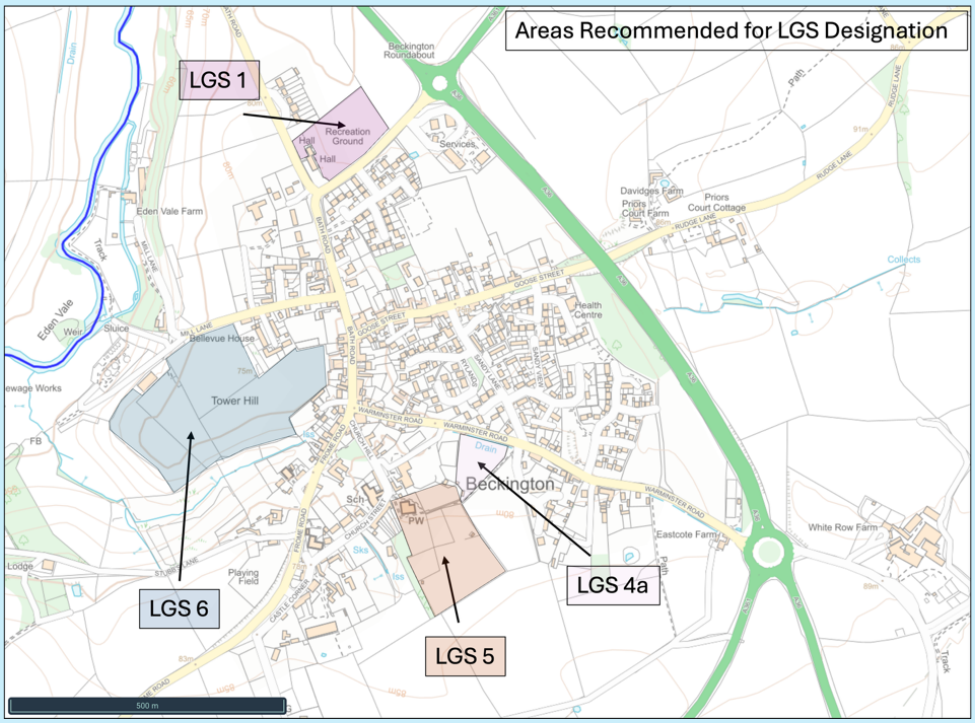


Figure 10: Designated Local Green Spaces

LGS 1.2 Development within these Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances. This may include essential utility infrastructure where no feasible alternative location is available and any adverse impacts can be minimised, or small-scale works that are consistent with the open character and purpose of the Local Green Space and which enhance its value.

LGS 1.3 Development proposals on land adjacent to designated Local Green Space will be supported only where they protect the setting and community value of the space.

5.4.1 Policy HC2 (Local Green Space) of the NPPF (August 2026) establishes that Local Green Space designation affords protection which endures beyond the end of the plan period.

5.4.2 The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces (LGS) of particular importance to the community.

5.4.3 Policy HC2 (Local Green Spaces of the NPPF (August 2026, page 75) sets out the "*Local Green Space should be limited to situations where the land concerned is:*

a. In 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 not an extensive tract of land*."

5.4.4 **Intent**:

a. The designation of these Green Spaces will help to safeguard their openness, historic and landscape value and value to wildlife and nature recovery over the lifetime of the Plan and beyond. Development within them will only be permitted in very special circumstances. To avoid unnecessary barriers to positive management, the policy allows for small-scale works which enhance recreational use, biodiversity, heritage interpretation, or sustainable drainage, provided that these do not compromise the open character of the space. Essential utility infrastructure may also be supported where no reasonable alternative exists and where harm is minimised.

b. In addition, development proposals affecting land adjacent to designated Local Green Spaces will be expected to respect their character and setting. This ensures that the contribution of these spaces to village identity, local views, and the setting of heritage assets is not undermined by inappropriate neighbouring development.

5.4.5 **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **Beckington Local Green Space Assessment Report (2025)**

(1) The Beckington Local Green Space Assessment Report (2025) reviewed the eight candidate sites nominated by residents in the 2024 Residents' Survey against the NPPF criteria, drawing on survey responses, public consultation feedback and independent professional assessment. Four sites were found to meet the relevant criteria and are therefore designated as Local Green Spaces in this Plan:

- **LGS 1 Recreation Field:** The Parish's principal recreation ground, with strong community, recreational and historic significance.

- **LGS 4a Glebe Field** (part of Sue's Walk Fields): An important historic and landscape space forming part of the setting of the village and conservation area.
- **LGS 5 Fields adjacent to St George's Church:** Valued for their proximity to the village, open character, and contribution to the setting of the Grade II* listed St George's Church.

- **LGS 6 Fields south of Mill Lane/Beckington Loop:** Well-used public footpaths (including the Macmillan Way) and the Beckington Loop permissive path to the south, west and north offer panoramic views in a tranquil setting and provide high community value.

(2) The boundaries of the four designated Local Green Spaces shown at Figure 10 are precisely defined for clarity and to ensure that protection is applied only to areas which are demonstrably special to the community and capable of enduring beyond the Plan period.

(3) Community consultation and independent assessment has demonstrated that each of the designated Local Green Spaces complies with Policy HC2 of the NPPF.

(4) Designation will provide enduring protection to these areas in recognition of their importance to the identity and well-being of Beckington Neighbourhood Area and its residents.

b. **Consultation with the Local Community**

Community consultation consistently placed the protection of green spaces among the top priorities for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. In the 2024 parish survey, 62.3% of respondents identified protection and improvement of green spaces and recreational areas as their highest priority. At subsequent consultation events in 2025, residents strongly endorsed the proposed four LGS designations.

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey Results, 2024
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Space Assessment Report, Open Plan, July 2025

5.5. Policy PV – Protected Views

Policy PV - Protected Views

PV.1 Developments should be located and designed to take account of the identified Protected Views, preserving, conserving and, where practicable, enhancing such views and/or providing greater accessibility to them.

PV.2 Development proposals that would interrupt, obscure or otherwise detract significantly from views identified on the map at Figure 11 (and described in the accompanying schedule) will not be supported.



Figure 11: Designated Protected Views

Protected View 1: Views of St George's Church across adjacent fields, from Footpath
Protected View 2: View out to River Frome valley and hills beyond from Frome Road
Protected View 3: Views of River Frome valley and western edges of village across fields, from footpath.
Protected View 4: Views of River Frome valley and western edge of Beckington village, across sloping fields, from public footpath leading from Stubb's Lane and the Beckington Loop permissive path (south)
Protected View 5: Views of western edge of Beckington village, across sloping fields, from the Beckington Loop (north) and public footpath connecting with Mill Lane
Protected View 6: Views of River Frome valley and beyond

PV.3 Any development that has the potential to impact on those views will be expected to respond positively to them and to respect them in terms of location, siting, scale, form and massing.

PV.4 The sites shown at Figure 11 are designated as Protected Views and considered to be 'Heritage Assets' as defined in the glossary to the in National Planning Policy Framework.

5.5.1 Protection of particular open views over the countryside and broad views approaching a settlement from the countryside, plays an essential part in maintaining the distinctive character of that settlement, contributing to the well-being and social cohesion of those who share the place.

5.5.2 As part of the production of neighbourhood development plans, communities can protect and enhance important views by identifying them, assessing their importance and the characteristics that make them so relevant, and listing such views as part of statutory policies.

5.5.3 **Intent**: Policy PV - Protected Views seeks to protect six views that contribute significantly to the character, rural setting and maintaining the well-being and social cohesion and feel of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

5.5.4 **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The NPPF (August 2026) provides a framework for neighbourhood plans to include protected views policies, provided they are locally justified, do not duplicate national or local plan policies and do not conflict with higher-level plans or national policy. Key NPPF polices which support the inclusion of protected views include:

(a) Policy PM5 (Neighbourhood plans): Neighbourhood plans can establish policies addressing particular local issues, including design requirements and conservation of local heritage assets.

(b) Policy PM6 (General principles for plan-making): Plans should only include policies that are necessary and relevant and avoid unnecessary duplication.

(c) Policy PM8 (Evidence for plan-making): Plans should be underpinned by proportionate, up-to-date evidence.

(d) Policy DP1 (A strategy for design): Development plans should set out clear design expectations, informed by an evaluation of the area's existing characteristics and potential.

(e) Policy DP2 (Local design guides, design codes and masterplans): Design codes and guides can specify the protection of key views, skylines, or sightlines as part of local design standards.

(f) Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places): Proposals should respond to their context, including the history, character, and features of their site and setting.

(g) Policy N1 (Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards): Plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, including landscape value.

(h) Policy N2 (Improving the natural environment): Development proposals should consider landscape character and identify opportunities for conservation or enhancement, supporting the protection of valued views.

(i) Policy HE1 (Planning for the historic environment): Plans should identify heritage assets and consider their setting, which often includes important views.

(2) A landscape may be considered a heritage asset where it has been identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Annex B of the National Planning Policy Framework includes a landscape within its definition of a heritage asset. A landscape may also contribute to the setting and significance of an existing heritage asset, whether or not the landscape is identified as a heritage asset in its own right.

b. **Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition), 2017**

(1) Guidance from Historic England recognises the significance of a heritage asset is often closely linked to its setting, and views are a key component of that setting.

(2) Views can be static or dynamic, long or short, and may include views of, from, across, or including the asset. The importance of views lies in their ability to contribute to the significance of the asset and to allow that significance to be appreciated. This is not just about visual aesthetics, but also about historical, cultural, and associative values.

(3) Views are often fundamental to understanding the significance of a heritage asset, especially where the composition of the view was part of the asset's original design or function (e.g. within the landscape).

(4) Views can also have historical or cultural associations.

c. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**

(1) Mendip Local Plan Policy DP4: Mendip's Landscapes, reads as follows,

"*Mendip district is defined by its landscapes. Proposals for development that would, individually or cumulatively, significantly degrade the quality of the local landscape will not be supported. Any decision-making will take into account efforts made by applicants to avoid, minimise and/or mitigate negative impacts and the need for the proposal to take place in that location.*"

(2) The Plan states:

"the following criteria will be applied in relation to particular landscape designations present in the district:...

