

HORTON PARISH COUNCIL

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF HORTON PARISH COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT **BROADWAY HILL METHODIST CHURCH** ON **TUESDAY 16th DECEMBER 2025** COMMENCING AT 6.30PM.

1C) Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.

1d) Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask or answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

1e) The period of time which is at the Chairman's discretion.

1f) Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless invited by the Chairman to provide further information.

1g) In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate. Questions from the members of the public to the council requiring an answer (if possible) must be submitted to the clerk on or before the Monday before the Parish Council meeting



Z Bougourd StSLCC- Parish
Clerk/RFO

10th December 2025

Agenda:

- 1: To discuss and consider the Parish Council's response to the outline Planning Application for 150 new dwellings off Broadway Hill, Horton.

- 2: To discuss the engagement and cost of using a Planning Consultant to advise the Council regarding responding to the Planning Application as noted above.



Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Somerset

Planning Statement

**(including Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms, Local Housing Needs Assessment,
and Public Open Space, Play and Recreation Statement)**

ON BEHALF OF GLEESON LAND

October 2025

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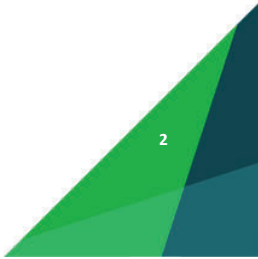
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Appendices

- 1 - Pre-Application Response
- 2 - EIA Screening Opinion
- 3 – Education Statement



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Gleeson Land to support an outline planning application with all matters reserved except access, for development at the Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Somerset ("the Application Site"). The description of development is:

"Outline planning application with all matters reserved, other than access from Broadway Hill, for the construction of up to 150 residential dwellings with open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure and potential expansion of Horton Playing Field." ("the Proposed Development")

- 1.2 The following sections of this Statement set out the planning history relevant to the development of the Application Site, describe the planning policy context and the proposed development, and set out the justification for the proposals. Further information is provided in the Design and Access Statement and the other supporting documents submitted with the application.

- 1.3 The Proposed Development will deliver the following key benefits:

- Provision of up to 150 high-quality residential dwellings to boost housing supply in the area;
- Delivery of 35% affordable homes, compliant with the requirements of the relevant development plan policy;
- An extensive amount of public open space over and above adopted policy requirements, including high quality private and communal amenity space for future and existing residents;
- Provision of community sports facilities through the potential expansion of Horton Playing Field;
- Provision of a Locally Equipped Area of Play ("LEAP") that will be accessible for the existing community as well as future residents of the Application Site;
- A biodiversity net gain of 69.21% in habitat units, 14.08% in hedgerow units and 12.81% in watercourse units, over and above the 10% mandatory requirement;
- Extensive landscaping and public realm enhancements to improve the appearance of the Application Site within the wider landscape setting;
- High-quality sustainable designs which respond to the local character and vernacular;
- Creation of local employment opportunities, particularly during the construction period, including supporting the employment of circa 520 people and 6 apprentices, graduates, or trainees; and
- Creation of additional footfall for existing local services and facilities;
- Over £300,000 in annual council tax revenue; and
- Financial contributions towards local education/healthcare provision and local infrastructure via CIL and S106 obligations.

Application Documentation

1.4 The following documentation is submitted for approval as part of the planning application:

- Site Location Plan (ref: TOR-SK003)
- Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan (ref: TOR-PP-001)
- Building Heights Parameter Plan (ref: TOR-PP-002)
- Proposed Access and Gateway Feature Plan (ref: 422.065268.00001_PD03 Rev E)
- Swept Path Analysis Refuse Vehicle Plan (ref: 422.065268.00001_PD03/A01 Rev A)

1.5 The above should be read in conjunction with the following range of technical documents and supporting material:

- Application Form and Ownership Certificates (27/10/2025)
- Covering Letter (27/10/2025)
- Design and Access Statement (October 2025)
- Drawings
 - Illustrative Masterplan (ref: TOR-SK007)
 - Landscape Strategy (ref: edp9202_d020d)
- Affordable Housing Statement (October 2025)
- Air Quality Assessment (October 2025)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (October 2025)
- Archaeology and Heritage Assessment (October 2025)
- Biodiversity Checklist (September 2025)
- Biodiversity Net Gain Declaration Form (September 2025)
- Community Infrastructure Levy Forms 27/10/2025)
- Ecological Impact Assessment (October 2025)
- Energy and Sustainability Statement (October 2025)
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (October 2025)
- Geo-Environmental Interpretive Report (October 2025)
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal including Accurately Verified Images (October 2025)
- Noise Assessment (October 2025)
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy (October 2025)
- Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study (October 2025)
- Planning Statement (including Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms, Local Housing Needs Assessment, and Public Open Space, Play and Recreation Statement) (October 2025)
- Preliminary Drainage Strategy (25116-RLL-25-XX-DR-C-1001 P04)
- Shadow Habitats Regulation Assessment Report (October 2025)
- Statement of Community Involvement (October 2025)
- Topographical Survey (ref: 001.1 Rev B and 001.2 Rev B)
- Transport Assessment (October 2025)
- Travel Plan (October 2025)
- Utilities Planning Statement (October 2025)
- Waste Management Strategy (October 2025)

1.6 The range of supporting technical documentation has regard to the Council's validation checklist relevant to the South area and pre-application discussions with Officers.

Structure of Planning Statement

1.7 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: The Application Site, Surrounding Area, and Planning History** – describes the Application Site and its surroundings, including reference to any specific designations, and summarises the relevant planning history of the Application Site;
- **Section 3: Pre-application and Stakeholder Engagement** – outlines how the Proposed Development has been informed by pre-application discussions and stakeholder engagement;
- **Section 4: Proposed Development** – describes the Proposed Development;
- **Section 5: Planning Policy Context** – outlines the relevant development plan documents and other material considerations relevant to the consideration of the Proposed Development;
- **Section 6: Local Housing Needs Assessment** – sets out the housing land supply position for Somerset;
- **Section 7: Public Open Space, Play and Recreation Statement** – sets out the provision of open space, play and recreation land;
- **Section 8: Planning Assessment** - provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the development plan and other material considerations;
- **Section 9: Planning Balance** – undertakes a balancing exercise to assess the benefits of the Proposed Development against any adverse impacts;
- **Section 10: Draft Heads of Terms**; and
- **Section 11: Conclusion.**

2. The Application Site, Surrounding Area, and Planning History

Application Site Context

- 2.1 The Application Site comprises approximately 14.1 hectares of land currently in agricultural use, located on the south-western edge of Horton. The extent of the red line boundary is shown on the Site Location Plan submitted with the application.
- 2.2 The Application Site is bound to the north/north-west by Broadway Hill and to the south/south-west by the A303. To the east is residential development located along the Channells Lane cul-de-sac and the Horton Playing Field.
- 2.3 There are no Public Rights of Way within the Application Site.

Designations

- 2.4 The Application Site is not subject to any landscape designations. The Blackdown Hills National Landscape is situated approximately 2km to the west of the Application Site.
- 2.5 According to the Environment Agency ("EA") Flood Map for Planning, the majority of the Application Site is located within Flood Zone 1. Land adjacent to the existing watercourse and two small areas spanning from this are located in Flood Zone 2/3.
- 2.6 The Application Site is not within a Conservation Area and does not contain any heritage assets. Historic England maps identify that a Grade II listed milestone lies adjacent to the northern boundary ('Milestone at NGR ST 3175 1470', list entry number: 1345841) – this is discussed further within the submitted Archaeology and Heritage Statement.
- 2.7 Along with the majority of the former South Somerset area, the Application Site is located within a nutrient neutrality catchment area.

The Surrounding Area

- 2.8 The Application Site is in a sustainable location, at the south-western edge of the settlement of Horton, which comprises a single built-up area in conjunction with the adjacent Broadway.
- 2.9 Horton and Broadway villages are each defined as 'Rural Settlements' in the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 ("SSLP") Settlement Hierarchy. The villages offer a range of services and facilities, including a primary school, medical centre, village hall, a Post Office, two faith facilities, a play area, and a public house.
- 2.10 Ilminster, a 'Primary Market Town' (Tier 1 settlement), is located circa 4km to the east, and Chard (another Tier 1 settlement), is located circa 6km to the south. A broader range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and wider public transport connections, can be accessed at these two locations.
- 2.11 The nearest bus stop is located approximately 350m from the Site. Buses from Horton and Broadway provide connections to Ilminster, Ashill, and Taunton. A bus stop for a daily school bus is also located in Horton, with connections provided to Somerset College and Richard Huish College.
- 2.12 The Site is located circa 15km from both Taunton and Crewkerne train stations, which provide connections across the south-west, to Bristol, and London.

Planning History

- 2.13 The Site has not been subject to any planning applications, but it has been promoted as part of the Somerset Local Plan through the Call for Sites that closed in February 2025.
- 2.14 Planning permission was granted for the construction of 49 dwellings at Land to the north of Broadway Hill (and west of Pound Road) at appeal on 15/10/2024 (reference: APP/E3335/W/23/3324775).

3. Pre-Application and Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.1 This section of the Planning Statement identifies the pre-application, public and other stakeholder engagement, undertaken by the Applicant in connection with the submission of the planning application. Further details are provided within the Statement of Community Involvement ("SCI") submitted as part of this application.
- 3.2 The Somerset SCI (2023) sets out the guidance for engaging with the community and other stakeholders on the preparation of planning applications. To ensure communities take an active role in the decision-making process, engagement should be done in a timely, and constructive manner, whilst also ensuring that consultation is proportionate and relevant to the needs of local communities.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") (December 2024) also recognises how early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties, and ultimately enabling improved outcomes for the community.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 3.4 The Applicant submitted a request for pre-application advice in May 2025 (ref: 25/01312/PREMAJ) in relation to the emerging development proposals.
- 3.5 A pre-application meeting took place between the Applicant and Somerset Council on 22nd July.
- 3.6 Formal written advice from the Council was received on 6th August 2025 (ref: 25/01312/PREMAJ) from Tim Marsh (the case officer). A copy of this written advice is enclosed in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.7 The pre-application response from the Council discussed the following matters:
- Principle of development
 - Landscape including LVA viewpoints
 - General Design Principles including Layout and Built Form
 - Public Open Space and potential expansion of Horton Playing Fields;
 - Highways and Parking (including Proposed Access Technical Note);
 - Phosphates
 - Ecology and Biodiversity
 - Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage
 - Affordable Housing
 - Sustainable construction and waste reduction
 - Contamination
 - Refuse collection and recycling requirements in new developments
 - Secured by Design
 - Planning Obligations / Section 106 Legal Agreement
- 3.8 Overall, the pre-application response was positive and confirmed that the tilted balance would be engaged.

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

- 3.9 Following the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Screening Request, the Council issued its EIA Screening Opinion (ref: 25/01731/EIASS) on 5th August 2025 confirming that a development of approximately 150 dwellings at the Application Site does not constitute EIA development.
- 3.10 A copy of the Screening Opinion is provided at **Appendix 2**.

Horton Parish Council Meeting

- 3.11 A meeting was held with Horton Parish Council on 12th June 2025 online. The proposals and Concept Plan were presented, highlighting the opportunity for the expansion of the Horton Playing Field. Following the meeting, Horton Parish Council requested that a public consultation event be held in person.

Public Consultation

- 3.12 As part of pre-application consultation, a public exhibition was held on 10th July 2025 between 16:15 and 20:00 at Horton Village Hall, Broadway Hill, TA19 9QR. Local residents were invited to share their thoughts on the proposals and ask any question they might have to Gleeson and the project team.
- 3.13 This was publicised by letters distributed to over 700 properties. A letter was also sent out to Horton Parish Council, Broadway Parish Council and Councillors Keitch and Osborne.
- 3.14 At the event, the Applicant presented a series of information boards in relation to the Application Site and the emerging proposals, with the Applicant and members of the project team available to respond to queries and provide further information. The exhibition boards identified the site location, constraints and opportunities and the emerging design ideas for the site. Approximately 150 individuals attended the public consultation event.
- 3.15 Comments on the proposals were sought via questionnaires at the event with an email address provided for later comments to be made. The website also displayed the site location and the emerging design ideas for the Application Site, through the Concept Plan. It provided a function that enabled visitors to complete an online questionnaire.
- 3.16 In total, 86 people responded: 44 people completed a questionnaire at the public exhibition event and a further 42 people completed the online questionnaire. The feedback gathered from public consultation has been beneficial in informing the design evolution process, as evidenced by the submitted SCI.

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1 The Proposed Development seeks outline permission for up to 150 dwellings, including up to 53 affordable homes, associated public open space, green infrastructure and landscaping, with access from Broadway Hill. The description of development is as follows:

“Outline planning application with all matters reserved, other than access from Broadway Hill, for the construction of up to 150 residential dwellings with open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure and the potential expansion of Horton Playing Field.”

- 4.2 Outline planning permission is sought with only access to and from the site included for detailed consideration at this stage. Matters of scale, appearance, layout and landscaping are reserved for future determination. A Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan (ref. TOR-PP-001 Rev 9) is submitted for determination at this stage, and this will inform any reserved matters applications in due course.
- 4.3 An Illustrative Masterplan (ref: TOR-SK007) is submitted alongside this planning application to demonstrate how a development of up to 150 dwellings could be accommodated within the parameters; however, this drawing is not subject to approval under this planning application.
- 4.4 The key elements of the Proposed Development for which permission is sought are set out below. It should be noted that a detailed account of the design evolution process can be found in the submitted Design and Access Statement.

Layout and Use

- 4.5 Whilst layout is a matter reserved for future determination, the Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan demonstrates that the proposed built form is located on the northern-central portion of the Application Site, responding to the surrounding context by siting this next to the adjacent residential development along Channells Lane.
- 4.6 Land has been reserved for a potential expansion of Horton Playing Field in the eastern portion of the Application Site, adjacent to the existing Horton Playing Field. Detailed provision will be agreed with the Council in consultation with Horton Parish Council ahead of the detailed design stage.
- 4.7 A key element of the design approach is to include open greenspace, ecological enhancements and recreational use across the western, southern and south-eastern portions of the Application Site. This will provide large areas for both local and existing residents to enjoy, while also enhancing biodiversity. Green infrastructure corridors are also provided around the perimeter of the Application Site and running both north to south and east to west through the centre of the proposed built form, providing recreational and wildlife connectivity around and through the Application Site.
- 4.8 Sustainable drainage (“SuDS”) features are located in the central and western portion of the Site, ensuring the delivery of an effective surface water drainage strategy.
- 4.9 Based on the Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan, the Proposed Development will amount to an average gross density of approximately 36 dwellings per hectare.

- 4.10 The proposed land uses ensure that the Application Site's development potential is optimised whilst creating an attractive residential environment that complements the existing character of the area and is underpinned by a landscape-led approach and informed by the objective of delivering high quality public open spaces. It also ensures that the necessary infrastructure (e.g. sustainable drainage systems) can be incorporated and provides a large area for ecological and biodiversity enhancements and recreational use.

