

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ILMINSTER



Architecture
Planning
Community

Draft Pre- Regulation 14 Document for internal consultation / 27th November 2019



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1/ This Document

This is the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan (INP) which covers the period 2016-2036. It is an ambitious community led plan which has been prepared by Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group on behalf of Ilminster Town Council and everyone who lives, works and studies in the neighbourhood plan area. Technical assistance has been provided by ECA Architecture & Planning.

The INP has been informed by a two year consultation program which has included workshops with local schools, walkabouts and community workshops.

The evidence base includes documents produced by the South Somerset District Council such as the 'Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal' (2016) and the 'Peripheral Landscape Study-Ilminster' (2007). It includes Town Council produced documents, 'Ilminster By Design' and Ilminster Community Plan 2016-2026'

Evidence prepared specifically for the

neighbourhood plan includes 'A Housing Needs Survey' (2018) 'Housing Needs Assessment' (Aecom, 2019) and a Site Assessment Report (2019, ECA Architecture and Planning).

The Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan aims to guide the future development, regeneration and conservation of Ilminster and is focused on four main themes:

- Environment & Leisure
- Economy, Tourism & Heritage
- Access and Movement
- Homes and Places for living

Digital copies of our plan can be downloaded from the following websites:

Contact info:

www.ilminster.gov.uk

www.eca-p.com

All maps within this document are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey



2/ Executive Summary

The Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan contains fifteen policies under four themes.

The ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE THEME includes four policies, namely; **Policy ILM1: Conserve and Enhance Ilminster’s Historic Landscape Setting** which requires development proposals to demonstrate how they preserve all views of green fields, hillsides and heritage assets. **Policy ILM2: Conserving and enhancing Ilminster’s Ecology, Species and Habitats**, requires all developments to contribute to ecological networks, including planting one new tree per new bedroom built. **Policy ILM3: Enhance and Connect our Green Open Spaces with a Green Chain**, designates fourteen open spaces in Ilminster and promotes a ‘Green Chain’ which is a safe route around and across the town for walkers and cyclists with enriched biodiversity corridors. **Policy ILM4: Better Recreation Facilities for our Growing Community**, promotes a new sport/recreation facility adjacent to Canal Way.

The ECONOMY, TOURISM & HERITAGE theme is at the centre of the INP and contains three policies. **Policy ILM5: The Ilminster Environmental Enterprise**

Zone, allocates an area in the western part of town where small businesses which capitalise on access to Ilminster’s natural, heritage and cultural assets are encouraged. **Policy ILM6: Enhancing Ilminster’s Tourism and Heritage**, seeks to encourage more shoppers and visitors to Ilminster by preserving and enhancing its heritage assets and improving facilities. **Policy ILM7: Promoting High Quality Design**, requires high quality design in all development across the wider neighbourhood plan area to reflect Ilminster’s unique character. This policy is supplemented by the Ilminster Design Guide.

Successful ACCESS & MOVEMENT is integral to the success of Ilminster and this theme seeks to promote alternative modes of transport to the car, through **Policy ILM8: Encouraging shoppers and visitors into Ilminster Centre**. **Policy ILM9: Safe, Interesting Walking and Cycling Routes**, supports development which improves walking and cycling including better pavements. **Policy ILM10: Welcome people to Ilminster**, promotes public realm improvements to key road junctions. **Policy ILM11: The layout and appearance of the Historic Market Town Centre**, addresses the communities desire to see the town centre regenerated with a high quality

public realm which preserves and enhances the setting of The Market House in particular.

HOMES & PLACES FOR LIVING seeks to provide good quality, well designed homes for existing and future residents.

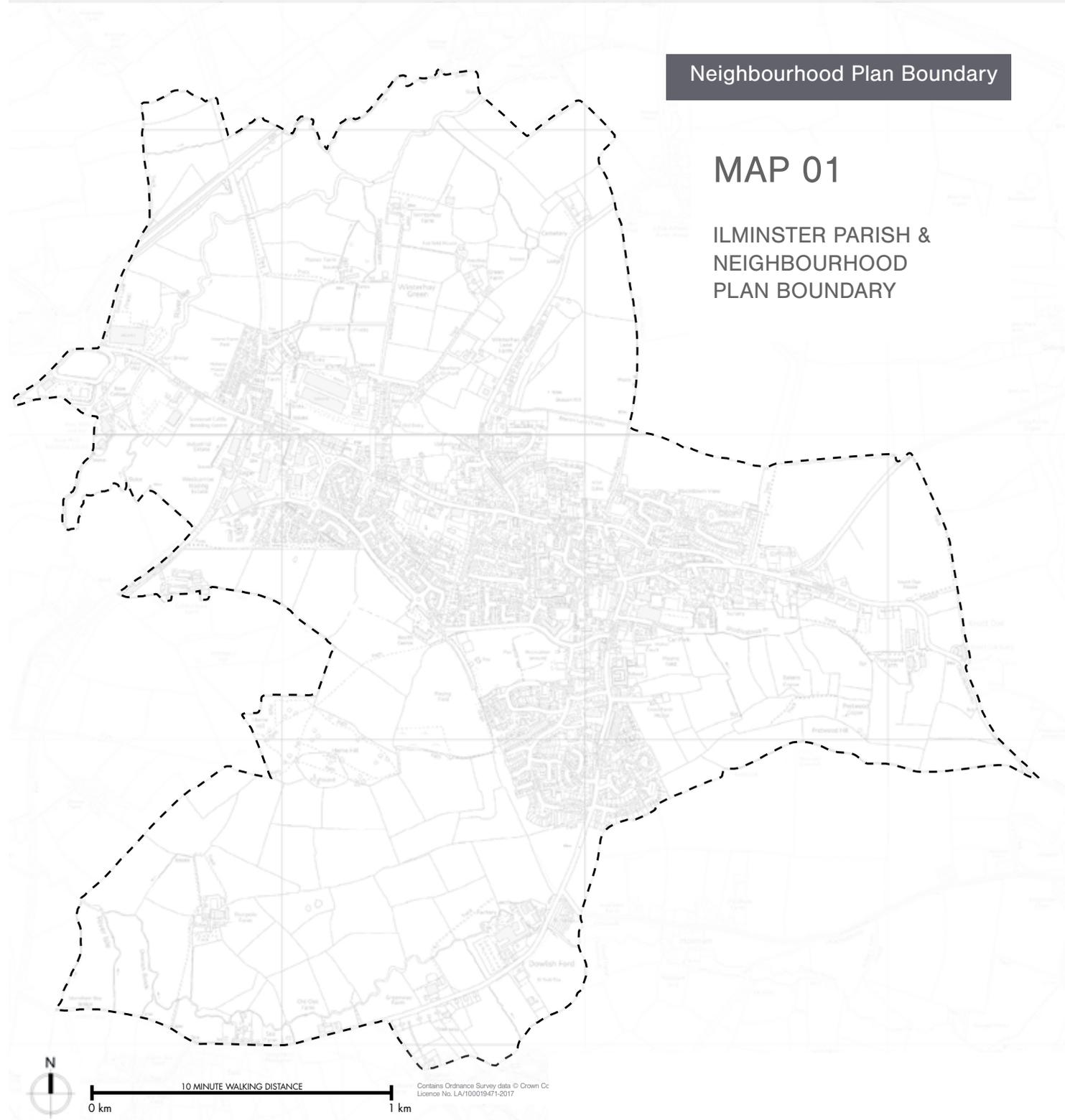
Policy ILM12: Amount and Location of our New Homes, seeks to meet the SSDC Local Plan housing target for Ilminster through the sustained and phased development of ten sites.

Policy ILM13: Types of New Homes confirms the size and mix of homes needed and requires at least 20% of new homes to be suitable for elderly people. **Policy ILM14: Allocated or Small Brownfield Sites**, requires development to be in strict accordance with the character of the area, including the layout and density of adjacent development. **Policy ILM15: Design and Layout of Strategic Sites**, includes nine criteria that must be adhered to in development proposals on Land South West of Canal Way and on Station Road where a large number of houses are due to be built. This includes reducing reliance on fossil fuels, incorporating sustainable landscape features and cycle routes and promoting good quality design.

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

MAP 01

ILMINSTER PARISH & NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BOUNDARY



3/ Background

Iminster Neighbourhood Plan

3.0 The Iminster Neighbourhood Plan (INP) is a policy-based land-use plan that is in general conformity with the South Somerset District Council (SSDC) Local Plan. It is a document made by the local community in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Localism Act 2011.

3.1 Neighbourhood Plans provide opportunity for communities to influence:

- Local design policies
- Infrastructure
- Community facilities
- Housing allocations.

The Iminster Neighbourhood Plan includes the evidence base, aims, objectives and policies which will guide future development and conservation within the town. When adopted, the INP forms part of the Development Plan* and will be taken into account in the determination of all planning applications made in the INP Boundary.

The Development Group

3.2 The Iminster Neighbourhood Plan Development Group was set up in January

2019 as a sub-group of the main Town Council with delegated authority to direct the Neighbourhood Plan. The group meet and report monthly to the main Town Council on the progress of the plan and on major decisions made affecting its direction. The group members live and/or work within Iminster and are a collection of residents, business owners and councillors with an extensive knowledge of the town and good outreach to the wider communities within Iminster.

Area Covered by the Plan

3.3 The INP boundary shown on Map 1 conforms with the neighbourhood forum boundary as approved by South Somerset District Council on 1st June 2017. The Plan boundary follows the boundary of the Parish of Iminster in South Somerset.

Time Period of the Plan

3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Development Plan and therefore covers the period from 2016-2036.

Meeting the Basic Conditions

3.5 Only a draft INP which meets Central Government criteria can be put to a referendum and 'be made'/ adopted.

3.6 The basic conditions are set out in para. 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and

** Development Plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, & includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made & published spatial development strategies & regional strategy policies that remain in force.*

Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as applied to Neighbourhood Plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3.7 A Neighbourhood Plan can be made if it meets the following basic conditions:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan.
- The making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.8 A screening assessment to determine the need for a Habitats Regulation Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with regulation and guidance will be undertaken in 2020.

3.9 The Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan meets these basic conditions because:

- It is in general conformity with Development Plan policies, as contained in the adopted South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2026) Adopted March 2015 and other supplementary planning documents and guidance. In addition to this it has also been prepared taking account of the emerging South Somerset Local Plan Review (2016-2036)
- It seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ilminster Conservation Area, numerous listed buildings and their settings;
- It is in accordance with policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Guidance (NPPG), and European Planning Guidance;
- It is based on a sound and robust evidence base;
- It reflects the needs of the business and residential community;
- It is a sustainable plan

3.10 A comprehensive list of relevant local, national and EU policies, and how the INP complies with these, is set out in the Basic Conditions Statement which is included

in the Appendices.

Our evidence base

3.11 The main evidence base for the INP is primarily from existing sources which support the adopted and emerging South Somerset Local Plan. Additional evidence specific to the INP are as follows:

- The Housing Needs Survey for Ilminster Town Council, 2018
- The Housing Needs Assessment for Ilminster, Aecom on behalf of Ilminster Town Council, August 2019
- The Ilminster Peripheral landscape study, South Somerset District Council, November 2007;
- South Somerset District Council Settlement Profile: Ilminster October 2017;
- Ilminster Community Plan, 2016-2026
- Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal, South Somerset District Council 2016
- Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, SSDC, 2018
- The findings of various consultation events, as summarised in the Consultation Report included in the Appendices.

4/ The Character of Ilminster

Background

4.0 Ilminster is in the administrative District of South Somerset, one mile to the east of the River Isle, and the major road intersection of the A303 and A358, which provides links to the regional road network. It is a historic market town of Saxon origin which prospered on cloth manufacture in the 17th century.

Early Ilminster History

4.1 Although there is some archaeological evidence of settlement around Herne Hill in pre-Roman times and much Roman history in the area, the earliest historical evidence of the town of Ilminster is when Ilminster was bestowed on the Abbey of Muchelney by King Ine in 725.

4.2 The Domesday survey records Ilminster as having a population of about 50 working families on twenty hides (about 240 acres), 27 oxen for ploughing, 40 sheep, 33 pigs, 3 mills, a market, woodland and 80 acres of meadow.

4.3 When the monasteries were dissolved in 1538 Ilminster passed to the Lord of the Manor, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, later Duke of Somerset based at Donyatt Manor. There followed almost 150 years

of Lordships of the Manor held by the Seymours. The first Duke (of Wolf Hall fame) reached high rank in Royal circles and it was by this influence the town became a Royal Peculiar and the town held its own Court at the Swan Hotel. The status of Royal Peculiar remained until 1857 when the national court system was introduced by an act of parliament.

4.4 In 1894 the Urban District Council was formed, surviving until local government reorganisation in 1974 when some responsibilities moved to South Somerset District Council and some remaining with Ilminster Town Council.

4.5 In 1670, Ilminster was the fourth largest town in Somerset based on the Hearth Tax returns. However in the 17th century tillers of land were driven out in favour of wool production and the town prospered on a strong textile industry. Cloth, rope and glove making were growing industries with mills on the River Ile and factories in the town.

4.6 On 29th August 1680, the Duke of Monmouth attended the Minster and was hosted at Whitelackington by George Speke. It was five years later that he camped near the town on his route from



Lyme Regis to Sedgemoor.

4.7 In 1809, the new Exeter to London route passed through the town and it became a major coaching stage prompting a huge trade for the George, Swan and Dolphin hotels.

Modern Iminster

4.8 In the 2011 census, the residential population of Iminster was 5,808 with fewer people of working age than 'Older People'. The town has undergone significant growth in recent times.