3. Outside of designated landscape areas, proposals should demonstrate that their siting and design are compatible with the pattern of natural and man-made features of the Landscape Character Areas, including cultural and historical associations, as detailed in the "Landscape Assessment of Mendip District..."

d. **Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Protected Views Assessment (2025**)

(1) The village of Beckington is intimately connected with its green, countryside setting, contributing greatly, today, to Beckington's distinctive identity and to the quality of life available to those who live here. Historically, though, the physical relationship between hilltop, slopes and river valley, so clearly visible on the west has been fundamental to Beckington's evolution. It is a functional relationship, still readable in the landscape.

(2) Any development that would obscure or dilute the visual relationship between the old village Conservation Area and the landscape within which it is set would be likely to conflict with the legal requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of that area.

(3) There is an extensive network of public rights of way in and around Beckington Parish and the long-distance, coast-to-coast footpath, the Macmillan Way passes through the Parish. Mostly, the views assessed as deserving protection are closely associated with the Public Rights of Way which make it possible for them to be appreciated by walkers, horse riders and cyclists. The extensive network of public rights of way shows the value of the landscape surrounding the villages as a recreational resource.

(4) Views and viewpoints identified as requiring protection from development that would diminish their value have been marked at Figure 11 (above).

(5) Some of these views (1, 2 and 6) are from quite restricted viewpoints. In these cases, even relatively small changes in the immediate vicinity of the viewpoint could impact significantly on the valued view.

(6) The other views (3, 4 and 5) are available either intermittently or continuously along paths, so the viewpoints marked are more illustrative of those available to people travelling these paths.

(7) Whilst obstruction of a particular point from which there is a view of the countryside/village edge might, individually, be less sensitive, changes that would be more extensively obstructive or would harmfully affect the scene being viewed may be expected to diminish its historic and cultural significance and landscape value.

e. **Consultation with the Local Community**

(1) The 2024 Neighbourhood Plan Residents' Survey included the question "*What three things do you value most about living in the Parish*?" 239 respondents answered this question, with the highest quantitative tick list responses being rural setting (41.8%) and access to open countryside (40.2%). Of 31 open ended comments received, 45% mentioned views with representative comments as follows:

- *"MOST value? The views of fields with livestock. Views are the thing I most value. Far more than the things in this list. Seeing and enjoying the views is far more valuable than 'access to the countryside'."*

- *"I value most the spectacular views of the open countryside that we are so lucky to have in the Parish. So views above all the above"*

- *"Views across the beautiful countryside and walks" "Views of countryside"*

- *"Most value landscape views of green fields. The beautiful conservation area" "Verdant views. conservation area"*

- *"Agricultural views. The conservation area"*

(2) This was reinforced by responses to the last question in the survey that asked people to provide any comments that 'you feel are relevant and important for this survey'. Representative comments included:

- *"Please, please protect the main views that contribute so much to daily life in the village of Beckington. This is not a NIMBY appeal but rather a call for balanced development. Any new housing can be on non-view land - land that does not contribute to the health and well-being of the community. Take the views away and the sheep and lambs on them and it will be much harder to persuade kids to come out on walks and to tempt the elderly to go outside and walk as part of their mental and physical well-being. I contest that these views make Beckington the place it is. Both historically and in the present day. We need to protect them".*

- *"The most important thing that makes Beckington stand out and makes it a beautiful place to live are the panoramic views of open fields and countryside visible. These lift spirits and even when busy going about your life these views they are what you see all the time. It is the views that visitors mention every time. I really fear that if housing is built to the west of the village that the character of the village will be list forever. Even those who can't afford a large garden or a house with a view themselves, they just need to walk out their front door to see the amazing views of open fields, sheep and nature"*

(3) On March 14th 2024 an open community consultation was held at Beckington Memorial Hall. In response to an unprompted question to write down on a postcard what makes the parish unique and should be protected, 39% of respondents wrote views. Representative comments include:

- *"Beautiful field and livestock views from the conservation area and footpaths"*
- *"Amazing views of rural countryside near and from the conservation area"*

- *"Rural, countryside, agricultural views out of and into the conservation area"*

(4) On 15 May 2025, an open community consultation was held at Beckington Memorial Hall. The recommendations from the assessments of potential Protected Views and Local Green Spaces were displayed and explained, and comments were invited – both verbally and in writing. 19 feedback forms were completed, from which some representative comments have been quoted below:

- *"Key to the Neighbourhood Development Plan is to protect the rural character and green field setting of the Conservation Area. This is fundamental to the unique sense of place. It is these views that are the most important: into and out of the Conservation Area and its setting."*

- *"Please protect the amazing views and green spaces that make living here so special and worthwhile. Please protect the conservation area and its green, agricultural setting. As the consultant said this is the link to the reason the village is here."*

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Protected View Assessment (2025)
- Beckington Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey Results, 2024
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement
- Historic England, Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic England Advice Note 11, second edition, published 5 April 2022

5.6. BPL – Beckington Protected Landscape

Policy BPL – Beckington Protected Landscape

BPL1. The area shown in blue at Figure 12 is designated as the Beckington Protected Landscape Zone, as defined in the Beckington Landscape Value Statement.

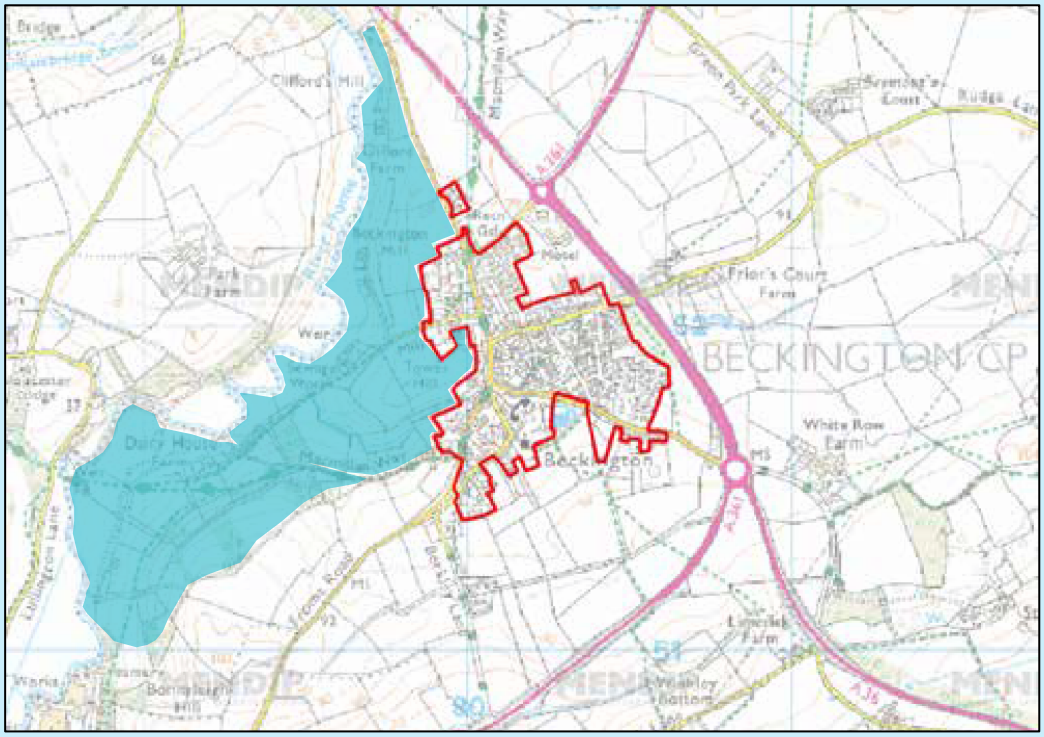


Figure 12: Area designated as Beckington Protected Landscape
Source: Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Value Statement, Chapter 6

BPL2. Development proposals within the Beckington Protected Landscape Zone must demonstrate how they protect and enhance the landscape's special physical attributes and identified qualities as set out in the Beckington Landscape Value Statement. They will not be supported if they adversely affect the Landscape Zone.

BPL3. Proposals must align with the findings of the Beckington Landscape Value Statement and provide evidence via a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of how they will preserve and enhance the zone's beauty, tranquillity, ecological value, and cultural significance.

5.6.1. In the Mendip area, only 22% of the landscape is protected by policy and the area around Beckington has no specific designation.

5.6.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, August 2026) recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as a core part of sustainable development and Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the need to manage development in protected landscapes including to ensure that areas of environmental value are not negatively impacted.

5.6.3. The area proposed as the Beckington Protected Landscape Zone includes and is adjacent to an area set out in the Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy which could become of particular importance to biodiversity. It includes land which slopes down to the River Frome, which has freshwater, low wetland, grassland and woodland habitats. It is therefore an area of potential significance to nature recovery and nature-based solution to mitigation of climate change

5.6.4. Beckington village is notable for the number of listed buildings within a small area and the presence of a Conservation Area. These heritage assets are sensitive receptors which extend their importance to their setting. As a result, there is more sensitivity to changes in views, topography, tranquillity and cultural associations to the south and west of the village where the development boundary and the Conservation Area boundary are closest to open countryside.

5.6.5. The local community recognise the significant value of the landscape setting of Beckington village and wish to both safeguard against the threat of inappropriate development on settlement edges and in the countryside and provide opportunities for nature-based recovery as a means of supporting and enhancing habitats and biodiversity and to support mitigation to climate change.

5.6.6. **Intent:** Policy BPL – Beckington Protected Landscape seeks to manage change and identify landscape policy opportunities so that the special character of Beckington village and its environs and natural environment is identified, conserved and enhanced for the future.

5.6.7. **Justification**: The term 'valued landscape' as tested through appeal shows demonstrable physical attributes, rather than just popularity, which take it out of the category of 'ordinary countryside'. In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, August 2026) recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as a core part of sustainable development (polices S1, S2, and N2). The aim is to guide development towards sustainable solutions while taking local circumstances into account, reflecting the character, needs, and opportunities of each area.

(2) The landscape area proposed for protection lies outside of the Beckington settlement boundary to the West. NPPF Policy S5 states that "*only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements*" provided the benefits of doing so substantially outweigh any adverse effects.