Access and Movement

- 4.11 The vehicle access will be via a priority junction on Broadway Hill, along the northern boundary of the Application Site. Pedestrian and cycle links will also utilise this access point. An additional pedestrian link is provided in the south-east corner of the Site, as well as a proposed pedestrian connection to Horton Playing Field.
- 4.12 The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that an easily legible street pattern could be accommodated within the Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan, with a principal route connecting through the built form with secondary streets and private drives leading from this. These routes will all be designed to encourage walking and cycling.
- 4.13 Pedestrian links would be provided through the public open space of the Application Site, including a connection to the Public Right of Way ("PRoW", ref: CH 11/14) to the south-east.

Housing Mix

- 4.14 The Proposed Development comprises up to 150 dwellings, up to 53 of which will be delivered as affordable homes. The mix of dwelling sizes will be determined through the reserved matters applications.

Scale and Massing

- 4.15 Whilst matters of scale and massing are reserved for future determination, the submitted Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan demonstrates that the majority of proposed new homes will be 2 storeys in height, with two areas of dwellings centrally located up to 2.5 storeys in height, in keeping with the local area.

Appearance

- 4.16 Whilst matters of appearance are reserved for future determination, the Proposed Development will be a high-quality development that is in-keeping with local character, demonstrating an understanding of the local vernacular and an ability to deliver new homes in a manner that is sympathetic of the locality. This is demonstrated by the submitted Design and Access Statement.

Amenity Space and Landscaping

- 4.17 Each dwelling will be delivered with appropriate levels of private amenity space, as indicated by the Illustrative Masterplan.
- 4.18 As outlined above, the western, southern, and south-eastern portion of the Application Site will remain free of built form, providing a large area of green infrastructure that will include public open space, biodiversity enhancements, and space for recreational use.
- 4.19 A LEAP is provided in the central part of the residential development; appropriate buffers will be provided around the formal play area.

- 4.20 Trees along all boundaries will be retained. Some minor hedgerow removal will be necessary to deliver the access and internal roads but can be suitably mitigated through the Proposed Development.
- 4.21 The Illustrative Landscape Strategy (ref: edp9202_d020) submitted demonstrates how there are opportunities to deliver new hedgerows, trees and other forms of green infrastructure that enhance the Application Site's ecological value. In addition to areas of open space, it is proposed that the soft landscaping will also permeate throughout the areas of built form. The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that there will be sufficient space alongside the internal roads to deliver street trees.
- 4.22 Overall, the Proposed Development provides an opportunity to significantly enhance the green infrastructure value of the Application Site through the delivery of new planting. This will result in climate change and ecological enhancements.
- 4.23 Based on the Illustrative Masterplan, the Proposed Development could achieve a 69.21% in habitat units, 14.08% in hedgerow units and 12.81% in watercourse units, therefore achieving significantly above the 10% mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

Sustainability

- 4.24 The application is accompanied by an Energy and Sustainability Statement, which sets out in detail the measures that could be proposed in respect of energy efficiency and renewable technologies. It demonstrates that the Proposed Development will be 'zero-carbon ready', with high fabric standards for thermal efficiency, energy demand to be met from low/zero carbon sources, and overheating risk reduced through passive design measures.

5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Planning policy relevant to the determination of this application comprises the Development Plan and relevant material considerations, including Government policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (herein, “the Framework”).

Development Plan

- 5.3 The relevant development plan documents for the Application Site comprise:

- South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028 (adopted March 2015);
- Saved policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 1991-2011

South Somerset Local Plan

- 5.4 The South Somerset Local Plan (“SSLP”) was adopted in March 2015 and covers the period 2006-2028.
- 5.5 The key policies of SSLP that are considered to be relevant to the Proposed Development are as follows:

- Policy SD1 Sustainable Development
- Policy SS1 Settlement Strategy
- Policy SS2 Development in Rural Settlements
- Policy SS4 District Wide Housing Provision
- Policy SS5 Delivering New Housing Growth
- Policy SS6 Infrastructure Delivery
- Policy YV4 Yeovil Air Flight Safety Zone
- Policy HG3 Provision of Affordable Housing
- Policy HG5 Achieving a Mix of Market Housing
- Policy TA1 Low Carbon Travel
- Policy TA4 Travel Plans
- Policy TA5 Transport Impact of New Development
- Policy TA6 Parking Standards
- Policy HW1 Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development
- Policy EQ1 Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset
- Policy EQ2 General Development
- Policy EQ3 Historic Environment
- Policy EQ4 Biodiversity
- Policy EQ5 Green Infrastructure
- Policy EQ6 Woodland and Forests
- Policy EQ7 Pollution Control

Saved Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 1991-2011

- 5.1 There are no saved policies relevant to the determination of the Proposed Development.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

- 5.2 The most recent version of the Framework was published in December 2024.
- 5.3 It included significant changes to support the government's ambitions to deliver 1.5 million homes over the next five years. Amendments reverse the changes made to the previous version of the Framework published in December 2023, including making the Standard Method ("SM") for housing needs a mandatory requirement. A new SM for assessing housing need based on housing stock is in place, resulting in significant uplifts in housing needs for some areas, including in Somerset.
- 5.4 The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. The policies contained within the Framework are material considerations that local planning authorities should take into account when determining planning applications. The sections referenced below are of particular relevance to this application.
- 5.5 Paragraph 8 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of what is meant by 'sustainable development' the Framework states at paragraph 8 that there are three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, namely:

"a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

- 5.6 In respect of implementation, paragraph 11 advises that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It advises that for decision-taking this means:

"c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁸, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."

- 5.7 Paragraph 39 of the Framework relates to decision-making and advises that the Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, and that:

"Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."

- 5.8 Paragraph 40 of the Framework states the importance of early engagement with all parties to improve the efficiency of the planning application system.

- 5.9 Paragraphs 48 and 49 seek to ensure that local planning authorities give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans and that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan.

- 5.10 Section 5 of the Framework highlights that it is an objective of the Government to significantly boost the supply of homes and advises that it is important that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. At paragraph 73 it is noted that:

"Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes"

- 5.11 Paragraph 124 sets out the importance of making efficient use of land and states that decisions should:

"promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions."

National Planning Practice Guidance and other National Guidance

- 5.12 The National Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG") website went live in March 2014 and is updated regularly to set out provide guidance on how to interpret national planning policy. The PPG is a material consideration within all planning decisions.

- 5.13 The National Design Guide (2021) is also a relevant material consideration.

Supplementary Planning Documents / Other Local Guidance

- 5.14 The following supplementary planning documents and other local guidance is also relevant to the determination of the Proposed Development:

- The Countywide Parking Strategy (2013)
- Somerset Waste Strategy (2013)
- Somerset Minerals Plan (2015)
- Somerset County Council Highways Development Control Standing Advice

Emerging Local Plan

- 5.15 Somerset Council as a unitary authority is progressing a Somerset Local Plan, which will replace the adopted Local Plans of the four previous authorities (South Somerset, Somerset West and Taunton, Sedgemoor, and Mendip).
- 5.16 The latest Local Development Scheme, published in February 2025, anticipates the following:
- Regulation 18 consultation on the Draft Plan – April 2026
 - Regulation 19 publication – October 2027
 - Submission – January 2028
 - Adoption – March 2029

6. Local Housing Need

- 6.1 Paragraph 78 of the Framework outlines that where strategic policies are more than five years old, and have not been reviewed, local planning authorities are required to identify a specific supply of sites to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their minimum Local Housing Need ("LHN").
- 6.2 Through the determination of recent planning applications¹, the Council has concluded that the former South Somerset District is only able to demonstrate a housing land supply of 2.11 years. Accordingly, it accepts that the provisions of paragraph 11d of the Framework are engaged for decision-making purposes.
- 6.3 With respect to housing delivery, South Somerset scored 143% in the 2023 Housing Delivery Test. As such, its housing land supply requirement is not subject to a 20% buffer.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding this, as outlined in Section 5 of this Statement, the changes to the planning system have set out a new SM for calculating LHN, against which the Council's LHN has significantly increased. The table below sets out the Council's previous LHN figure and the LHN figure in light of the new SM.

Local Authority	Previous LHN	LHN as per New Standard Method	% Change
Somerset Council	2,669	3,774	41.41%

¹ Namely application ref. 20/01414/FUL, which was considered by Planning Committee on 25th March 2025

7. Public Open Space, Play and Recreation Statement

- 7.1 The Proposed Development provides public open space, play, and recreation, delivering a landscape-led scheme that prioritises community wellbeing and high-quality placemaking. A total of 8.65ha of public open space will be provided across the Site, significantly exceeding the policy requirements set out in Policy HW1. This generous provision ensures that future and existing residents will benefit from a diverse range of open space, recreational opportunities and green infrastructure.
- 7.2 A key feature of the Proposed Development is the integration of open greenspace throughout the western, southern, and south-eastern portions of the Site. These areas will be designed to support informal recreation, ecological enrichment, and community interaction. The development also incorporates green infrastructure corridors that run both north–south and east–west through the built form, as well as around the perimeter of the site. These corridors will facilitate wildlife movement and provide accessible routes for walking, cycling, and nature engagement, enhancing connectivity and biodiversity across the site.
- 7.3 The eastern portion of the Site has been reserved for the potential expansion of Horton Playing Field, which lies immediately adjacent to the Site. This demonstrates a commitment to supporting existing community assets and will be developed in consultation with Horton Parish Council and the local authority at the detailed design stage. The expansion will offer opportunities for enhanced sports provision and community use, reinforcing the role of Horton Playing Field as a key recreational hub for the villages of Horton and Broadway.
- 7.4 The Illustrative Masterplan shows that approximately 61% of the Site will be retained as public open space, ensuring that the Proposed Development is sensitive to its rural context and delivers a high-quality living environment. Provision for play and recreation is delivered throughout the scheme. A LEAP will be delivered, accessible to both new and existing residents. Informal play areas and community sports facilities, including potential playing pitches, could be provided to encourage active lifestyles and social interaction. The Proposed Development also includes high-quality private and communal amenity spaces, offering residents a variety of outdoor environments for recreation, informal play, and community use.
- 7.5 In summary, the Proposed Development delivers:
- A substantial overprovision of public open space, totalling 8.65ha, far exceeding policy requirements;
 - A landscape-led design that retains and enhances natural features, supporting biodiversity and visual character;
 - Community sports facilities and informal recreation spaces, including potential playing pitches;
 - A LEAP that serves both the new development and the wider community;
 - Green infrastructure corridors that promote ecological connectivity and recreational access; and
 - High-quality amenity spaces that contribute to a vibrant and inclusive public realm.
- 7.6 This comprehensive approach ensures that the Proposed Development exceeds requirements for public open space, play, and recreation, creating a sustainable and attractive environment for both future and existing residents.

8. Planning Assessment

Introduction

8.1 This section of the Planning Statement is structured having regard to the topic-based approach identified in the Framework but focusing under each topic, in accordance with S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, on the relevant adopted and emerging development plan policies, as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Material Considerations
- Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Building a Strong and Competitive Economy
- Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Making Effective Use of Land
- Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Principle of Development

8.2 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

8.3 Policy SD1 of the SSLP - titled 'Sustainable Development' - reflects paragraph 11d) of the Framework, stating that where relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

- *"Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted."*

8.4 Policy SS1 – titled 'Settlement Strategy' - identifies Horton as a 'Rural Settlement', with paragraph 5.41 of the SSLP stating that:

"...new housing development should only be located in those Rural Settlements that offer a range (i.e. two or more) of the following services, or that provide these within a cluster of settlements:-

- *local convenience shop;*
- *post office;*
- *pub;*
- *children's play area/sports pitch;*
- *village hall/community centre;*
- *health centre;*
- *faith facility; and*
- *primary school."*

- 8.5 Horton, in conjunction with the adjoining Broadway, delivers a range of services and facilities, including each of those identified above. Therefore, in accordance with Policy SS1 of the SSLP, it is a sustainable location for growth. Policy SS2 of the SSLP supports some housing development in Rural Settlements in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5.41; however, it needs to be demonstrated that the housing would meet a specifically identified housing need.
- 8.6 South Somerset District Council had made progress on its Local Plan 2020 to 2040 Review (“the SSLP Review”) before the announcement that Somerset would become a Unitary Authority. Whilst the SSLP Review will now not progress, the settlement hierarchy set out within Policy SS1 of the Preferred Options Regulation 18 Local Plan Review document proposed to include Horton, combined with Broadway, as a ‘village’. Paragraph 5.20 of the SSLP Review stated that villages are sustainable location for growth. On this basis, it is concluded that the Site is a sustainable location for growth. Furthermore, providing additional new homes at Horton would also contribute towards meeting the objectives of paragraph 83 of the Framework – enhancing the vitality of settlements - with future residents of the Proposed Development supporting existing services and facilities within the village.
- 8.7 As set out above, it is acknowledged that the Application Site lies in a Rural Settlement where development is normally restricted unless it meets a specifically identified housing need. However, there are a number of reasons why residential development on the Application Site should be granted having regard to national policy and other material considerations.
- 8.8 In broad terms the Proposed Development will help meet the SSLP’s minimum requirement of at least 15,950 additional dwellings between 2006 and 2028, set out in Policy SS4. As outlined in Section 6 of this Statement, the Council is currently only able to demonstrate a 2.11 year supply. As the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, it will be important for the Council to approve sustainable sites which can deliver housing in the short term. The size of the Application Site means that it can be built out within a five year period (2026-2031), if planning permission is granted within the agreed timescales.
- 8.9 Footnote 8 of the Framework clarifies that development plan policies relating to the provision of housing are out-of-date where a Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. On this basis, paragraph 11d) of the Framework will be engaged during the determination of the planning application.