4.9 The town is primarily a linear settlement with an east-west axis, in the valley associated with the Shudrick Stream. The town's centre is focused on the historic market place and Minster, which lie between Shudrick Stream and the lower slopes of Beacon Hill. Historic maps confirm settlement growth around and adjacent to the centre along this east-west access, largely limited to lower ground until more recent times.

4.10 Twentieth century residential growth has spread both north, south and southwest whilst a large employment area has developed to the west of the town, adjacent the confluence of the River Isle and Shudrick Stream corridors, with convenient for access

to the major road network. However in recent years the character of this part of town has changed with the closure of large scale businesses and the emergency of smaller businesses.

4.11 The visual context of the town is made up of its heritage and landscape setting. In terms of its heritage setting the Minster and Market House form prominent landmarks together with numerous listed buildings, some of very significant heritage value being Grade 1, 2* and Grade 2 listed.

4.12 Iminster's landscape setting is unique. It is surrounded by three hills: Beacon Hill to the north, and Herne Hill and Pretwood Hill to the southwest and southeast respectively. All rise to a little over 100 metres and broadly contain the spread of the town and its immediate rural edge. To the west, the setting is less defined, with the town extending toward the open land of the River Isle valley, and an edge that is reinforced by the A303 road corridor.

4.13 Today the town has four distinct character areas, assessed and defined for the purposes of the INP below:

– Employment Zone-large scale businesses and former railway station with increasing

number of homes located in the river valley floor adjacent to the main road network. The gateway of Iminster from the west.

– Green Zone- this zone has a few historic buildings but is largely contemporary estates of houses with large areas of green open space to the south. 400 new homes are planned by Persimmon in this area.

– Heritage Zone- the historic core centres around the market house and church. It is a mixed use area with a tight urban grain or heritage significance,

– Education zone- To the south of the historic core, this area contains the primary and middle school and predominantly contemporary housing and a large estate to the south.

A character analysis is included in the appendices.

5/ Vision & Aims

Our vision for Ilminster in 2036 is to be one of the most desirable market towns in which to live, learn, work and play, as well as to visit. We will create a stimulating, attractive, healthy, safe and sustainable environment through well-considered and balanced development that respects Ilminster's unique heritage and rural location, embracing new ideas, technology and innovation for our habitat and community to thrive.



5/ Neighbourhood Plan Aims

AIM 1

5.0 Provide a suitable range of homes to serve both existing and potential residents of Ilminster including homes for rent, affordable homes, executive and “live-work” homes suitable for the range of ages as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment report and residents with special needs.

AIM 2

5.1 Allocate sustainable sites for a suitable number of new homes, including self-build, which have good access to the countryside and town centre, in order to support our shops and services and promote walking and well-being.

AIM 3

5.2 Achieve the highest standards of design for all new homes, suitable for their occupants, in particular, by providing well laid out developments, with suitable levels of parking and bungalows, which reflect the character and appearance of Ilminster as well as generate a proportion of their own energy needs on site.

AIM 4

5.3 Make Ilminster a more self-sufficient community and reduce commuting by preserving and enhancing existing infrastructure and employment floor space (falling within use class B1 and B2 in particular) and allowing an overall increase in employment floorspace.

AIM 5

5.4 Safeguard the rural environment for local food production and recreational amenity.

AIM 6

5.5 Preserve and enhance the market town’s unique built heritage and independent retail offering and recognise its needs as an increasingly desirable visitor attraction.

AIM 7

5.6 Increase the use of our parks and open spaces by a wider age range of people by, improving existing facilities, providing a new cemetery and more facilitates at the Recreation Ground.

AIM 8

5.7 Provide improved and safe walking routes to all the amenities in our town centre from existing and proposed developments to reduce car use and improve the health and well-being of residents.

AIM 9

5.8 Create a continuous network of green habitats, parks, waterways and nature trails.

AIM 10

5.9 Reduce car use within and to Ilminster by working with partners to encourage better bus services to surrounding towns, train stations and outlying villages.

AIM 11

5.10 Reduce car movements in the town centre by promoting the implementation of various traffic management measures.

AIM 12

5.11 Plan for the greater use of sustainable transport, by providing car charging points, cycle racks and comfortable bus stops.

Site Selection Workshop

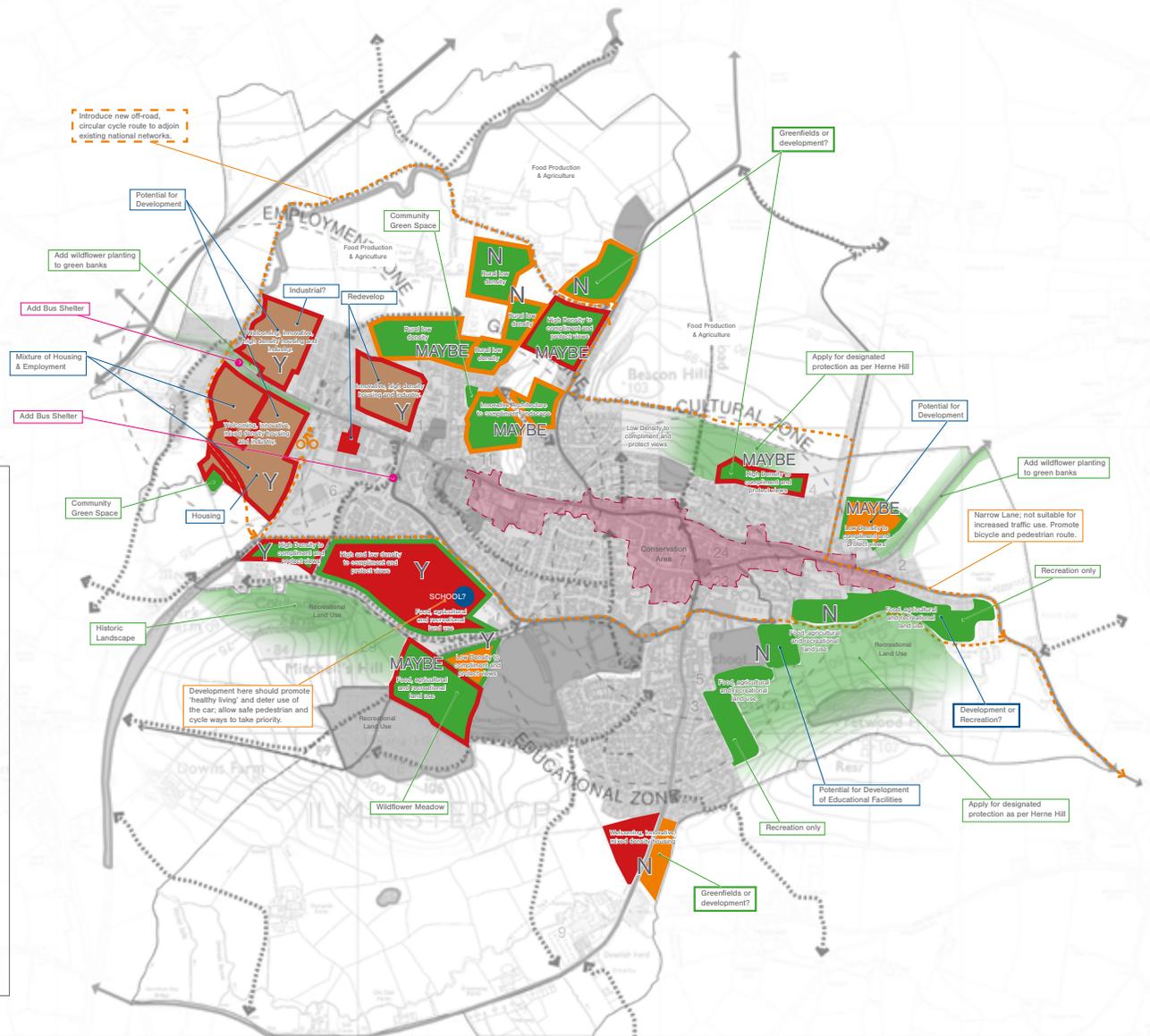
RESULTS MAP
October 2019

Preferred Land-Use Legend:

- High Density Housing
- Low Density Housing
- Education
- Open Space including Food & Agriculture
- Employment

Y YES - greater consensus *for* housing development
MAYBE MAYBE - *undecided* consensus for housing development
N NO - greater consensus *against* housing development

NOTE:
 - The main colour of the sites is the primary preferred use, the outline colour the secondary use.
 - Only sites that were mentioned by participants are shown on the map.



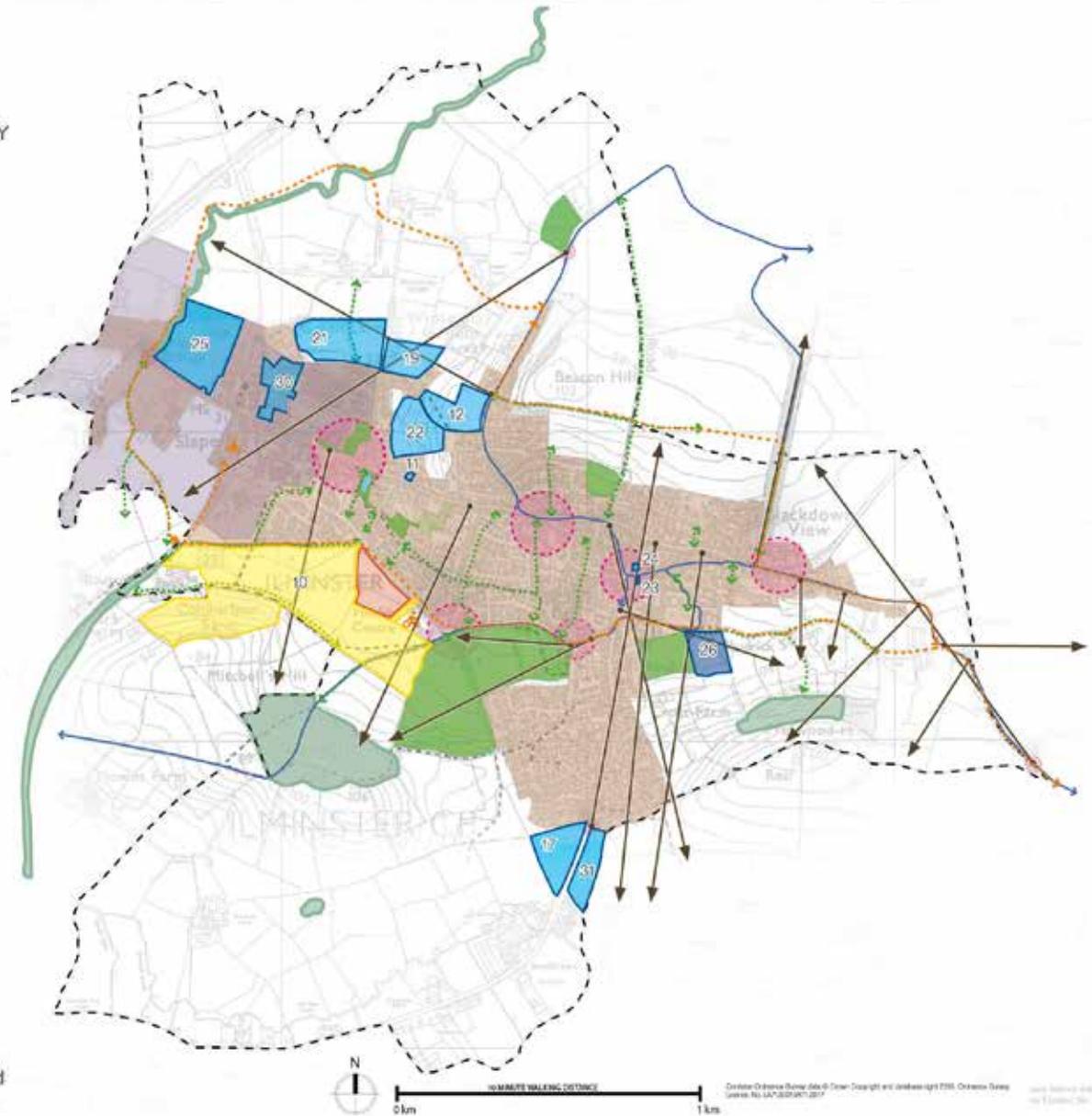
ILMINSTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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ILMINSTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROPOSALS MAP

- KEY**
-  ILMINSTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BOUNDARY
 -  ILM1: The protected views of Ilminster
 -  ILM3: The Ilminster Green Chain
 -  ILM3: Designated Green Open Spaces
 -  ILM4: Potential sport/recreation facility
 -  ILM5: Potential location for a cycle hub
 -  ILM7: Ilminster Environmental Enterprise Zone
 -  ILM8: Public realm enhancements at key gateways
 -  ILM9: Existing and Proposed Cycling routes
 -  ILM9: Existing and Proposed Walking routes
 -  ILM12: Site allocations for education
 -  ILM12: Site allocations for homes
 -  ILM14: Settlement boundary
 -  Site with outline planning permission for homes and education



Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Figure 3. Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map

6/ Environment & Leisure



RELEVANT AIMS

6.0 The four aims of the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan which are most relevant to this chapter, are:

Aim 5: Safeguard the rural environment for local food production and recreational amenity.

Aim 7: Increase the use of our parks and open spaces by a wider age range of people by, improving existing facilities, providing a new cemetery and more facilities at the Recreation Ground.

Aim 8: Provide improved and safe walking routes to all the amenities in our town centre from existing and proposed developments in order to reduce car use and improve the health and well-being of residents.

Aim 9: Create a continuous network of green habitats, parks, waterways and nature trails.





6.1

Our Vision for Environment and Leisure in Ilminster is:

Emphasise our assets. Good open spaces, good heritage, sustained environment.