(3) Policy CC1 (Planning for climate change): Development plans should identify opportunities for green infrastructure provision and nature-based solutions that support nature recovery and resilience and should take account of Local Nature Recovery Strategies in accordance with Policy N1.

(4) Policy N1 (Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards): Development plans are required to use Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), along with other evidence, to:

- Set out the hierarchy of designated sites and areas of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity.

- Identify opportunities for conservation, enhancement, and recovery of landscapes, habitats, and species, including habitat restoration and ecological networks.

- Steer the location of development to land of least environmental value and set standards for green infrastructure provision.

(5) Policy N2 (Improving the natural environment): Development proposals should consider landscape character and identify opportunities for conservation or enhancement, supporting the protection of valued views.

(6) Policy DP1 (A strategy for design): Development plans should set out clear design expectations, informed by an evaluation of the area's existing characteristics and potential.

(7) Policy DP2 (Local design guides, design codes and masterplans): Design codes and guides can specify the protection of key views, skylines, or sightlines as part of local design standards.

(8) Policy DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places): Proposals should respond to their context, including the history, character, and features of their site and setting.

b. **Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Section 98)**

(1) The Regulations which brought into force the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Section 98) (effective 26 March 2026) establish two new rules amending parts of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The new legal compliance requirements set out in Section 98 specify details of the policies a neighbourhood development plan may include, as follows:

(a) So far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, the plan must: be designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change, and

(b) be designed to take account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.

c. **Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

(1) Local Nature Recovery Strategies are spatial strategies required by law (Environment Act 2021). The Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) provides a plan to reverse the decline of wildlife, restore natural habitats, and connect important green spaces.

(2) The Somerset LNRS identifies priorities and opportunities for conserving, enhancing, and restoring nature, and to inform local planning decisions and development plans. Its main aims are:

(a) Protecting and Restoring Biodiversity: safeguarding existing habitats and species and reversing declines in biodiversity across Somerset.

(b) Enhancing and Connecting Habitats: improving the quality, extent, and connectivity of natural habitats to create resilient ecological networks.

(c) Supporting Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Change: using natural processes and restored habitats to help mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, such as flooding and drought.

(d) Improving Water and Soil Quality: reducing pollution and enhancing the health of Somerset's rivers, streams, and soils.

(e) Engaging Communities and Landowners: involving local people, landowners, and stakeholders in nature recovery efforts, fostering stewardship and collaborative action.

(f) Delivering Multiple Benefits for People and Nature: ensuring that nature recovery delivers wider benefits, including improved health, wellbeing, recreation, and resilience for local communities.

(3) The Somerset LNRS Local Habitat Map indicates that the River Frome is within an area of importance to biodiversity and that there is a need to "*create, restore and manage habitat features to increase biodiversity and connectivity in waterways*." The proposed area of landscape for which protection is sought is located adjacent to an area that could become of particular importance to biodiversity including freshwater, low wetland, grassland and woodland habitats. The Local Habitat Map also includes areas of woodland within the proposed area for protection.

d. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**.

In relation to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, the following policies are of relevance:

(1) Spatial Strategy, CP1 and CP2; The strategy and polices set out the hierarchical spatial strategy. The strategy directs growth towards the principal settlements and then secondly towards the Primary Villages. Beckington is designated as a Primary Village where new development should be tailored to meet local needs. The site allocation process states: '*Landscape, biodiversity and heritage impacts must be key considerations in the selection of sites for development*'. The area of landscape proposed for protection is outside the settlement boundary and is located within the countryside where development should be strictly controlled.

(2) DP1: Local Identity and Distinctiveness: All development proposals should contribute positively to the maintenance and enhancement of local identity and distinctiveness across the district. *'Proposals should be formulated with an appreciation of the built and natural context of their locality recognising that distinctive street scenes, townscapes, views, scenery, boundary walls or hedges, trees, rights of way and other features collectively generate a distinct sense of place and local identity. Such features may not always be designated or otherwise formally recognised.'*

(3) DP2: Open Areas of Local Significance: Policy 6.14 and 6.15 identifies that there are open spaces which make a significant contribution to the quality of the built environment. *'These spaces may provide views out of an otherwise built up street scene, allow views of significant local features or buildings beyond them, enhance the setting of the settlement, create a sense of space or otherwise contribute to the locally distinctive character of an area'*.

(4) DP4: Mendip's Landscapes: Outside of designated landscape areas, proposals should demonstrate that their siting and design are compatible with the pattern of natural and man- made features of the Landscape Character Areas, including cultural and historical associations, as detailed in the "Landscape Assessment of Mendip District."

(5) DP5: Biodiversity and Ecological Networks: All development proposals must ensure the protection, conservation and, where possible, enhancement of internationally, nationally or locally designated natural habitat areas and species.

(6) DP6: Bat Protection: Planning Applications for development on sites within the Bat Consultation Zone will require a 'test of significance' under the Habitats Regulations to be carried out.

(7) DP8: Environmental Protection: Development (either cumulatively or individually) will be required to demonstrate that it does not give rise to unacceptable adverse environmental impacts on ambient noise levels; air quality; the quality of water resources, whether surface river or groundwater; biodiversity; light pollution; land quality and ground stability; residential amenity; and public health and safety.

(8) DP23: Managing Flood Risk: Development will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to the development of sites with the lowest risk of flooding. The development of sites with a sequentially greater risk of flooding will only be considered where essential for regeneration or where necessary to meet specific local requirements.

e. **Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment 2020**

The Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020 shows that the parish of Beckington lies within Mendip Character Areas B1.3 (The Selwood, Berkley and Rudge Ridges) and B3 (Lower Frome Valley Spring Gardens, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford). Figure 13 shows the Mendip Character Areas B1.3, B3:

(1) LCA B1.3 - The Selwood, Berkley and Rudge Ridges: The area is predominantly farmed as pasture grazing with occasional areas of arable forage production. An area of historic character landscape exists at the northern end of the area in the form of Standerwick Court with the large main house overlooking parkland.

(2) LCA B3 - Lower Frome Valley Spring Gardens, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford: Beckington village is 'set down' in a sheltered location. Beyond the village development boundary, the surrounding rural landscape has fewer designations recognising, defining or protecting landscape character and the setting of the village.

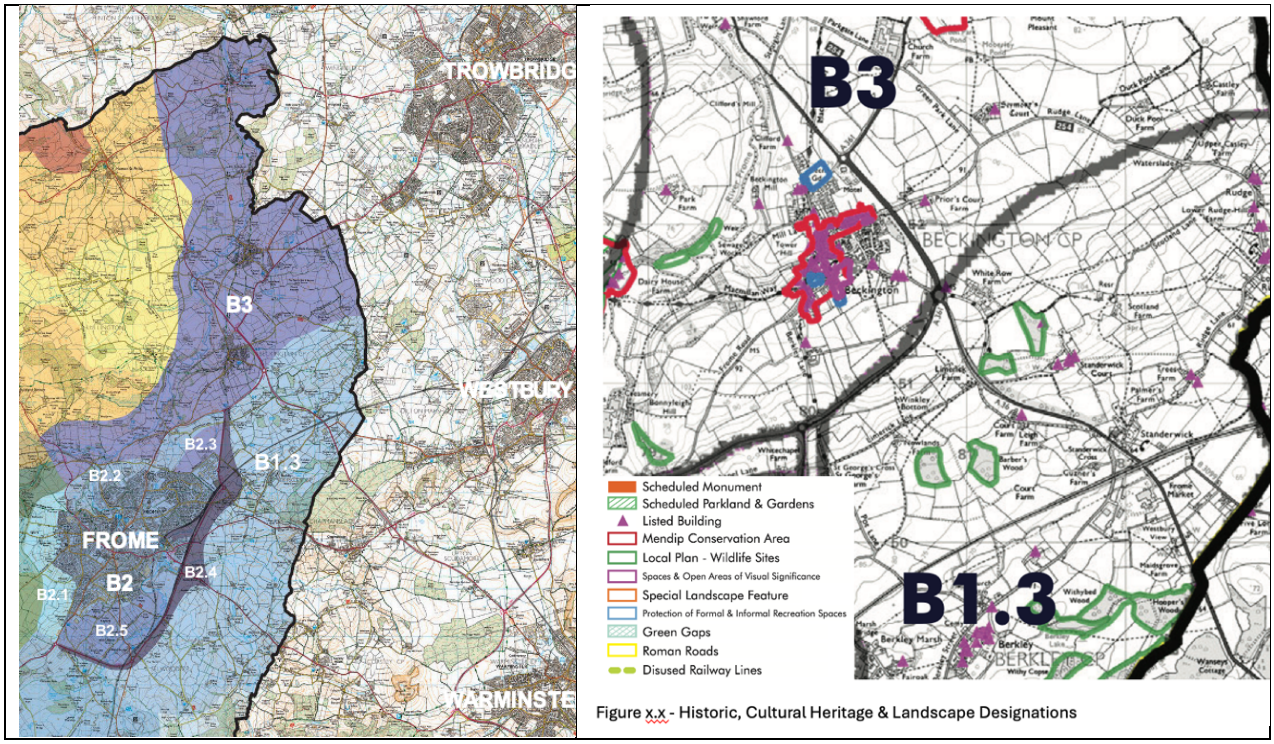


Figure 13: Mendip Character Areas B1.3, B3
Source: Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020 - Section 6.3

d. **Beckington Landscape Value Statement 2025**

(1) A Landscape Value Statement, commissioned by Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in 2025, considered five areas that surround the village and whether any or all might meet the definition of 'valued landscape'. The focus was on the landscape surrounding the village development perimeter and finding the outward point at which the landscape character no longer seemed to have visual, physical or a character connection with the village.

(2) The Statement noted that the landscape is more distinctive to the south, west and north, and less to the east of Beckington where the bypass has severed easy visual and physical connections. Accordingly, there is a pronounced difference between the village's east environs which are close to the noise and pollution of the busy road network and the peace and tranquillity of the river valley to the west.