Application of Footnote 7

- 8.10 Footnote 7 of the Framework lists areas or assets of particular importance in the context of applying the presumption of sustainable development at paragraph 11d of the Framework. It identifies habitat sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; Green Belt; Local Green Spaces; National Landscapes; National Parks (or areas within the Broads Authority); Heritage Coasts; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change as the areas and assets of particular importance.
- 8.11 As per the provisions of paragraph 11d (i) of the Framework, permission should be granted unless the application of footnote 7 policies provides a ‘strong’ reason for refusing or restricting development
- 8.12 The below table assesses the Application Site/Proposed Development against the provisions of footnote 7 and whether they would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

Asset or Area of Particular Importance	Any impact arising from the Proposed Development	Strong Reason for Refusal?
Habitat site	The Application Site does not include any designated habitat sites, nor is it within the impact zone of any such sites.	No
SSSI	The Application Site does not contain nor is it in close proximity to a SSSI.	No
Local Green Space	No part of the Application Site is subject to a Local Green Space designation.	No
National Landscape	The Application Site is located approximately 2.5km from the Black Down Hills National Landscape to the west and does not form part of the setting of the designation.	No
National Park	The Application Site is not located within or in close proximity to a National Park.	No
Heritage Coast	The Application Site is not located within or in close proximity to a Heritage Coast.	No
Irreplaceable Habitat	The Application Site is not an irreplaceable habitat, nor does it contain an irreplaceable habitat.	No
Designated Heritage Asset	As demonstrated within Section 8 of this Statement, it is concluded that the Proposed Development will not have an unacceptable impact on archaeology or heritage assets located near to the Application Site.	No
Area of Flood Risk	Other than land adjacent to the existing watercourse and two small areas spanning from this, the Site is located within Flood Zone 1, where paragraph 170 of the Framework seeks to steer new development. All built development can be located in Flood Zone 1 and the level of flood risk from all sources is acceptable. A comprehensive sustainable drainage strategy (based on an assessment that takes into account the necessary climate change allowances) forms part of the Proposed Development to ensure that that it will be safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.	No
Area of Coastal Change	The Application Site is not located within or in close proximity to an area of coastal change.	No

Summary

- 8.13 In summary, it is evident that the application of footnote 7 would not provide any reason for restricting or refusing the Proposed Development, let alone 'strong' reasons. Accordingly, Policy SD1 of the SSLP and the second limb of paragraph 11d) of the Framework provides the decision-making framework for the determination of the Proposed Development, as acknowledged by the Council during pre-application discussions.

8.14 The overall planning balance is set out in Section 9 of this Statement.

Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

Boosting the Supply of Housing

- 8.15 Paragraph 61 of the Framework outlines the Government's objective to *"significantly boosting the supply of homes"*. Moreover, as set out in Section 6, the LHN for Somerset has increased by 41.41% to 3,774 dwellings per annum based on the updated SM calculation.
- 8.16 Furthermore, given that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the Local Plan policies relating to the provision of housing are considered to be out-of-date, in line with Footnote 8 of the Framework.
- 8.17 Policy SS4 of the SSLP – titled 'District Wide Housing Provision' – seeks to provide at least 15,950 additional dwellings between 2006 and 2028. SS5 - titled 'Delivering New Housing Growth' - identifies that 2,242 dwellings are to be delivered in rural settlements over the plan period, which accounts for 14% of the housing delivery.
- 8.18 In addition to helping to meet Somerset's needs, the development of up to 150 dwellings (including up to 53 affordable homes) will contribute towards the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of market and affordable housing (paragraph 61 of the Framework). The Proposed Development therefore complies with Policies SS4 and SS5.

Housing Tenure and Mix

- 8.19 Policy HG5 of the SSLP – titled 'Achieving a Mix of Market Housing' - requires developments to deliver a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet the identified local needs based on the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Policy HG3 'Provision of Affordable Housing' requires developments of 6 dwellings or more to deliver 35% of the dwellings as affordable homes.
- 8.20 The Proposed Development will provide 35% of the new dwellings as affordable homes; this meets the requirement set by Policy HG3. Although the application does not seek to define the housing mix at this stage, the Illustrative Masterplan indicates that a range of house sizes can be accommodated to meet identified needs. The detailed design phase will demonstrate how the proposed mix aligns with the Local Housing Need Assessment (2021).
- 8.21 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is in compliance with policy requirements in relation to affordable housing provision and is able to deliver a housing mix that responds to the identified local need and, thus, complies with Policies HG3 and HG5.

Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

- 8.22 The SSLP policies relating to the economy are not directly related to housing development. Nevertheless, the economic benefits of the development are a key consideration in considering the planning balance.
- 8.23 The Application Site is located in Horton village, which forms a contiguous built area with Broadway village with shared services and facilities. The additional population generated by the Proposed Development will increase expenditure at local shops and services. Furthermore, the Home Builders Federation Housing Calculator indicates that a development of 150 dwellings will deliver the following economic benefits (inter alia):

- i. A significant capital investment to the local area;

- ii. Support the employment of 521 people;
- iii. Provide for six apprentices, graduates or trainees;
- iv. Generate £4,000,000 in tax revenue (Including £301,875 in annual council tax revenue); and
- v. Increased spending by new residents in local shops, business and other services.

8.24 In addition to the benefits mentioned above, the Proposed Development will also deliver developer contributions in line with Policy SS6 of the SSLP – titled ‘Infrastructure Delivery’. This will ensure that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered, through planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy.

8.25 The Proposed Development is therefore in accordance with Policy SS6 of the SSLP.

Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

8.26 Policy HW1 of the SSLP - titled ‘Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development’ - states that if new housing development generates a need for additional open space or outdoor playing space provision will be made as appropriate. The Proposed Development also includes the potential to expand the existing Horton Playing Field and provide enhanced facilities. The total quantum of public open space proposed is 8.65ha and accounts for approximately 61% of the overall site. The public open space includes a LEAP; as demonstrated by the Illustrative Masterplan.

8.27 Policy EQ2 of the SSLP - ‘General Development’ - expects development to create quality places and safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety. The Proposed Development facilitates the delivery of natural surveillance of the LEAP in its central location. This will discourage crime and encourage use by the future residents of the Application Site and the existing community. Furthermore, homes front onto the large areas of public open space in the southern and western portions of the site, providing natural surveillance.

8.28 Policy EQ5 ‘Green Infrastructure’ states that development proposals should provide an accessible network of green spaces and improve recreational opportunities, ensuring that all children and young people have reasonable access to a range of play and leisure opportunities.

8.29 The Proposed Development delivers a well-connected network of green spaces designed to enhance recreation, through the provision of a LEAP and enhanced play facilities. This provides children and young people with access to a diverse range of play and leisure amenities.

8.30 The table below illustrates the open space typology required in line with Policy HW1 and demonstrates that the Proposed Development will deliver a substantial overprovision of the public space required.

Typology	Provision Required on the Application Site (ha)	Provision Provided on the Application Site (ha)
Natural Open space	0.09	6.68
Informal and recreational space	0.2	0.99

Playing pitch/es	0.5	0.14
Green Corridor	To be determined by future work on the GI Strategy	0.77
Equipped play	0.07	0.07
Total POS		8.65

- 8.31 The Proposed Development includes a large area of public open space in the central, southern, and western portions of the Application Site. The total quantum of public open space is 8.65ha, which exceeds the requirements outlined above.
- 8.32 Furthermore, as demonstrated by the Education Statement (**Appendix 3**), there would appear to be capacity within Somerset’s existing school provision to meet the anticipated needs arising from the Proposed Development.
- 8.33 As such, the Proposed Development is in compliance with Policies HW1, EQ2, and EQ5 of the SSLP.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 8.34 Policy TA1 of the SSLP - titled ‘Low Carbon Travel’ states that all residential development should:
- i. *“Provide Travel Information Packs;*
 - ii. *Provide for the charging of electric vehicles adjacent to each parking space;*
 - iii. *Provide a Green Travel Voucher for each occupier valid for 1 year for use on sustainable transport;*
 - iv. *Provide facilities for cycle parking within the new development commensurate with the levels and standards designated in the SCC cycle parking strategy;*
 - v. *Include Travel Plans (commensurate with Policy TA4);*
 - vi. *Ensure that sustainable transport measures are in place and operational concurrent with first occupancy.”*
- 8.35 Paragraph 110 of the Framework states that development should be focused at locations that are sustainable where the need to travel can be limited and there is a choice of transport modes. It also recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and Paragraph 83 of the Framework identifies that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and that development in one village may support services in nearby villages.
- 8.36 As demonstrated earlier in this Statement, Horton is a sustainable settlement with a range of services and facilities (within both Horton and Broadway) within the 800m ‘walking neighbourhoods’ distance. These services and facilities are therefore accessible from the Proposed Development via the most sustainable modes of travel – walking and cycling. Furthermore, Ilminster, which provides a broader range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and public transport connections, is 4km away and can be accessed via bicycle and bus.

- 8.37 The Proposed Development includes a pedestrian / cycle access point through the northern boundary. An additional pedestrian access point is proposed on the south-eastern boundary that will facilitate a recreational connection towards the existing PRoW located to the south of the A303 (accessible via an existing underpass).
- 8.38 Policy TA4 of the SSLP - titled 'Travel Plans' - requires detailed travel plans and Policy TA5 ('Transport Impact of New Development') requires all new development to ensure that it addresses its own transport implications and be designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport through:
- i. Safeguarding existing and new transport infrastructure;*
 - ii. Securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport;*
 - iii. Ensuring that the expected traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks;*
 - iv. Ensuring that proposals are well located on these networks;*
 - v. Assessing the transport impact of development and ensuring delivery of the necessary transport infrastructure for the proposal and requiring larger schemes to prepare Transport Assessments.*
 - vi. Requiring car parking and vehicle servicing at levels appropriate to the development and its location, in accordance with the approved/adopted standards identified in Policy TA6.*
- 8.39 Measures will also be secured through a Travel Plan to further encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.40 As such, the Proposed Development is in accordance with Policies TA1, TA4 and Paragraph 110 of Framework.

Creating Safe Pedestrian and Vehicular Access

- 8.41 Policy TA5 of the SSLP - titled 'Transport Impact of New Development' – requires new development to deliver inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all. This is supported by Paragraph 115b) of the Framework, which requires the provision of safe and suitable access for all vehicles.
- 8.42 The Proposed Access and Gateway Feature Plan shows the proposed access arrangements, for which detailed approval is sought through this planning application. The plans demonstrate that safe access and egress can be achieved via the proposed access points.
- 8.43 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is consistent with the relevant requirement of Policy TA5 and paragraph 115b of the Framework.

Highways Impacts

- 8.44 Policy TA5 aims to ensure that the nature and volume of traffic generated by development does not harm the character or amenity of the area. It also seeks to prevent any compromise to the safety or functionality of local or strategic road networks, considering both the amount and type of traffic involved.

- 8.45 Paragraph 116 of the Framework states that development should only be prevented on highway grounds if it would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe.
- 8.46 The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the additional trip generation resulting from the Proposed Development is expected to be accommodated within the existing highway network without causing an unacceptable impact on existing junctions.
- 8.47 The Proposed Development is, therefore, consistent with Policy TA5 and paragraph 116 of the Framework.

Parking

- 8.48 Policy TA6 of the SSLLP - titled 'Parking Standards' - provides further information, setting out the County Council Parking Strategy standards; 2 spaces per 1-bed, 2.5 spaces per 2-bed, 3 spaces per 3-bed, and 3.5 spaces per 4-bed.
- 8.49 EV charging for all dwellings and a provision of 1 visitor parking space per 5 homes is required. Cycle parking standards require 1 space per bedroom.
- 8.50 The car parking provision for the Proposed Development will be determined through a reserved matters application relating to layout and scale; however, the level of parking set out in the adopted and emerging parking standards will be met, and this is demonstrated by the Illustrative Masterplan.
- 8.51 Therefore, the Proposed Development is in accordance with Policy TA6.

Making Effective Use of Land

- 8.52 Paragraph 124 of the Framework outlines that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Paragraph 129 of the Framework clarifies that the following should be taken into account in determining whether a proposal makes efficient use of land:

"a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places."

- 8.53 The Proposed Development will include a range of different house types to meet identified needs.
- 8.54 The Proposed Development will achieve a density of approximately 36 dwellings per hectare within the developable area as set by the Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan. This is consistent with the prevailing character of the locality, ensuring that the Proposed Development is not out-of-keeping with existing residential development at Horton.

- 8.55 The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that a development of this density can be achieved whilst providing approximately 61% of the Application Site as public open space and securing the delivery of a high quality residential development that would facilitate the creation of a high quality and attractive place.
- 8.56 Furthermore, the Utilities Planning Statement concludes that there is sufficient capacity within existing water, gas, electricity, and telecommunications to accommodate the Proposed Development.
- 8.57 In light of the above, the Proposed Development will make efficient use of land in accordance with paragraph 129 of the Framework, notably through reflecting the rural character of the locality.

Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places

- 8.58 Policy EQ2 of the SSLP - titled 'General Development' - outlines that development is expected to achieve a high quality, while promoting South Somerset's local distinctiveness, and preserving/enhancing its character and appearance.
- 8.59 Development proposals will be considered against (inter alia) the following criteria:
- Sustainable construction principles;
 - Creation of quality places;
 - Conserving and enhancing the landscape character of the area;
 - Reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context;
 - Creating safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety;
 - Making efficient use of land whilst having regard to housing demand and need; infrastructure and service availability; accessibility; local area character; and site specific considerations.
- 8.60 The Proposed Development will provide a high quality, landscape-led development that complements the existing character of the local environment. It has been developed with a desire to retain approximately 61% of the Application Site as public open space, benefiting both wildlife and the residents. It has been informed by an understanding of the adjoining land uses and seeks to replicate development principles from the existing residential development within the village.
- 8.61 Whilst only access to the Application Site is to be determined in detail through this application, the Land Use and Landscape Parameter Plan demonstrates that the built form will be concentrated in the northern and central portion of the Application Site, adjacent to the existing residential development. Large areas of public open space and green infrastructure are provided to the west, south, and east.
- 8.62 Whilst matters of landscape and appearance are reserved for future determination, the submitted Illustrative Landscape Strategy and Design and Access Statement demonstrate that the Proposed Development would deliver high quality landscaping throughout the Application Site, with the extended recreational space and links to wildlife corridors/habitat walks benefiting both existing and new residents.
- 8.63 The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that a clear street hierarchy could be delivered within the proposed parameter to ensure an easily navigable layout with the opportunity to create distinct character areas throughout the Proposed Development. Pedestrian and cycle movements would be prioritised, with the provision of a

pedestrian / cycle access at the northern boundary, providing a connection towards the amenities and public transport provision within Horton.

- 8.64 The Proposed Development will deliver a scheme underpinned by high quality design principles and is, therefore, consistent with Policy EQ2.

Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

- 8.65 Policy EQ1 of the SSLP - titled 'Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset' - states that development must demonstrate climate change mitigation and adaptation, through the following measures (as appropriate):

- CO2 emissions minimised through energy efficiency measures, renewable and low carbon energy;
- Meet the Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 from 2016 (or as amended by future government policy, regulations, and/or legislation) as the sustainable construction standard;
- Utilise renewable/low carbon energy generation; and
- Consider climate change in the design of development, incorporating measures such as solar orientation, maximising natural shade and cooling, water efficiency and flood resilience.

- 8.66 The submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the Proposed Development would be designed to include a range of measures to minimise energy use and maximise renewable/lower energy generation, in line with the requirements of Policy EQ1.

- 8.67 It will be 'zero-carbon ready' and will be futureproofed to become operationally zero carbon over time. High fabric standards for thermal efficiency will be met, with energy demand to be met from low/zero carbon sources, including air source heat pumps. Water use will be reduced through water efficient fixtures and fittings, overheating risk will be reduced through passive design measures, and open space/landscaping and SuDS provides multiple benefits for climate resilience and adaptation. Furthermore, electric vehicle charging infrastructure will be incorporated in line with the requirements of Approved Document S.