OPEN SPACES

Develop and improve the existing Recreation Ground Plan. Improve usage and access for all ages to open spaces. Get more land for more team games, hockey, netball etc. Look for income generation from open spaces. Investigate sites for new cemetery. Open up the Recreation Ground Users Group to a bigger group from community.

Longer term: consider some form of indoor sports building for the wider community.

LEISURE

The Community has a good number of various leisure activities at present. Consideration needs to be given to the future for all age groups. Ask the question

to the schools, other older groups, special needs groups, communication by both old-fashioned methods and new social media. Make sure all ideas are from the bottom up. Lots of blue-sky thinking, imagination and dreaming!

ENVIRONMENT

We have little control of our environment. Positive thinking is required. Looking at the future, question how we reduce car usage, have our own transport system, remove all cars from the town centre, use volunteer buggy drivers.

It is clear that the town is in the heart of South West.

The majority of residents who work commute. We have no community association, why not start one?

Plan for a population of 10,000 by 2035.

Stuart Shephard, Carol Goodall, Colin Hyde, 25/10/18

6/ Environment & Leisure



THE EVIDENCE BASE

6.2 The most relevant evidence for this chapter is as follows:

- Peripheral Landscape Study for Ilminster, South Somerset District Council, 2007;
- Joint LEP Energy Strategy (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, Dorset and Heart of the South West LEAs)- Carbon Trust, January 2019;
- The Landscape of South Somerset;
- Canal Way, Ilminster, Ecological Appraisal, Persimmon Homes, Green Ecology, 2016;
- South Somerset District Council - Planning for Open Space and Recreation and Landscape Design Guide Addendum and the Play Policy;
- South Somerset Infrastructure

Delivery Plan, 2016;

- ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ (Natural England) October 2014 and other guidance and best practice examples;

6.3 The ‘Infrastructure Delivery Plan, South Somerset, January 2016’ is of relevance to Ilminster. It includes a Flood Risk Alleviation scheme associated with land off Station Road, which has been agreed through a planning application for employment land.

6.4 The following organisations are relevant to this policy area:

- Biodiversity South West
- Somerset Wildlife Trust
- Somerset County Council
- Hinkley Point

- The UK Forestry Standard

MEETING THE COMMUNITIES NEEDS

6.5 The Town Council conducted five workshops from June-July 2018, and ECA on behalf of the Council also held a walkabout and workshop on 16th February 2019. Workshops for children at each of the schools serving Ilminster - Greenfylde, Swanmead, Neroche and Wadham were undertaken in June 2019.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group also discussed ideas with the wider community at ILMEX in June 2019.

6.6 The findings of these consultation events in relation to this theme can be summarised as follows:

- A need for a leisure facility was repeated on numerous occasions with a special mention of the need for a swimming pool;



- A need for a sports centre, allotments and a cemetery easily accessible to the town was expressed;
- Consideration needs to be given to moving the youth club to a site adjacent to the playing fields;
- There is a need for more landscaping of green spaces in the town centre
- There is a need to create an eco-friendly town
- A community centre should be provided within the new development on Canal Way
- There is a need to preserve and enhance all the great walks and cycle tracks into the open countryside



6/ Environment & Leisure



POLICY ILM1

CONSERVE AND ENHANCE ILMINSTER'S HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SETTING

Development proposals must demonstrate how they:

- (a) Preserve all views of Beacon Hill, Herne Hill, Pretwood Hill, River Isle and The Minster especially from main roads into Ilminster and those from the twenty 'Identified views of Ilminster';
- (b) Enhance views and vistas, particularly those containing heritage assets, through public realm improvements and carefully managing development;
- (c) Create new views and vistas, particularly on allocated housing sites on the edge of the built up area;
- (d) Conserve or enhance local landscape character, features (such as trees and hedgerows) and provide walking routes to the open countryside;
- (e) Ensure all new development includes a strategic landscape plan and associated management for the whole site to include hard and soft landscaping which enhances the local landscape.

Policy ILM1 Context

6.7 Ilminster has good access to the open countryside. Set within a valley, the green hillside and woods make an important visual contribution to the character and appearance of Ilminster.

6.8 The peripheral landscape study of Ilminster (SSDC, 2007) is the main evidence base for this policy and describes it as a combination of a predominantly developed area following the more sheltered and shallow valley sides with the higher level valley sides and ridge/plateau tops surrounding the town which have remained largely undeveloped. The policy protects the distinct landform which forms the green backdrop to the historic market town and

provides a strong sense of place.

6.9 The landscape setting is defined by a number of factors, as follows:

6.10 NATURAL FACTORS:

- distinct landform/geomorphology/geology particularly the river valley;
- the undeveloped skyline (treed, farmland or open space) ridge lines and distinctive hills;
- River corridors and natural water bodies including The River Isle and The Canal with their associated trees, woodland, farmland and open space;
- Distinct land cover or natural habitat including landscapes important for wildlife such as



traditional floodplains, trees and woodlands.

6.11 CULTURAL AND HUMAN FACTORS:

- The built environment comprising historic farmsteads, the historic town centre, its buildings monuments and streetscape and the contemporary additions to the town including housing estates;
- water bodies including the canal and its associated trees;
- contemporary landscaping including woodland, farmland, parkland and playing fields;
- historic landscapes and distinctive historic hedgerow patterns and field and ditch systems;

- greenways and other ancient routes.

6.12 VISUAL AND PERCEPTUAL FACTORS:

- special views, viewpoints and visual characteristics (e.g. sequential views);
- open spaces within and on the edge of the town which are visually distinctive and attractive in themselves;
- landscapes with significant associations (e.g. Blake Hill);
- other perceptual factors such as colour, form and pattern.



6/ Environment & Leisure



VIEWS

IDENTIFIED VIEWS:



Beacon

1. View from Beacon graveyard looking South-West over the west of Ilminster.



Beacon

2. Long views from Beacon footpaths looking North-West to the River Isle.



Riec-Sur-Belon Way

3. View from one of the core spinal routes in Ilminster to the South and Herne Hill.



Canal Way

4. View from Canal Way cycle junction looking to South-West ridge.



Station Road

5. View from apex of Station Road looking over the valley to the southern ridge line.



High Street

6. View from High Street looking down towards town centre and ridge line beyond.



Butts

7. View looking over town centre to the southern landscaped ridge beyond.



Bay Hill

8. Development framing views over rolling patchwork landscape to south.



Bay Hill

9. Way-finding view looking north towards historic estate and grounds.

Map 09

LANDSCAPE

LEGEND:

Neighbourhood Plan Identifications:

- Ilminster NHP Boundary
- Local Green Space
- Water
- Car park
- Long Vistas

South Somerset District Council 'Value & Constraints' Identifications*:

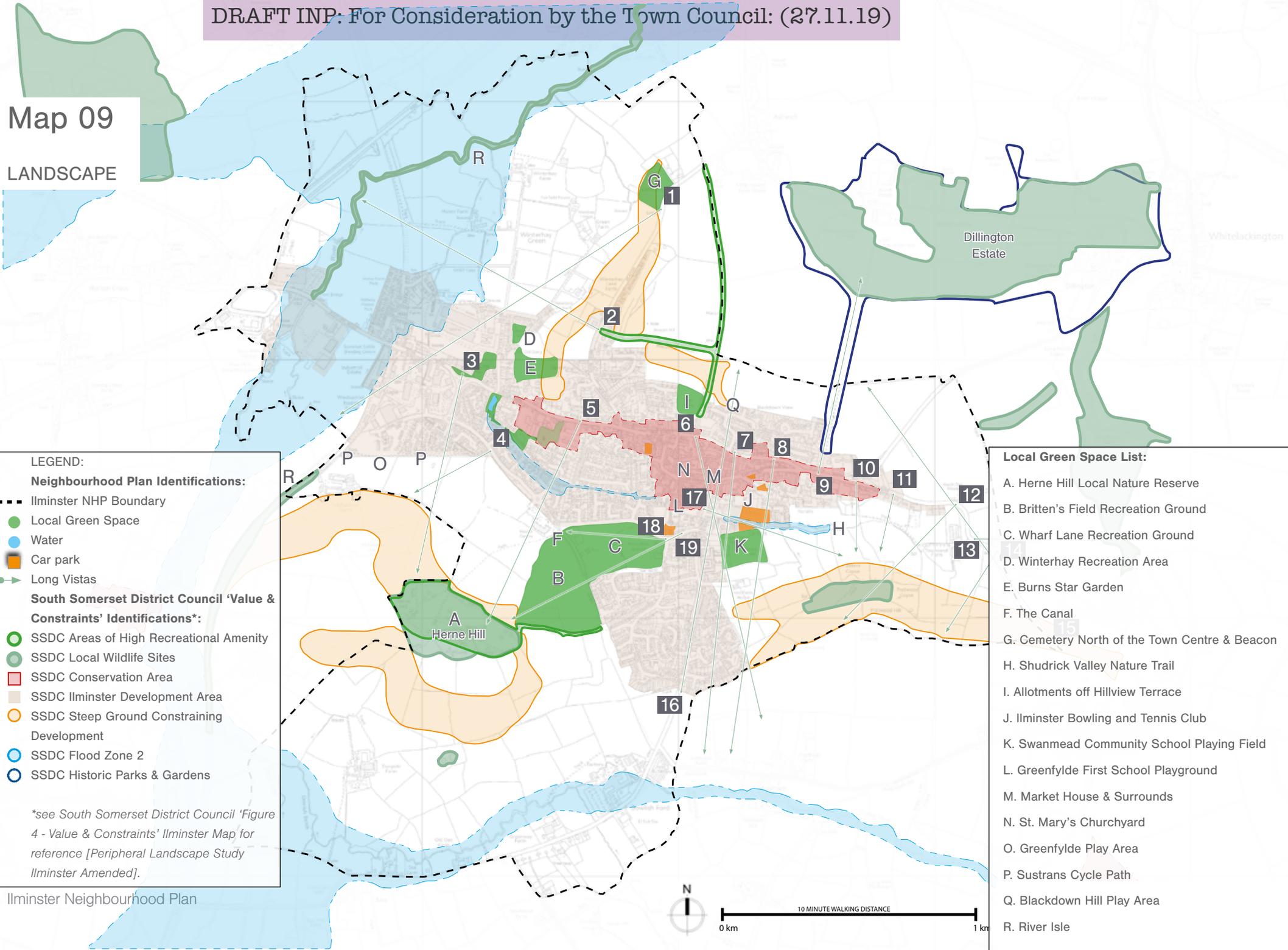
- SSDC Areas of High Recreational Amenity
- SSDC Local Wildlife Sites
- SSDC Conservation Area
- SSDC Ilminster Development Area
- SSDC Steep Ground Constraining Development
- SSDC Flood Zone 2
- SSDC Historic Parks & Gardens

**see South Somerset District Council 'Figure 4 - Value & Constraints' Ilminster Map for reference [Peripheral Landscape Study Ilminster Amended].*

Local Green Space List:

- A. Herne Hill Local Nature Reserve
- B. Britten's Field Recreation Ground
- C. Wharf Lane Recreation Ground
- D. Winterhay Recreation Area
- E. Burns Star Garden
- F. The Canal
- G. Cemetery North of the Town Centre & Beacon
- H. Shudrick Valley Nature Trail
- I. Allotments off Hillview Terrace
- J. Ilminster Bowling and Tennis Club
- K. Swanmead Community School Playing Field
- L. Greenfylde First School Playground
- M. Market House & Surrounds
- N. St. Mary's Churchyard
- O. Greenfylde Play Area
- P. Sustrans Cycle Path
- Q. Blackdown Hill Play Area
- R. River Isle

Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan



6/ Environment & Leisure



IDENTIFIED VIEWS:



Townsend
10. View from north-east Townsend Road to Pretwood Hill to the south.



Townsend
13. View highlighting openness between eastern edge of Ilminster and land beyond.



Listers Hill
16. View from very southern edge of Ilminster to the very northern ridge line.



Orchard Vale
19. Prominent views along Canal Way dominate, looking towards Herne Hill.



Townsend
11. Glimpses between existing buildings into the valley and ridges beyond.



Long Orchard Hill
14. View from east looking south back into Ilminster and the visible ridge line.



Shudrick Lane
17. Glimpses to Pretwood Hill from Ditton Street over Shudrick Lane.



20. View from Beacon footpath looking south across the town



Townsend
12. Long distance view from the east of Ilminster over the valley to Pretwood Hill.



Kingstone Hill
15. Long distance view from south entrance into Ilminster to historic park.



Canal Way
18. Far-reaching open views of recreation land and Herne Hill beyond.



POLICY ILM2

CONSERVING AND ENHANCING ILMINSTER'S ECOLOGY, SPECIES AND HABITATS

All development proposals will contribute to ecological networks, either via a financial contribution towards improvements to ecology OR through provision on site AND to the green chain identified on the Proposals Map with:

- (a) one new tree per new bedroom built;
- (b) Replacement of every tree removed by development with two trees;
- (c) The creation, protection, enhancement, restoration and/or management of all habitats;
- (d) demonstrating a net gain in biodiversity;
- (e) Provision of buffer zones of 10 metres adjacent to existing and new habitats.

Supporting Policy Text

6.13 There are no nationally designated landscapes (e.g. AONB or SSSI) within the neighbourhood plan area, however there is a wealth of green open space which is valued by the whole community for its ecology, biodiversity and visual amenity value.

6.14 Woodlands and fields surrounded by hedgerows and some significant tree belts make a valuable contribution to the wildlife character and biodiversity of the environment. The River Isle, Shudrick Stream and canal also provide an important network of waterways, associated floodplains, trees, wildlife corridors and biodiversity.

6.15 The proportion of trees in the District is lower than that of Somerset as a whole and the community are deeply concerned of the need to mitigate against climate change

through planting more trees. There is also a need to mitigate against the impact of the considerable increase in houses proposed and its associated activity it will generate.