(3) The Statement assesses the landscape to the west of Beckington shown in Figure 12. It concludes that, although the area is typical of its wider landscape character, the combination and completeness of its landscape features and cultural associations give it particular value. The features identified include panoramic views across the rolling hills and river valley, historic grazing slopes and flood meadows, the river and mills, and the contribution of the landscape to the setting of listed buildings. The statement also identifies a sense of tranquillity valued by parishioners and considers that the area has a distinctive cultural identity.

(4) The Statement was prepared with reference to the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework, which referred to "valued landscapes". The 2026 Framework takes a different approach, but continues to recognise landscape value, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside. The Landscape Value Statement therefore remains part of the evidence informing the Plan, subject to consideration alongside current national policy.

(5) The Statement also suggests that the landscape could be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. This would require its heritage interest and significance to be identified and assessed. Separately, the landscape may contribute to the setting and significance of existing heritage assets, including listed buildings, whether or not the landscape is identified as a heritage asset in its own right.

e. **Consultation with the Local Community**.

Consultation with residents in 2024 and 2025 identified the following themes:

(1) Rural Setting: across all character areas, the green fields and rural surroundings are consistently highlighted as the most valued elements, contributing to the village's identity and sense of place.

(2) Views and Green Spaces: fields adjacent to the built-up areas are seen as integral to the character and significance of the Conservation Area.

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020
- Beckington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Launch Consultation
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment, 2025
- Beckington Landscape Value Statement, Georgina Harvey, August 2025.
- Assessment of Sewage Pollution in the River Frome, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford, Final Report, June 2025
- Beckington Design Guidance and Codes, Final Report, July 2024
- Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy,

5.7 Policy HM – Housing Mix

Policy HM - Housing Mix

HM1. To be supported, proposals for 3 or more homes must provide a mix of dwellings that meets local needs identified in the latest Beckington Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). Proposals should deliver a balance of different housing unit types and sizes which help to bring Beckington's housing mix closer to the suggested 'ideal' mix as set out in the most recent HNA.

HM2. Priority should be placed on delivery of 1-3 bedroom homes suitable for meeting the evidenced needs of both newly forming households on lower budgets, as well as older households looking to downsize. Proposals for homes of 4 or more bedrooms will not be supported unless it is demonstrated they are necessary to meet identified local housing need.

HM3. To be supported all proposals must meet affordable housing needs in accordance with existing Somerset Council Policy.

HM4. For the purposes of allocating affordable homes, housing shall be occupied in accordance with the Somerset Council's standard allocation procedures with priority given to applicants who can demonstrate that they have a local connection to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

5.7.1 Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Beckington grew by 19.2%. In both years the greatest proportion of the population was aged 45-64 (31.9% to 30.5%). The proportion of people aged 44 and under decreased over the decade, with the proportion of the population aged 65-84 increasing significantly from 20.0% to 26.3%. The number of people aged 85+ remained the same over the decade.

5.7.2 At the time of the 2021 Census Beckington had a greater proportion of the population aged 45-84 than Somerset and England, indicating an older population. However, Beckington Neighbourhood Area had the smallest proportion of households aged 85+. Beckington had a slightly greater proportion of children than Somerset, but still a smaller proportion than the country as a whole.

5.7.3 Beckington Neighbourhood Area had the greatest proportion of family households, with Beckington having the greatest proportion of families aged 66 and over, at 15.0% compared to 9.2% nationally. The proportion of households with no children was greater in Beckington than the comparator geographies. The Beckington Neighbourhood Area had a greater proportion of households with dependent children (24.8%) than Somerset (22.9%), but a smaller proportion than nationally (25.8%).

5.7.4 **Intent**: Policy HM - Housing Proposals should deliver a balance of different housing types and sizes to meet the identified local housing need.

5.7.5 **Justification:** In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **Beckington Housing Needs Assessment 2024**

(1) AECOM modelling suggests a mix of dwelling sizes that should be delivered in Beckington over the plan period. It suggests that 21.9% of future delivery should be for 1-bedroom dwellings, 24.6% 2-bedroom dwellings, and 53.5% 3-bedroom dwellings. However, it is not necessarily appropriate to completely prohibit the delivery of larger dwellings in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

(2) AECOM notes that other factors should be considered in determining the dwelling mix that is desirable in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area or on any particular site. These include the specific characteristics of the nearby stock of housing (such as its condition and design), the role of the Neighbourhood Area or site within the wider housing market area (linked to any Local Authority strategies or plans) and site-specific factors.

(3) AECOM considers that Beckington is, in broad terms, a suitable location for specialist accommodation based on its place in the settlement hierarchy. There is no specific requirement or obligation for specialist housing for older people to be delivered and a need arising from Beckington could also be met in other suitable locations near to but outside the Neighbourhood Area boundaries, such as Frome or Westbury.

(4) AECOM has estimated the likely need for care home accommodation over the plan period, based on the HLIN SHOP toolkit prevalence rates for residential and nursing care home for older people (aged 75+). Based on these rates, applied to the projected growth in the older population, it is estimated that in 2040 there would be a need for 7 residential care beds and 5 nursing care beds in Beckington to meet the needs of this increase in older population.

(5) AECOM estimates the potential demand for 1.9 affordable home ownership dwellings per annum in Beckington, equating to a total of 30.2 over the Neighbourhood Development Plan period.

b. **Consultation with the Local Community**

(1) A residents' survey was conducted in March and April 2024. Residents were asked a series of questions to help understand what about the parish was valuable to them and what sort of development they would like to see in the future. Surveys were delivered to every household within Beckington Parish with an option to complete the survey online. 243 responses were received, with 236 identifying their location: Beckington 223, Rudge 9 and Standerwick 4.

(2) The survey results indicate that the Parish appears to be split on the issue of further housing development, with just over a third of respondents supporting

more development versus just under half against. The views of the not sure could tip the balance either way.

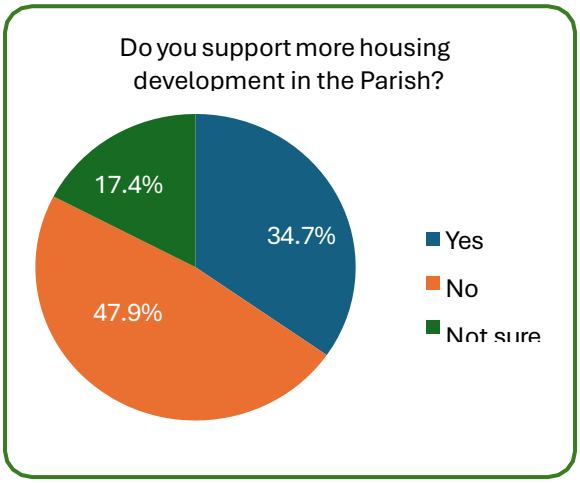


Figure 14: Community views about new housing development

(3) There was however, a general consensus over the type of housing preferred, in the event of more development, with a preference for individual plots and smaller developments.

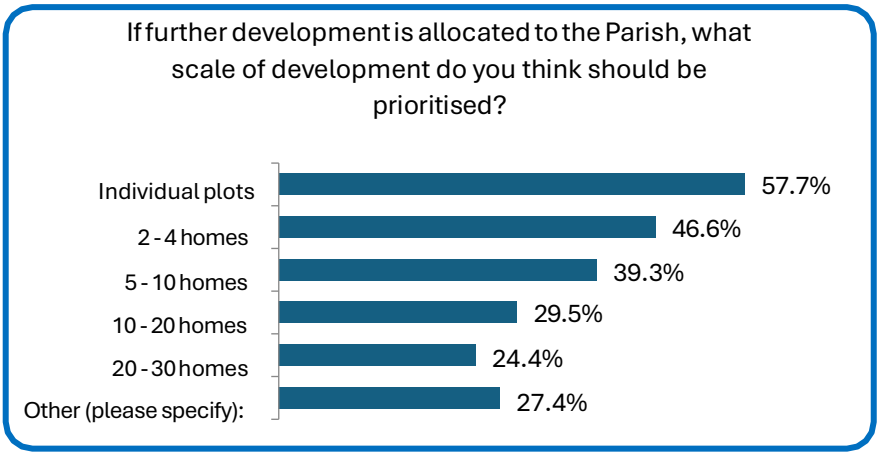


Figure 15: Community views on Scale of Housing Development

(4) When specifically asked about housing shortages, the most pressing types, in order of priority, were:

- First homes (90%)
- Affordable rent (56%)
- Private to buy (49%)
- Self-build (48%)
- Private to rent (40%)
- Retirement (38%)

(5) Two and three-bedroom homes were favoured over those with one or four or more bedrooms. More than a quarter of respondents knew of young families or young people raised in the community (who have either moved away or still live at home) or downsizers who are seeking housing in the Parish.

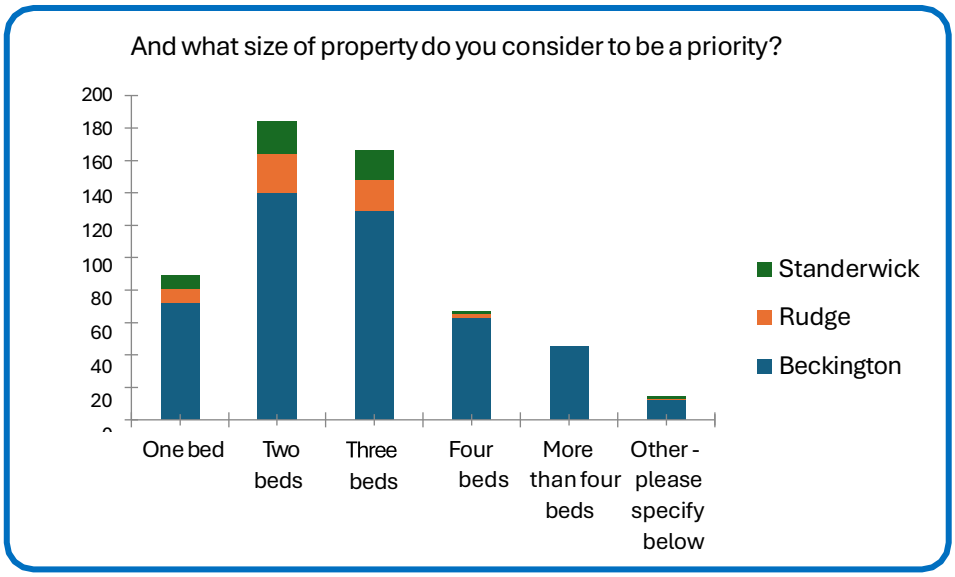


Figure 16: Community views about Size of Properties

Key Evidence Sources

- Beckington Housing Background Paper
- Beckington Housing Needs Analysis, 2024 (AECOM)
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Residents' Survey 2024

5.8 Policy HD – Housing Design

Policy HD - Housing Design

HD1. All proposals for new development and alterations that require planning permission must demonstrate due regard to the objectives, guidance and codes set out in the Beckington Parish Design Guidance and Codes Report dated August 2024.