- 8.68 Policy EQ2 of the SSLP – titled 'General Development' - states that development proposals will be considered against sustainable construction principles. The Proposed Development will prioritise the use of sustainable building materials and construction and operational waste will be managed according to the principles of the Waste Hierarchy, with a focus on waste prevention, re-use and recycling.

- 8.69 The Proposed Development also includes a large amount of green infrastructure that will enhance the Application Site's carbon capture capacity, deliver a comprehensive sustainable drainage strategy (discussed in the next sub-section), and deliver a biodiversity net gain (discussed in a later section).

- 8.70 The future reserved matters applications for scale, appearance, layout and landscaping will provide further details with respect to sustainable design matters. However, the submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the Applicant is committed to delivering the required measures.

- 8.71 As such, the Proposed Development is in accordance with Policies EQ1 and EQ2.

Flood Risk

- 8.72 Policy EQ1 of the SSLP - titled 'Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset' - also requires development to be directed away from medium/high flood risk areas, with the impact of flood risk to be reduced and managed by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems ("SuDS").
- 8.73 The majority of the Application Site is located within Flood Zone 1, albeit areas identified to be within Flood Zone 2/3 are located in the western portion of the Application Site. Built development is proposed to be sequentially located away from the area of predicted risk. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy confirms that the Proposed Development is not at significant flood risk, subject to the recommended flood mitigation strategies being implemented, nor will it increase flood risk off-site.
- 8.74 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy demonstrates that a comprehensive approach to SuDS can be provided. This will add to the sense of place, while ensuring that surface water run-off is limited to greenfield rates and land adjoining the Site does not experience increased risk of flooding. A foul water drainage strategy is also proposed, with a potential connection to a public foul water sewer along Pottery Lane.
- 8.75 On this basis, the Proposed Development is consistent with the relevant requirements of Policy EQ1.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Landscape Impact

- 8.76 Policy EQ5 of the SSLP - titled 'Green Infrastructure' - requires development to provide a network of connected and multifunctional open spaces, connecting new habitats, and improving recreational opportunities.
- 8.77 Policy EQ6 of the SSLP – titled 'Woodland and Forests' - seeks to ensure that the environmental, social and economic value and character of the district's trees, woods and forests are protected and enhanced in a sustainable way.
- 8.78 The accompanying Illustrative Landscape Strategy details how the Proposed Development could provide large areas of public open space of 8.65ha. This accounts for approximately 61% of the Application Site and provides an area that delivers biodiversity and ecological benefits and enhancements, with an emphasis on retaining and enhancing the natural features of the land.
- 8.79 Landscape enhancement includes opportunities for planting trees within the public open space and development area, with new hedgerow planting that will reflect and enhance the landscape character.
- 8.80 A Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment ("AIA") has been submitted. The main conclusions of the AIA are summarised below:
- All trees and hedgerows will be retained within the Application Site, other than the removal of a small section of hedgerow required for the access road and internal roads between development parcels.
- 8.81 The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal ("LVA") which concludes as follows:
- The Application Site is not the subject of any statutory landscape designation which indicates that it is part of a valued landscape as per paragraph 187 of the Framework.

- The proposed development, while altering the site's land use, aligns with the character of Horton's settlement edge and retains much of the existing natural features like vegetation and watercourses.
- It introduces new ecological enhancements such as hedgerows, tree planting, and wildflower areas, contributing positively to the landscape.
- Though visible from surrounding routes, the impact on visual amenity is minimal due to effective screening by vegetation and built form.
- Overall, the development is considered a well-integrated and logical extension of Horton, with thoughtful design that supports public enjoyment and respects the local landscape character.

8.82 The Proposed Development is therefore of a scale and appearance that would be sympathetic to and in-keeping with the landscape character and visual context, with natural features of the Site retained as far as practicable to allow access while also preserving the character they contribute to.

8.83 As such, the Proposed Development is in compliance with Policies E5 and EQ6.

Biodiversity

8.84 Policy EQ4 of the SSLP - titled 'Biodiversity' - requires proposals to protect the biodiversity value of land and promote coherent ecological networks, maximising opportunities for enhancement and connection of natural habitats. Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) outlines a mandatory requirement for new development to achieve a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

8.85 The Ecology Report demonstrates that the Proposed Development will provide the opportunity to enhance the Site. The Biodiversity Net Gain Report demonstrates that a gain of 69.21% in habitat units, 14.08% in hedgerow units and 12.81% in watercourse units could be achieved.

8.86 In accordance with Policy EQ4, a sequential approach to the design of the Proposed Development has been taken to avoid harm to the dormice found on the Application Site.

8.87 The Site is located within the River Parrett catchment area and as such, must demonstrate nutrient neutrality. The phosphate impacts arising from the Proposed Development will be mitigated in accordance with Natural England's requirements. A Nutrient Neutrality Statement accompanies the application, outlining a mitigation strategy (to be secured through a Section 106 agreement) to ensure that nutrient neutrality is achieved.

8.88 The Proposed Development is therefore in accordance with Policy EQ4.

Ground Conditions and Pollution

8.89 Policy EQ7 of the SSLP - titled 'Pollution Control' - seeks to maintain quality of life by not allowing development that will cause unacceptable levels of air, light, noise, water quality or other environmental pollution or harm to amenity.

8.90 The Proposed Development is not located within an Air Quality Management Area and concentrations of air pollutants are below the relevant National Air Quality Objectives. The Air Quality Assessment concludes that the effect of the Proposed Development on air quality is considered 'not significant' during the operational phase.

- 8.91 The Noise Assessment concludes that the design of the development is acceptable subject to the adoption of acoustically upgraded glazing and ventilation and acoustic screening around gardens. This can be investigated further at the detailed design stage.
- 8.92 The Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study and Phase 2 Ground Investigation reports conclude that no significant sources of contamination have been identified on the Application Site.
- 8.93 It is anticipated that a Site Waste Management Plan will be conditioned, demonstrating how waste during the construction period will be kept to an acceptable minimum.
- 8.94 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is consistent with Policy EQ7.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 8.95 Policy EQ3 of the SSLP - titled 'Historic Environment' - seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets, ensuring their significance, character, setting and local distinctiveness are safeguarded. The preservation and enhancement of heritage assets forms an important part of the Framework (Chapter 16) and is one of the core planning principles that should be used to underpin plan-making and decision-taking.
- 8.96 The Site does not contain any designated heritage assets. Within 1km of the Site are 15 Grade II listed buildings, one Grade II* listed building, and one scheduled monument. There are four buildings included on Somerset Council's local list of non-designated heritage assets within 1km of the Site. The Archaeology and Heritage Assessment concludes that no designated or non-designated heritage assets would experience a loss of significance and therefore would not be harmed by the approval and implementation of the Proposed Development.
- 8.97 Results from the Geophysical Survey showed no evidence for archaeological remains with the potential to preclude the principle of development. The only area of archaeological sensitivity is confined to the easternmost part of the Site, away from the proposed residential development. An appropriately worded condition could secure a further programme of archaeological investigation and recording.
- 8.98 The Proposed Development is therefore in accordance with Policy EQ3 and Chapter 16 of the Framework.

Other Matters

- 8.99 The Site is located outside the area that is relevant to Policy YV4 of the SSLP - titled Yeovil Air Flight Safety Zone, which controls development in Yeovil Airfield Flight Safety Zone to ensure no hazard is caused to the operational needs of the Agusta Westland's Aerodrome.
- 8.100 An assessment of how the Proposed Development meets the Placemaking Principles for Somerset (October 2024) is set out below.

Placemaking Principle	Assessment of Proposed Development's Compliance
1. Reduce the need to travel via private car	The Proposed Development has been strategically located and designed to ensure that key services, amenities, and public transport options are accessible within a 20-minute round-trip walk or cycle. Street layouts promote permeability and connectivity with surrounding neighbourhoods, while residential density supports viable local services without compromising design quality.

Placemaking Principle	Assessment of Proposed Development's Compliance
2. Facilitate modal shift through multi-modal travel measures	The Proposed Development includes EV charging points, bike storage, and public transport enhancements. The implementation of a Travel Plan aims to deliver a modal shift away from the private car in favour of more sustainable means of travel.
3. Integrate car and bicycle parking in a way that prioritises pedestrians and public realm	Parking is discreetly integrated into the streetscape to avoid being obtrusive or visually dominant. Secure cycle parking is provided.
4. Create an attractive, high-quality environment, incorporating green infrastructure into streets and public spaces	The public realm is designed with tree-lined streets, green corridors, and permeable surfaces to reduce runoff and enhance biodiversity. Natural features are retained, while swales and SUDS contribute to drainage requirements ecological resilience.
5. Improve road safety for all users through street design, appropriate to the context	Street geometry and junction design prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety, with natural traffic calming measures ensuring speeds below 20mph. Sightlines and tracking are optimised to reduce vehicle dominance, while access for emergency and service vehicles is maintained without compromising safety for active travel users.
6. Facilitate car-free school transport	The nearest primary school is accessible via walking and cycling, reducing reliance on private cars. The approach improves air quality around schools and supports healthy travel habits from an early age.
7. Enhance accessibility and attractiveness through materials, street furniture and fixtures	The Proposed Development encourages use a simple, context-sensitive material palette that is durable, low-carbon, and easy to maintain. Clear and accessible pathways are provided for all users. Any lighting and signage (to be considered through a reserved matters application) are integrated into existing structures to maintain a clean and attractive streetscape.
8. Plan lighting, waste storage/collection and other service infrastructure at an early design stage	Service infrastructure has been considered from the outset to avoid conflicts with street trees and movement networks. Further consideration will be given at detailed design stage. Waste storage is integrated into the design with sufficient capacity and convenient access, ensuring it complements the overall aesthetic and functionality of the development.
9. Provide safe connectivity within rural communities	The development promotes safe, walkable and cyclable routes to local services, reducing dependence on private vehicles. It encourages connectivity between Horton and Broadway, while respecting landscape character and ecological sensitivities, offering inclusive travel options for both new and existing residents through the provision of a new connection to the PRoW to the south of Horton.
10. Engage key stakeholders early	Early engagement with Horton Parish Council helped shape the format of public consultation. An in-person consultation event, supported by a dedicated website and

Placemaking Principle	Assessment of Proposed Development’s Compliance
	both in-person and online opportunities to complete questionnaires, enabled meaningful engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community. This collaborative approach informed design decisions and ensured the Proposed Development had taken into consideration the community feedback.



9. Planning Balance

9.1 The Proposed Development will deliver substantial benefits, including:

- i. Provision of up to 150 high-quality residential dwellings to boost housing supply in the area;
- ii. Delivery of 35% affordable homes, compliant with adopted policy;
- iii. An extensive amount of public open space over and above adopted policy requirements, including high quality private and communal amenity space for future and existing residents;
- iv. Provision of community sports facilities, including potential pitches, recreational, and informal play space;
- v. Provision of a LEAP that will be accessible for the existing community as well as future residents of the Application Site;
- vi. A biodiversity net gain of 69.21% in habitat units, 14.08% in hedgerow units and 12.81% in watercourse units, over and above the 10% mandatory requirement;
- vii. Extensive landscaping and public realm enhancements to improve the appearance of the Application Site within the wider landscape setting;
- viii. High-quality sustainable designs which respond to the local character and vernacular;
- ix. Creation of local employment opportunities, particularly during the construction period, including supporting the employment of over 520 people and 6 apprentices, graduates, or trainees; and
- x. Creation of additional footfall for existing local services and facilities;
- xi. Over £300,000 in annual council tax revenue; and
- xii. Financial contributions towards local education/healthcare provision and local infrastructure via CIL and S106 obligations.

9.2 The Application Site is located adjacent to the built up area of Horton and is enclosed by existing development to the east and road infrastructure to the north, south and west.

9.3 The Proposed Development would result in the loss of a greenfield site and existing agricultural land; however, the submitted Agricultural Land Assessment demonstrates that the significant majority of the Site comprises Grade 4 ('poor quality') with the remainder comprising Grade 3b ('moderate quality') land². As such, none of the Site is considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land.

9.4 Furthermore, this impact is minimised by the landscape-led approach to the Proposed Development, the creation of attractive new public open spaces and recreation space that would be accessible for existing and future residents, and the achievement of the required Biodiversity Net Gain.

9.5 Furthermore, based on the Council's housing land supply shortfall, the requirements of the SSLP with respect to the location of new development (notably settlement boundaries) are out-of-date for the purposes of determining

² Noting that some of the Grade 3b land identified by the report is located on land that does not form part of the planning application boundary

the Proposed Development in accordance with footnote 8 of the Framework. Accordingly, paragraph 11d) of the Framework will provide the relevant decision-making framework with respect to determining the Proposed Development.

9.6 It has been demonstrated in Section 8 that the application of footnote 7 policies would not provide any reason for restricting or refusing the Proposed Development, let alone 'strong' reasons. Additionally, it is evident that there are substantial benefits associated with the Proposed Development that would significantly outweigh any harm. Therefore, the Proposed Development is consistent with Policy SD1 of the SSLP and the provisions of paragraph 11d) (ii) of the Framework.

9.7 Accordingly, planning permission should be granted.

10. Draft Heads of Terms

- 10.1 Draft Heads of Terms for a Section 106 Agreement, to provide a level of infrastructure to support the development in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 ('CIL') (as amended), are set out below. The exact scope and content of any agreement will need to be discussed and finalised during the course of the application and therefore the Heads of Terms should be considered in that context.
- 10.2 Somerset Council is a Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") charging authority. Therefore, financial contributions will be made in accordance with the charging rate, which is £40 per square metre for residential development (affordable housing is excluded).
- 10.3 Policy SS6 'Infrastructure Delivery' states that the Council requires developer contributions through S106 agreements and CIL contributions to support development. S106 obligations are site-specific and negotiated individually.
- 10.4 It is considered that the following key elements are likely to be covered in a Section 106 Agreement for the Proposed Development subject to meeting the statutory tests:
- a) Provision of 35% affordable housing;
 - b) Provision of on-site open space, and arrangements for future management and maintenance by a private management company;
 - c) Provision of on-site landscaping and maintenance by a private management company;
 - d) Provision of on-site SuDS; and maintenance of these by a private management company;
 - e) Biodiversity Net Gain (unless secured by condition);
 - f) Financial contributions towards healthcare/education provision;
 - g) Implementation of a Travel Plan to deliver a modal shift away from the private car in favour of more sustainable means of travel; and
 - h) Highway improvement works.
- 10.5 The exact scope and content of any Legal Agreement will be discussed and finalised during the determination of the application through discussions with Council Officers.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 This Planning Statement has been submitted in support of an outline planning application, made on behalf of Gleeson Land for development at Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Somerset. The description of development is:

“Outline planning application with all matters reserved, other than access from Broadway Hill, for the construction of up to 150 residential dwellings with open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure and the potential expansion of Horton Playing Field.”