6.16 In preparing this policy it is recognised that there is already a wealth of relevant policies in the South Somerset Local Plan Review (2016-2036). The INP supports the implementation of these policies.

6/ Environment & Leisure

POLICY ILM3

ENHANCE AND CONNECT OUR GREEN OPEN SPACES WITH A GREEN CHAIN

The Green Infrastructure network of Ilminster will be preserved and enhanced by:

- (a) Providing a well sign posted, 'Green chain' of designated green open spaces* and well sign posted, routes identified on the proposals map, where it does not compromise ecology, including safer road crossings and cycle facilities;
- (b) Providing more facilities and equipment to encourage greater use of green open spaces by all age groups;
- (c) Increasing biodiversity by attracting more wildlife, flora and fauna especially on the identified 'Green Chain';
- (d) ensure that the site allocations preserve and enhance existing open spaces and enhance the 'Green Chain' network.

* This policy applies to the following 'Designated green open spaces on the Ilminster NP Proposals Map: (1) Herne Hill Local Nature Reserve (2) Britten's Field recreation ground (3) Wharf Lane Recreation Ground (4) Winterhay Recreation Area (5) Burns Star Garden (6) The Canal (7) Cemetery North of the town centre and Beacon (8) Shudrick Stream Footpath (9) Allotments off Hill View Terrace (10) Ilminster Bowling and Tennis Club (11) Swanmead Community School Playing Field (12) Greenfyde First School playground (13) Market House and surrounds (14) St Mary's Churchyard.



Supporting Policy ILM3 Text

6.17 Green infrastructures is defined in the NPPF (2018) as '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'.

6.18 Green infrastructure in the INP area is made up of all the publicly and privately owned predominantly undeveloped open spaces, footpaths, waterways, woodlands, playing fields, parks and gardens.

6.19 Ilminster Town Council is responsible for the upkeep of a number of open spaces most notably Herne Hill- a 25 acre, diverse woodland and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Britten's Field and recreation ground comprising 19.13 acres. The Market House and Churchyard are also important civic spaces for the community.

6.20 It is essential that the green infrastructure of the whole of Ilminster is



POLICIES
Environment & Leisure

preserved and enhanced in order to successfully accommodate the anticipated population growth without an overall reduction and deterioration in the quantity and quality of the green infrastructure and its associated ecological networks.

6.21 The neighbourhood funding element of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be available to be spent on improving access to and the environments of these spaces.



6/ Environment & Leisure



POLICY ILM4

BETTER RECREATION FACILITIES FOR OUR GROWING COMMUNITY

To improve health and well-being, provide facilities for the rising population and reduce the need to travel, applicants of the allocated sites covered in Policy ILM12 must contribute towards building a new indoor sport/ recreation facility adjacent to Canal Way as designated on the proposals map.

Supporting Policy ILM4 Text

6.22 The 'Infrastructure Delivery Plan, South Somerset, January 2016' (Para.6.8) confirms 'New housing does generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities'. Priorities are sports ground enhancements and equipped play areas.

6.23 The census (2011) confirms that Ilminster has an ageing population compared to the national average. Coupled with the fact that there are few facilities for children and young people, it makes Ilminster a less attractive place for young people to live.

6.24 Consultation with young people in four local schools confirmed that they enjoy good access to the open countryside and its associated walks and cycle rides as well as playing fields. However there is a need to improve cycle paths and provide

better facilities children of a wider age range. There is a real need for a large indoor sports or recreation facilities. A swimming pool would be extremely popular.

6.25 The Ile Youth Centre on Frog Lane has good facilities. When consulted, some people suggested it would be better located adjacent to existing sports pitches, to create a more cohesive community hub closer to the larger housing estates where more families tend to live.



Greenfylde School



Swanmead School



Neroche Primary School



Wadham School

7/ Economy Tourism & Heritage



RELEVANT AIMS

7.0 Four aims of the INP most relevant to this chapter, are, as follows:

Aim 4: Make Ilminster a more self-sufficient community and reduce commuting by preserving and enhancing existing infrastructure and employment floor space (falling within use class B1 and B2 in particular) and allowing an overall increase in employment floorspace.

Aim 5: Safeguard the rural environment for local food production and recreational amenity.

Aim 6: Preserve and enhance the market town's unique built heritage and independent retail offering and recognise its needs as an increasingly desirable visitor attraction.

Vision for Economy, Tourism &

Heritage

7.1 "Our Vision for the economy, tourism and heritage of Ilminster is for a broad range of local employment opportunities to support the residual working-age population, thereby reducing commuting. All development should contribute towards the towns employment infrastructure and the market town's heritage should be protected and the rural environment safeguarded for local food production. The Town's unique independent retail offering should be retained to create an increasingly sustainable community. There needs to be greater recognition of the Town as a desirable visitor destination, re-siting the Tourism Centre in the heart of the Town".

Natalie Wainright & Matt James,
25/01/19



THE EVIDENCE BASE

7.2 The most relevant evidence base is as follows:

- South-West Rural Productivity Commission (Local Enterprise Partnership Report, 2017)
- Ilminster Community Plan, 2016-2026, (2017)
- Ilminster- By Design (Ilminster Town Council, 2001)
- Ilminster Conservation Area Statement (South Somerset District Council, 2016)
- 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
- Ilminster Settlement Profile, South Somerset District Council, 2017

- Brownfield Sites Register, South Somerset District Council, 2018
- South Somerset: Housing Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017 (HELAA)

7.3 **The South-West Rural Productivity Commission** includes the following findings of relevance to this theme:

- The South West has a bounty of natural and cultural assets that form the backdrop for both our economy and quality of life, which must be protected and enhanced to support growth in the longer term (Key findings- Theme 8: Natural and Cultural Heritage);
- There are synergies between primary production, food and drink and tourism;

- Physical hubs combining high quality design, ultrafast broadband and opportunities for collaboration are attracting new knowledge based businesses into rural areas. These hubs have the potential to achieve a transformational impact;

- South West LEPs should work with the private sector to build/upgrade a network of 'high quality collaboration space' (see the Glove Factory case study);

- Rural cycling, walking and tourism are of economic importance;

- Recreational transport infrastructure has a direct and proven link to productivity and jobs in rural areas;

- Investment in the national trail network and sustainable transport



infrastructure must be improved to achieve sustainable, inclusive growth in rural areas;

- There is demand for workspace, across all sizes and types. However, in some area, there is a significant ‘cost-value gap’ for commercial workspace developments where the end market value in rural areas is typically less than the cost of construction;
- Failure to allow rural businesses to grow, will threaten their survival. The cost value gap demonstrates that there is a continuing need for public sector intervention in some parts of the area;
- Planning is an integral part of the system and where it is working well, is a positive tool for growth. However, it is the commission’s view that in many parts of the area, poor approaches to planning are acting as a constraint on growth. It is the commission’s view that planners must respect all three principles of sustainable

development (economy, social and environmental);

- Our natural and cultural assets are vital economic assets;
- the loss of natural and cultural heritage, will cause long term damage to the economy of the South West;
- In partnership with Local Nature Partnerships, South West LEPs should invest in improving the area’s natural and cultural assets as key drivers of economic growth in rural areas (43);
- South West LEPs should explore and develop the concept of ‘environmental enterprise zones’ that put an area’s natural and cultural assets at the heart of economic development, creating opportunities for small and micro-businesses to capitalise on these distinctive assets;

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

7.4 The findings of the consultation events held in relation to this theme are

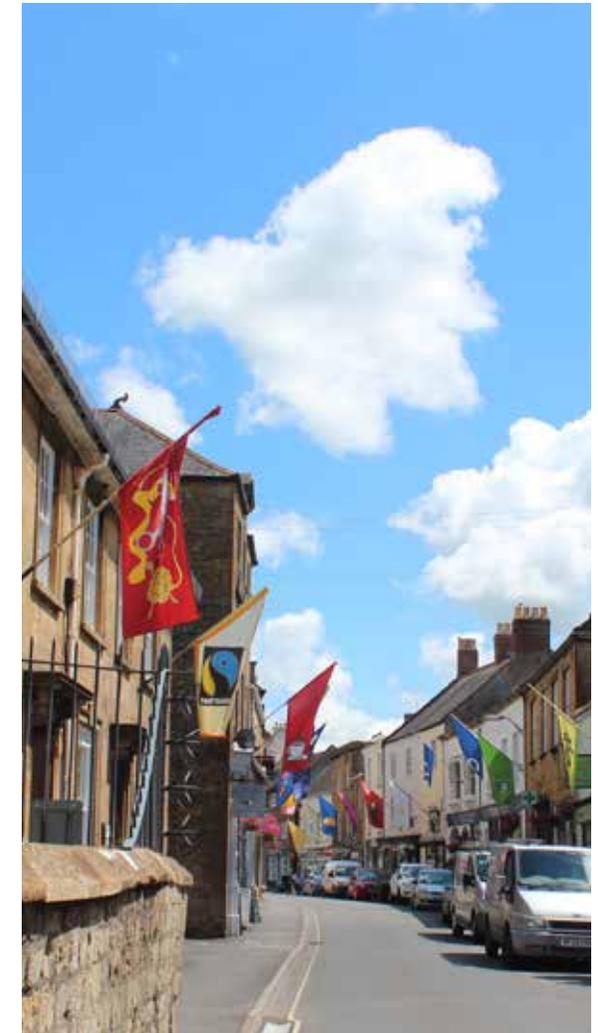
set out in the appendices and can be summarised as follows:

- Celebrate our amazing old buildings that we take for granted!
- Avoid homogenised architectural types dictated by developers which do not embrace local character and materials.
- Use brownfield sites and redundant buildings effectively for a mix of uses, especially prominent buildings.
- Employment issues are complex but we should provide more jobs in Ilminster so less people have to commute.
- Improve the attraction of the area and Ilminster for Tourists.
- Use new and improved cycling routes and a cycle hub to promote eco-tourism.
- Provide space for small businesses in Ilminster, encouraging local

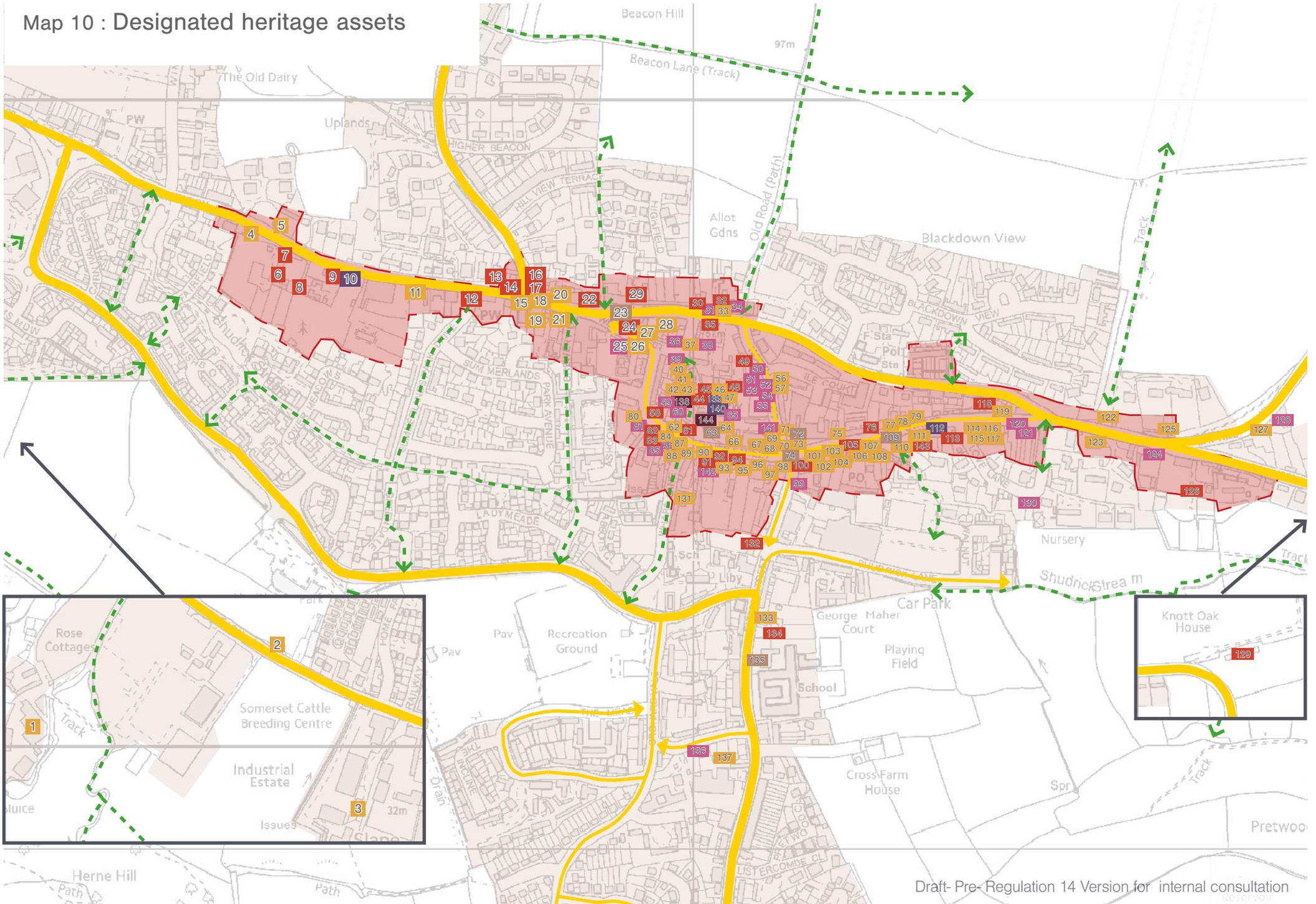


entrepreneurs.

