



4.0 Involvement

This section provides an overview of the community involvement, and how the feedback has informed the design.

4.1 Community Involvement Summary

4.2 Public Consultation Feedback

4.3 Framework Plan and Development Brief Consultation

4.4 Branding and Website

4.1 Community Involvement Summary

A detailed Statement of Community Involvement is submitted with this application.

Public Consultations and Workshops

A pre-launch public consultation event was held by PM Asset Management in July 2013 at Staplegrove Village Hall, to introduce the project team to members of the public within Staplegrove.

A second exhibition was held in December 2013 to inform and seek the views of the Kingston St Mary community in respect of the issues and constraints that may affect the emerging masterplan.

A workshop was also held with representatives from the Whitmore Area Residents Group (WARG) on the 18th December 2013.

A further exhibition was held in May 2014 at the Taunton Vale Sports Club to present the community with an update of the findings, and show progress to date.

A comprehensive Framework Plan and Development Brief covering Staplegrove East and West was prepared in December 2014 and reflected the requirements of both the Core Strategy and the emerging Site Allocations Development Management Plan. The document went out to public consultation in January 2015, and then again in July 2015. The document was endorsed by Taunton Deane's Full Council on 15 December 2015, and is now a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications on the site.



Pre-Launch Public Consultation
Staplegrove Village Hall

Public Consultation 2
Kingston St Mary

July 2013



Workshop
Whitmore Area Residents Group

December 2013

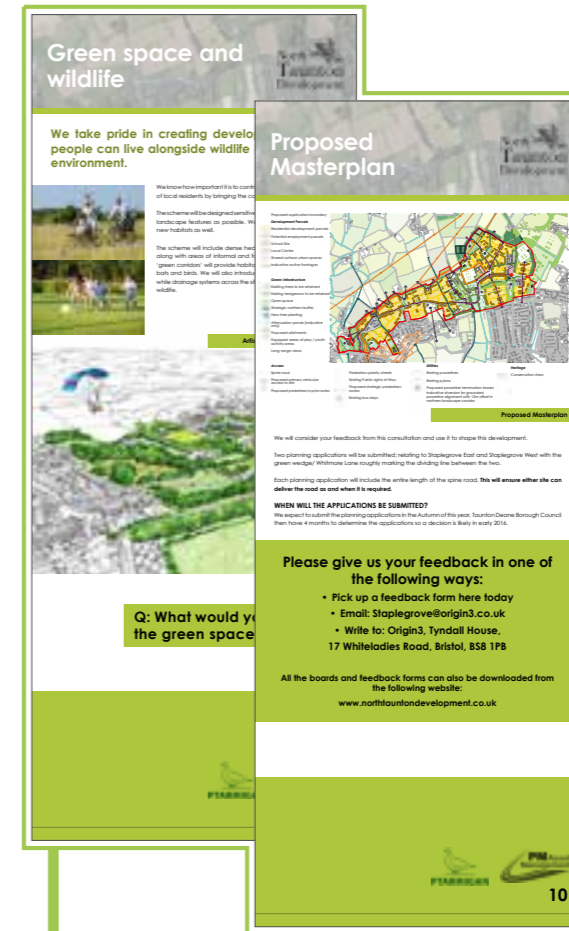


Public Consultation 3
Taunton Vale Sports Club

May 2014

Framework Masterplan
and Development Brief
Consultation

January and July 2015



Public Consultation 4
Taunton Town Centre and
Staplegrove Village Hall

July 2015

Framework Masterplan
and Development Brief
Endorsed by TDBC

December 2015

4.2 Public Consultation Feedback

4.2.1 Public Consultation 1

Public Consultation 1 - Pre-launch Exhibition, Staplegrove

25th July 2013

The first public consultation was held at Staplegrove Village Hall as a way of introducing the team to the public, and introduce the initial site analysis and thoughts for the site.

4.2.2 Public Consultation 2

Public Consultation 2 - Kingston St. Mary

12th December 2013

At this consultation event the local community was asked to identify potential constraints and opportunities of the area.

Main constraints identified:

- Highways
- Loss of prime agricultural land
- Lack of services/local facilities
- No employment

Main opportunities identified:

- Improved bus service
- Highway improvements
- Improvements to Corkscrew Lane junction
- A new shop

One of the main issues identified was traffic and the existing road infrastructure. The masterplan proposes a Spine Road which would help to alleviate traffic congestion in the existing road south of the site, by providing a road that is capable, through its design, to accommodate traffic and buses.

Section 7 provides more detail about the access strategy as well as the proposed road network and hierarchy.





- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Alternative Sites Available | Taunton Deane BC not Including Kingston St Mary in Public Consultation Events |
| Flooding | Impact on AONB |
| Highways | Commuting to Hinkley Point |
| Pollution | Affordable Housing |
| Loss of Prime Agricultural Land | No Demand for New Housing |
| Lack of Services/Local Facilities | Sewage Capacity/Drainage |
| Proximity of AONB | Appearance of Development |
| Impact on Bats | Overhead Power Lines |
| Poor Secondary School Catchment | 'Rat Running' |
| Light Pollution | Loss of Village Identity |
| No Employment | |
| Phasing | |

Constraints Identified



- | | |
|--|---|
| Improved Bus Service | 10m Wide belt of Woodland along Northern Boundary to Protect AONB |
| Potential for Commercial Development | Close Linkage to Train Station |
| New Infrastructure | More Young People in the Area |
| Highway Improvements | More Warden Housing for the Elderly or Bungalows |
| New Primary School | A New Shop |
| New Cycle Routes to Taunton | First Time Buyer Homes |
| Green Wedge | Landscaping |
| SUDS Drainage | High Quality Development |
| Playing Field in the Green Wedge | |
| Improvements to Corkscrew Lane Junction to Kingston Road | |

Opportunities Identified

4.2 Public Consultation Feedback

4.2.3 Public Consultation 3

The third public consultation event was held at Taunton Vale Sports Club on the 15th May 2014. The event was attended by over 200 people and a total of 100 comments/responses were received.

The public were provided with feedback forms and were given a chance to raise any issues, and give feedback on the emerging masterplan. The issues raised are shown in the pie charts on the opposite page, with the main issue being traffic and access.

School and Local Centre Location

Three options for the location of the school and local centre were presented. The public was asked to comment on their preferred option.

The three options were (more information can be found in chapter 5.7):

- Option 1 - School and local centre in the west.
- Option 2 - School in west, local centre in the east.
- Option 3 - School and local centre in the east.



Option 3 was the preferred option with 23 ticks, Option 1 was the second preferred option with 16 ticks and only 6 ticks for Option 2. A total of 55 of the respondents chose no option. The reasons for the choice are outlined below.