5.8.1 Given the special character of the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, its Conservation Area and its many listed buildings it is important that any new development does not have an adverse negative impact.

5.8.2 The proportion of dwellings in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area built prior to 1900 was 34.03%. This is around double the proportion in England (15.06%) and in Somerset (18.43%).

5.8.3 Given the age and historic nature of much of the housing in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area it is not surprising that some housing is in poor condition; older (often listed) buildings are more expensive and challenging to maintain. The proportion of households in fuel poverty in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, has also increased, from 10.3% in 2011 to 12.67% in 2023. This latest figure is higher than in Somerset (10.49%) and England (11.4%). With many properties in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area having a higher overall insulation need compared to properties in Somerset and England it is not surprising to find that 3.37% of Energy Performance Certificate lodgements were rated F-G in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area (the lowest energy efficiency) compared to 4.97% in Somerset and 2.55% in England.

5.8.4 **Intent**: Policy HD – Housing Design seeks to ensure that the design of any new development that is proposed is in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area, reflects the character of the area, is of high-quality design and does not negatively impact on the Beckington Neighbourhood Area. The policy also seeks to ensure that the design of new development provides for environmental sustainability.

5.8.5 **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The National Planning Policy Framework 2026 provides a robust framework for neighbourhood-level design codes to be developed, adopted, and enforced, ensuring that achieving well-designed places is a shared goal between local communities and planning authorities.

(2) Chapter 14 'Achieving well-designed places', Policies DP1–DP4 sets out key principles for well-designed places, such as responding to local context, supporting healthy and inclusive communities, and promoting sustainability.

(3) Policy PM5 (Neighbourhood plans): allows local communities to set policies and allocate land to meet local development needs, including setting design requirements and codes.

(4) Policy DP1 (A strategy for design): requires development plans (including neighbourhood plans) to set out clear design expectations and identify where design codes are necessary.

(5) Policy DP2 (Local design guides, design codes and placemaking): recognises that at the neighbourhood level local character must be reflect, be informed by community engagement, and be proportionate to the scale of change. Design guidance and design codes must therefore be locally relevant and supported by residents.

b. **National Model Design Codes 2021**

The National Model Design Code 2021 provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

c. **National Design Guide 2021**

The National Design Guide 2021 illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

d. **Building for a Healthy Life**

(1) Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

(2) BHL is supported by Streets for a Healthy Life, which demonstrates what can be achieved in creating streets as places for people.

e. **Manual for Streets 2007**

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets 2007 and subsequent updates, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

f. **Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029**

(1) The Mendip District Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029 puts in place a selection of policies to manage development in a manner appropriate to this district which generic national policy would not adequately cover.

(2) The Local Plan actively encourages community groups to undertake characterisation exercises (such as Village Design Statements, Design Guides and Context Studies) to define and improve awareness of local character and identity.

g. **Beckington Design Guidance and Codes 2024**

(1) The Beckington Design Guidance and Codes 2024 sets out four design objectives that aim to enhance the village's character and sustainability.

- Objective O1: Contribute to the rural village character and lifestyle.
- Objective O2: Protect and enhance the landscape setting.
- Objective O3: Integrate development with historical architecture.
- Objective O4: Promote sustainable design practices.

(2) The design guidance and codes are organised by themes relevant to development.

- Codes include Rural Village (RV), Landscape Design (LD), Local Architecture (LA), and Sustainable Design (SU).
- Each code provides specific guidance for maintaining local character and quality in new developments.
- Design proposals should be evaluated against the Codes and the Checklist included in Section 5 of the Report.

h. **Beckington Parish Character Assessment**

(1) The Beckington Parish Character Assessment provides detail on the special and different features and specific character of each of seven distinct built up areas within Beckington village.

(2) The Beckington Parish Character Assessment further recognises the importance of heritage to the current built environment.

Code	Prefix	When to use the code
Rural Village (RV)	RV.1	**Village streets.** Code to be applied to development that proposes new streets in the Neighbourhood Area.
	RV.2	**Plot and building layout.** Code to be applied to development that proposes new plots, new buildings or extensions in the Neighbourhood Area.
	RV.3	**Respect views and vistas.** Code to be applied to development within the Neighbourhood Area to ensure that important views and vistas are preserved.
	RV.4	**Parking.** Code to be applied to any development that requires car parking in the Neighbourhood Area.
Landscape Design (LD)	LD.1	**Landscaping.** Code to be applied to development in the Neighbourhood Area to ensure locally distinctive and wildlife friendly landscape design.
	LD.2	**Boundary treatments.** Code to be applied to development in the Neighbourhood Area to ensure locally distinctive boundary treatments.
Local Architecture (LA)	LA.1	**Building height, scale and roofscape.** Code to be applied when determining the height and roofscape of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.2	**Fenestration and architectural details.** Code to be applied when determining the fenestration and architectural details of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.3	**Architectural materials and colour palette.** Code to be applied when determining the architectural materials and colour palette of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	LA.4	**Building modifications, extensions, and plot infills.** Code to be applied when determining the building of infills, modifications and extensions in the Neighbourhood Area.
Sustainability (SU)	SU.1	**Building fabric thermal mass**. Code to be applied when determining the thermal mass of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.2	**Insulation.** Code to be applied when determining the insulation of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.3	**Airtightness.** Code to be applied to ensure airtightness of development in the Neighbourhood Area.
	SU.4	**Permeable pavement.** Code to be applied to ensure permeable pavement for development in the Neighbourhood Area.

Figure 17: Beckington Design Codes

i. **Consultation with the Local Community.** In the 2024 Residents' Survey, the most important design factors for any development, favoured by more than half of respondents, were compatibility with local character (84%), provision of adequate parking (76%), energy efficiency (68%), use of renewable or low carbon energy (58%) and provision of adequate storage areas (53%). The limitations of current infrastructure for any future development were also raised.

Key Evidence Sources

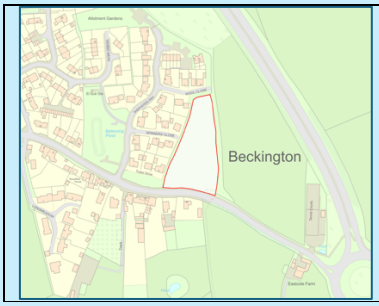
- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Beckington Design Guidance and Codes Report 2024 (AECOM)
- Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment, 2025

5.9 Policy HA – Housing Allocation

Policy HA - Housing Allocation

HA1. The following sites have been identified as potentially suitable for housing to meet the balance of the indicative requirement of 95 new homes between 2025 and 2045.

HA1.1 Land North of the Warminster Road (BNDP SA36).

	The site measures 0.62 hectares. Based on an indicative density of 25 dwellings per hectare for an edge of settlement site, this could provide up to 16 dwellings

HA1.2 Land between the Warminster Road and A36 (BNDP SA7).

	The total site area measures 3.88 hectares including an area of existing woodland to the North. However, for the purpose of calculating site density the developable area (excluding the woodland) has been calculated at 2.1 hectares as shown on the layout submitted. Based on an indicative density of 25 dwellings per hectare for an edge of settlement site, this could provide up to 53 dwellings Residential development at the site could be supported subject to suitable noise mitigation. A footpath link between the Shepherds Way car park and the doctor's surgery would be a potential benefit.

There should be a combined development plan, to include the phasing of development, for both sites, agreed through collaborative and consultative master planning with the Beckington Parish Council.

HA2. Windfall and speculative sites will be considered providing that they contribute to the housing requirement.

5.9.1. **Intent:** It is the intention of the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate these sites to meet the balance of the housing requirement over the period 2025-2045.

5.9.2. **Justification**: In justification of this policy the following is noted:

a. **National Planning Policy**

(1) The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) requires neighbourhood plans to allocate land for housing in line with the requirement set by the local plan or spatial strategy, and not to plan for less development than that figure. Local authorities must provide a housing requirement figure for each neighbourhood plan area, and neighbourhood plans are expected to meet or exceed this figure unless there are exceptional, justified reasons not to.

(2) Policy PM 5 (Neighbourhood plans) states:

"1. Neighbourhood plans allow local communities to plan positively for their areas by identifying and addressing community priorities that can be met or supported through the planning system. They should do this by:

a. Allocating land to meet the development needs of their designated area, where it is appropriate to do so; and

b. Setting out policies which address particular local issues. These should relate to site-specific matters or, where appropriate, may cover wider issues such as the provision of infrastructure and community facilities, regeneration opportunities, design requirements (including design codes), local environmental improvements and the conservation of local heritage assets.

2. The contents of a neighbourhood plan should not result in less development than specified in other parts of the development plan which cover the same area."

(3) Policy HO2 5 (Setting requirement figures for homes) states:

"In the case of local plans, a housing requirement figure should also be set for designated neighbourhood plan areas, unless it is impractical to do so (because a neighbourhood planning area has been designated at a late stage in the local plan preparation process, or after the plan has been adopted, or in instances where the local plan is out of date; in which case the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure instead). This requirement figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority. Local planning authorities should avoid setting housing requirement figures for neighbourhood planning areas at nil other than where:

a. The local plan already meets or exceeds the housing need figure for the neighbourhood planning area; or

b. The neighbourhood planning area has a clear and well evidenced need for no additional housing; or

c. The constraints within the neighbourhood planning area are so substantial as to preclude any additional housing of any kind from coming forward."

b. **Mendip Local Plan Part I and Part II 2006-2029**

(1) The Mendip Local Plan Part I 2006-2029 (LLP1) identifies Beckington as one of 16 Primary Villages offering key community facilities, the best transport services and some employment opportunities making then "*best placed to accommodate most new rural development".*

(2) At the start of the LPP1 planning period on 1 April 2006, the Mendip Planning Department recorded the number of Beckington village dwellings as 353. LPP1 set a minimum target of a 15% increase over the existing housing stock, equating to a minimum of 55 dwellings within the Planning period (2006-2029), which the Mendip District Council Strategic Planning Team deemed to be 'proportionate growth'.