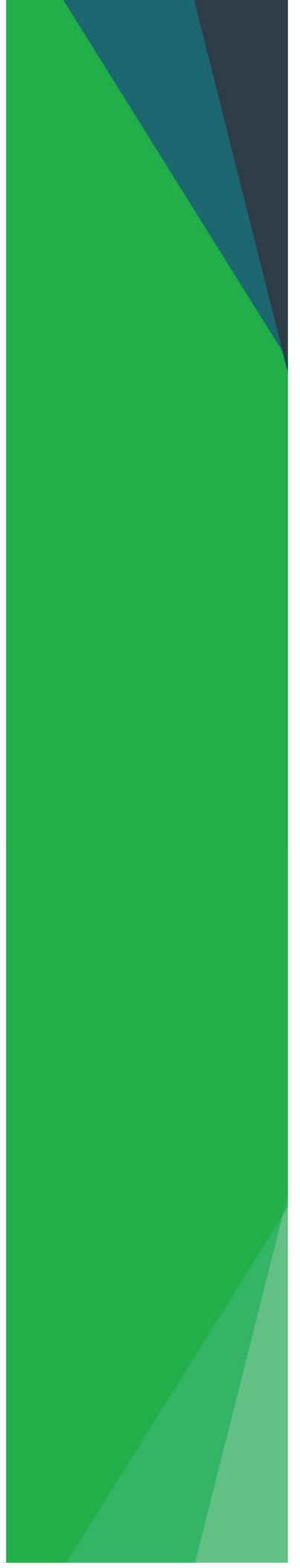
- 11.2 This Planning Statement has provided a description of the Application Site and the surrounding area, a summary of the planning history of the Application Site, a detailed description of the Proposed Development and an assessment of the proposal against the relevant planning policies.

- 11.3 The application follows public consultation with local residents and other stakeholders, including Horton Parish Council and local Councillors. Matters raised during those discussions have been addressed within this planning application. Please refer to the Statement of Community Involvement for further details on the consultation process.

- 11.4 The development will provide the following key benefits:

- Provision of up to 150 high-quality residential dwellings to boost housing supply in the area;
- Delivery of 35% affordable homes, compliant with adopted policy;
- An extensive amount of public open space over and above adopted policy requirements, including high quality private and communal amenity space for future and existing residents;
- Provision of community sports facilities, including potential pitches, recreational, and informal play space;
- Provision of a LEAP that will be accessible for the existing community as well as future residents of the Application Site;
- A biodiversity net gain of 69.21% in habitat units, 14.08% in hedgerow units and 12.81% in watercourse units, over and above the 10% mandatory requirement;
- Extensive landscaping and public realm enhancements to improve the appearance of the Application Site within the wider landscape setting;
- High-quality sustainable designs which respond to the local character and vernacular;
- Creation of local employment opportunities, particularly during the construction period, including supporting the employment of over 520 people and 6 apprentices, graduates, or trainees; and
- Creation of additional footfall for existing local services and facilities;
- Over £300,000 in annual council tax revenue; and
- Financial contributions towards local education/healthcare provision and local infrastructure via CIL and S106 obligations.

- 11.5 The Proposed Development will bring forward much needed new houses (including affordable housing) at a site that is sustainability located and offers an expansion to the Horton playing field. It will bring forward substantial benefits that will outweigh any adverse impacts.
- 11.6 On this basis, it is evident that there are significant material considerations in this case that outweigh any harm as a result of the Proposed Development. Therefore, the Proposed Development should be granted planning permission in accordance with SD1 of the SSLP and paragraph 11d) of the Framework.



Appendix 1

Pre-Application Response

Pre-Application Submission Report

Reference: 25/01312/PREMAJ

Description of Proposal: Residential development of approximately 150 dwellings

Address:

Land Off Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 9QN

Author: Tim Marsh

Date: 6th August 2025

Thank you for your pre-application submission received on 27th June 2025, consisting of the following:

- Completed pre-application advice enquiry form
- Covering Letter dated 26th May 2025
- Site Location Plan
- Technical note for proposed access
- Draft Illustrative Masterplan

Pre-application advice is sought on the following matters:

- The principle of residential development;
- General design principles and comments to inform the design evolution process;
- Public open space proposals and potential expansion of the Horton Playing Fields;
- Comments on the Proposed Access Technical Note;
- Agreement to proposed LVIA viewpoints;
- Likely Section 106 obligations;
- Validation requirements for an outline application; and
- Any other material matters relevant to the preparation of an outline application.

Please note that although comments have been sought from Somerset Ecology Services; the Environmental Health Officer; and the Lead Local Flood Authority they have not provided advice. However, it is understood that your client's

hydrologist has been liaising separately with the Lead Local Flood Authority, and at this stage detailed comments from these consultees are not considered to be essential. Should an application for planning permission be lodged it is anticipated that they would provide detailed comments and be likely to raise issues that it should be possible to address by means of planning conditions.

This advice takes into account discussions at the virtual meeting held on 22nd July with your colleague Hywel James, your client (Gleeson Land), myself, the Council's Affordable Housing Officer and Landscape Officer. It also takes into account the attached comments from these Officers, and the following additional consultees: Planning Policy Team; Public Open Space Team; and the County Education Services.

Advice is provided on the above and other known issues to assist you based on the information you have supplied. Online references are also identified to help you shape and submit your proposal and explain further some of the Council's relevant procedures

Site:

The site is located at the south-western edge of the settlement of Horton and comprises of approximately 15.7 hectares of agricultural land and is located at the south-western edge of Horton. It is framed by the A303 to the south and Broadway Hill to the North and North-West and is situated adjacent to Whitegate farm, Shave Lane, Channells Lane and Pottery Road. To the east is residential development located along the Channells Lane cul-de-sac and the Horton Playing Field. The land is undulating and is divided by field hedges and mature trees. A watercourse runs through the western portion of the Site.

Proposal:

It is proposed to submit an outline planning application with all matters except access reserved. A total of 150 dwellings is proposed with associated public open space and possible extension to the Horton Playing Fields, along with car parking to serve the expanded facility ("the Proposed Development"). A mix of dwelling sizes and tenures is proposed with 35% affordable homes in accordance with Local Plan policy HG3.

The submitted draft Illustrative Masterplan proposes:

- Retention and incorporation into the development of existing landscape and green infrastructure features where possible;
- An organic layout that reflects the existing development and the wider setting of the town;
- Large areas of public open space in the southern and western portions of the Site, with new homes fronting onto these areas to provide natural surveillance;
- A mix of multifunctional green spaces to provide recreation and biodiversity enhancement opportunities;
- Green corridors bisecting areas of built development;

- Vehicular access from Broadway Hill through the Site's northern boundary to include new footways along Broadway Hill;
- Possible expansion of Horton Playing Fields on land in the eastern section of the Site; and
- A comprehensive sustainable drainage strategy.

It is noted that a number of technical assessments are being undertaken to inform a refinement of the proposals, including:

- Highways
- Landscape
- Ecology
- Drainage
- Heritage
- Arboriculture
- Noise

Relevant Planning History

There is no relevant planning history on the site itself but Land North of Broadway Hill Broadway, approximately 90m north of the Site, was approved for the construction of 49 dwellings at appeal on 15 October 2024 (reference: APP/E3335/W/23/3324775). Although subject to a resolution to grant, a similar application for the construction of 49 dwellings (reference: 23/01649/FUL) was finally disposed of on 30th June 2025 in light of the developer choosing to implement the previously approved application.

Site Constraints

The site is not covered by any specific landscape, ecological or heritage designations however it is subject to the following relevant recorded constraints:

- Although located mostly in Flood Zone 1, a watercourse runs through the Site and as a result parts of the site are identified as Flood Zone 2/3.
- A303 consultation zone for the Highways Agency
- Grade 3 Agricultural Land
- Within the Impact Zone of a Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Within Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar site catchment – (Phosphates mitigation strategy required)

- Within an area of sparsely distributed Great Crested Newts (GCN) - less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for GCNs

Planning Policies, legislation, and other information relevant to your proposal (without limitation):

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, and 12 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) – hereafter referred to as the SSLP was adopted on 5th March 2015. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the adopted Local Plan now forms part of the Development Plan. As such, decisions on the award of planning permission should be made in accordance with this Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Legislation and National policy are clear that the starting point for decision-making is the Development Plan, where development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The following policies of the SSLP are relevant to the proposal:

Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development
 Policy SS1 – Settlement Strategy
 Policy SS2 – Development in Rural Settlements
 Policy SS4 – District Wide Housing Provision
 Policy SS5 – Delivering New Housing Growth
 Policy SS6 – Infrastructure Delivery
 Policy YV4 – Yeovil Air Flight Safety Zone
 Policy HG3 – Provision of Affordable Housing
 Policy HG5 – Achieving a Mix of Market Housing
 Policy TA1 – Low Carbon Travel
 Policy TA4 – Travel Plans
 Policy TA5 – Transport Impact of New Development
 Policy TA6 – Parking Standards
 Policy HW1 – Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development
 Policy EQ1 – Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset
 Policy EQ2 – General Development
 Policy EQ3 – Historic Environment
 Policy EQ4 – Biodiversity
 Policy EQ5 – Green Infrastructure
 Policy EQ6 – Woodland and Forests
 Policy EQ7 – Pollution Control.

No weight is afforded to the Local Plan Review by reason that it had reached only an early stage in the process and has now been delayed indefinitely due to the transition from district council to unitary in April 2023.

Placemaking Principles for Somerset (October 2024)

The Council's Placemaking Principles were adopted in October 2024 following public consultation and are a material planning consideration. These principles set the Council's vision to create attractive, high-quality environments that are inclusive and accessible for all. [Appendix 1- Finalised placemaking principles.pdf](#)
The principles guide the Council's approach to transport and development planning, aiming to enhance the quality of life for residents by promoting active travel, reducing carbon footprints, and fostering community pride.

The 10 Principles are: -

- Reduce the need to travel via private car.
- Facilitate modal shift through multi-modal travel measures.
- Integrate car and bicycle parking in a way that prioritises pedestrians and public realm.
- Create an attractive, high-quality environment, incorporating green infrastructure into streets and public spaces.
- Improve road safety for all users through street design, appropriate to the context.
- Facilitate car-free school transport
- Enhance accessibility and attractiveness through materials, street furniture and fixtures.
- Plan lighting, waste storage/collection and other service infrastructure at an early design stage.
- Provide safe connectivity within rural communities.
- Engage key stakeholders early

Other possible Relevant Considerations (without limitation):

- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guide/Code
- The Countywide Parking Strategy (2013)
- Somerset County Council Highways Development Control Standing Advice
- Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (March 2015)
- South Somerset Local Plan 1991 – 2011 (Replaced and Saved Local Plan Policies)
- Somerset Minerals Plan
- Somerset Waste Strategy

There is no Neighbourhood Plan for Horton

ASSESSMENT OF MAIN ISSUES

The key planning considerations relevant to this proposal are as follows:

1. Principle of development
2. Landscape including LVIA viewpoints
3. General Design Principles including Layout and Built Form
4. Public Open Space and potential expansion of Horton Playing Fields;
5. Highways and Parking (including Proposed Access Technical Note);
6. Phosphates
7. Ecology and Biodiversity
8. Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage
9. Affordable Housing
10. Sustainable construction and waste reduction
11. Contamination
12. Refuse collection and recycling requirements in new developments
13. Secured by Design
14. Planning Obligations / Section 106 Legal Agreement

1. Principle of Development

The Settlement Strategy set out under policies SS1 and SS2 of the SSLP directs new development for housing, employment, shopping and other services to named settlements listed as either Primary Market Towns, Local Market Towns, or Rural Centres.

SSLP Policy SS5 attributes a level of growth to each of the main settlements within the hierarchy. Horton falls within the overall Rural Settlements target of 2,242 dwellings.

Policy SS2 also seeks to ensure that development is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, increases its sustainability should generally have the support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation.

The Council's Planning Policy Team have been consulted on the proposal and a copy of their advice is attached. In summary they have advised that the lack of a five-year housing land supply means the presumption in favour of sustainable development is a significant material consideration and any recommendation will need to be made in the context of paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF having regard to the weight that should be given to policies within the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 and taking into account the nature and extent of the shortfall in housing land supply.

The most recent figures calculated under the new Framework standard method, indicate that the supply is 2.22 years for the South Somerset District Council area (now Somerset Council – Area South).

Due to this shortfall in supply, the policies relating to the supply and location of new housing are deemed to be out-of-date and paragraph 11d)ii. of the Framework applies. It states that, for decision making this means that where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. *the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*

With regards to these requirements, subject to the submission of satisfactory information on potential impacts of the development on ecology, it would appear that the proposal does not conflict with need to protect areas or assets of particular importance and that 11d)i would not preclude development of the site.

This leaves 11d)ii and the need to direct development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Horton is served by a range of community facilities including a post office/village store, pub, children's play area/sports pitch, village hall /community centre and church. As such it is considered to be a sustainable location for housing under SSLP Policy SS2 provided the development is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, increases its sustainability and has the general support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation.

The proposed affordable and market housing would help meet the Council's significant shortfall in its 5-year housing supply and is supported in principle in this location. However, this is subject to compliance with other more detailed policy considerations set out under the relevant headings below.

2. Landscape including LVIA viewpoints

SSLP Policy EQ2 requires high quality design, which promotes South Somerset's local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district by:

- Creating quality places;
- Reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context...

SSLP Policy EQ5 promotes the provision of Green Infrastructure and open spaces that. Inter alia, enhance and/or maintain the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and contribute to and/or maintain local identity and sense of place.

The thrust of these policies remains consistent with paragraph 135 of the NPPF which states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

With regards to these requirements:

The Site is not subject to any specific landscape designations.

The site comprises of approximately 15.7 Ha of agricultural land adjoining the existing settlement of Horton and is outside of any landscape-based designations.

It is noted that a comprehensive green infrastructure strategy is proposed with the aim of assimilating the proposed development within its landscape setting. It is proposed that significant improvements would be provided in terms of tree and hedgerow planting. An application for outline planning permission should include a comprehensive tree survey and arboricultural report and the Council's Tree Officer would be consulted on this and their advice would inform any future decision on the proposal.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is proposed to be undertaken, and the Council's Landscape Officer has been consulted. A copy of their advice is attached; in summary they have advised that:

- The proposal is largely sympathetic to the existing landscape and built environment.