Option 1 Reasons:

- Kingston Road already at capacity.
- This option puts the school and local centre together.
- Closer for the elderly in Staplegrove Village.
- Logical location.
- Close to existing Staplegrove facilities.
- Closer to major roads.
- Less impact on Kingston Road.
- To concentrate activity in one place.

Option 2 Reasons:

- Better community balance.
- School located between Staplegrove school and Wellsprings so better placed.
- A good distance between existing primary schools.
- Traffic will be split.

Option 3 Reasons:

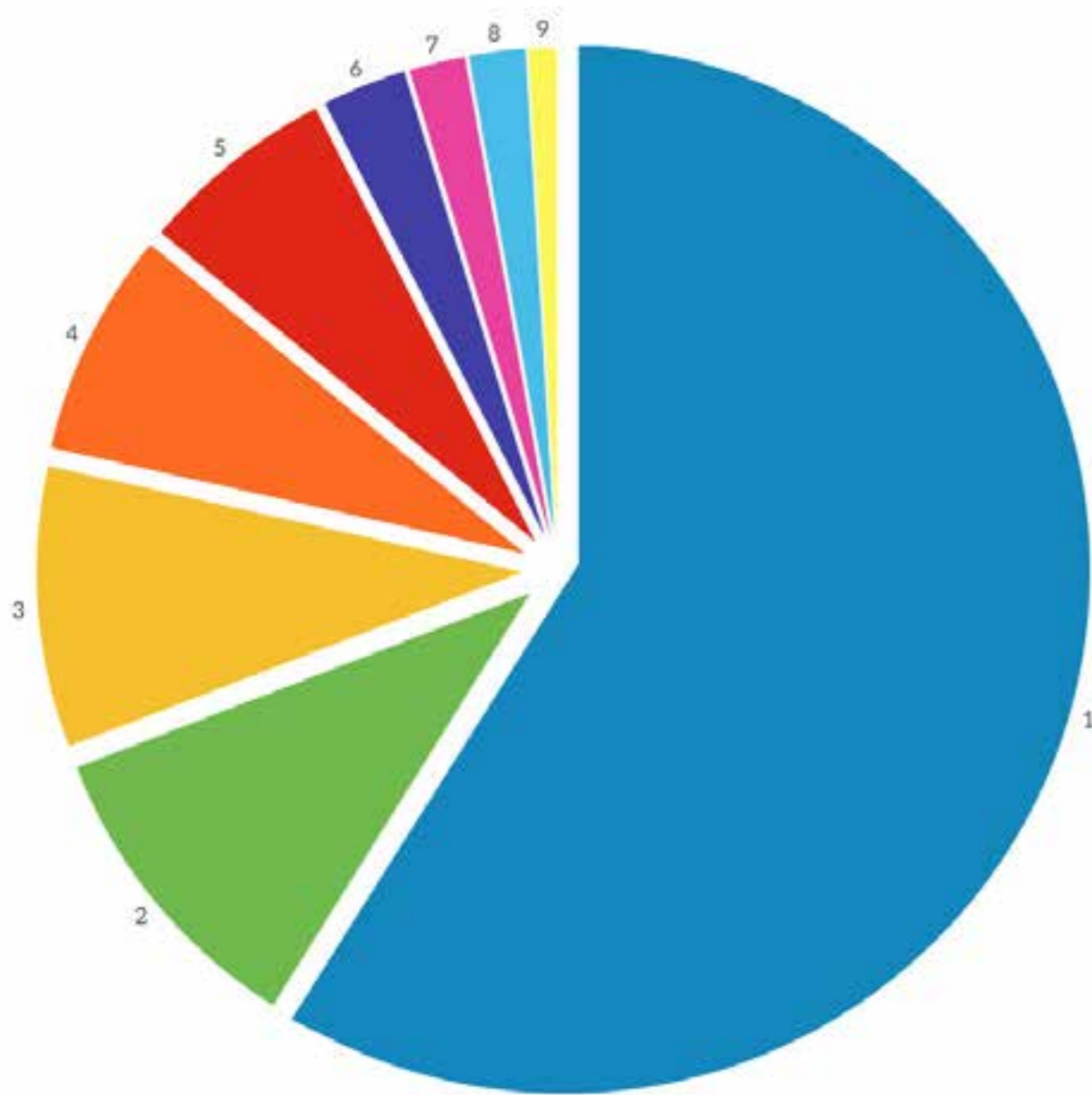
- Help to maintain Staplegrove Village as a village.
- Less impact on the existing facilities.
- Facilities to be located where the majority of the houses are.
- Connected to the main road rather than Corkscrew Lane.
- Away from existing development.
- A better school location.
- Facilities together.
- Better road infrastructure.
- Closer to Wellsprings Area.
- Away from Staplegrove Village.
- A good balance.
- Better highways access.
- Even distribution between the existing schools and shops.
- Seems more centralised.
- Well integrated to assist pride in the new community.
- Better access.

Local Centre Uses

The public was also asked what uses they would like to see in the Local Centre. A total of 28 responses were received and a range of uses proposed:

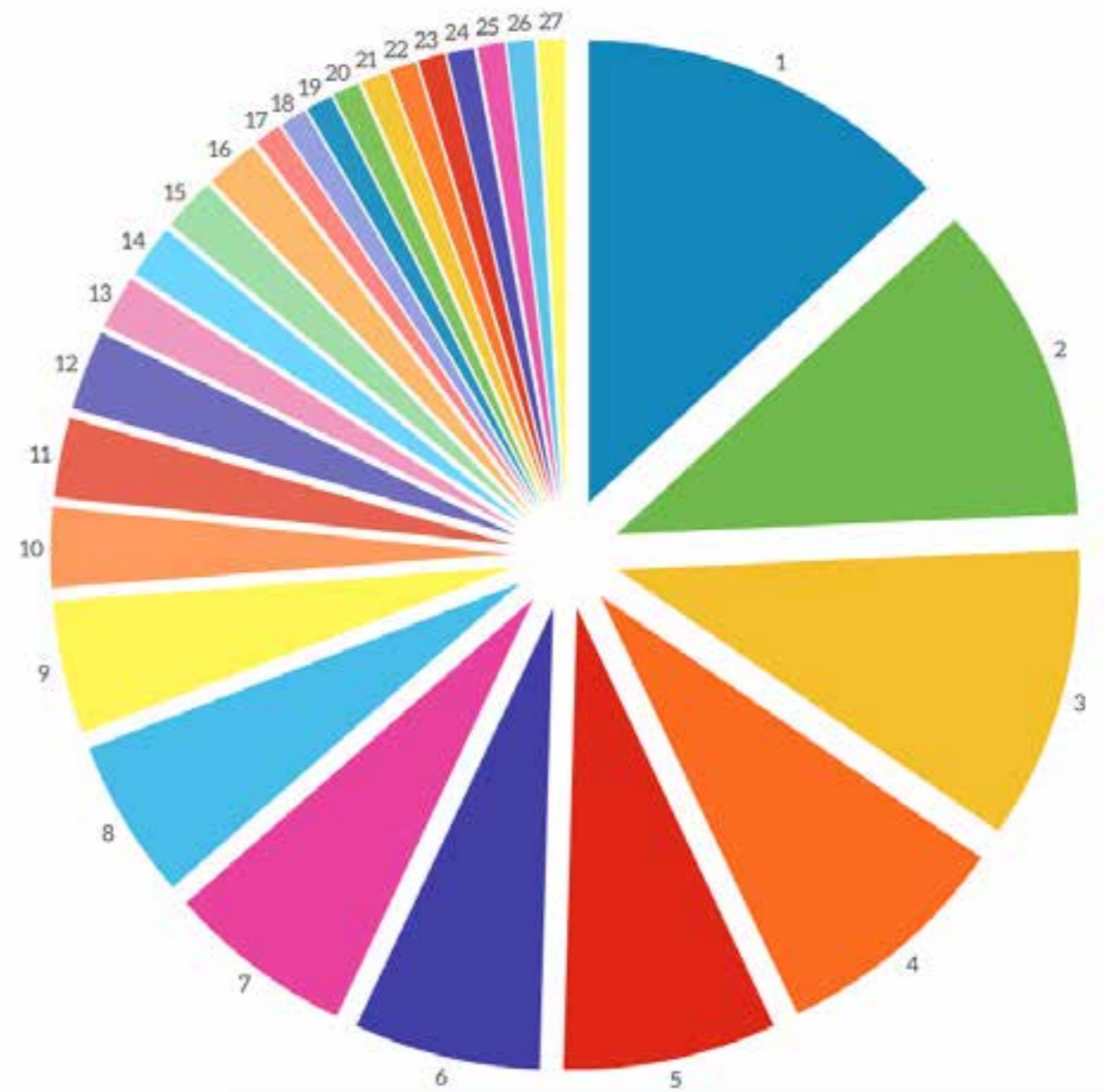
- Convenience store (5 mentions).
- Village hall (4 mentions).
- Shops (3 mentions).
- Surgery (2 mentions).
- Chemist (2 mentions).
- Youth club (2 mentions).
- Lunch club (2 mentions).
- Restaurant (2 mentions).
- Pub (2 mentions).
- Facilities for all ages (2 mentions).
- Playgroup (1 mention).
- Library (1 mention).

The uses of the Local Centre are detailed in the emerging SADMP policy, and will be brought forward as part of future Reserved Matters applications on site.



Key Issues	No. of Mentions
1. Traffic and Access	63
2. Retention of Existing Character	11
3. No Development/Viability Issues	10
4. GI/Ecology/Flooding	8
5. Housing Need/Type/Parameters	7
6. Noise and Crime	3
7. Utilities	2
8. Infrastructure	2
9. Need for Comprehensive Plan	1

Key topics



Issue Raised	No. of Mentions	Issue Raised	No. of Mentions
1. Traffic Volumes	14	15. Crime	2
2. NDR Completion Prior to Houses Developed	12	16. Pylon Health Issues	2
3. Rat Running	11	17. Existing Infrastructure not Able to Cope	1
4. Traffic Calming Measures	9	18. Widening of Kingston Road required	1
5. Bus Gate Option Concern	8	19. No Development on the Archaeological Site	1
6. Loss of Agricultural Land	7	20. No Development	1
7. Loss of Views	7	21. Village Under Threat	1
8. Highway Safety	6	22. Piecemeal Development	1
9. No Houses to be Higher than 3 Storeys	5	23. Encourage Self Build	1
10. Flooding/ Drainage	3	24. Noise	1
11. Protection of Wildlife	3	25. Secondary School Accommodation	1
12. Access to the Church	3	26. Need for Housing	1
13. Access to Allotments	2	27. Viability of the Scheme	1
14. Parking	2		

Detailed breakdown of issues raised

4.2 Public Consultation Feedback

4.2.4 Public Consultation 4

The fourth public consultation event was held over two days, the first at the Orchard Shopping Centre in the centre of Taunton on the 3rd July 2015, and the second in Staplegrove Village Hall on the 4th July 2015. The events were attended by over 500 people, with a vast majority of respondents (around 75%) being from the immediate area of Staplegrove and Kingston St Mary. Feedback was also sought for the amended Framework Plan and Development Brief document consulted on in January 2015.

Feedback was given via face to face conversations at the consultation events plus feedback forms that were filled in and left at events, taken home and sent via the post, or completed on the dedicated website. Collective feedback received from elected representatives and stakeholder groups has been received via email.

A total of 218 individuals or groups responded to the consultation through submitting consultation forms. The forms consisted of 7 questions and a section for open-ended feedback. Not everyone answered every question on the forms.

The questions were as follows:

1. Do you generally support the proposals to provide more homes and community facilities in North Taunton? Yes/Some/Not sure/No. Reason for your answer.
2. What kind of housing do you think Taunton needs for the future?
3. What do you think about our proposals for the Spine Road?
4. What kind of community facilities would you like to see as part of the development?
5. What would you like to see the green space used for?
6. What do you think of our proposals to replace the pylons?
7. Do you have any comments on the water management proposals?
8. Any other comments?

A summary of key issues raised is outlined below as well as an explanation of how the project team responded to the feedback.

Question 1

Total who answered "Yes": 26 (12% of responses to Question 1)

People who wholly support the proposals do so in recognition of the need for new housing in Taunton Deane to accommodate the growing population. Most responses refer particularly to a need for additional affordable housing. They also refer to the potential to attract new investment. A small number of people expressed a desire to live in a new home on the proposed development. The new Spine Road and its role in easing traffic congestion is given as a reason to support the proposals

Total who answered "Some": 38 (17% of responses to Question 1)

Those respondents who answer "some" in response to their level of support for the proposals are generally in support of the proposals set out in the masterplan but mostly concerned with traffic congestion and infrastructure (50%). Comments relate to the need for new housing as a reason for giving support to the Masterplan. However, there are concerns expressed about traffic and infrastructure and lack of employment opportunities echoing common themes discussed by other respondents.

Total who answered "Not Sure": 23 (11% of responses to Question 1)

Those who indicate they aren't sure about the proposals are mostly concerned about what they describe as a lack of infrastructure to support the development. They describe the roads as being congested already and want reassurance that infrastructure to support the new development and existing households will be in place early enough to cope with traffic flow.

There is also some mention of potential impact on the "look and feel" of the area.

A common theme emerging again is concern over employment opportunities for people living in the new development. There is a general perception that Taunton will be a base for people to live whilst they travel to work elsewhere.

There is support for the proposals in relation to the perceived wider social benefits of the proposals. Respondents talk about increasing the diversity of the local population.