(3) Over the course of the current Local Plan period (2006 to March 2025), Beckington village has seen 111 dwellings either completed or granted consent, double the intended increase. A further 28 dwellings outside of the Beckington village planning line have been completed or granted consent figures, including outlying farms, the hamlet of Rudge and part of Standerwick. In total, 139 new dwellings were either completed or granted planning permission in the Parish between 1 April 2006 and 1 March 2025.

(4) Following a Statutory Review, a revised Mendip Local Plan Part II 2006-2029 (LPP2) in December 2022 stated that:

- The village school is near capacity and not capable of expansion. However, roll numbers are predicted to fall in the medium term. Financial contributions for education may be required for transport to alternative schools depending on the timing of development.

- The Highways Agency have identified capacity issues on both A36 roundabouts which link to the village. Development proposals are subject to Policy DP27 - Highway Infrastructure Measures for Frome, Beckington and Rode'. Major proposals which require a traffic impact assessment will need to take this into account and may be subject to development contributions to support strategic highway infrastructure.

- A comprehensive drainage review was undertaken in 2020 in Beckington village to address long-standing issues relating to surface water, highway and sewer flooding in high rainfall in the village. This identifies a range of measures to reduce flood risk and provide capacity for surface water and sewage flows.

- Changes to the development limit have been made to reflect committed development. There are four significant sites which have

planning permission which have now been included within the development limits - south of Warminster Road, north of Warminster Road, off Bath Road and at Mill Lane.

- Beckington village continues to have an identified development limit. Over the lifetime of the plan, additional small-scale development (windfall sites) can potentially come forward within this boundary.

c. Somerset Emerging Local Plan 2025-2045.

(1) **Somerset Requirement**. In December 2024, the Government released an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with revised housing targets for local authorities to achieve the objective of building 1.5 million new homes in England over the course of the current Parliament. Somerset's target was increased by 41% from 2,669 to 3,769 new homes per year.

(2) **Beckington Parish Housing Requirement**. In February 2025, in response to a request from the Parish Council, the Somerset Council Planning Department stated that the Neighbourhood Plan should plan against an indicative target of 95 new dwellings over the period 2025-2040.

(3) **Completions**. The number of new dwellings completed is zero (0).

(4) **Commitments**. The number of new homes that have planning permission as 30 September 2026 (known as Commitments) is 61, derived from planning permissions as follows**:**

- 2025/0276/OUT for 35 dwellings. Somerset Council decision dated 1 June 2026.[3]

- 2024/1865/FUL for 20 dwellings. Appeal decision dated 18 September 2026.[4]

- 2026/0437/PAA for 6 dwellings. Appeal decision dated 21 September 2026.[5]

(5) When completions and commitments are deducted from the overall indicative housing requirement, the Net Residual Requirement (the remaining amount of housing that needs to be identified during the plan period after deducting completions and commitments) is 34 (95 minus 61).

(6) The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Development Plan, therefore this is the figure the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to allocate for up to 34 dwellings.

[3] https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/files/AD7F515FDC467DE694C5AE5DCF0409EE/pdf/2025_0276_OUT-DECISION_NOTICE-1496716.pdf
[4] https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/files/29661A2888F67443A478C68DE8C08EEC/pdf/2024_1865_FUL-APPEAL_DECISION_NOTICE-1517572.pdf
[5] https://publicaccess.mendip.gov.uk/online-applications/files/160A836E3B391D9EBF41F9DD87337201/pdf/2026_0437_PAA--1518189.pdf

d. Site Assessment

(1) Allocating sites is one of the most powerful, but also most controversial aspects of Neighbourhood Planning. It can be challenging but there are many benefits, including bringing forward sustainable development to meet local needs and providing new infrastructure and services for the benefit of the community.

(2) To avoid criticism and to ensure that site assessments were undertaken in a robust and transparent way, all sites were assessed using the same criteria based on national guidance and best practise. The Call for Sites (CfS) exercise and site assessments were conducted by the independent chartered Town Planning consultancy, Brodie Planning Associates (BPA).

(3) In identifying sites to review, BPA cast the net as wide as possible to ensure the most appropriate sites were allocated and to avoid the plan being challenged by landowners or developers who own or control sites they consider deliverable. This included:

- Writing to all known landowners with land adjacent to a settlement within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area to make them aware of the CfS as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The letter invited landowners to submit land to the CfS for consideration as to its suitability to meet future housing need.

- Publishing the CfS on social media, in the parish magazine and on notices erected in key locations.

- Writing to all landowners who submitted land into the Somerset (Mendip) Call for Sites as part of the Mendip Local Plan Part II – Sites & Policies process (2023) (latest published land availability information).

(4) The CfS resulted in 22 submissions:

- 17 sites for onward assessment as part of the CfS process.

- 5 landowners wrote to declare they did not wish to include their land in the process of identifying sites for future housing.

(5) The assessment of the 17 submitted sites was undertaken by BPA in three stages:

Stage 1: An initial assessment or 'sift' of the submitted sites using an agreed methodology: whether the site was sustainably located within or adjacent to the Primary Village of Beckington and promoted for housing. Sites removed from local services and facilities where sustainable transport modes would not be prioritised would fail to progress to the next stage of the assessment process.

Stage 2: Full detailed assessments.

Stage 3: Shortlist of sites for consideration at public consultation.

(6) The methodology used meant that each site was thoroughly and objectively assessed to consider if it was appropriate and suitable to allocate for housing development. This included considering:

- whether it was in the most sustainable location;
- the physical and policy context and environmental constraints to bringing the site forward;
- its impact on the local setting; and
- whether there was a suitable means of providing access.

(7) To ensure a consistent approach was taken and to maintain independence BPA completed each site assessment through desk-top study including photographs and information regarding views in and out of the site and topography. The desktop assessment was then subsequent informed by visiting each of the sites. This helped with consistency in the way the criteria were interpreted and sites were assessed. The desk and site-based assessments were completed in between October 2024 and January 2025.

(8) The sites were also checked for conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Authority's Plan and sites were only shortlisted where it was considered there was a good prospect that they could be developed in the Plan period. 17 sites were assessed using the methodology outlined above. 13 of the sites were subject to a full detailed assessment (Stage 2).

(9) Each site was assigned a category of suitability for development when considered against the assessment criteria. The results were presented by BPA to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on 24 January 2025. The site assessments were endorsed at a steering group meeting dated 10 February and published in full on the Neighbourhood Plan website on 11 February 2025. Of the 13 sites:

- 5 were assessed to be inappropriate,
- 2 were assessed to be inappropriate or have significant constraints,
- 2 were assessed to have significant constraints,
- 1 was assessed to have significant or minor constraints,
- 2 were assessed to have minor constraints, and
- 1 was assessed to have minor constraints or be unconstrained.

(10) The 13 sites are shown on the map at Figure 18. 5 sites were identified as having potential for future housing (Options A to E). However, development of 2 of the 5 sites (Options B and E) is considered to be constrained by road noise from the A36, and the landscape impact from mitigation measures may affect the quantum of housing in the developable area.

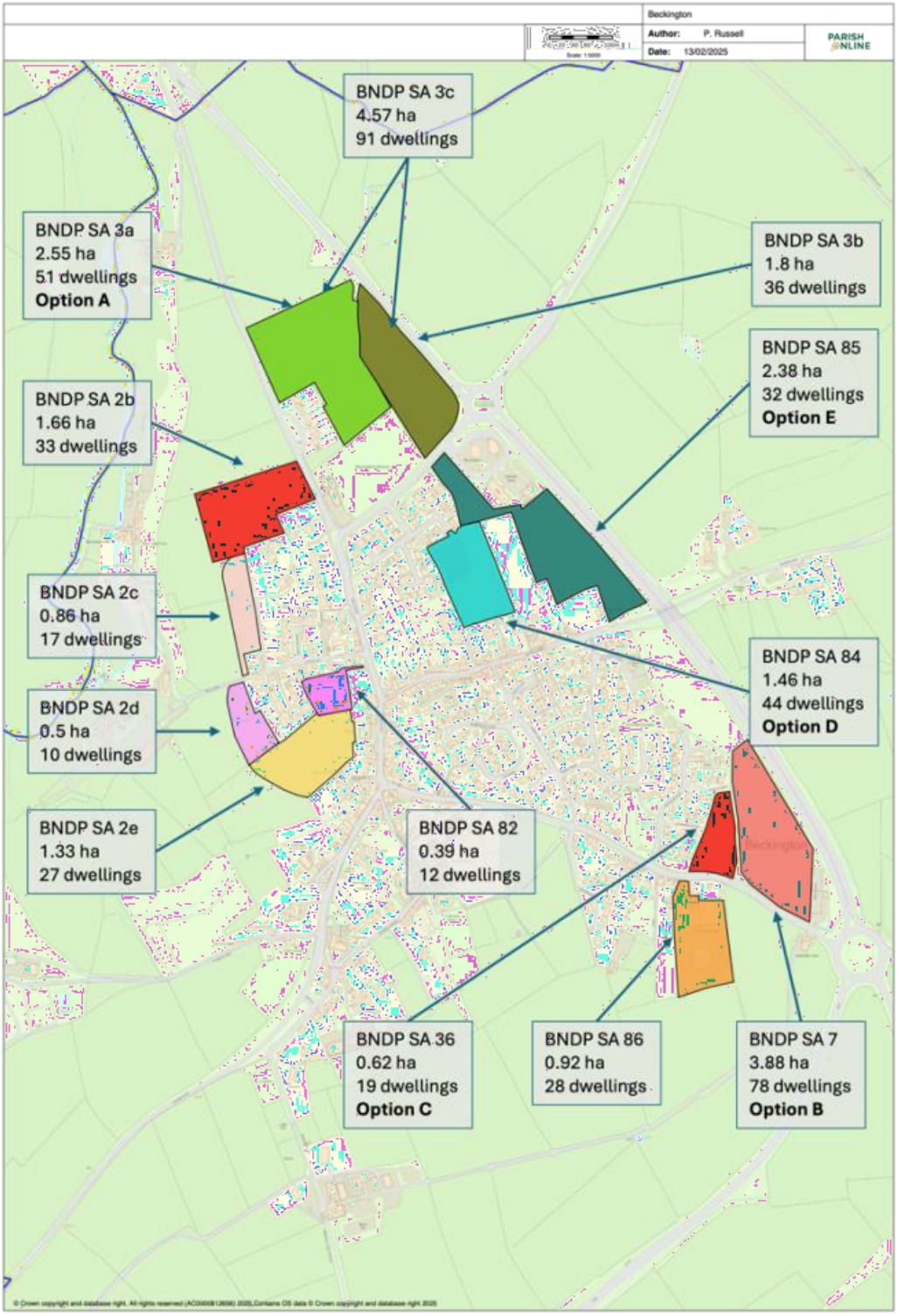


Figure 18: Sites subject to Full Assessment

e. **Consultation with the Local Community**

(1) As part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, a survey of residents was conducted in March-April 2024. There was general consensus over the type of housing preferred, in the event of more development, with a preference for individual plots (58%), smaller developments (43%) and affordable housing (30%).