- The photo viewpoints plan which has been overlayed on the ZTV (Zone of Theoretical Visibility) plan are deemed to be suitable for the LVIA (Landscape Visual Impact Assessment) study.
- Visualizations should be provided in accordance with GLVIA 3 guidelines to enable the viewer to understand the impact and how the scheme will look after the construction phase in year 1 and in comparison, to year 10 after the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation planting.
- Any anticipated effects on the landscape from cumulative development should be demonstrated.
- The layout of the eastern boundary should be reviewed with particular attention to the relationship with Whitegate farm and houses at the bottom of Channells Lane.
- Play settings – LEAPS, NEAPS and LAPs. Consideration should be given to natural play and the use of timber play equipment.
- Landscape screening along the northeast and east boundaries may be required to mitigate against the view of the development when travelling southwest towards the A303.
- The impact of the proposed recreational area on houses at the bottom of Channells Lane must be reviewed to ascertain if screening is appropriate.
- Whilst the proposed scheme effectively introduces tree planting throughout, a more irregular and grouped pattern should be considered.

More detailed observations for later consideration include a preference for the use of natural materials for seating areas and bridges and mown routes; the use of hard materials to ensure a strong visual relationship with the village and the agricultural setting; the gateway into the settlement should reflect the varied character of the built form within the village with a key building at the entrance to the proposed development; houses at the front of the site should be informally grouped and front gardens and irregular tree-lined frontage should be provided within the development; vegetation or natural stone walling should divide parking between properties; roads should terminate with built form; and cottages opposite the open space should have boundary treatment rather than a road.

3. General Design Principles including Layout and Built Form

SSLP Policy EQ2 requires high quality design, which promotes South Somerset's local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district by:

- Creating quality places;
- Reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context...

SSLP policy EQ2 also expects new development to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, and policy EQ7 seeks to resist noise and light pollution and harm to residential amenity.

With regards to these requirements and related provisions of the NPPF (including paragraph 135 – see above) and the Placemaking Principles for Somerset:

The proposal is considered to be largely sympathetic to the existing landscape and built environment (see Landscape Officer's comments summarised above) with sufficient separation and existing as well as proposed planting to take account of potential adverse impacts on the proposed new housing from traffic noise on the A303 Trunk Road. There are residential properties relatively close to the site to the north and east and any detailed proposals will need to ensure adequate separation between proposed and existing dwellings, and that adequately sized private rear gardens are provided.

Although the detailed design remains to be considered, in my opinion the proposed illustrative masterplan is well-conceived and, in time a development consistent with the principles and parameters of the masterplan should integrate well with the existing settlement. However, the scale of the proposed development is significant and, taking into account recently constructed and permitted development at Horton and Broadway, it is debatable whether the proposal is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, and it remains to be seen whether it has the general support of the local community. Notwithstanding this, in terms of landscape, layout and character the masterplan appears to accord with policies EQ2, EQ5, the relevant sections of the NPPF and the Placemaking Principles.

Having regard to the above an outline application will be expected to include Parameter Plans that if acceptable would then form part of any planning permission. This is to ensure that subsequent applications for approval of reserved matters are consistent with the general form and layout of proposed development as shown on the illustrative masterplan. This includes, all areas of public realm overlooked by frontage development, minimal parking in front of dwellings, sufficient space for existing retained and proposed new planting to flourish, and adequate separation between proposed new play spaces and existing as well as proposed new dwellings.

4. Public Open Space and potential expansion of Horton Playing Fields

SSLP Local Plan policies SS6 and HW1 seek provision/contributions and future maintenance of open space, outdoor playing space, local and strategic sports, cultural and community facilities.

The Council's Public Open Space Team have been consulted and advised that they no longer provide detailed comments on development proposals, referring instead to the attached Fields in Trust (FIT) Standards. These detail the minimum requirements to develop quality open space, including minimums of 32 sqm per

person for open space provision. The proposals will be assessed with reference to the FIT standards, and it is noted that substantial public open space of various typologies are proposed, however the provision of these extensive areas of informal and formal public open space are considered to be essential to the acceptability of the scheme – see Landscape and Design considerations above. The equipping and maintenance of these areas would need to be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement.

The proposed expansion of Horton Playing Fields is a significant potential benefit of the scheme. However, its overall acceptability will be dependent on support from the local community, particularly the Parish Council, and the ability to achieve a satisfactory level of natural surveillance of this area. The cost of providing and maintaining this facility, and all other areas of proposed new open space will be expected to be carried by the development along with policy compliant affordable housing and other provision for financial contributions towards off-site education and health infrastructure as sought by the relevant consultees.

5. Highways, Access, and Parking

SSLP policy TA1 requires all residential development to provide Low Carbon Travel measures subject to viability.

SSLP policy TA5 requires all new development to maximise the potential for sustainable transport.

SSLP policy TA6 requires the Somerset County Council Parking Strategy standards be applied to all new development.

NPPF paragraph 115 states that in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*
- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code⁴⁸; and*
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach...*

NPPF paragraph 116 states:

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe...

NPPF paragraph 117 states:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;*
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations. ...*

NPPF paragraph 118 states:

All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.

With regards to the above policies, as noted above there is a variety of services and facilities at Horton. The nearest bus stop is 350m from the site with buses to Ilminster, Ashill, and Taunton. In terms of highway safety, the Highway Authority have been consulted and have provided comprehensive comments that are attached to this letter.

In summary they have advised that:

The formula contained within Manual for Streets 2, page 73, para 10.1.5, may be more appropriate to determine the Desirable Minimum Stopping Sight Distance (DMSSD) elements of the proposed visibility splays along Broadway Hill from the centreline of the proposed development access. This suggests that the Desirable Minimum Stopping Sight Distances (DMSSD) should be: • 70.2m - inbound to the village. • 83.7m - outbound from the village. It is recommended that at least these Stopping Sight Distances should be provided along Broadway Hill from the proposed development access location.

There is a relatively short distance between the proposed 30mph/national speed limit gateway on Broadway Hill and the proposed development access location. Given the existing recorded vehicle speeds on entry and exit (41.9mph eastbound and 46.9mph westbound), it is recommended that the 30mph speed limit should be extended further south-west along Broadway Hill.

The applicant will be required to enter into a suitable legal agreement with the Highway Authority to secure the construction of the highway works necessary as part of this development, and all s.278 works will need to be cited in the s.106 agreement.

The application will require the highest-level travel plan which includes monitoring and targets and a S106 legal agreement will be used to secure the travel plan.

Consideration should be given to the requirement for the provision of highway lighting to mitigate the risks of collisions occurring between vehicles along Broadway Hill (including the proposed development access) during the hours of darkness conditions.

Active Travel England (ATE) will need to be formally consulted.

The existing highway carrier drain may need to be temporarily or permanently lowered, diverted, or protected to facilitate the construction of the proposed new vehicular access junction into the development, and it is possible that a culvert may be required to construct both the vehicular access junction and the footways onto Broadway Hill to span any drainage ditches that exist. The proposed location of the vehicular access junction approximately 35 metres to the east of a box culvert that serves the Environment Agency watercourse may be affected by the proposed carriageway widening.

Parking will need to accord to SC Parking Standards (2013) with 1 EVCP per dwelling and safe, secure cycle parking included too.

The applicant should approach the Estate Roads Team as early as possible and the Somerset “Streets in Residential Developments-Design Guide Notes” reviewed.

It is assumed that the proposed access onto Broadway Hill will be delivered using a separate S278 agreement and not included in any future S38 agreement.

Section 3.15 of the design guide should be reviewed as the main route through the scheme should take the form of a collector street rather than an access street.

Locations where dwellings front the carriageway without footways may not be acceptable.

Turning heads will be needed in several locations at the termination of roads if adoption is sought.

There is a potential here to improve some passenger transport routes. communication should be made with the SC Transport Team to discuss ways in which this application could contribute to improve bus connectivity in the area.

6. Phosphates

SSLP policy EQ4 states:

Development will not be allowed to proceed unless it can be demonstrated that it will not result in any adverse impact on the integrity of national and international wildlife and landscape designations, including features outside the site boundaries that ecologically support the conservation of the designated site.

NPPF paragraph 198 states:

Planning .. decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development...

The site is identified as being within the catchment of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site.

The form of development, providing new dwellings, is identified by the Natural England informative guidance as one that may require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

The proposal involves the creation of new dwellings. As such, the development would result in an increase in user numbers and is considered to give rise to an increase in phosphates.

A Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy would be required.

See: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/phosphates-on-the-somerset-levels-and-moors-ramsar-site/>

See also : <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/phosphates-guidance-template-documents-and-useful-information/>

7. Ecology and Biodiversity

Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that the impact of development on wildlife is fully considered during the determination of a planning application under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations 2017).

In May 2019 South Somerset District Council formally recognised a climate and ecological emergency.

SSLP policy EQ4 requires proposals to:

- Protect the biodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation of habitats and promote coherent ecological networks;

- Maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats;
- Incorporate beneficial biodiversity conservation features where appropriate;
- Protect and assist recovery of identified priority species; and
- Ensure that Habitat Features, Priority Habitats and Geological Features that are used by bats and other wildlife are protected and that the design including proposals for lighting does not cause severance or is a barrier to movement.

SSLP policy EQ6 resists the loss of ancient or veteran trees.

NPPF paragraph 187 states that :

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

d) minimizing impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity...

NPPF paragraph 136 states:

Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning ... decisions should ensure... that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments..., that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible...

A 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory under the Environment Act 2023 for applications received from 12 February 2024 for major development.

With regards to the above requirements, although consulted the Council's Ecologist has not commented. In the absence of their expert advice, it is noted that a Biodiversity Checklist and Ecology Report would be provided with an application and that the Site is not subject to any ecological constraints and does not contain any priority habitats or trees subject to Tree Protection Orders. The results of these surveys and demonstration of 10% Net Gain in Biodiversity would need to be submitted with and inform any planning application

It is also noted that large areas of green infrastructure and open space are proposed, with the expectation that existing trees and hedgerows will largely be retained and that an on-site Biodiversity Net Gain would be achieved.

The Council's Ecologist would be consulted on this information and their support for the proposal (subject to any recommended conditions) would be required for the proposal to satisfy the above policy requirements.

- More information about what is required on ecology and biodiversity can be found here: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/biodiversity-net-gain/>

- See also the Somerset BNG guidance, which will have helpful background information and further explain the requirements:
<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s25025/Somerset%20BNG%20Guidance%20Note.pdf>
- Once the application has been approved, the applicants will need to submit a <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan> and creating a habitat management and monitoring plan for BNG - GOV.UK (HMMP) to discharge the Biodiversity Gain Condition.
- A legal agreement is required for all significant on-site gains and all off-site gains.

8. Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

SSLP policy EQ1 directs development away from areas at risk of flooding and stipulates that development reduce and manage the impact of flood risk by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems, and through appropriate layout, design, and choice of materials.

Paragraphs 170 -182 of the NPPF requires a sequential risk-based approach to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any risk of flooding, to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Paragraph 174 states, inter alia, that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.

The proposed development site, although predominantly within Flood Zone 1 where there is a low risk of flooding, does include land adjacent to an existing watercourse and two associated small areas that fall within the High-Risk Flood Zones (2 and 3) . In my opinion, since no built development is being proposed within these high-risk flood zones, provided that the application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (to tie in with the required Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy.) acceptable to the Lead Local Flood Authority then there is unlikely to be a need to apply the sequential test for flooding.

This is on the basis that sufficient information will be provided with the application to satisfy the relevant consultees that the proposed development will be safe from the impacts of flooding; that suitable sustainable drainage systems will be provided to manage the risk of surface water flooding on site; and that the proposal will not increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere.

9. Affordable Housing

SSLP policy SS6 seeks the provision of on-site affordable housing as appropriate, to be secured through S106 legal agreements.

SSLP policy HG3 requires 35% on-site affordable housing (AH) in schemes of 6no. new dwellings or more.

SSDC Policy HG3 First Homes Position Statement, (FHPS), states that at least 25% of all affordable housing units should be offered to first-time buyers at 30% discount on the open market value.

NPPF paragraph 65 supports the provision of affordable housing in residential major development.

NPPF paragraph 66 expects affordable housing that meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures.

SSLP Policy HG3 requires 35% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable, a development of 150 dwellings would be expected to deliver 53 (rounded) affordable homes.

A range of market homes should be provided in accordance with Local Plan Policy HG5 sets out that a range of market housing types and sizes should be provided across the district that can reasonably meet the market housing needs of the residents of South Somerset. The latest Local Housing Needs Assessment 2021 (LHNA)¹ for South Somerset demonstrates the mix of housing needed over the period 2020-2040.

For affordable and market housing the following split is provided by Figure 1 of the LHNA and set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Local Housing Need Assessment (2021) – Market and Affordable Housing Split (based on Figure 1)

No. of bedrooms	Total Market Housing	Percentage	Total Affordable Housing	Percentage
1	499	6%	454	11%
2	1,329	15%	1,744	40%
3	5,292	59%	1,642	38%
4+	1,801	20%	469	11%
Total	8,921	100%	4,309	100%

The Affordable Housing Officer has been consulted. A copy of their advice is attached; in summary they have advised that:

An affordable housing mix based on 53 affordable homes with a tenure a split 80% Social Rent and 20% Shared Ownership is required.

¹ [South Somerset LHNA Update, 2021](#)

The proposal should include provision for 5 No adapted Part M4, Category 3 affordable homes.

The affordable units should be evenly distributed and form an integral part of the development and should not be visually distinguishable from the market housing on site.

A local connection clause will be required for the affordable housing.

Service charges should reflect the necessity to keep these properties affordable

The appropriate affordable housing provision on the site would need to be secured under the terms of the s106 agreement.

10. Sustainable construction and waste reduction

SSLP policy EQ1 states, among other criteria:

New development will ensure that carbon dioxide emissions are minimised through energy efficiency measures, renewable and low carbon energy... Climate change should be considered in the design of new development, incorporating measures such as solar orientation, maximising natural shade and cooling, water efficiency and flood resilience...

NPPF paragraph 166 encourages decentralised energy supplies for new development and energy consumption to be minimised.

NPPF paragraph 167 states:

... local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights)...

Somerset Council Waste Core Strategy policy WCS1 requires waste prevention to be maximised and the following to be submitted with planning applications:

A site waste management strategy for the construction of large-scale major projects (200 or more dwellings or where the development covers more than 10,000 m²) or for multi-site projects within the same application.

11. Land Quality

NPPF paragraph 187 requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia, a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner

commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).

The proposal would result in the loss of 15.7 Ha of Grade 3 Agricultural Land, so a survey will be required to establish whether the site is best and most versatile grade 3a land, and if so, that would weigh against the proposed development.

SSLP policy EQ7 seeks to limit water, land and air pollution and to avoid harm to amenity, health or safety.

NPPF paragraph 196 a) states:

Planning... decisions should ensure that.. a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination...

The Council's Environmental Health team would be consulted on an application for planning permission and may recommend conditions should evidence of potential contamination be identified – it is anticipated that an agricultural land quality survey would identify any such potential contamination.