Total who answered "No" : 125 (57% of total responses to Question 1)

Infrastructure: *Many people who did not support the proposals set out in the Masterplan were concerned about infrastructure and traffic congestion. People referred to existing traffic congestion in North Taunton as a key reason for not supporting the proposals. The feedback frequently refers to the road network already being at full capacity and not able to accommodate additional traffic generated by new housing. The proposed new Spine Road is dismissed by many as not providing a solution to local traffic congestion. People are concerned that the new Spine Road would feed additional traffic onto an already congested road network.*

Response: The planning application is supported by a detailed Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, which take account of the proposals for Staplegrove West. These identify existing road capacity, future required capacity and necessary highway infrastructure on and off site to make the development acceptable in highways terms. The Spine Road has a dual function of providing access to the new development, but also in alleviating existing transport issues within the local road network.

Principle of development: *A number of people objected to the principle of development on the site itself. As above, it should be noted that the principle of development in this location has already been established via the Core Strategy. Many expressed the view that the proposals were on "the wrong side of town" and that new housing developments should be built "closer to the motorway" because there is "no employment" in Taunton. Many referred to existing Brownfield sites in Taunton and stated that these sites should be exhausted before development on greenfield sites takes place.*

Response: This site was identified by the council as a broad location for growth in their Core Strategy. The Examiner's Report for the Core Strategy (2012) concluded that the allocation of Staplegrove was "sound" (paragraph 63). Furthermore a Sustainability Appraisal accompanied an Emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Plan which gave scores to each of the allocated sites for sustainability following site specific mitigation measures and Staplegrove scored joint highest. Further, the opportunity to provide about 1,500 sustainable new homes at Staplegrove comprises a significant proportion (approximately 9%) of the 17,000 dwellings identified under Core Strategy Policy CP4: Housing over the plan

period 2008 - 2028. Development at Staplegrove is required in addition to Brownfield development, and the other urban extensions identified in the Core Strategy.

Agricultural land: Concern was expressed over the loss of Prime Agricultural land and it not being suitable for development when other sites are perceived to be available. Similarly, many expressed concern over the impact the development might have on the “character of Staplegrove” and the area of AONB.

Response: An option for keeping the site as agricultural land was not explored (see response above to Principle of Development). The character of Staplegrove has been studied and has helped inform the design of the masterplan. A visual impact assessment has also been carried out by the Landscape Architects in order to ensure that any impact on the AONB is minimised and mitigated against.

Employment: There is a common perception that a significant number of people who live in Taunton don't work in Taunton and commute to Bristol or Exeter. A regular theme in the feedback is concern over suitable employment opportunities for new residents once the housing is built. The perception is that people living in Taunton need to travel to Exeter, Bridgwater or Bristol for work and that Taunton is in danger of becoming a “commuter town”.

Response: The comprehensive masterplan (Staplegrove East and West) provides a total of 2ha of employment land, as well as a school and local centre, which would all produce jobs. The site will provide accessible links to key employment centres within Taunton, via the town centre, and is in close proximity to the town's train station. The requirements for housing and employment land are set out by TDBC in adopted and emerging policy.

Scale of development: A significant percentage take the view that the proposed development is “too large”. They suggested that a smaller scale development would be acceptable. A large number of people expressed the desire for brownfield sites to be developed before greenfield sites are used, but again, this relates to the principle of development on the site. Another common theme is the desire for social housing to be restricted to brownfield sites in the centre of town.

Response: The scale of the development reflects local housing need and TDBC's requirement to deliver housing in line with the adopted Core Strategy.

Other: Respondents frequently refer to other housing developments including Monkton Heathfield, Bathpool and Norton Fitzwarren. They refer to houses “not being sold” on these developments and question the need for additional housing in North Taunton.

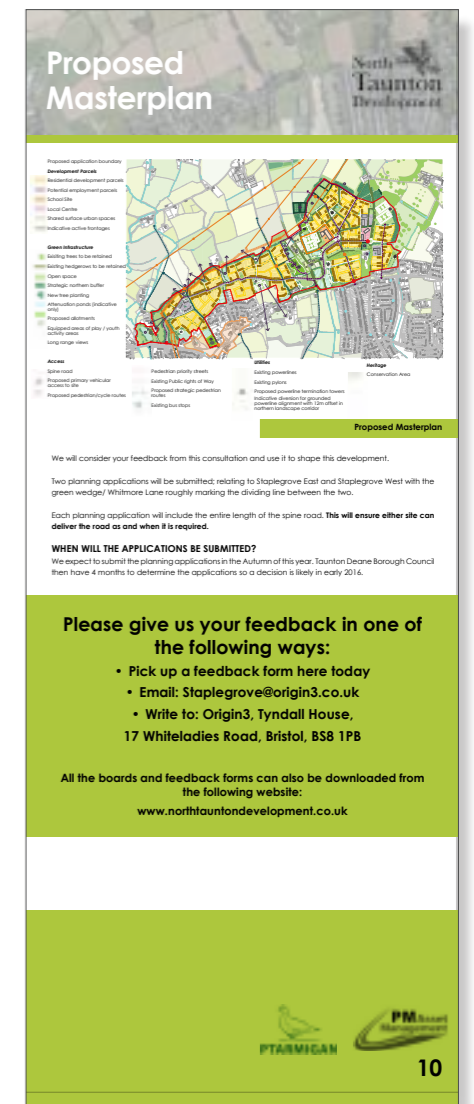
Concerns relating to the impact on existing value of existing housing close to the proposed development are mentioned alongside comments on the rural nature of Staplegrove and how this may be affected by the proposals.

Response: The need for housing is set out in the Core Strategy which was found sound by an independent planning inspector.

Question 2

There is clear recognition in the feedback for the need for more affordable housing for young people and families, even from those respondents who don't support the masterplan proposals. A high proportion of people want to see a mixture of housing provided, particularly with parking. A common theme is the quality of housing and a significant number of people highlight the need for new housing to “reflect the character of Staplegrove.” The subject of Brownfield sites is raised again with respondents suggesting that these are used to deliver new housing for Taunton, particularly social housing. Others point out that young families will want and should be able to live in a desirable area like North Taunton. There is also a demand for more housing for older people.

Response: The Staplegrove East masterplan proposes up to 915 dwellings of varying types and sizes. This will accommodate a range of households such as families, young professionals and elderly people all within the same neighbourhood, thereby promoting social cohesion across a range of ages and demographics. A mix of tenure will be provided. The different tenures will be integrated across the masterplan to ensure a sustainable and well balance community is provided. At Reserved Matters stage the mix of housing will be proposed.



4.2 Public Consultation Feedback

4.2.4 Public Consultation 4

Question 3

The issue of infrastructure is the most important in the eyes of the immediate local community. Respondents are mostly concerned with existing traffic congestion and additional traffic generated by the proposals. Whilst there is some acknowledgement that a new Spine Road will ease congestion on Manor Road and Corkscrew Lane, the general perception is that it will not reduce congestion at its exit points on Kingston Road and Staplegrove Road.