(2) The survey also asked residents a series of questions about what they most liked or valued in the Parish, with the highest quantitative tick list responses being rural setting (41.8%) and access to open countryside (40.2%). Of 31 open ended comments received, 45% mentioned views.

(3) While the Conservation Area was not offered as an option in the multiple-choice examples, the qualitative comments suggested that it is also highly valued amongst the local community and therefore should be protected and enhanced.

(4) Feedback from the community throughout the consultation process underlined concerns that infrastructure development has not kept up with the addition of new dwellings since 2006. There is widespread dissatisfaction with sewage system problems that have caused foul water flooding in the centre of Beckington village, and with the environmental impact of the rising amount of foul water being discharged into the River Frome due to capacity issues at the Beckington Wastewater Treatment Plant. There are also very real concerns about the capacity of the roundabouts on the A36 and the impact that additional housing would have on this.

(5) Given resident's early feedback the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group decided to undertake a 'preferred options' consultation to gather the views of the community on site preferences. This approach was conveyed at a public meeting to update the community on the Neighbourhood Plan process and housing matters on 17 February 2025.

(6) A 'preferred options' survey opened on Friday 21 March and closed on Friday 2 May. Surveys were delivered to all 557 households across the parish for completion on the basis on one per household. A record was maintained to ensure that every household received a survey. Sealed collection boxes were placed at three publicly accessible locations in Beckington, one in Rudge and one in Standerwick.

(7) Details of the survey were posted on the Neighbourhood Plan website, on social media, in the parish magazine and on posters.

(8) Five options were presented, with residents invited to rank each in order of preference (1 to 5). The choices are shown in Figure 16.

(9) 159 Reponses were received, representing a 29% response rate. Of the total of 159 total responses, 142 were valid:

- 8 responses were ruled out due to having multiple sites assigned the same ranking.

- 7 responses declined to rank any sites stating that they did not agree with the number of sites selected.

- 1 response included comment only due to the survey being lost by the respondent.

- 1 response was incomplete with only pages 2 and 3 submitted.

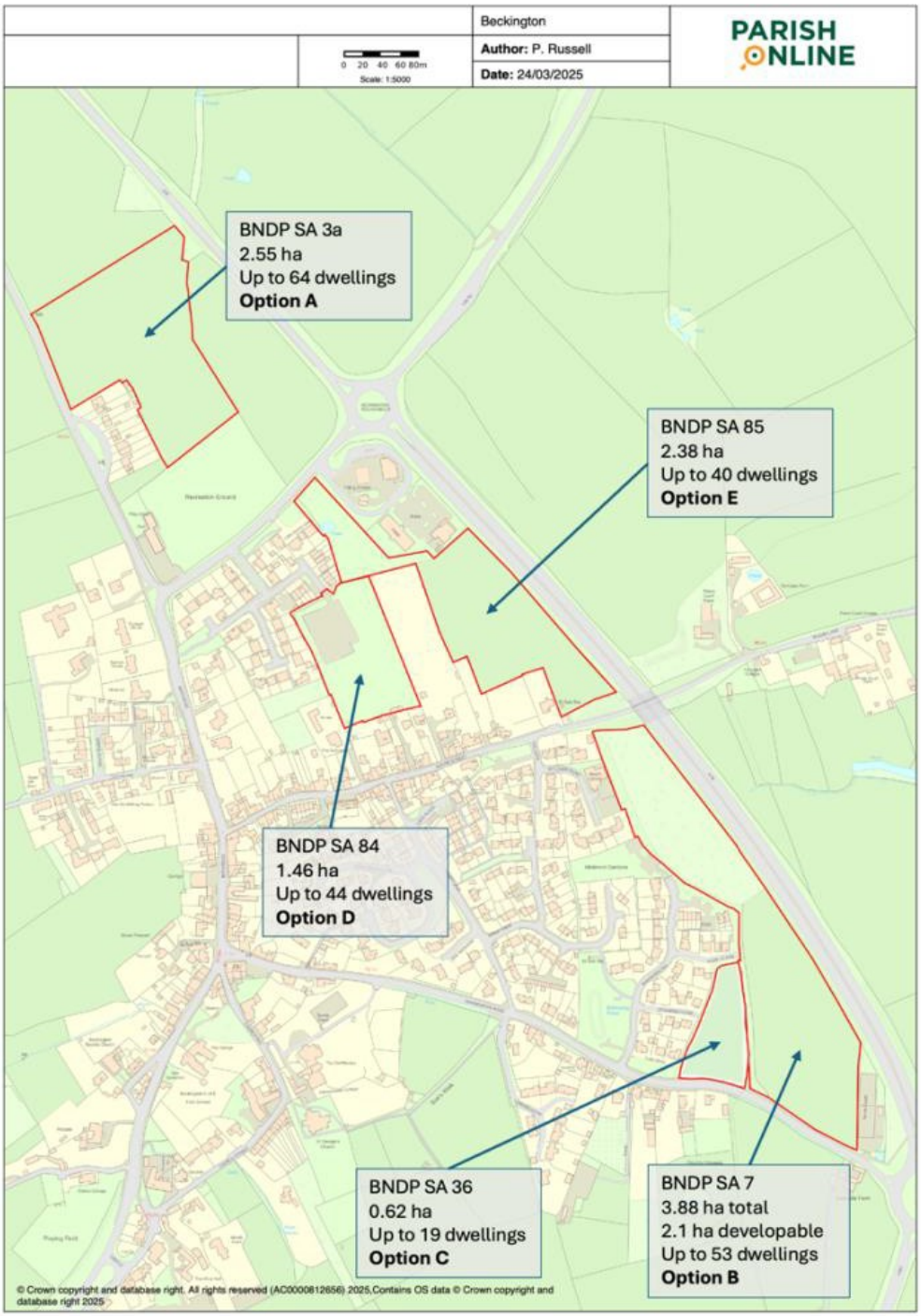


Figure 19: Preferred Options Consultation Site Map

(10) The ranking results for each option are shown in this table:

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5
Option A	19	10	19	18	76
Option B	28	31	30	43	10
Option C	42	41	30	18	11
Option D	31	32	21	33	25
Option E	22	28	42	30	20

Table 3: Preference for Each Option by Rank

(11) The weighting methodology used to get an overall ranking was to assign weights of 5,4,3,2,1 to the first, second, third, fourth and fifth ranked choices respectively. This produced the following overall result shown in Table 4 and at Figure 19:

	Weighted Score	Rank
Option A	304	5
Option B	450	2
Option C	511	1
Option D	437	3
Option E	428	4

Table 4: Results with Weighting Applied

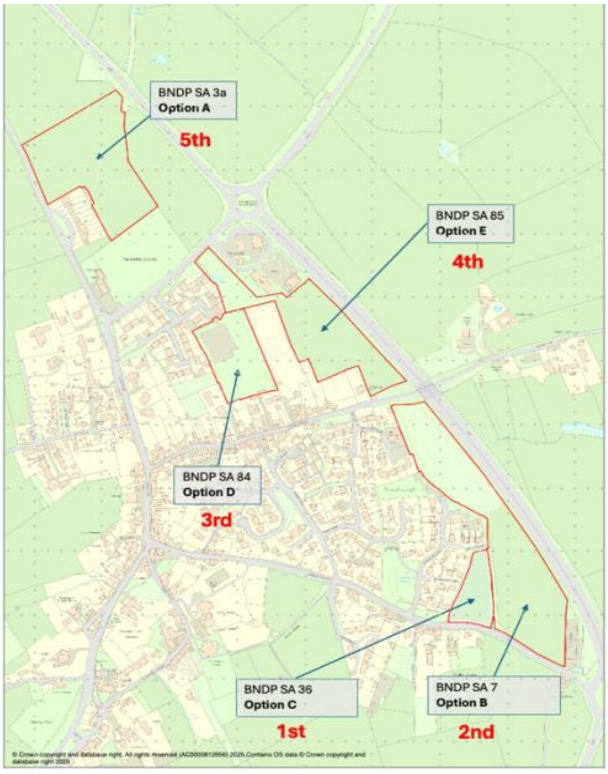


Figure 20: Map of Preferred Sites by Weighted Rank

Key Evidence Sources

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Mendip Local Plan Part 1, 2006-2029
- Beckington Call for Sites Report 2025
- Beckington Housing Background Paper
- Mendip District Housing Completions (Net Additional Dwellings Completed to 31 March 2024) 31 March 2024
- Somerset Council Somerset East Area (former Mendip District local planning authority) Statement on Five-Year Housing Land Supply July 2025
- Somerset Emerging Local Plan 2025-2045

6 Community Aspirations

6.1 During the work to produce the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan, a number of other actions were identified that could not be framed or were best not framed as planning policies. Some were simply not land use or development issues. They were nevertheless considered important given the views expressed by residents and their fit with the Plan's objectives. These have become "Community Aspirations" (instead of policies).