12. Refuse collection and recycling requirements in new developments

Waste and recycling collections are essential services for households and must be considered when designing a new development or even converting an existing property. Failure to do so can lead to poor services for future residents and could result in objections to planning applications.

To ensure sufficient space is allocated for refuse and recycling storage, to ensure collection points can be accessed and has the road design taken into account access by collection vehicles please visit this SWP guidance page:
<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/developer-guidance/>

Somerset Waste would be consulted on an application

13. Secured by Design

This a Police initiative combining the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security and seeks to approve developments that are safe, secure, and inclusive for all residents, for more information visit
<http://www.securedbydesign.com/>

14. Planning Obligations / Section 106 Heads of Terms

The level of developer contributions sought will be proportionate to the nature, scale and viability of the project having regard to the:

- Scale and form of development;
- Capacity of existing infrastructure; and
- Potential impact of the development upon the surrounding area and its facilities.

Where viability of a scheme is contested the Council will adopt an open book approach to negotiations in line with adopted Council procedures.

It is anticipated that the following planning obligations would be sought:

- Affordable Housing – 35 % as discussed above
- Education – the Council's Education Team have been consulted. A copy of their advice is attached.
- Formal play space – provision of, and contribution towards equipped plays space, youth facilities, playing pitches and changing rooms and associated maintenance – amount To Be Confirmed
- Health Facilities - amount To Be Confirmed in consultation with the NHS.
- Travel Plan (Highest Level)
- Phosphate mitigation and monitoring
- Off-site highways works/access works
- Other Infrastructure improvements as may be necessary.

Other financial contributions as may be required such as for, GP surgeries etc – following receipt of advice from the relevant consultees on an application for planning permission.

Community Infrastructure Levy

Submitting 'Form 1' with your application will save time, as your eventual application may be delayed if we have to request this at a later time, advice and forms can be found on the [Planning Portal](#).

Further information on CIL in Somerset South is available on Community Infrastructure Levy [Community Infrastructure Levy \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Site contains does not include any above-ground heritage assets and is not in or part of the setting to a Conservation Area. However, there is a Grade II listed milestone adjacent to the northern boundary. The Proposed Development, including any off-site highway works, would need to be designed to minimise any potential adverse impacts on the significance of the milestone.

An initial archaeological Desk Based Assessment and Geophysical Survey will need to be provided in support of a planning application to define the archaeological baseline conditions and inform any further investigations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Tilted Balance under NPPF paragraph 11 d) applies since the Council's latest housing position is less than 5 years (currently 2.22 years) supply. Horton is considered to be a sustainable settlement that qualifies for limited growth under SSLP Policy SS2.

In terms of the Planning Balance, the scheme would deliver significant benefits, including a contribution towards the housing shortfall, 53 affordable dwellings, substantial areas of new public open space, possible extension to the existing Horton Playing Fields, and potentially a 10% net gain in biodiversity. The proposed illustrative masterplan is considered to be well-conceived and to show a layout that should integrate well with the existing settlement. Parameter Plans to reflect this would be expected to form an integral part of an outline planning permission. However, the scale of the proposed development is significant, and it is debatable whether the proposal is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement as required by SSLP policy SS2, as is the general support of the local community.

Having assessed the proposal under the tilted balance, it is considered that an outline planning application for the proposed development is likely to be supported at officer level. However, this is subject to a favourable conclusion being reached on the scale of development taking into account community engagement, and the necessary supporting surveys and associated strategies being found to confirm that the proposals would not result in significant adverse impacts in terms of drainage, highways, ecology, etc. It is also subject to the ability to control the quality and impacts of the proposed development using planning conditions (including compliance with parameter plans) and a S106 Legal Agreement to secure the necessary mitigation, infrastructure improvements and affordable housing provision.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS

Validation - Information requirements for a planning application

On average 7 out of 10 applications submitted are invalid. This means they do not contain the necessary information to assess the application and the evident issues.

I can confirm that, as you have listed in your covering letter, if you submit an outline application for the proposed development, it will need include:

- Application form and ownership certificate
- Fee
- Site Location Plan (1:1250)
- Air Quality Assessment
- Arboricultural Statement / Tree Survey
- Agricultural Land Quality Survey and Report
- Biodiversity Checklist / Ecology Report
- Climate Emergency Checklist
- Contaminated Land Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy
- Energy Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment (including Surface Water Drainage Strategy)
- Habitat Regulation Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Heritage Statement and Archaeological Assessment
- Landscape Plan
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment
- Local Labour Agreement
- National Design Guide Compliance Statement
- Noise Assessment
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy
- Planning Drawings:-
 - Site Location Plan
 - Proposed Masterplan
 - Land Use Parameter Plan
 - Landscape and Open Space Parameter Plan
 - Movement Parameter Plan
- Planning Statement (including draft Heads of Terms, Affordable Housing Statement, Local Housing Needs Assessment and Public Open Space, Play and Recreation Statement)
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Sustainability Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Transport Drawings

- Proposed Access Plan
- Tracking Plans
- Visibility Splays
- Travel Plan
- Utilities Assessment (including Broadband)

Given the sloping topography of the site, I would also expect suitable cross sections.

For more information about validation, including how to submit your application and what to include please visit the Somerset Council website: [SCC - Public - South Team Validation Guide \(Updated June 2023\).pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Should you wish to assess the planning application fee for your development, please see the following link:
<https://1app.planningportal.co.uk/FeeCalculator/Standalone?region=1>

Consultation

If an application is submitted, consultation will be undertaken with the adjoining neighbours and with consultees. Therefore, it is recommended that you speak to adjoining neighbours before submitting an application.

It is noted that you have reached out to Horton and Broadway Parish Councils to enquire about a potential meeting to discuss the proposals, including the potential playing field improvements and expansion. This is considered to be particularly important given the requirements for community engagement under policy SS2.

Consultation on the application may raise new issues not addressed in the advice above. Should this be the case, the officer will work with you to gain sufficient information or amendments to determine the application and where possible address the issues being raised.

Decision Making

Any eventual application may need to be referred to the Planning South Committee. If you would like to know more about the Scheme of Delegation, please go to www.somerset.gov.uk

Disclaimer

You will appreciate that the above advice is based on the information provided and facts available without recourse to a site visit. This advice is without prejudice to the determination of any subsequent application whether under delegated authority or via planning committee. Further issues may arise during the application process which, where possible, we will seek to address prior to determining an application.

Appendix 2

EIA Screening Opinion

Sinead McKendry
Nexus Planning

Date	5th August 2025
Your ref.	40649
Our ref.	25/01731/EIASS
Ask For.	Tim Marsh
Direct Line	01935 462054
E-mail	tim.marsh@somerset.gov.uk

Dear Ms McKendry

Application No: 25/01731/EIASS

Location: Land Off Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 9QN

Thank you for your email dated 28th May 2025 in which you request an EIA Screening Opinion from the LPA under The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) Part 2, Regulation 6 (1) in respect of the above proposal.

Based on the information supplied, the proposed development falls within the definition of Schedule 2 development, under Column 1, Section 10(b) Urban development projects.

The proposed development exceeds the corresponding applicable thresholds and criteria in Column 2 as the proposed development includes 150 dwellings (the minimum), and the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

Based on an analysis and having taken account of the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development as outlined under Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, it is not considered that the proposal has more than local importance; it is not located within an environmentally vulnerable or sensitive location, nor would the proposed development have unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental consequences. Moreover, it is not considered that the proposed development would have significant effects on the environment. Furthermore, it is considered that the effects will be low in intensity. The probability, onset, duration, and frequency of effects are likely to be accurately determined. No significant transboundary effects are anticipated, and likewise no significant cumulative effects are anticipated.

The thresholds mentioned in the indicative guidance are not determinative and this proposed development has been considered on its own facts and on an assessment of whether it will have significant environmental effects.

As such, the Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development and therefore will not require an Environmental Statement to accompany any future planning application associated with the proposal. The applicant is advised to notify the Council as soon as possible if there are significant changes to the proposed scheme, as a revised EIA Screening Opinion may be required.

A copy of this Screening Opinion and the accompanying Screening Matrix will be placed on the Council's planning register

You are further advised that any planning application submitted for the proposed development should be accompanied by the various documents referred to in your submitted documentation. In this respect you are strongly advised to take into account the various comments, provided by the following consultees in the following attachments: Highway Authority (dated 22nd July 2025), Landscape Officer (dated 22nd July 2025) National Highways (dated 28th July 2025), Natural England (dated 23rd July 2025), Lead Local Flood Authority (dated 29th July 2025), and Wessex Water (dated 17th July 2025).

Please note that this letter sets out the Council's Screening Opinion as required under the EIA Regulations. This opinion does not pre-empt or prejudice any decision taken on any forthcoming planning application; the proposed development being determined on its own planning merits having regard to relevant planning policies, Government guidance and other material planning considerations.

Yours sincerely

Tim Marsh

Principal Planning Officer– Development Management (South West)

Appendix 3

Education Statement

Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster: Education Position Statement

Introduction

1. This Education Position Statement has been prepared by Gleeson Land (the 'Applicant'). The Applicant is submitting a planning application for outline planning permission comprising:

"Outline planning application with all matters reserved, other than access from Broadway Hill, for the construction of up to 150 residential dwellings with open space, landscaping, associated infrastructure and potential the expansion of Horton Playing Field ("Proposed Development")

on

Land off Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster ("the Site").

2. This Statement seeks to set out the expected needs arising from the Proposed Development against the existing education provision context.

Anticipated Needs Arising

3. Using Somerset Council's pupil yield ratio's, the Proposed Development is expected to generate:
 - Early Years: c. 14 full-time equivalent pupils across 4-year groups.
 - Primary: c. 48 pupils across 7-year groups (7 Reception (yR) pupils).
 - Secondary: c. 22 pupils across 5-year groups (4 Year 7 (y7) pupils).
 - Special Education Needs (SEN): c. 2 pupils across 12 (primary and secondary) year groups.

Existing Provision

Early Years

4. Although early years attendance is not mandatory, education authorities, such as Somerset Council, still have a duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable.
5. With attendance not being mandatory, early years provision is largely provided by the market and encompasses a wide range of types, including pre-schools, day nurseries, maintained nursery schools, school nursery classes, academy nursery provision, independent schools, childminders, out-of-school care, creches, nannies and babysitters.
6. There is no prescribed accessibility distances associated with early years provision. A key reason being that childcare location preferences, both in terms of time and location, vary due to individual family needs. For example, some parents will not be using childcare close to their home as they may favour a workplace-based nursery or one that is closer to their place of work.
7. However, the Ofstead's childcare accessibility by neighbourhood accessibility methodology includes the concept of a 15-minute drive time catchment area for accessing childcare at the neighbourhood / close to home geography. Analysis of Somerset Council's 'Find childcare providers' portal shows there to be c. 25 existing childcare providers within a 15-minute drive time of the Horton and the Site.
8. The closest facility to the Site being Neroche Primary School, which has an on-site pre-school (First

Friends Pre-School). It is understood that the pre-school offers c. 26-30 places.

Primary

9. There are two primary schools within 2-miles of Horton and the Site:

Neroche Primary School

10. The Neroche Primary School is a single form entry, mainstream school. With 1-form of entry the school has a net capacity for 210 pupils with a yR intake of 30 pupils.
11. Department for Education (DfE) school capacity data and Somerset admissions data indicate that Neroche Primary School is at capacity. However, analysis of admissions data over the past seven years indicates that an increasing proportion of yR pupil admissions are from pupils not living within the Neroche Primary School catchment, or within 2-miles of the school. For the 2025 academic year Somerset's admissions data shows 50% of yR admissions were admitted based on criterion 4, 5 or 6. These being the criterion associated with beyond school catchment admissions.

Ashill Community Primary School

12. Ashill Community School is a small mainstream school with a net capacity of 60 pupils. The school yR admissions number is 9 pupils.
13. DfE school capacity data indicates that Ashill Community School has been consistently undersubscribed over the past 14 years for which data is available. School Census data for January 2025 records 46 pupils on roll.
14. As an undersubscribed school admissions data is limited on the basis that Somerset Council only publishes data where the number of applications exceeded places allocated. Over the past seven years the number of applications has only exceeded allocations in a single year (2022). Within this year, 5 out of the 8 places allocated (63%) were admitted based on criterion 4,5 or 6 i.e. pupils living outside of the Ashill Community Primary School catchment, or within 2-miles of the school.

Secondary

15. The closest secondary school to Horton and the Site is Holyrood Academy in Chard (3.5 miles to the south). The Holyrood Academy is a 5-form entry secondary school having increased its net capacity to 1,525 places in the 2023/24 academic year.
16. Following its fairly recent expansion, DfE school capacity data and Somerset Council's admissions data (or lack of published admissions data), indicates that the school is currently undersubscribed.

SEN

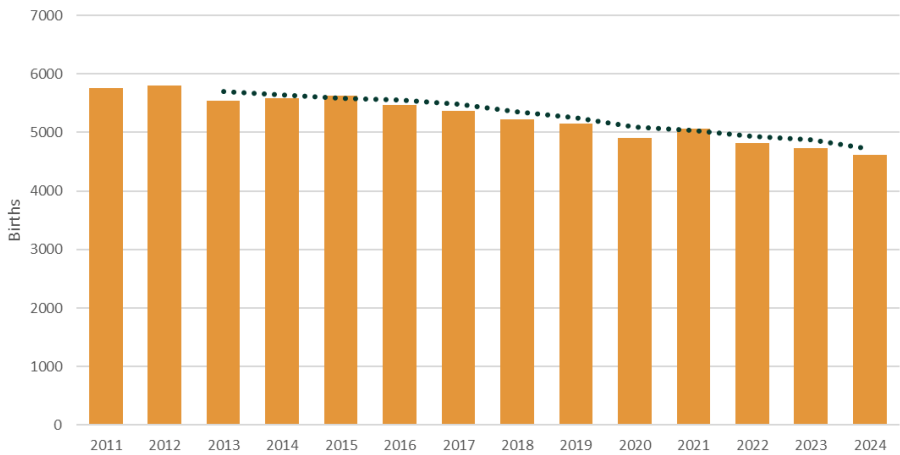
17. There are 10 Special Education Needs schools across Somerset. The closest being the recently opened (2024) Hill View School, in Martock (7.5 miles to the north east). Hill View School has a net capacity for 120 pupils aged 5 to 16. DfE capacity data indicates the school currently has 55 pupils on the register.

Future Needs

Demographic Change

18. The Somerset Sufficiency Update¹ confirms the relevance of demographic factors when considering future pupil place needs. As illustrated within Figure 1 below, the number of live births across Somerset since 2011 has progressively declined. This being a general trend observed across the wider south west region and England and Wales more generally.
19. Over the 2011 to 2024 period (14-years), Somerset’s three-year rolling average number of live births has decreased from c. 5,700 births to c.4,700 births. A 17% decrease over the 2011 to 2024 period.