Feedback on the size of the road indicates a desire for it to be wide enough to allow large vehicles to pass each other comfortably and to be more substantial than an “estate road”.

There is a significant amount of feedback relating to the two alternative proposed routes for the Spine Road. There is overwhelming support for the northerly route B.

Reasons for supporting Route B (Northern) include:

- Avoids dividing the development.
- Less air and noise pollution for existing and new residents.
- Retains Whitmore Lane as part of the village.
- Retains the character of the Green Wedge with no artificial break.
- Does not cut off Whitmore Lane residents from Staplegrove Village.
- Could later form part of a Northern Distributor Road.
- Power cabling and road construction carried out simultaneously.
- Keeps the junction at Kingston Road further from Hope Corner Lane.
- Safer for cyclists and pedestrians as no need to cross the Spine Road to access the Green Wedge.
- Reduces the risk of flooding.

A common theme is a request for the road to be completed before any house-building starts or homes are occupied.

Response: A Spine Road is proposed from Staplegrove Road in the west to Kingston Road in the east, with provision safeguarded for a future wider northern road. The road is wide enough to accommodate large vehicles such as buses to pass each other comfortably.

Following public consultation and discussions with the Council, a northern alignment is being proposed, with a southern access onto Kingston Road. More detail in respect to this decision is explained in Section 5.

The Spine Road will be commenced in phase 1a, and future development will be restricted until its completion (further information can be found in section 10). The details of the restrictions will be determined during the planning application, and based upon detailed technical assessment of transport impacts.

Question 4

A majority of respondents acknowledge the need for community facilities to serve the new development and many recognise the benefits these would provide to existing residents. A majority of people highlight the need for a school as proposed and GP/Dentist Surgery. A new Community Hall is a very popular suggestion along with sports and leisure facilities catering for specific groups including the elderly, teenagers and families. Play areas for children and green space are frequently mentioned. Many people highlight the need for additional secondary school provision in addition to the primary school included in the proposals. Shops (convenience store) pubs, cafés and restaurants are also high on the list of suggestions followed by a library and Post Office.

Response: The proposal includes a two-form primary school, a local centre, employment land, and a wide network of green spaces including play areas, sports pitches, orchards, allotments and informal open space. The local centre is required to provide a range of facilities, including health provision, as detailed in the emerging SADMP policy, and these will come forward as part of future Reserved Matters applications.

Question 5

The most popular suggestions are for walking areas and/or a nature reserve aimed at supporting existing wildlife and enabling the new community to interact with the green environment. Many of those who don't support the proposals suggest the land should be maintained as farmland because they disagree with the principle of development on the site. Parkland/green open space and play areas for children are popular themes and sport and recreation facilities are mentioned. Less popular suggestions include orchards and performance space.

Response: The design of the masterplan has been led by ecological and landscape factors, as such a wide network of hedgerows, new trees and green spaces are proposed. A wide network of pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed which allow access to the green spaces and allow the community to interact with the green environment. A number of equipped play areas are proposed, as well as sports pitches, allotment and orchard, which would all give the community usable public open space. (More information about the green infrastructure strategy can be found in section 8).

Question 6

- Good = 95
- Concerned about the costs and impact on funds for other facilities = 25
- A wider areas of pylons should be buried = 10

Response: The comprehensive development (Staplegrove East and West) proposes to ground the pylons from Silk Mills to Kingston Road.

Question 7

The public express concerns that the development will increase the risk of flooding and that Kingston Road already “runs like a river” during heavy rainfall. There are several requests for additional water management measures due to the high level of concern over flooding. There is support for the water management proposals and respondents refer to them as “attractive” and “well thought out.”

Respondents request further information on how the attenuation ponds will function and be managed. There is concern that the water will become stagnant and people ask for reassurance that the ponds will be managed.

Response: A detailed drainage strategy is submitted as part of this planning application, and the accompanying Environmental Statement sets out the required mitigation and enhancement measures. The attenuation pond’s management will be secured via legal agreement, thus enforceable by the Council.

Question 8

A number of the comments were from members of the public who wanted to explain why they thought the development is too big, not appropriate or in the wrong place.

Traffic congestion was also a major concern, with many commenting that the new development will merely add more vehicles to the highways network in Taunton.

The other major concern that emerges from many narrative comments is a worry about lack of employment opportunities for those living in the new homes.

Response: As previously mentioned, this consultation was not about the principal development, as this site was identified as a ‘Broad Location for Growth’ in the Core Strategy.

The proposed Spine Road has been designed to accommodate the development and the extra cars added. The Spine Road will be built to a specification that would allow it to become part of the northern distributor road should TDDB take forward this proposal.

Staplegrave East and West each provide 1ha of employment land (2ha total), and together with the local centre and school would provide jobs within the new development.

4.3 Framework Plan and Development Brief Consultation

Consultation of the Framework Plan and Development Brief

A comprehensive Framework Plan covering the entirety of the site was prepared in December 2014. This high-level masterplan reflected the requirements of both the Core Strategy and the emerging Site Allocations Development Management Plan, which provides further detail on the proposed urban extension at Staplegrove.