- Create heritage trails and high quality heritage 'national trust style' attractions in the town centre.
- Celebrate the heritage of the town with fairs and events.



Map 10 : Designated heritage assets



Grade II Listed Buildings

1. Rose Mills early C19 (original building only)//
2. Old Toll House and Attached Railings mid C19//
3. Former Great Western Railway Station c1868
4. Acacia House c1830//
5. Hazelwell House and Attached Walls and Railings c1830//
6. Doniet House c1700//
7. Westerholme and Attached Gates, Gate Piers and Railings to North West C18//
8. Coach House (approx. 30m South of Westerholme early C18//
9. 31 Station Road late C18//
10. The Hermitage and Attached Pier and Walls mid C16//
11. 25 and Attached Walls, Gates and Railings early C19//
12. Summerrods and Attached Walls and Railings late C18//
13. 2 Station Road c1740//
14. 1 New Road C18//
15. Walls and Railings to Wesleyan Methodist Church c1887//
16. 4 New Road C18//
17. 2 New Road early C18//
18. 28-34 West Street early C19//
19. Wesleyan Methodist Church and Church Room 1887//
20. The Laurels (22A) and Attached Railings to 22A and 26 c1840//
21. 33 and 35 West Street early C19//
22. 8 and 10 and Attached Outbuildings, Walls and Railings mid C18//
23. K6 Telephone Kiosk designed 1935//
24. 6 West Street mid C18//
25. 11 West Street late C17//
26. 9 West Street mid C19//
27. 2 and Byrnes and Attached Wall to East early C19//
28. 47 and 48 Attached Walls early C19//
29. 21 High Street mid C18//
30. 14 High Street C18//
31. 10 High Street C17//
32. 7 High Street late C18//
33. 6 High Street early C19//
34. Bell Inn late C17//
35. 54-56 and approx. 20m of Wall East and South into North Street late C18//
36. Court Barton Cottage and Attached Wall and Railings C17//
37. Masonic Lodge early C19//
38. Abbots Court and Attached Walls and Gate Piers C17//
39. 8 and 9 and Attached Railings C17//
40. 7 Court Bartkon early C19//
41. 5 and 6 Court Barton early C19//
42. The Coach House and Attached Walls early C19//
43. Walls, Gates, Piers and Railings Attached to The Chantry C19//
44. Chest Tomb NW corner of churchyard of Parish Church of St Mary early C18//
45. Cross House and Attached Wall, Gate and Railings c1700//
46. The Old Library early C19//
47. 27-29 Walls with Gate Piers and Fronting Gates early C19//
48. The Vicarage late C18//
49. 7 Coach House and Associated Gate Piers and Rear Brick Wall early C18//
50. Holly Cottage C17//
51. Beam End C17//
52. 13 North Street C17//
53. 15 North Street C17//
54. Little Minster The Flat C17//
55. 7 and Attached Walls, Railings and Gate Piers mid C17//
56. North Street School and Attached Walls and Railings 1853//
57. 16 North Street early C19//
58. 24 Silver Street c18//
59. Stables to West of Courtyard to Dolphin Public House late C17//
60. Dolphin Public House late C17//
61. Railings, Gates and Revetment Wall to Churchyard of Parish Church of St Mary C18//
62. Standpipe to SE corner of Dolphin Public House mid C19//

63. War Memorial in St Mary Churchyard 1917//
64. Four Chest Tombs St Mary Churchyard c1800//
65. Garden Wall, Gate Piers/Gates and Railings to South of Vicarage 1700//
66. 18 and 20 Silver Street c1850//
67. 8 Silver Street early C19//
68. Lloyds Bank c1800//
69. 1 North Street early C19//
70. Shaft to Drinking Fountain C19//
71. 1 East Street early C19//
72. 3 and 5 East Street 1916//
73. The Market House c1813//
74. Telephone Kiosk West of Market House designed 1935//
75. 11,13,15 and Attached Railings and Gateway early C19//
76. Monksmead late C18//
77. Petherthon Cottage early C19//
78. 33A East Street mid C19//
79. 33,35,35a and Attached Walls, Gate Piers and Railings early C19//
80. 45 Silver Street c1840//
81. 43 Silver Street C17//
82. 41 Silver Street C18//
83. 39 Silver Street C18//
84. 37 and Attached Railings early C19//
85. 35 Silver Street C17//
86. 33 Silver Street C17//
87. 31 Silver Street early C19//
88. 29 Silver Street early C19//
89. Greenfyld North Entrance Gates 1878//
90. 25 Silver Street C19//
91. 23 Silver Street late C18//
92. 17 Silver Street late C18//
93. 15 Silver Street mid C19//
94. 13,12a and Warehouse to Rear mid C18//
95. 9,11 Silver Street early C19//
96. 7 Silver Street mid C19//
97. 5 Silver Street early C19//
98. 1,3 Silver Street c1840//
99. 1 Ditton Street C17//
100. 2 East Street late C18//
101. 8 East Street c1850//
102. National Westminster Bank c1860//
103. Barclays Bank c1840//
104. 20,22 East Street early C19//
105. 24 East Street late C18//
106. 26 East Street early C19//
107. 28 East Street early C19//
108. 30 and Attached Railings early C19//
109. Gates, Piers and Walls to Unitarian Churchyard 1913//
110. Three Chest Tombs to SW of Unitarian Church early C19//
111. 32,34 Attached Wall and Railings early C19//
112. 36, 38 Attached Wall and Railings C16//
113. Angle Cottage C18//
114. 1 Love Lane c1800//
115. 42 East Street early C19//
116. 44 East Street early C19//
117. 46,48,50 East Street early C19//
118. 55,57 East Street early C18//
119. Pump and Recess East Street end late C19//
120. 52,54 East Street C17//
121. 58,60 East Street C17//
122. 2,3 and Attached Railings, Gate Piers and Gates early C19//
123. Bay House c1840//
124. White Horse Public House and Attached Wall C17//
125. 10,11 and Attached Railings c1840//
126. Cottage to Rear of 14 C18//
127. Toll House early C19//

128. 13 Bay Hill late C17//22 Townsend C17//
129. Knott oak House and Attached Outbuildings early C18
130. 17 Love Lane late C17//
131. Greenfyld School 1878//
132. Ditton Lea and Walls, Railings and Gates mid C18//
133. 33 and Attached Walls c1820//
134. Ditton House and Walls, Gate Piers and Gates c1720//
135. Commemorative Flagpole former Ilminster Boys School c1920//
136. 5 and Attached Railings late C17//
137. Prospect Buildings c1840

Grade II* Listed Buildings

138. The Chantry mid C15//
139. 28 Court Barton c1586//
140. 29 Court Barton early C16//
141. George Hotel mid C17//
142. 19-21, Attached Gateway and Outbuildings C17//
143. Unitarian Church and School House 1718//

Grade I Listed Buildings

144. Parish Church of St Mary C15//

LEGEND:

-  Vehicular Roads
-  Walking Routes
-  SSDC Conservation Area
-  SSDC Ilminster Development Area
-  15th Century Listed Building
-  16th Century Listed Building
-  17th Century Listed Building
-  18th Century Listed Building
-  19th Century Listed Building
-  20th Century Listed Building



7/ Economy and Tourism & Heritage

POLICY ILM5

THE ILMINSTER ENVIRONMENTAL ENTERPRISE ZONE

Within The Ilminster Environmental Enterprise Zone (as shown on the proposals map) supported development must include accommodation for small businesses which capitalise on access to Ilminster's natural, heritage and cultural assets.

Supported development will include:

- (a) Improved facilities for cyclists and walkers, including cycle hubs, visitor parking and new connections to public rights of way and the national cycle network;
- (b) High quality business hubs for small and medium scale businesses;
- (c) Development that conserves or enhances the local landscape character, local distinctiveness, biodiversity and heritage assets;
- (d) Sustainable public access to the open countryside its footpaths cycle ways, nature reserves, open spaces and gardens;
- (e) A large regional scale sport or leisure facility;

Other acceptable land uses in this area include visitor

Supporting Policy ILM5 Text

7.5 In relation to more traditional industries it is recognised that manufacturing and research establishments have been attracted to Ilminster in the past and large businesses such as Gooche and Housego make a significant contribution to the local economy. The District continues to plan for more employment opportunities in Ilminster with the allocation of sites in the west of the town. The INP supports these allocations as it has the potential to make Ilminster a more sustainable town. Everyone consulted, including young people support the retention

and expansion of jobs in Ilminster and diversification of the workforce.

7.6 The 2011 census is a little dated in relation to employment figures, however some general comparisons are useful for neighbourhood planning purposes. In 2011, only 2,969 people in Ilminster were economically active out of a potential 4177 residents between the age of 16 and 74. Of these only 4.1% were unemployed, with remainder being in full time or part time work or a student. This compares with 6.3% in England and Wales. Again these figures will have changed since 2011. However a significant number of new homes are



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Economy Tourism & Heritage

planned for the town and there will be an increasing demand for jobs closer to home.

7.7 Car ownership is a useful measure of affluence and also potential commuting patterns. Car ownership in Ilminster, which is not highly accessible by public transport, is relatively high compared with the national average. Overall 83.6% of the population have one or more car in the household, this compares to 67.8% nationally. But 16.4% have no access to a car and with bus services seriously depleted in recent years, this provides a significant obstacle to jobs and training for part of the community.

7.10 Out of the people aged 16 to 74, only 3.9% (164) work from home, with 45.5% or 1899 commuting to a place of work by car. 11.6% commute on foot and only 1.2% on a bike. It should be noted that 32.2% of this age group are not in employment.

7.8 The evidence base confirms a small decline in the demand for new manufacturing floorspace, but a demand for high quality floorspace for small sized businesses in alternative sectors. In addition to this, there is a reasonable proportion of self-employed people in Ilminster and the surrounding District, all of whom may benefit from small scale business units or hubs.

7.9 Ilminster has seen a reduction in the number of manufacturing jobs in recent years. The closure of the 'Horlicks' Factory was regrettable and employment opportunities must be replaced on this site. The creation of an 'Environmental Enterprise Zone' in Ilminster will put the area's natural and cultural assets at the heart of economic development, creating opportunities for small and micro-businesses to capitalise on these distinctive assets. Ilminster Town Council would welcome the opportunity to work with the LEP to develop this further and

therefore spatial planning policies in the neighbourhood plan support this in principle.



7/ Economy and Tourism & Heritage

POLICY ILM6

ENHANCING ILMINSTER'S ECONOMY, TOURISM AND HERITAGE

Encourage more shoppers and visitors to Ilminster by preserving and enhancing its heritage assets and improving facilities to enhance the daytime and night-time economy. Change within Ilminster should improve its profile and performance as:

- (a) A unique historic market town;
- (b) A beautiful place in which to live work and learn;
- (c) A more dynamic place for business, enterprise, creativity and innovation;
- (d) An attractive centre for shopping, leisure and recreation;
- (f) A visitor destination;
- (g) A place that connects people to the historic and natural environment.

Supporting Policy ILM6 Text

7.10 Tourism provides a modest but notable contribution to the local economy and together with nearby towns a significant contribution to the regional economy.

7.11 The INP seeks to attract more visitors, in order to boost the local economy, provide more local jobs and enhance the vitality and viability of existing businesses.

7.12 It is important that the right visitors are attracted, as the town centre has a fragile infrastructure which could be easily harmed, for example by a large increase in vehicular traffic including coaches, for which there are no facilities.

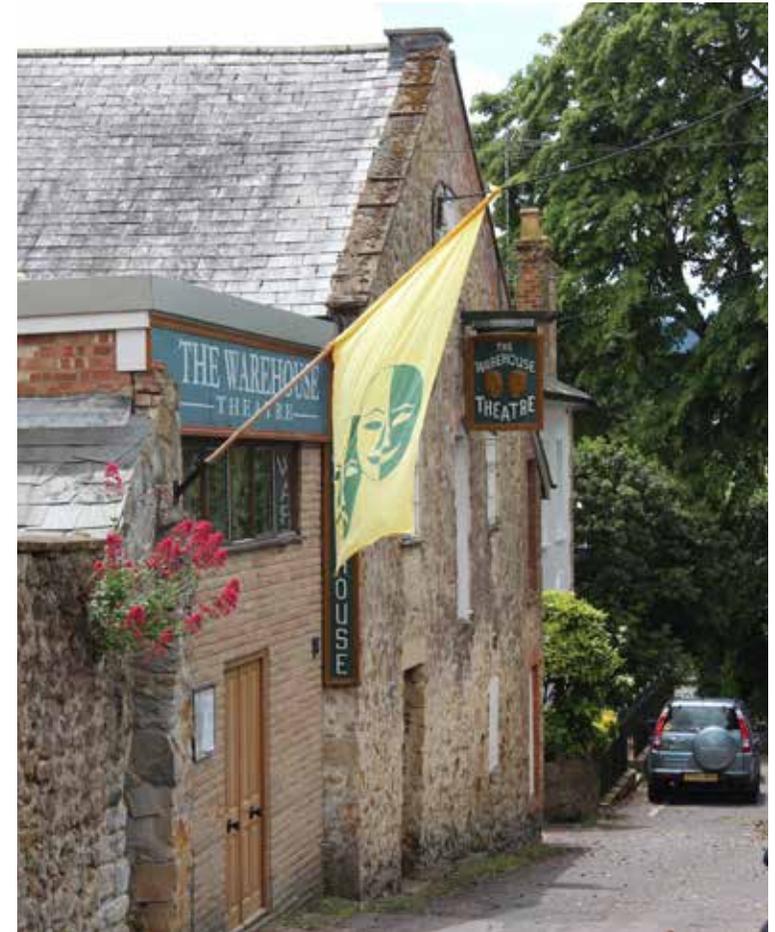
7.13 Ilminster is on the national cycle network as well as a major road junction

with the A303, and is potentially a very attractive and accessible place for long and short distance cyclists. The centre of Ilminster is accessible to the open countryside and to numerous walks, local wildlife sites, and Dillington Park.