6.2 The aspirations draw together the recurring themes from the community consultations and evidence of local need. There is a strong desire from across the Beckington parishioners to invest in practical, inclusive improvements that help residents enjoy the rural setting, access local services, use community facilities and strengthen village life.

6.3 The community aspirations are as follows:

i. Improve and maintain the parish footpath network: restore and upgrade key public rights of way, including Sue's Walk, so that paths are safer, better drained, more even and easier to use throughout the year.

ii. Make walking and wheeling more accessible for everyone: remove barriers such as uneven surfaces, difficult level changes and inaccessible stiles so that older residents, disabled residents, families with pushchairs, children, dog walkers and people with limited mobility can continue to enjoy local routes.

iii. Provide enhanced and updated walking and cycling routes from Beckington to surrounding villages and towns which address pinch points, poor footpath maintenance and create safer crossings.

iv. Provide a segregated ("behind hedgerow") walking and cycling route from Beckington to Frome.

v. Protect and celebrate historic routes and rural character: recognise the heritage value of long-established paths, links to St George's Church, the school and historic settlement patterns, and use these routes to help residents understand and enjoy the parish landscape.

vi. Encourage everyday access to nature and outdoor recreation: promote walking, dog walking, cycling and informal outdoor activity as ways to improve physical health, mental wellbeing and connection with the countryside.

vii. Provide clear, reliable information about local routes: install or replace footpath signs, provide a walking map and publish an updated parish walks book so

residents and visitors can discover routes even where mobile phone coverage is poor.

viii. Support stronger community connections: use improved paths, maps, walks and shared facilities to encourage people to meet, chat, explore the parish and rebuild community spirit following recent and proposed housing growth.

ix. Improve access to essential local services: create a safe pedestrian link between the new GP surgery car park and the Beckington Family Practice so that parking provided through development can be used effectively by patients and residents.

x. Invest in inclusive recreation for children and young people: enhance the village hall playground with equipment for older primary-aged children, recognising the limited amount of non-agricultural open space available to children in the parish.

xi. Sustain valued community sport and leisure facilities: support the long-term viability, safety and accessibility of the tennis and cricket facilities so they can continue to serve children, adults, older residents and community users.

xii. Prioritise projects with broad community benefit and clear local support: use survey evidence, beneficiary numbers, health and safety considerations, accessibility needs, heritage value and availability of alternative funding to guide investment decisions.

6.4 Managing the Section 106 Priority List

6.4.1 Beckington Parish Council will maintain a priority list of community infrastructure projects that may be suitable for Section 106 funding (see S 106 project list). The list will be used to provide a transparent, evidence-based framework for assessing projects, recording local priorities and supporting funding decisions when developer contributions become available.

6.4.2 The priority list will be informed by the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan evidence base, parish surveys, consultation responses, project expressions of interest, identified community needs and any relevant technical or cost information. Projects will be assessed against clear criteria including the level of parishioner support, number and range of beneficiaries, health and safety benefits, accessibility improvements, contribution to wellbeing, heritage or landscape value, deliverability, long-term maintenance requirements and the availability of alternative funding.

6.4.3 The Parish Council will review the priority list at appropriate intervals and when new evidence, costings or funding opportunities arise. This will allow projects to be added, updated, deferred or removed where circumstances change. Any significant change to project priorities must be supported by recorded reasons so that the process

remains fair, accountable and capable of being explained to parishioners, funders and the local planning authority.

6.4.4 When Section 106 monies are available, the Parish Council will use the priority list to help determine which eligible projects should be recommended for funding first. Priority will normally be given to projects that demonstrate strong community support, wide public benefit, clear evidence of need, limited access to alternative funding and a direct relationship to the impacts of development. The list will not prevent the Parish Council from responding to urgent needs or exceptional opportunities, but any departure from the agreed priorities should be clearly justified and recorded.

6.4.5 Section 106 funding will be managed as part of a wider community infrastructure programme rather than as a series of isolated project decisions. This will help ensure that investment is targeted at projects that best support the aims of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan, deliver lasting community value and respond to the needs and aspirations expressed by Beckington parishioners.

7 Implementation and Monitoring

7.1 Implementation

7.1.1 Implementation of the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan will be ongoing for the plan period. Responsibility for determining planning applications rests with the local planning authority, Somerset Council, who are therefore responsible for applying the policies.

7.1.2 Beckington Parish Council will continue to use its role as statutory consultee to comment on planning applications and will engage in proactive dialogue with developers who wish to submit planning applications in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

7.1.3 Beckington Parish Council will review each application for planning submitted to Somerset Council for development within the Beckington Neighbourhood Area and provide commentary to Somerset Council so as to support development management considerations.

7.2 Monitoring

7.2.1 Beckington Prish Council will adopt the following monitoring plan:

a. **Twelve-Month Review**. The Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed by the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group one year after it is 'made' by Somerset Council following a successful referendum. The purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan objectives have been implemented in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting the Plan's objectives. The Steering Group will present a report to the Beckington Parish Council on the findings of the review.

b. **Five-Year Review**. After first review, the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed every five years. Beckington Parish Council will lead review of policies. As above, the purpose of the review will be primarily to assess the extent to which the objectives have been achieved in practice and the contribution of the policies and projects contained within it towards meeting those objectives.

Glossary

Active travel: Walking or cycling as a means of transport to get to a particular destination, such as work, shops, or social activities.

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented, intermediate housing, and First Homes provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Ancient or veteran tree/tree of arboricultural value: A tree that, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural, or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Change of use: A change in the way that land or buildings are used (see Use Classes Order). Planning permission is usually necessary to change a "use class".

Community Aspirations: A set of objectives set out within the Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan which have a local consensus and will be used to inform decisions on where to put resources to improve aspects of life in the Beckington Neighbourhood Area.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made for a new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and would be set, once adopted, by Somerset Council.

Conservation area: an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation on the list maintained by Historic England

Disability: There is no single definition for ‘disability.’ Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. It refers to trees, lawns, hedgerows, parks, fields, forests, etc.
Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

High Value Nature Areas: A site that has been designated as important internationally, nationally or locally, including terrestrial and aquatic habitats, irreplaceable habitats, Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland, and JLP Biodiversity Network Core Sites.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD): The official measure of deprivation. The IMD 2025 combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation.

Listed Building: A building mentioned in statutory lists as being of special architectural or historic interest under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act. There are different grades of listing to indicate relative interest.

Local connection: For the purposes of allocating affordable homes, housing shall be occupied in accordance with the Somerset Council's standard allocation procedures with priority given to applicants who can demonstrate that they have a local connection to the Beckington Neighbourhood Area at the time of occupation.

Local list: Local lists of heritage assets (also known as local heritage lists) are usually developed by the local planning authority, often in collaboration with the community. Heritage assets for consideration for the local list may be identified through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Local lists can include buildings; public art; street furniture, such as telephone boxes, benches, drinking fountains and lampposts; other structures such as bridges, viaducts and military structures; parks, gardens, public spaces and designed landscapes; archaeological sites and remains; and maritime heritage and shipwrecks.

Local Green Spaces: A series of green spaces that have been identified by consulting local communities and using the criteria set out in National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 105 and 106. These sites are demonstrably of local significance.

Local housing need: The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance.

Local Plan: Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change, and securing good design for the area they cover. They are a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as Local Plans (together with any Neighbourhood Development Plans that have been made) are the starting point for considering whether planning applications can be approved. It is important for all areas to put an up-to-date Local Plan in place to positively guide development decisions.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The national planning policy document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG): a suite of documents setting out how to apply national planning policies.

Non-designated heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest but that does not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. These can include those identified by a local planning authority or in a Neighbourhood Development Plan local list.

Non-strategic policies: Policies contained in a neighbourhood development plan or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

Older people: People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Permitted development: Permitted development rights are an automatic grant of planning permission that allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application. Most houses have permitted development rights, but flats and maisonettes do not, so planning permission is required. A further example is the conversion of offices, for instance to flats, without the need for planning permission.

Mendip Local Plan 2006-2029: sets out where Somerset Council wants to see development and what needs to be protected until 2029.

Section 106 agreement: A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.

Somerset Local Plan 2023-2045: The Local Plan sets out a framework for the future development of the area. Until Somerset Council adopt the Somerset Local Plan, existing Local Plans remain in place for the individual geographical areas of the former district councils (Sedgemoor, West Somerset, Taunton Deane, South Somerset, and Mendip).

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD): Supplementary Planning Documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, that may expand policy or provide further detail to policies contained in a Development Plan Document, where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery.

Use Classes Order: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended in 1995, 2005 and 2013) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base

Assessment of Sewage Pollution in the River Frome, Beckington to Farleigh Hungerford, Final Report, June 2025
Beckington Call for Sites Report 2025
Beckington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010
Beckington Design Guidance and Codes, Final Report, July 2024
Beckington Housing Background Paper
Beckington Housing Needs Assessment 2024
Beckington Landscape Value Statement 2025
Beckington Local Green Space Assessment Report (2025)
Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment, 2025
Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Launch Consultation Report 2024
Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Protected View Assessment (2025)
Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Residents Survey 2024
Bettering Beckington Parish Council survey 2016
Building for a Healthy Life
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition), 2017
Historic England Planning Practice Guidance on Historic Environment
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2023
Manual for Streets 2007
Mendip District Housing Completions (Net Additional Dwellings Completed to 31 March 2024) 31 March 2024
Mendip Local Plan Part 1 2006-2029
Mendip Local Plan Part II 2006-2029
Mendip District Landscape Character Assessment, 2020
National Design Guide 2021
National Model Design Codes 2021
National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
Natural England Agricultural Classification map
Parish Cycle Strategy in 2020
Somerset Council Calculation of an Indicative Housing Requirement for Beckington Parish Area February 2025
Somerset Council Somerset East Area (former Mendip District local planning authority) Statement on Five Year Housing Land Supply July 2025
Somerset Emerging Local Plan 2023-2045
Somerset Local Nature Recovery Strategy, 2025