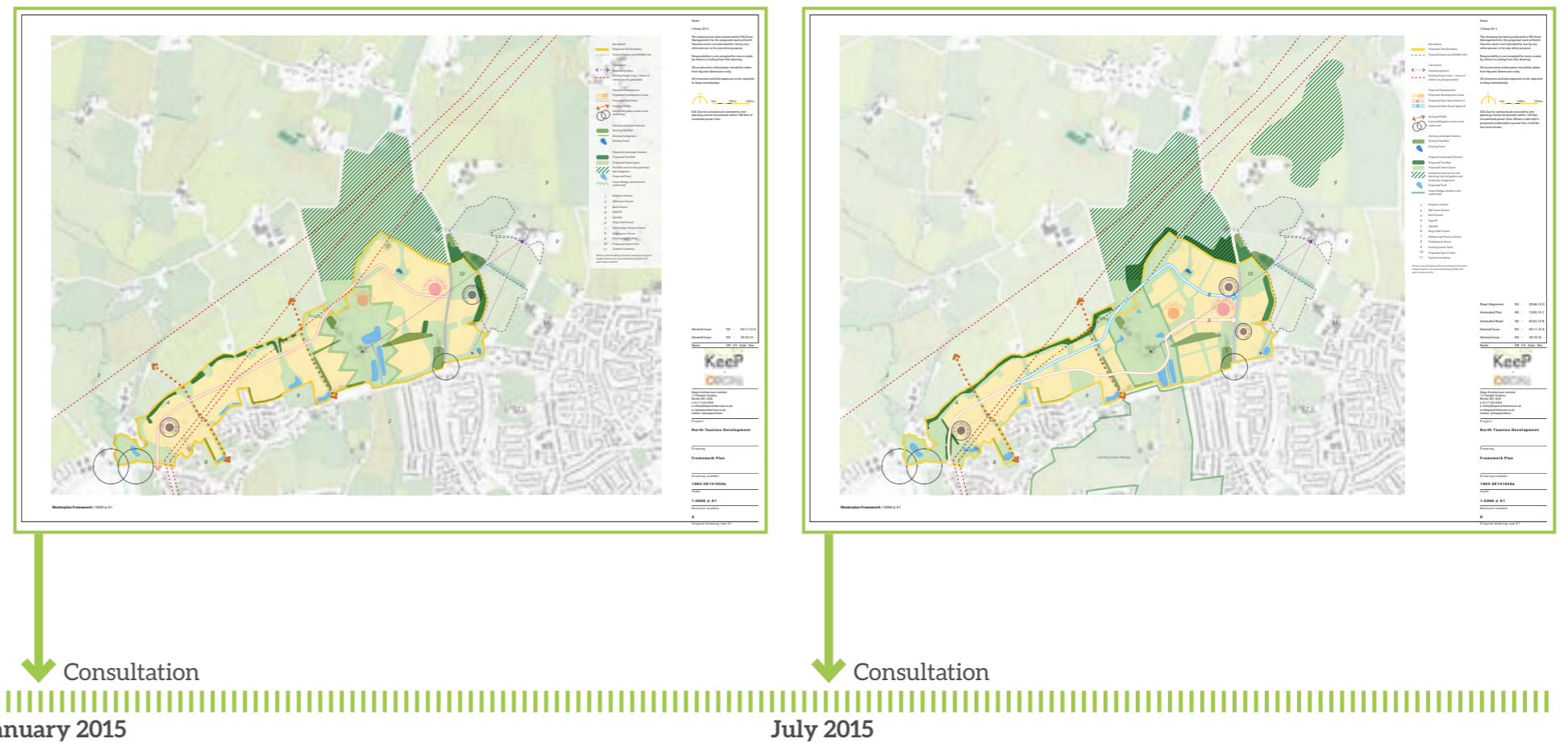
The Framework Plan was presented to Community Scrutiny and Executive Committees on 2nd and 3rd December 2014 and approved for wider consultation over a six week period. PM Asset Management and Parmigan sought views from the general public on these initial proposals for the urban extension at Staplegrove in this consultation period.

The document set out the broad location for housing and associated physical, social and green infrastructure required by the Core Strategy. The teams worked alongside the Borough Council, stakeholders and the community.

The Framework Plan was amended and adapted further to comments and feedback received from this initial consultation period. This amended document was considered by the Council's LDF Steering Group in July 2015, and the amended plans formed part of the July 2015 Public Consultation.

Following these consultations, the document was reviewed again in September 2015. This document was taken to the Council's Executive in November 2015, and Full Council in December 2015. The Full Council on 15th December 2015 agreed to endorse the document, and it now forms a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications relating to the site.

It is noted that the Executive and Full Council identified a number of recommendations and notes for the developers, and these have informed the detailed planning application proposals. See Planning Statement for more information.