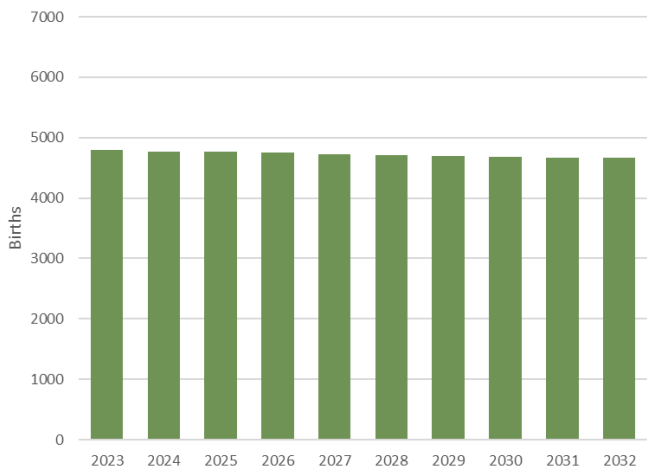
Figure 1: Somerset Live Births (2011 to 2024)



Source: ONS Live Births

20. As also illustrated within Figure 2, the latest Office for National Statistics (“ONS”) 2022-based sub-national population projections (“2022-based SNPP”) anticipate the number of births within Somerset to remain broadly constant at c. 4,700 per annum.

Figure 2: Projected Somerset Births (2023 to 2032)



Source: ONS 2021-based SNPP

¹ [Sufficiency Update Somerset Council 09/12/2024](#)

Planned Commitments

21. A review of Somerset Council's planning history records confirms that over the past 5 years there have been two approved planning applications for residential development comprising 10 or more dwellings within or around Horton or the wider Ashill area (Application reference: 18/01311/OUT – 35 dwellings; and 20/03277/FUL – 49 dwellings) Collectively these two developments are anticipated to generate need for:
- 8 early years places.
 - 27 primary school places (7 yR places).
 - 22 secondary school places (4 y7 places).

Summary and Conclusion

22. The Proposed Development comprise 150 dwellings and is expected to generate need for:

- 14 early years places.
- 48 primary school places (4 yR places).
- 12 secondary school places (3 y7 places).
- 2 SEN places.

23. A review of existing provision indicates:

Early Years: There is an existing pre-school within Horton providing between 26 and 30 places. However, within a 15-minute drive time catchment area there is a good range of other existing child care facilities (c. 25 facilities).

Primary School: There are two primary schools within 2-miles of Horton and the Site. Although the closest primary school to the Site (Neroche Primary School) appears to be at, or nearing capacity, it is noted that there is a longstanding trend of admissions from pupils living some distance from the school i.e. particularly the Ilminster area. The Ashill Community Primary School to the north of Horton and the Site appears to be consistently undersubscribed and also has pupils on roll who live some distance from the school.

Secondary School: The closest secondary school to the Site (Holyrood Academy) recently increased its planned admissions number and appears to be undersubscribed.

SEN: The closest SEN school to the Site (Hill View School) opened in 2024 and appears to be undersubscribed.

24. With regard to future needs, it is noted that there have two major residential planning applications approved within Horton over the past 5 years. These developments are expected to generate need for c. 8 early years places, 27 primary school places and 22 secondary school places.
25. Somerset's declining birth rate trend is having and will continue to have an impact on school place needs over the coming years. Less school places will be required to meet demographic needs. The declining birth rate with impact needs from both existing and new households.
26. In view of the above there would appear to be some capacity within Somerset's existing school provision to meet the anticipated needs arising from the Proposed Development. However, in accordance with the planning obligations tests prescribed within the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") (paragraph 58), and s122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 should additional places to be necessary, then developer contributions could be provided as part of the s106 process to ensure the development is acceptable in planning terms.

HORTON PARISH COUNCIL – PLANNING POLICIES RELEVANT TO OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR 150 HOUSES OFF BROADWAY HILL

CONFLICT WITH SETTLEMENT STRATEGY:

POLICY SS1: SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

Yeovil is a Strategically Significant Town and the prime focus for development in South Somerset.

The following are Market Towns where provision will be made for housing, employment, shopping and other services that increase their self-containment and enhance their roles as service centres:

☐ Primary Market Towns: Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton

☐ Local Market Towns: Ansford/Castle Cary, Langport/Huish Episcopi and Somerton.

The following are Rural Centres which are those market towns with a local service role where provision for development will be made that meets local housing need, extends local services and supports economic activity appropriate to the scale of the settlement:

☐ Rural Centres: Bruton, Ilchester, Martock/Bower Hinton, Milborne Port, South Petherton, and Stoke sub Hamdon.

Rural Settlements will be considered as part of the countryside to which national countryside protection policies apply (subject to the exceptions identified in Policy SS2).

POLICY SS2: DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Development in Rural Settlements (not Market Towns or Rural Centres) will be strictly controlled and limited to that which:

- ☐ Provides employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement; and/or
- ☐ Creates or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or
- ☐ Meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing.

Development will be permitted where it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, provides for one or more of the types of development above, and increases the sustainability of a settlement in general.

Proposals should be consistent with relevant community led plans, and should generally have the support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation.

Proposals for housing development should only be permitted in Rural Settlements that have access to two or more key services listed at Paragraph 5.41.

POLICY SS5: DELIVERING NEW HOUSING GROWTH

Housing requirement will make provision for at least 15,950 dwellings in the plan period 2006 – 2028. At least 7,441 dwellings will be located within the Urban Framework of Yeovil and via two Sustainable Urban Extensions.

This provision will include development and redevelopment within development areas, greenfield development identified within this Plan or to come forward through conversions of existing buildings, residential mobile homes and buildings elsewhere in accordance with the policy on development in rural settlements.

Prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a permissive approach will be taken when considering housing proposals in Yeovil (via the SUEs), and 'directions of growth' at the Market Towns. **The overall scale of growth (set out below) and the wider policy framework will be key considerations in taking this approach, with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth for all settlements.** The same key considerations should also apply when considering housing proposals adjacent to the development area at Crewkerne, Wincanton and the Rural Centres.

The distribution of development across the settlement hierarchy will be in line with the numbers below:

Settlement	Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Housing Requirement	Existing Housing Commitments 2006-2012 (at April 2012)	Additional Housing Provision required (Total Housing Less Existing Commitments) (at April 2012)
Yeovil	7,441	3,951	3,490
Chard	1,852	1,750*	102
Crewkerne	961	916	45
Iminster	496	181	315
Wincanton**	703	698	5
Castle Cary / Ansford	374	156	218
Langport / Huish Episcopi	374	289	85
Somerton	374	286	88
Bruton	203	103	100
Ilchester	141	1	140
Martock	230	106	124
Milborne Port	279	202	77
South Petherton	229	151	78
Stoke Sub Hamdon	51	7	44
Rural Settlements	2,242	1,331	911
Total	15,950	10,128	5,822

INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY:

POLICY SD1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

When considering development proposals the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of **sustainable development** contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and seek to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions within the District.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this local plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:-

- ☐ Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- ☐ Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted or refused.

Where necessary the Council will work with applicants to improve proposals so that they are capable of being approved.

POLICY SS6: INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

The Council will secure the provision of (or financial contributions towards) affordable housing, social, physical and environmental infrastructure and community benefits which the council considers necessary to enable the development to proceed. Proposals that form part of potentially wider sites will be assessed in terms of the capacity of the site as a whole and such requirements sought on a pro rata basis.

Planning Obligations (through S106 legal agreements) will be used to cover those matters which would otherwise result in planning permission being refused for an individual development and will be negotiated on a site by site basis.

The Council, in line with current practice within this and other Councils, will obtain payment from developers for legal and monitoring fees in association with Section 106 Agreements.

Affordable housing and infrastructure required as a result of a site specific planning obligation will normally be expected to be provided for on site where appropriate and delivered in timely manner alongside growth but may, exceptionally, be provided nearby or through financial contribution.

The types of infrastructure required will be considered on a site by site basis and may include the following, where appropriate and not otherwise funded in full or part through CIL (not exhaustive):

- ☐ Affordable housing;
- ☐ Renewable and low carbon energy;
- ☐ Provision and enhancement of open space, sports facilities and play areas;
- ☐ **Providing for and improving accessibility by a variety of modes of sustainable transport;**
- ☐ Improvements to biodiversity assets and green infrastructure;
- ☐ **Road and highway improvements;** and
- ☐ **Community facilities, including Early Years, Primary, and Secondary educational provision.**

The level of developer contribution will be proportionate to the nature, scale and viability of the project having regard to the:

- ☐ Scale and form of development;
- ☐ Capacity of existing infrastructure; and
- ☐ Potential impact of the development upon the surrounding area and its facilities.

Where viability of a scheme is contested the Council will adopt an open book approach to negotiations in line with adopted Council procedures.

A Community Infrastructure Levy will be charged throughout the District in accordance with the adopted Charging Schedule for the provision of infrastructure in the area.

The Council will work in partnership with other authorities and infrastructure providers to ensure coordination of infrastructure delivery to support growth.

POLICY TA1: LOW CARBON TRAVEL

All new residential and employment developments in South Somerset should, subject to general viability:

- i. Provide Travel Information Packs;
- ii. Provide for the charging of electric vehicles with an external charging point of at least 16 amps adjacent to each parking space and within the curtilage of the site. Such charging points should also be provided for garages within the development;
- iii. Provide a Green Travel Voucher for each occupier/employee valid for 1 year for use on sustainable transport;
- iv. Provide facilities for cycle parking within the new development commensurate with the levels and standards designated in the SCC cycle parking strategy;
- v. Include Travel Plans (commensurate with Policy TA4);
- vi. Ensure that sustainable transport measures are in place and operational concurrent with first occupancy.

Additionally, developments of all new residential dwellings should:

- vii. Enable ease of working from home by providing a designed in specific work area with broadband connections.

Where the scale of new residential development or employment sites would have an impact on existing public transport planning obligations will be sought to:

- viii. Deliver improved public transport connections increasing accessibility through enhancements to either existing conventional bus routes or existing Demand Responsive Transport schemes or the provision of new services and new bus stops, bus timetables and bus shelters. These should be commensurate with the scale of the development that enables good on-going connections with the public transport network. The developer will be required to enter into a planning obligation in accordance with Policy SS6 to ensure provision of such facilities, which shall be provided prior to first occupation of the new development.

POLICY TA5: TRANSPORT IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

All new development shall be required to address its own transport implications and shall be designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport through:

- i. Safeguarding existing and new transport infrastructure, which is important to an efficient and sustainable transport network from development that would prejudice their transport use;
- ii. Securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all;
- iii. Ensuring that the expected nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the

area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated;

iv. Ensuring that proposals, which specifically require a location with direct access to the strategic road network due to the volumes and quality of traffic generated, are well located on these networks. **There is a presumption against direct access from the strategic road network.** Exemptions will only be made where the type of development is such that it requires a high order (of route hierarchy) route location, such as roadside service stations or freight transfer facilities;

v. **Assessing the transport impact of development and ensuring delivery of the necessary transport infrastructure for the proposal and requiring larger schemes to prepare Transport Assessments.**

vi. Requiring car parking and vehicle servicing at levels appropriate to the development and its location, in accordance with the approved/adopted standards identified in Policy TA6.

POLICY TA6: PARKING STANDARDS

Parking provision in new development should be design-led and based upon site characteristics, location and accessibility. The parking standards within the Somerset County Council Parking Strategy will be applied in South Somerset.

CUMMULATIVE IMPACT:

POLICY EQ1: ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE IN SOUTH SOMERSET

The Council will support proposals for new development where they have demonstrated how climate change mitigation and adaptation will be delivered, through inclusion of the following measures (as appropriate).

☐ New development will ensure that carbon dioxide emissions are minimised through energy efficiency measures, renewable and low carbon energy, and where necessary Allowable Solutions;

☐ The following sustainable construction standards will be required, unless it is proven not to be feasible or viable:

o Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 from 2013 (or as amended by future Government policy, regulations and/or legislation);

o Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 from 2016 (or as amended by future Government policy, regulations and/or legislation);

o BREEAM rating of 'excellent' for non-domestic buildings.

☐ **Development of renewable and low carbon energy generation will be encouraged and permitted, providing there are no significant adverse impacts upon residential and visual amenity, landscape character, designated heritage assets, and biodiversity.** The presence of several airfields in South Somerset will mean the impacts of wind turbines upon electromagnetic interference and aviation radar will be a particular consideration;

☐ Developers must demonstrate that proposed wind turbines do not pose a risk to bat populations, and will not pose a barrier risk to migratory bird species, in particular to birds moving from key sites such as the Severn Estuary;

☐ Development will be directed away from medium and high flood risk areas through using South Somerset's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as the basis for applying the Sequential

Test. The area of search to which the Sequential Test will apply will be South Somerset wide, unless adequately justified otherwise in relation to the circumstances of the proposal;

☐ Where appropriate, the Exception Test can be applied if this is consistent with wider sustainability objectives;

☐ **Development should reduce and manage the impact of flood risk by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems, and through appropriate layout, design, and choice of materials;**

☐ Climate change should be considered in the design of new development, incorporating measures such as solar orientation, maximising natural shade and cooling, water efficiency and flood resilience;

☐ Susceptibility to climate change should be taken into account on all proposals to develop sites with biodiversity interest.

POLICY EQ2: GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

Development will be designed to achieve a high quality, which promotes South Somerset's local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district. Development proposals, extensions and alterations to existing buildings, structures and places will be considered against:

☐ Sustainable construction principles;

☐ Creation of quality places;

☐ **Conserving and enhancing the landscape character of the area;**

☐ Reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context;

☐ Creating safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety;

☐ Having regard to South Somerset District Council's published Development Management advice and guidance; and

☐ Making efficient use of land whilst having regard to:

☐ Housing demand and need;

☐ **Infrastructure and service availability;**

☐ **Accessibility;**

☐ **Local area character;**

☐ Site specific considerations

Innovative designs delivering low energy usage and/or wastage will be encouraged. Development must not risk the integrity of internationally, nationally or locally designated wildlife and landscape sites. Development proposals should protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and new dwellings should provide acceptable residential amenity space in accordance with Policy HW1.

POLICY EQ3: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Heritage assets will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced for their historic significance and important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of

place. Their potential to contribute towards the economy, tourism, education and local identity will be exploited.

All new development proposals relating to the historic environment will be expected to:

- ☐ Safeguard or where appropriate enhance the significance, character, setting and local distinctiveness of heritage assets;
- ☐ Make a positive contribution to its character through high standards of design which reflect and complement it and through the use of appropriate materials and techniques;
- ☐ Ensure alterations, including those for energy efficiency and renewable energy, are balanced alongside the need to retain the integrity of the historic environment and to respect the character and performance of buildings, adopting principles of minimum intervention and reversibility.