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7/ Economy and Tourism & Heritage

POLICY ILM7

PROMOTING HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

Ilminster's historic environment shall be sustained and enhanced and all development in the wider Neighbourhood Plan area reflect its unique character.

In order to be supported development, all development must contribute, reinforce and demonstrate that it is in keeping with the identified characteristics of Ilminster, as set out below and in the Ilminster Design Guide:

- (a) Exemplary urban design in the conservation area, where the relationship between streets and public spaces present a high quality environment;
- (b) A fine, permeable, urban grain made up of streets, blocks, plots with many active street frontages which contribute to lively streets and public areas;
- (c) An extensive area of high quality architecture combining to form a

harmonious townscape ensemble;

(d) a limited palette of materials and the quality detailing skill of craftsmanship and authenticity of construction to present a coherent and high quality finish;

(e) conversion of old buildings and the creation of new buildings, which are capable being easily adapted, to a range of uses over time;

(f) a strong visual relationship between the built environment and its landscape setting providing glimpses and views, out of, within and into the Conservation Area and the green landscape setting of the town;

(g) Utilise the proximity of the conservation area and open countryside by connecting parks, facilities and open countryside on foot and bike.

Supporting Policy Text

7.14 The built heritage of Ilminster is of national importance and together with its historic core, conservation area, collection of grade 1 and 2 listed buildings, independent retailers and cultural facilities provides a unique offer which attracts residents as well as visitors. There are 144 listed buildings alone in Ilminster.

7.15 The National Planning Policy Framework, adopted and emerging policies in the South Somerset Local Plan contain numerous policies which seek to preserve and enhance the town's heritage assets, and this plan supports the implementation of these policies.



7.16 Other evidence which supports good quality design in Ilminster includes:

- Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal (2016)
- Ilminster- By Design (2001)

7.17 Despite this statutory protection and local level guidance there has been much development on the edge of Ilminster in the last 20 years which fails to reflect the character of the historic town and represents poor quality architecture.

7.18 Policies in this neighbourhood plan, supported by a Design Code seek to provide a robust policy framework and design guidance to guide future development.

7.19 The Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal (South Somerset District Council, 2016) provides the most up to date evidence base for this policy area together with the 'Ilminster- By Design' document, consultation results from the walkabouts and Design Code workshops.

7.20 The Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal confirms that the Conservation Areas' key characteristics are:

1. Tight urban grain with well contained streets dominated by good quality listed buildings.
2. Sloping topography of the core town and views out to adjacent hills and open countryside.
3. Distinctive widespread use of local Moolham Marlstone.

4. High quality ashlar stone houses and many historic shop fronts.

5. The Market a key focal point in the Market Place.

6. Minster Church of St Mary enclosed within its urban churchyard.

7. The church tower rising over the town and a feature visible from many points.

8. Widespread use of ironwork in railings and cresting to shop fronts.

9. Regency houses with round-arched central 1st floor windows.

10. Fine Ham stone door cases with broken pediments.



7.21 The most relevant points from the Ilminster- By Design, are:

1. Development follows a north/south and east/west four-point star, which enables easy access to the open countryside from wherever one lives.
2. New developments must provide for easy access to bus routes.
3. There is a continued need for an indoor leisure centre.
4. The environment should be protected and new habitats created in the form of copses, hedgerows, ditches and ponds.
5. The planting of native and broad-leaf trees is encouraged.
6. The River Isle must be retained as an exceptionally attractive open space and needs to be treated very sympathetically as a continuing corridor for wildlife.
7. Future residential development should achieve a balanced community.
8. Large tracts of near identical design are not acceptable.
9. 'The importance of accessibility for all cannot be overstated' .
10. The height of buildings should be suited to its surroundings.
11. Where feasible the ground floor should be at ground level.
12. Variety in building materials is welcomed.
13. Windows should offer access in an emergency.
- 14: A diversity of roof materials and forms should be sought with large swathes of similar roofs avoided.
15. Boundaries should be stone or brick in the majority of cases.
16. The traffic needs for any development should not be considered in isolation but with regard to its effect on the whole town.
17. Footpaths should be wide enough to allow tree planting and create green wedges between development.
18. Future development must emulate the best and correct the mistakes of the past and ensure standards rise steadily in the future.



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8/ Access & Movement



RELEVANT AIMS

8.0 Five aims of the INP most relevant to this chapter, are, as follows:

Aim 8: Provide improved and safe walking routes to all the amenities in our town centre from existing and proposed developments in order to reduce car use and improve the health and well-being of residents.

Aim 9: Create a continuous network of green habitats, parks, waterways and nature trails.

Aim 10: Reduce car use within, and to Ilminster by working with partners to encourage better bus services to surrounding towns and stations and outlying villages.

Aim 11: Reduce car movements in the town centre by promoting various traffic management measures.

Aim 12: Plan for the greater use of sustainable transport, by providing car charging points, cycle racks and comfortable bus stops.

Our Vision for Access and Movement in Ilminster is:

8.1 “A Reduction of car usage, and the Creation of our own transport systems including volunteer buggy drivers. Creation of new off-street car parking areas and a bus park. Improvement of bus services with our outlying villages which are vital to our local economy”.

David J and Colin B, 25/01/2019



THE EVIDENCE BASE

8.2 The Transport, working group undertook **‘A Review of Public Transport in Ilminster’ in November 2017**, the findings can be summarised as follows:

- Ilminster has one bus service (30) which compares poorly to other towns in the area.
- The bus (30) is often overcrowded and northwards is no longer via the town centre.
- There is a need for a Park&Ride/ Shuttle bus to the west of the town and hamlets for use by school children/ families etc.
- There is an urgent need for a bus service to Taunton four times a day.
- No bus services on Sunday, to hospital, to nearby villages, or to the coast.

- There is increased demand for buses from proposed dwellings, yet no new bus routes are proposed.
- The main recommendations include:
 - a shelter/ seats at Orchard Vale/ Library bus stop;
 - a new bus service from Ilminster Market Square;
 - better entry points into town.
 - a shared surface in the centre of town.
 - Trading commercial vans on market day should be regulated and charged

8.3 The South Somerset District Council, Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Update 2015/16) Part One – Spatial Summary (January 2016) states

that proposals for the dualling of the A303 and the A358 from the A303 at Southfields roundabout, along with proposed improvements to junction 25 of the M5, will significantly enhance road connectivity to the motorway network. This will give Ilminster a strategic offer to businesses and commuters, affecting the growth potential of the town.

8.4 The **Settlement Profile for Ilminster (SSDC, October 2017)** confirms that ‘Ilminster is under-served by public transport and would benefit from improved bus services’. (para 6.4)

8.5 **Census Data (2011)** provides levels of car ownership rates. It confirms that 16.4% of the population have no access to a car or van, whilst this is low compared with the national average of 25% it reflects the town's rural location. It is slightly higher than South Somerset as



8/ Access & movement

a whole, with 14.7% having no access to a car or van. Many of those households fall into the retired category.

8.6 The Ilminster Community Plan

2016-2026 reiterates the census findings and confirms that a significant number of older and young people are reliant upon public transport, taxis or other people providing lifts. This restricts their ability to access services and places. As Ilminster is a small town, many people get about on foot.

8.7 A number of issues were identified. In relation to pedestrians these are:

- Crossing from Market House to the corner of East Street and Ditton Street;
- Narrow pavements, particularly along Ditton Street;

- Some poorly lit pavements making it difficult to walk about at night;

Main issues for drivers:

- Perception of limited free short stay parking spaces – for very quick shopping trips;
- No residential parking scheme for town centre residents;
- Inconsiderate parking on pavements;
- One way system in Ditton Street making it difficult for residents living north of town centre wanting to use the Tesco car park, which is free for up to three hours.

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

8.8 The objectives and policies and of this part of the plan have been prepared

in consultation with local residents and businesses, though a series of presentations, meetings and email correspondence in 2018 and 2019.

8.9 Comments made by the wider community are summarised below:

- The need for additional car parking specifically for businesses and residents and free car parking to attract more people to the town centre.
- There is a need for better traffic management and pedestrian crossings near the library, Station Road and Canal Way.
- Students commented that ‘All roads lead to Tesco!’ and that ‘Ditton Street should be made 2 way (With traffic priority given to north/south traffic). Traffic lights could be used’.



POLICIES
Access & Movement

- There should be a reduction in traffic volume, noise and speeds in the centre.
- Pavements should be made wider for all pedestrians.
- Better cycleways are needed in the whole of Ilminster.
- There should be a shared space in the town centre with a review of the one-way system.
- Electric car charging and coach parking should be provided on West Street and at Tesco.
- A need for better entry points into town
- There is concern about what potential impact traffic is having on the historic buildings.
- All new developments should incorporate a sufficient number of spaces

for a family. Spaces/ garages must be large enough and electric car charging and bike storage should be incorporated.

8.10 At our school workshops in June 2019, we had some excellent feedback from a range of ages, on issues relating to road safety, cycling and walking, which are summarised below:

- Participants showed places on plans that they 'don't like'. These all related to busy road junctions.
- Older students said we should NOT pedestrianise the center of Ilminster.
- The junction of the A303/A358 is a significant barrier to pedestrian and cycle movement and should have a new pedestrian and cycle bridge.
- All roundabouts should be replaced by traffic lights!

• There is a need for better signs to footpaths especially to the recreation ground.

- Better cycle routes needed across the town centre to connect up existing cycle paths.

8.11 A neighbourhood plan is a land-use plan and it is beyond its remit to provide specific policies in relation to the provision of bus or parking services. It can however include the provision of built facilities in the neighbourhood plan and provide support for a number of priority improvement projects that the Town Council would like to see coming forward.

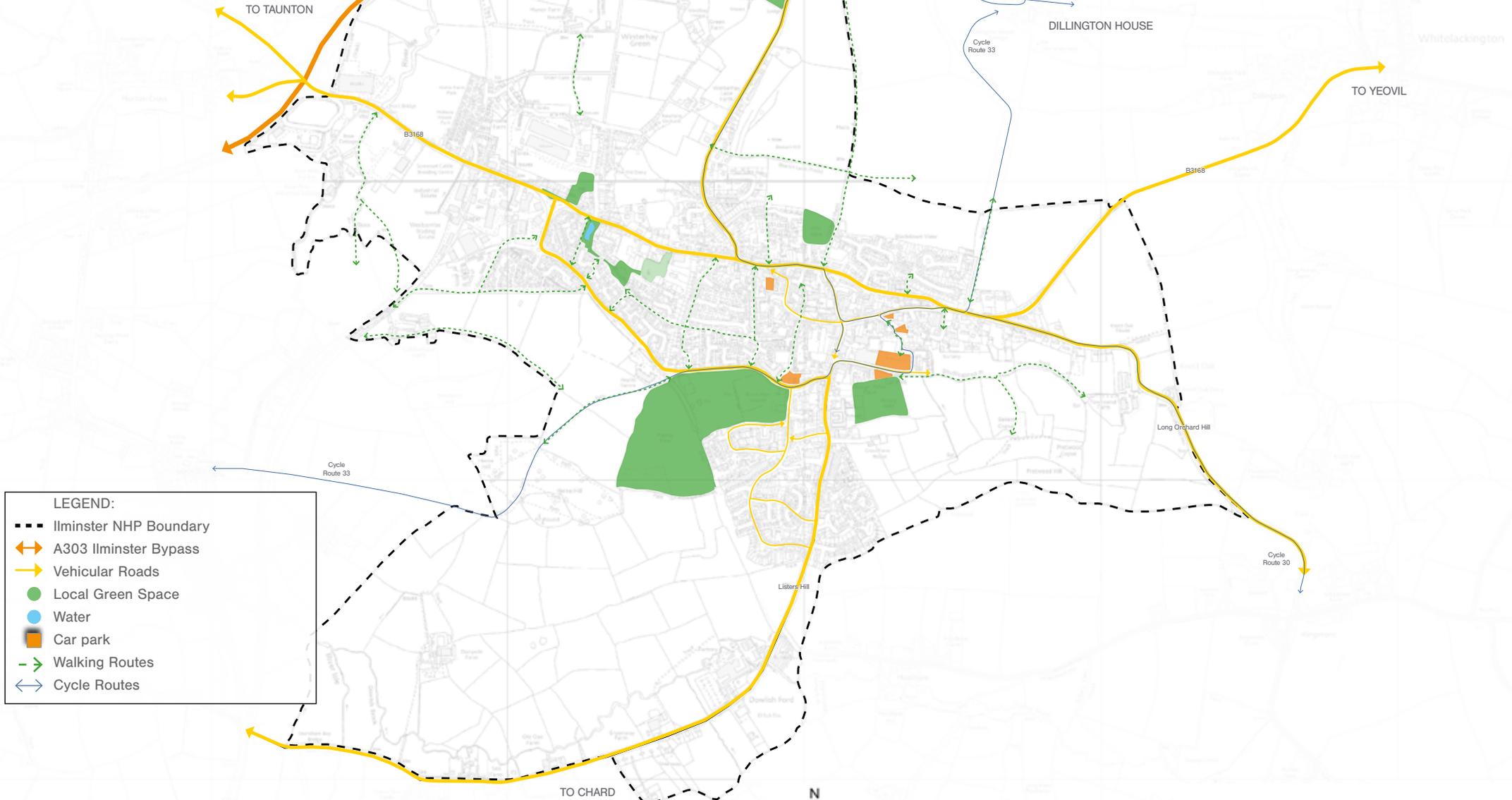


8/ Access & movement



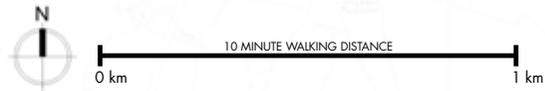
MAP 11

ACCESS & MOVEMENT



LEGEND:

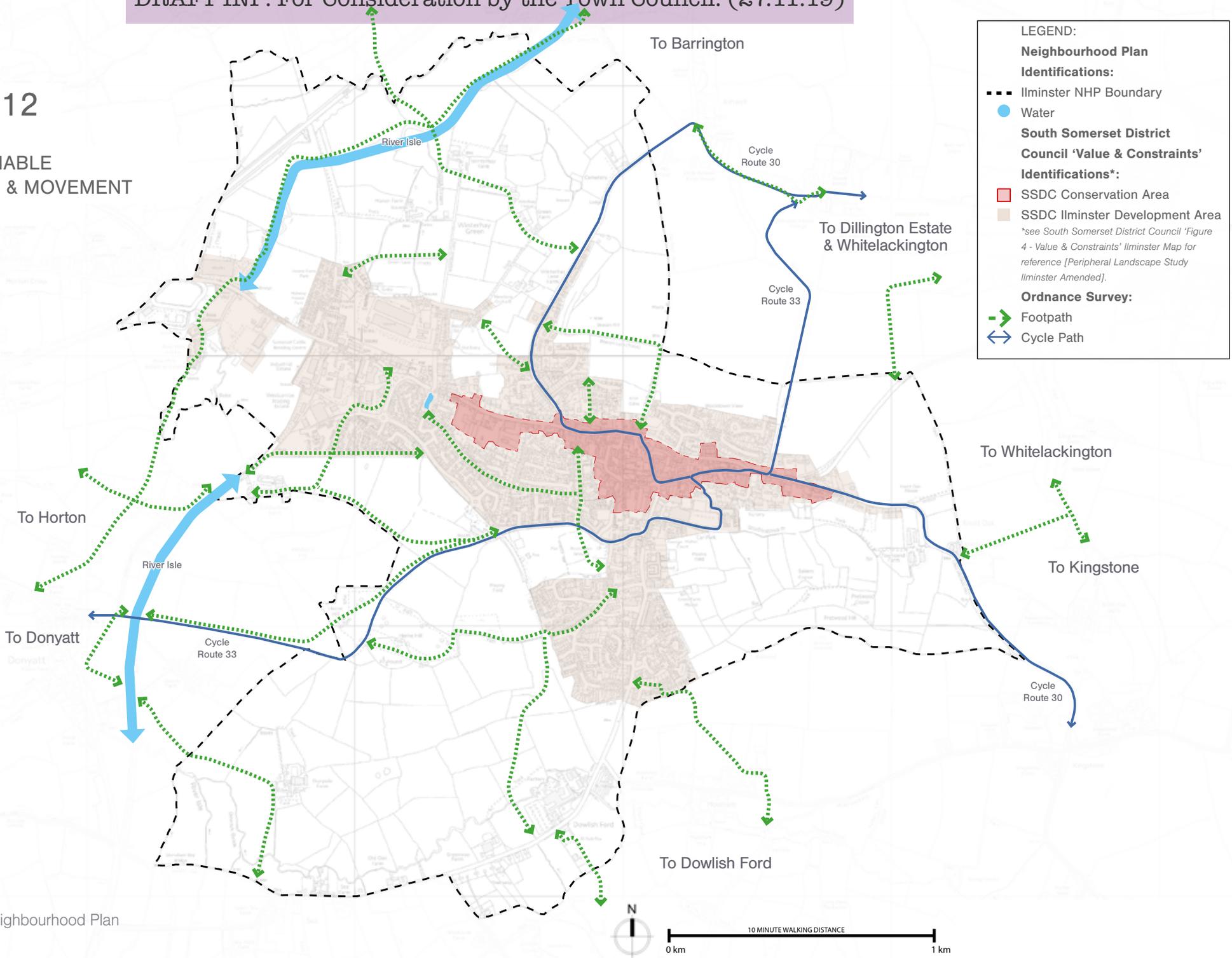
- Ilminster NHP Boundary
- ↔ A303 Ilminster Bypass
- Vehicular Roads
- Local Green Space
- Water
- Car park
- - -> Walking Routes
- > Cycle Routes





MAP 12

SUSTAINABLE ACCESS & MOVEMENT





8/ Access & movement

POLICY ILM8

ENCOURAGING SHOPPERS AND VISITORS INTO ILMINSTER CENTRE

Encourage more shoppers and visitors to Ilminster by improving access for all:

Supported projects include:

- (a) Welcoming pedestrians- Public realm enhancements and provision of dropped curbs at key gateways, as shown on the proposals map, in particular adjacent to Market House;
- (b) Welcoming Cyclists- Provision of cycle friendly streets, sensitively designed racks and signage and removal of barriers on cycle paths;
- (c) Managing Cars- Reduce cars in the centre by improving the quality and accessibility of existing car parks, reducing charges, improving paths and pavements, signage, lighting, layout and accessibility.
- (d) Welcoming bus travel - Improve the bus stops with sensitively designed street furniture and

Supporting Policy ILM8 Text

8.12 Ilminster has good access to the strategic road network being on the junction with the A303 and A358. It is also on the national cycle network, with numerous footpaths covering the surrounding hillsides. However there is poor accessibility to Ilminster by Public Transport, with bus services to outlying villages and some essential services, such as hospital, very poor indeed.

8.13 The dispersed nature of development of the town to the west, together with the steep topography in some areas, makes the town centre outside walking and cycling distance for a number of residents. Therefore, short

journeys by car to the town centre are common.

8.14 Lack of parking for visitors and shoppers within the centre is a continual issue. There are numerous free spaces on street, however there are conflicts with pedestrians and damage being done to historic buildings.

8.15 The population of Ilminster is due to expand significantly in the next 10-20 years and there is increasing pressure on the existing infrastructure.



POLICIES
Access & Movement



Mitchells Hill - This area is an abundance of ancient fields that line the cycle and bridle paths running from Canal Way to the disused railway managed by Sustrans, to the South-West of Iminster. Far reaching views such as this are examples of key visual and way finding connectivity between the centre of Iminster and the surrounding landscape, promoting sustainable access as pedestrians and cyclists move throughout the town.



Mitchells Hill



Looking back into Iminster from the South-West disused railway, a landmark view providing a sense of place and way finding.

8/ Access & Movement



POLICY ILM9

SAFE, INTERESTING WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

Supported development will improve walking and cycling routes, within development sites and on the proposed 'Ilminster Green Chain' as shown on the proposals map (and in accordance with Policy ILM10) by including:

- (a) Improvements to the National Cycle Network route 30 & 33, including better signage, surfaces, road markings and priority at key junctions;
- (b) Provision of safe walking routes, defined as 'pavements and paths wide enough to meet demand, with dropped curbs at key junctions, sufficient lighting and safe road crossings'.

Supporting Policy ILM9 Text

8.16 The promotion of Ilminster as a walking and cycling hub in the centre of Somerset would be consistent with the aims of the neighbourhood plan, policies in the 'Economy, Tourism and Heritage' Chapter as well as the local plan and other economic development strategies.

8.17 Ilminster currently lacks the quality and quantity of facilities which could attract a meaningful number of walkers and cyclists. It is considered that the provision of improved core facilities could put Ilminster on the regional and potential national map as a centre for cycling and walking.

8.18 Potential new facilities could include free toilets and parking, good sign posting, utilisation of existing eating and drinking facilities open during the day and evenings and venues for potential events and festivals. Consideration should also be given to the provision of specialist style

accommodation such as affordable eco accommodation, youth hostels, guest houses, cabins and camping.



8/ Access & Movement

POLICY ILM10

WELCOME PEOPLE TO ILMINSTER

Supported development must welcome visitors, by all means of transport, by improving the public realm, signage, pedestrian and cycle crossings.

Improvements to the following gateways and junctions into Ilminster town centre are particularly encouraged:

- (a) East Street and Butts
- (b) Bay Hill and Townsend
- (c) North Street and HighStreet/Butts
- (d) New Road, Station Road and West Street
- (e) Station Road and Riec-Sur-Belon Way

Supporting Policy Text

8.19 Paragraph 8.2-8.6 above confirms that the entrances into Ilminster are difficult to negotiate for cyclists and pedestrians making it less attractive for people to walk and cycle into and across Ilminster centre in particular. It is important to make these gateways easier to use if we are to encourage walking and cycling.

8.20 These entry points and road junctions also fail to provide an attractive environment to encourage visitors to explore further into the centre of Ilminster by car and foot. Heritage signage and public realm improvements could give a flavour of the character of Ilminster whilst also enhancing the setting of adjacent heritage assets.

8.21 Entry into Ilminster has re-orientated in the Twentieth Century from the north and east to the west, where there are good connections to the major road

network. However, the entrance into Ilminster from the western approaches is poorly sign posted and a poor quality environment, dominated by industrial development and retail forecourts along Station Road. It does not resemble the character of central Ilminster or provide a good quality place and gateway in its own right.



8/ Access & Movement

POLICY ILM11

THE LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE OF THE HISTORIC MARKET TOWN CENTRE

Proposals will be supported where they provide:

- (a) A high quality, vibrant market destination and local amenity space befitting its important heritage status;
- (b) Public realm enhancements which encourage people to linger and provide safe, level road crossings;
- (c) A shared surface approach where pedestrians have priority over vehicular traffic most of the time;
- (d) Suitable access and servicing arrangements for the market, businesses, residents and short-stay parking.

Supporting Policy ILM11 Text

8.22 There are some significant heritage assets, including Market House, in the centre of Ilminster which are becoming damaged as result of pollution, parked cars, passing traffic and its associated signage and road markings. There is much potential to improve the setting of this unique heritage asset, without significantly altering the amount of on-street parking and vehicular movements.

8.23 Clearly a brief needs to be developed with the Community and other stakeholders for any improvements, however the provision of a new shared surface, for example could enhance:

- Pedestrian access;
- Access for those with more complex mobility needs such as those using a buggy or wheelchair with more dropped curbs/ at

level crossings;

- Clearer parking bays for parked cars that need to use the town centre;
- Potentially larger area for market stall holders;
- Potentially larger area for events;
- Improvements to the setting of Market House and adjacent listed buildings;

8.24 New housing development proposed within Ilminster will inevitably affect the towns fragile infrastructure, including the historic market town centre. Improvements to the environment here are therefore essential if development is to be accommodated in a successful manner. A project as set out in this policy should therefore be funded through the neighbourhood portion of CIL and other central pots of CIL and S.106 funds.

9/ Homes & Places for Living

OUR AIMS

9.0 Relevant Aims for this part of the Neighbourhood Plan are:

Aim 1: Provide a suitable mix of homes to serve existing and potential residents of Ilminster, including homes for local families, affordable homes and older residents.

Aim 2: Allocate sustainable sites for a suitable number of new homes, including self-build, which have good access to the countryside and town centre, in order to support our shops and services and promote walking and well-being.

Aim 3: Achieve the highest standards of design for all new homes, suitable for their occupants, in particular, by providing well laid out developments, with suitable levels of parking and bungalows which reflect the character and appearance of Ilminster and generate a proportion of their own energy needs on site.

Aim 4: Make Ilminster a more self-sufficient community and reduce commuting by preserving and enhancing existing infrastructure and employment floor space (falling within use class B1 and B2 in particular) and allowing an overall increase in employment floorspace.

Aim 5: Safeguard the rural environment for local food production.

Aim 6: Preserve and enhance the market town's unique built heritage and independent retail offering and recognise its needs as an increasingly desirable visitor attraction





Our Vision and Aims for Housing in Ilminster:

9.1

‘Ilminster’s rural location, heritage and character make it a vibrant and friendly market town. Offering a wealth of services and amenities, with excellent road and rail links, Ilminster is a highly desirable place in which to live, work and learn. The vision for the built environment is to achieve a well-balanced development of both homes and employment, while protecting the natural environment and promoting well-being. To achieve this, sustainable sites for a suitable number of new homes and workplaces, with good access to the countryside and town centre will be allocated’

Housing Working Group: Tony Walker, Bryan Ferriss, Annie Murdoch, Henrietta Van den Bergh

AIM 1. To provide a suitable mix of desirable developments that reflect Ilminster’s historic built environment and surrounding countryside. These homes will serve existing and potential residents of Ilminster, or all ages and needs, including: Homes suitable for people with disabilities; Live/work homes; Affordable homes; Homes for older residents; First-time buyer homes; Self-build homes; Executive homes; Rental homes.

By providing a variety of dwelling types, homogenised development will be avoided and Ilminster’s unique character will be enhanced.

AIM 2. To maintain Ilminster’s historic hill and vale development pattern.

AIM 3. To promote health and well-being, all new development will have easy access to the: Countryside - whilst protecting it as an amenity; Town centre - to support our shops and services.

AIM 4. To maintain or enhance the countryside and natural habitats, each new development will provide habitat corridors, nature trails,



MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

9.2

The Town Council conducted five workshops from June-July 2018, and ECA on behalf of the Council also held a walkabout and workshop on 16th February 2019. Workshops for children at each of the schools serving Ilminster - Greenfylde, Swanmead, Neroche and Wadham were undertaken in June 2019.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group also discussed ideas with the wider community at ILMEX in June 2019.

9.3

The findings of these consultation events are summarised as follows:

- Support more housing in Ilminster to support the long term vitality and viability of the market town.
- All new housing must reflect the needs of existing and new residents.

- Ensure that all new development offers variety, is attractive and is in keeping with its surroundings.