Community Scrutiny and Executive Committee Presentations

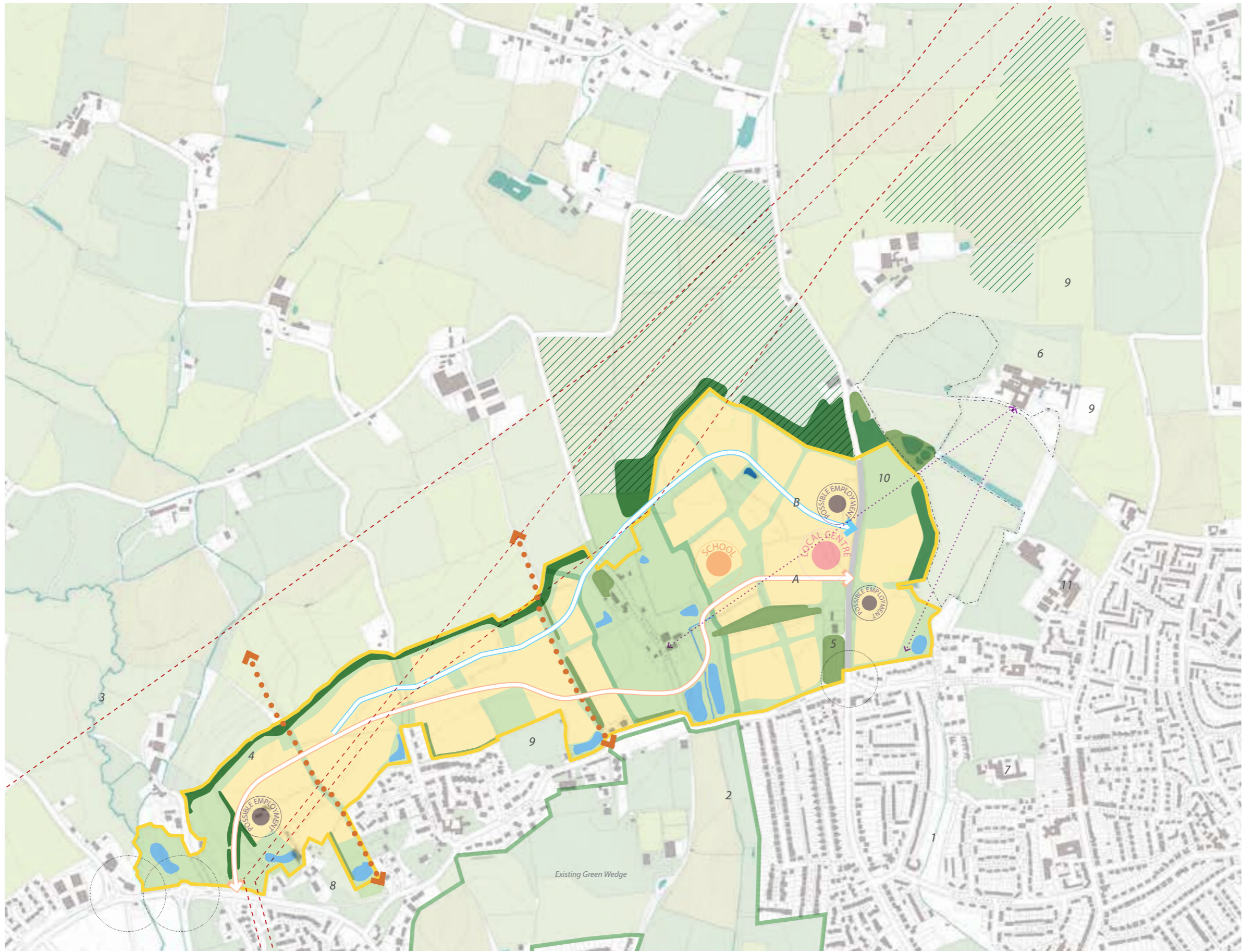
December 2014

Consultation

January 2015

Consultation

July 2015



- Boundaries**
- Proposed Site Boundary
- Pyrland Estate Local Wildlife Site
- Constraints**
- Interesting Views
- Existing Power Lines - Some of which may be grounded
- Proposed Development**
- Proposed Development Areas
- Proposed Main Road Option A
- Proposed Main Road Option B
- Existing PROWs
- Future Mitigation Works to be Confirmed
- Existing Landscape Features**
- Existing Tree Belt
- Existing Pond
- Proposed Landscape Features**
- Proposed Tree Belt
- Proposed Green Space
- Indicative Location for Tree Planting/Bat Mitigation and Landscape Integration
- Proposed Pond
- Green Wedge (extent to be confirmed)
- 1 Kingston Stream
- 2 Mill Lease Stream
- 3 Back Stream
- 4 Rag Hill
- 5 Okehills
- 6 King's Hall School
- 7 Wellsprings Primary School
- 8 Staplegrove House
- 9 Existing Sports Field
- 10 Proposed Sports Field
- 11 Taunton Academy

Final Framework Plan (September 2015)

4.3 Framework Plan and Development Brief Consultation

First Framework Plan Consultation - January/February 2015

A total of 76 responses were received from members of the public who had viewed the Framework Masterplan. All the responses came from residents living in Staplegrove or within 0.25 miles of the site.

A further 12 responses were received from statutory consultees, organisations and councillors.

The responses to the feedback are summarised in the pie chart on the opposite page. A summary of key issues raised is outlined below as well as an explanation of how the project team responded to the feedback.

Key Issues and Response

Transport and Access

Issue: The timing of the delivery of the Spine Road. The public would like to see the road completed before the houses are built and occupied.

Response: The Spine Road would be delivered as part of phase 1a with a cap on housing numbers before its completion. Details of the delivery and phasing can be found in section 10.

Issue: Design and scale of the Spine Road. The public was concerned that the road would not be wide enough for traffic to pass or would be clogged up by parked cars. They were also concerned about the location of the entry points to the Spine Road.

Response: The road has been designed to accommodate two lanes of traffic and buses. Some on street parking is proposed in designated parking bays. The entry points of the Spine Road have been designed to take into account all constraints (mainly topography and ecology). Details about the Spine Road design are outlined in section 7.

Principal of Development/ Character of Surrounding

Issue: The effect the development would have on the character of Staplegrove. The rural, attractive character of the area should be maintained.

Response: The setting of Staplegrove, as well as all surrounding built form has been considered in section 3, and has helped to inform the design of the masterplan. Further to consultations with the public, appropriate buffers have been allowed around listed buildings, as well as the Staplegrove conservation area. There will be many areas of open space throughout the development providing an attractive outlook and setting for the new homes including areas reminiscent of traditional village greens with ponds and informal groups of trees. The open spaces would be linked by a network of footpaths which would also connect to the wider countryside to the north. The allotments within Staplegrove West were relocated to the finger of land next to the Grove replacing the proposed housing. More details regarding the proposal immediately adjacent to the Staplegrove Village can be found in the Staplegrove West application.

Issue: Principle of development on the site. Many people did not consider housing to be appropriate.

Response: This site at Staplegrove was identified as a 'Broad Location for Growth' in the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy (2012), under Policy SS6. The need for, and suitability of, land north of Taunton for residential development has been established through the development plan process. The Examiner's Report for the Core Strategy (2012) concluded that the allocation of Staplegrove was "sound" (paragraph 63). Furthermore a Sustainability Appraisal accompanied an Emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Plan which gave scores to each of the allocated sites for sustainability following site specific mitigation measures and Staplegrove scored joint highest. Further, the opportunity to provide about 1,500 sustainable new homes at Staplegrove comprises a significant proportion (approximately 9%) of the 17,000 dwellings identified under Core Strategy Policy CP4: Housing over the plan period 2008 - 2028.

Infrastructure

Issue: Infrastructure to support the new population. Concerns were raised about the lack of school places, bus and cycle routes and other infrastructure to support a new population.

Response: The masterplan allows provision for a two-form primary school, a local centre that could include shops, a convenience store, food takeaways, a chemist, health provision, etc., and 1ha of employment land (more information about proposed land uses can be found in section 6). The masterplan also proposes a Spine Road that would accommodate buses, and a vast network of cycle and pedestrian routes that knit into the existing network (the proposals for bus routes and cycle/pedestrian routes can be found in section 7).