- Encourage walking and cycling, while ensuring sufficient parking and garages.

- Provide houses large enough for a family to grow into, thereby supporting sustainable communities.

- Provide adequate social housing particularly for local residents who are in need.

- Consider live/work units to reduce the need to commute to other centres.

- Provide home types for all ages, price points and identified needs including flats, bungalows, chalet bungalows, houses from affordable to executive homes with associated green spaces and gardens both private and public to attract a mix of residents.

- Position home types to ensure a mixed, balanced development.

- Avoid homogenised architectural types dictated by developers which do not embrace local character and materials.

9.4

The policies and aims of this part of the plan have been prepared in consultation with local residents, businesses, and South Somerset Council, through a series of presentations, meetings and email correspondence in 2019.



POLICIES

Homes & Places for Living

THE EVIDENCE BASE

9.4

The evidence base for the housing policies is listed below:

- Iminster Housing Needs Assessment, Aecom 2019
- Iminster Town Housing Needs Survey, 27 June 2018
- Call for Sites and Site Selection Report, ECA, 2019
- Iminster Community Plan, 2016-2026
- 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
- Iminster Settlement Profile, South Somerset District Council, 2017
- Brownfield Sites Register, South Somerset District Council, 2018
- Peripheral Landscape Study- Iminster, South Somerset District Council, 2007
- South Somerset: Housing Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017 (HELAA)

- South Somerset Local Housing Land Supply (August 2018)

9.5

Iminster Town Council commissioned The Community Council for Somerset to undertake a Housing Needs Survey in 2018, to better understand and meet the housing needs of residents. This included a review of the Housing Market and Census Data. The Housing Survey was distributed to all households on the electoral role in the parish. From a population of 5700, the survey attracted 379 responses, a 13% response rate (based on household data). The findings are summarised as follows:

- 23 respondents indicate an affordable/social rent housing need over the next five years. Nine respondents would consider other affordable low cost housing options such as rent to buy, shared ownership, owner-occupied affordable and self build. The 23 respondents are likely to qualify for:
- 15, one bedroom units;

- Four two-bed,
- Two three-bed
- Two four-bed homes.
- A further 24 respondents have preference for other low cost/affordable housing options over the next five years, such as shared ownership/equity, owner-occupied affordable, rent to buy, self/custom build and discounted market homes.
- 84 respondents are looking to buy housing on the open market over the next 10 years.
- 90 older people plan to move in the next five years (around one in five of them are also looking for low cost affordable housing options).

South Somerset Local Housing Land Supply (August 2018)

9.6

Since August 2018, the SSDC has demonstrated a four-year supply of housing, against its target for a five-year housing supply. Planning applications are



currently determined against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Para 11: ‘Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.’. Until a neighbourhood plan is adopted or reaches an advanced stage all planning applications will be determined on this basis.

Brownfield Land Register, 2018

9.7

Five sites in Ilminster have been identified as suitable for development, with a total capacity of 223 dwellings:

- “Former Powrmatic, Winterhay Lane, Ilminster” (72) (Under construction)
- “Land north of Station Road” (Part of the Horlicks Farm) (80) (Outline Planning Application stage)
- “Police Station, Butts, Ilminster” (7) (Developed and inhabited)

- “Former Cheese Factory Site, Station Road, Ilminster (Part of the Horlicks Farm) (50) (Outline Planning Application stage)
- “Gooch & Housego, Cornhill, Ilminster” (14)

It should be noted that these sites are at different planning application/ development stages, and will be reviewed periodically to keep dwelling numbers up-to-date.



POLICIES

Homes & Places for Living



Iminster Neighbourhood Plan

9/ Housing



POLICY ILM12

AMOUNT AND LOCATION OF OUR NEW HOMES

To meet the SSDC Local Plan target and housing needs of the Ilminster community, the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan supports the sustainable and phased development of up to 839 additional homes between 2016 and 2036 in the following locations:

2016-2021: 128 homes

Small sites completed/committed: 119

Other windfall: 9

2021-2026: 250 homes

Strategic Site Phase 1: Canal Way, up to 200 (Site ref: 10)

Strategic Site Phase 1: Station Road, up to 50 (Site ref: 25)

2026-2031: 250 homes

Strategic Site Phase 2: Canal Way, up to 200 (Site Ref:10)

Strategic Site Phase 2: Station Road, up to 50 (Site Ref: 25)

2031-2036: 211 homes

The Swan (Site ref: 23): 2

Gooch and Housego (Site ref: 24): 14

Land East of Winterhay Lane (Site ref: 19): 35

Daido Car Park, Station Rd (Site ref: 30): 29

Land rear of New Wood House, The Beacon (Site ref: 12): 15

Greenway Farm, Dowlish Ford (Site ref: 17): 43

Land to east of Winterhay Lane & Old Dairy (Site ref: 22): 30

Land to East of Greenway, Dowlish Ford (REF: 31): 43

Supporting Policy Text

Why we identified and allocated sites for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan

9.8

Evidence contained in the Emerging South Somerset Local Plan (2016-2036, preferred options consultation) confirms that there is a need for additional dwellings within Ilminster during the current plan period. Ilminster is the fifth largest settlement in South Somerset and has grown considerably in recent years, reflected in the fact that in seven years (2001-2008) the number of people living in the town increased by almost 20%.

9.9

The community wants to plan positively for new homes and direct development to the most desirable and appropriate locations. To be a truly sustainable town, preserving and enhancing existing employment and services, Ilminster needs an increase in its residential population.

How much Housing do we need to plan for?

9.10

The housing target for Ilminster in the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Preferred Options Policy SS2 sets a target



of 839 dwellings for Ilminster. Outline planning permission has been granted and committed to, for 400 dwellings South West of Canal Way, with a further 113 dwellings completed or committed to between 2016-2018 totalling 513 dwellings. To meet the target, Ilminster is required to deliver a further 326 new homes.

Which sites were identified?

9.11

Neighbourhood Planning Guidance (as contained in the Planning Practice Guidance) confirms that a Neighbourhood Plan may allocate sites for development and the qualifying body should carry out an appraisal of options and an assessment of individual sites against clearly identified criteria. The INP commissioned ECA to undertake an independent assessment of sites, which form an integral part of our evidence base. In addition, to understand the views of the Ilminster Community, ECA held workshops with children at the four schools serving Ilminster and held Site Allocation Workshop. The results of these activities informed the site allocations.

How the alternative sites were identified

9.12

To identify the potential sites, the following sources of evidence were used:

- Ilminster 'Call for Sites' results, captured over six weeks up to 1st July 2019. The Ilminster community were invited via press, email and Ilminster Town Council website to provide information on suitable development sites.
- SSDC Local Plan Site allocations-existing and proposed;
- Planning permissions and refusals;
- The South Somerset Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment report (HELAA) September 2018
- Desktop review of vacant and derelict land and buildings
- Site visits to Ilminster including a walkabout on 16th February 2019.

Assessment Criteria

9.13

ECA developed a set of criteria based on guidance which was ratified by SSDC (Planning Policy Officers).

9.14

Development potential of sites was calculated taking into account densities set out in the adopted Local Plan. Paragraph 10.23 of which states that the average net density of developments in the District is 30 Dwellings Per Hectare (DPH). The South Somerset HELAA (paragraph 2.19) also sets densities for specific site sizes.

9.15

Factors considered when assessing the sites included:

- Physical limitations or problems such as access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination;
- Potential impacts including the effect upon landscape features, nature and heritage conservation;
- Appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed;

9/ Housing



POLICY ILM13

TYPES OF NEW HOMES

All new housing developments* will provide an adequate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and tenure in accordance with the findings of the Ilminster Housing Needs Assessment (2019) or any subsequent update.

Development will be expected to provide:

(1) At least 20% of new homes to be built to accessible and adaptable standards to meet the requirements of Building Regulations M4(2) meeting lifetime home standards.

(2) On sites of 20 or more dwellings a target of 5% of homes to be provided as serviced plots for self-build and/or custom build homes

(3) A suitable mix of sizes, as follows:

- (a) Up to 6%, one bedroom flats subject to the design being wholly in keeping with the character of the Town;
- (b) 14%, two bedroom flats or houses;
- (c) 25%, two or three bedroom bungalows;
- (d) 40%, three bedroom houses;
- (e) 15%, four-bedroom plus houses OR live-work units.

Affordable Housing in accordance with adopted South Somerset Local Plan.

*on sites with less than five dwellings, this policy will be applied more flexibly depending on the character of the site and development.

Supporting Policy Text

9.16

Policy ILM13 has been informed by The Ilminster Housing Needs Survey (2018) and The Ilminster Housing Needs Assessment (Aecom, 2019) the findings of which are summarised below and are reflected in the INP policies.

9.17

The tenure profile of Ilminster is almost identical to that of the wider South Somerset district. In Ilminster and South Somerset:

- 70% of homes are owned
- 14% are socially rented
- 13% are private rented
- Less than 1% are shared ownership.



The 2011 census confirms that between 2001-2011 there was a notable increase in shared ownership in Ilminster (21.4%), social rented (29.8%) and home ownership (20.4%). The most significant increase is that of private rented homes at 137.4%. Whilst there was a notable increase in shared ownership homes in Ilminster at 21.4%, this is lower than both the District and National growth levels (72.1% and 30% respectively).

9.18

There has been a steady growth in house prices between 2009 and 2018. Only shared ownership (25%), affordable rent and social rent tenures remain affordable for those earning within the median household income. The Ilminster Housing Needs Assessment (Aecom, 2019) states that as the social and affordable rent tenures remain the most affordable in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, it is necessary to adhere to Policy HG2 of the draft emerging SSDC Local Plan (2016-2036) where 80% of all affordable housing should consist of these housing tenures. The remaining 20% should consist of shared ownership (25-50%) as this

is the only affordable housing tenure that will enable home ownership in Ilminster.

9.19

Although Ilminster demographics usually run congruent with that of South Somerset, there are far lower proportions of people aged between 25-44 in the area and higher proportions of those aged 65-84. It also illustrates the significant jump that can be expected in the over 65 population as Ilminster's large 45-64 age cohort ages over the Plan period.

(Paragraph 16, Housing Needs Assessment, AECOM, 2019). Therefore the recommended split in house size mixes in Ilminster differs significantly from the house mix targets stated in the emerging local plan policy HG4 (see Basic Conditions Statement in appendices). Based on specific local housing needs our calculations should be considered in any policy relating to Ilminster's housing mix.

9.20

Given that Ilminster's young and also ageing population will increasingly need smaller dwellings, it is logical that the recommended

dwelling mix for new development up to 2036 should focus on the provision of two-bedroom and three-bedroom homes suitable to downsizers and young families, at the expense of much larger homes.

9.21

In terms of the types of dwellings required, smaller and more affordable housing types, such as terraces and flats may meet local housing need best. Moreover, it is also advisable to promote the delivery of bungalows in order to meet the needs of the whole community.

9.22

There is a specific need for between 162 and 659 dwellings for the elderly (Aecom, 2019). This is the total number of additional units needed to meet the specialist housing needs of Ilminster). While it is important to maximise the accessibility of all new housing, it is particularly important for specialist housing for the elderly to be provided in sustainable, accessible locations. This is a challenge in Ilminster with its many topographical and heritage constraints.

9/ Housing



POLICY ILM14

ALLOCATED OR SMALL BROWNFIELD SITES

Within the INP settlement boundary, there is a presumption in favour of all development on allocated sites as set out in Policy ILM12.

Any infilling within the settlement boundary will be in strict accordance with the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan Design Guide and Policies and have regard to the character of immediately adjoining properties and sites, considering:

- Layout
- Density,
- Front, rear and side gardens
- Size of dwellings
- Character
- Appearance

Supporting Policy Text

9.23

Evidence confirms that Ilminster has benefited from a number of small developments (termed as Windfall Sites). Windfall sites, generally contribute positively to the housing stock and provide development opportunity for smaller developers and self-builders.

9.24

The Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan includes a Design Guide. Developments are required to adhere to these on all sites from strategic sites (such as land South West of Canal way and Station Road) to medium or small development sites.

POLICIES

Homes & Places for Living

9/ Housing

**POLICY ILM15****DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF STRATEGIC SITES**

New development on the two strategic sites, namely on (1) land South West of Canal Way and (2) Station Road, should deliver high quality sustainable communities in accordance with national and Local Plan policy. In addition, it must adhere to the following development principles:

- (a) Contribute positively to the area's character, scale, layout, height and form and conform with national and local plan, design and heritage policies as well as other policies in the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan;
- (b) Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and reduce fuel poverty, the provision of on-site renewable energy sources to meet a minimum of 10% of predicted energy use of the residential development;
- (c) Incorporate sustainable landscaping with associated maintenance and management plans, in consultation with Somerset Wildlife Trust, which includes minimal hard (non-permeable) landscaping and maximum net gain of native species (flora and fauna) for optimal biodiversity;

(d) Incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) including swales and ditches and provision for their ongoing maintenance;

(e) Provide areas of meaningful landscaping for amenity space, nature conservation, walking, playing and cycling routes on areas adjacent to: (i) the site boundary (ii) areas of ecological importance (iii) waterways (iv) local nature reserves;

(f) Provide high quality cycle and pedestrian routes within the site and into Ilminster's town centre to prevent a car dominated environment;

(g) Bury utility supplies underground in most instances;

(h) Provide an adequate amount of car parking spaces within the site, to limit on-street parking on the adjacent streets, in accordance with the Somerset County Council Parking Strategy or any subsequent adopted policy documents;

(i) Encourage full planning applications, with detailed design and layouts, for early stage consideration in relation to Ilminster's unique heritage and environment, as outline planning applications do not include sufficient detail for well-considered decision making.