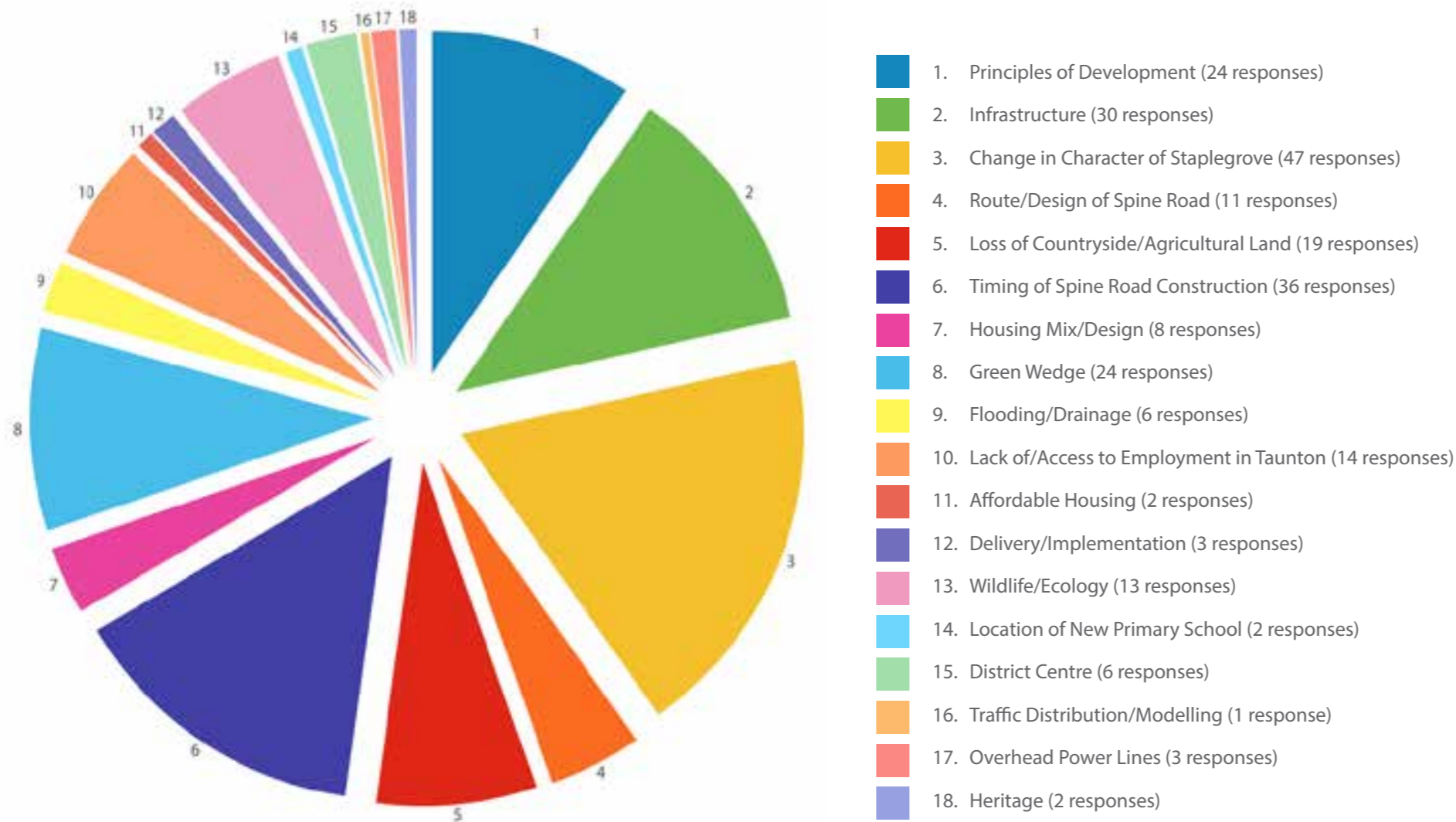
Green Infrastructure

Issue: The size and location of the Green Open Space.

Response: The masterplan proposes a wide variety of Green Open Space as part of the Green Wedge and within the development areas. Examples of the proposed green spaces include equipped play areas, informal green space, playing pitches, allotments, woodland areas, orchards, etc.

Issue: People wanted the Green Wedge to be large and in a clearly defined location. Concern was raised for the future of wildlife on the site and how habitats would be protected.

Response: The width of the Green Wedge has been informed by the existing Green Wedge and the visibility of the countryside from the existing Green Wedge. The masterplan clearly defines its width and location. The local wildlife has been a major driving factor throughout this project, with a vast area of bat mitigation planting being proposed and a wide network of hedgerows and green links retained, enhance and proposed. (More information about the landscape and ecology strategies can be found in section 8.)



Feedback received

Second Framework Plan Consultation - July/August 2015

The consultation feedback for the second consultation (July - August 2015) is outlined as part of chapter 4.2.4, as it took place in the same time as the fourth public consultation.

The feedback was taken on board and helped to develop the masterplan. Two options for the Spine Road were still presented as there was not conclusive feedback regarding which option was preferred.

The current scheme proposes an alignment which takes on board all the comments, and extensive discussion with the council and statutory consultees. A northern alignment is proposed, with a southern exit onto Kingston Road (more detail can be found in Section 7).

4.4 Branding and Website

Branding and website created for the scheme.

www.northtauntondevelopment.co.uk

This website allows the public to keep up-to-date with the progress of the project. It also provides a portal where the public can view consultation boards to date, and notifies of upcoming events.



[Home](#) [Background](#) [Analysis](#) [Landscape](#) [Proposals](#) [Team](#) [Feedback](#)



Welcome and thank you for visiting the website for the proposed future development of land between Staplegrove and Kingston St Mary, to the north of Taunton. This site will provide up-to-date information on the emerging proposals for the urban extension.



Logo created for the project



Background

The land at north Taunton is being promoted for a residential-led, mixed use development in consultation with Taunton Deane Borough Council, key stakeholders and the local community. To date a series of consultation events have taken place led by PM Asset Management consisting of an initial launch event which was held in Staplegrove village in July 2013, with a further exhibitions held in Kingston St Mary in December 2013, and in the Taunton Vale Sports Club in May 2014.

Following the adoption of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy in September 2012, PM Asset Management and Ptarmigan Land have been promoting the site in order to deliver the identified broad location for growth at north Taunton (referred to as the Staplegrove – Broad Location for Growth) contained within the adopted Core Strategy.

News

July 2015

View the Emerging Masterplan and Send us your Feedback

We are currently consulting on the emerging Masterplan that was presented at the public consultations on the 3rd and 4th July. If you would like to view and comment on the emerging Masterplan presented please click [here](#). The consultation period is running until the 3rd August. If you would like to send us your feedback please use the feedback form found [here](#), and return it to us by 5pm on the 3rd August 2015 by:

- emailing us at staplegrove@origin3.co.uk
- or
- writing to us at Origin 3, Tyndall House, 17 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1PB

[Please click here to download the latest consultation boards and feedback form.](#)

July 2015

Public Consultation

The team would like to invite you to the upcoming public consultation, exhibiting the proposals for up to 1500 new homes, a new primary school and community facilities in North Taunton. The exhibition will be displayed on:

- Friday 3rd July at Orchard Shopping Centre, opposite Greggs 10.00am - 3.00pm
- and
- Saturday 4th July at Staplegrove Village Hall 10.30am - 3.30pm

Representatives from the team will be available to answer your questions and record your feedback.

[Please click here to download the consultation leaflet.](#)

The website has been used to inform the public of the scheme, and has been used as a method of keeping the public up-to-date with news and events



5.0 Design Evolution

This section explains how the layout has developed and the preferred layout agreed for the site.

5.1 Evaluation

5.2 Spine Road

5.3 Green Wedge

5.4 Bat Mitigation Planting

5.5 Hedgerows and Dormice

5.6 Surrounding Listed Buildings and Properties

5.7 Design Evolution - School, Local Centre and Employment

5.8 Design Evolution - Framework Plan

5.9 Current Design

5.1 Evaluation

The Need for Housing

The need for, and suitability of, land north of Taunton for residential development has been established through the development plan process.

The Taunton Deane Local Plan was adopted in 2004 and covers the period up to 2011. More recently it has been partly replaced by a Core Strategy (2011-2018) and Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan. Staplegrove has been identified within the Core Strategy as a 'Broad Location of Growth' under Policy SS6. The Council's emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Plan provides further details on the allocation including number and type of dwellings, timescales, community facilities and environmental considerations.

The Examiner's Report for the Core Strategy (2012) concluded that the allocation of Staplegrove was "sound" (paragraph 63). Furthermore a Sustainability Appraisal accompanied an Emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Plan which gave scores to each of the allocated sites for sustainability following site specific mitigation measures and Staplegrove scored joint highest. Further, the opportunity to provide about 1,500 sustainable new homes at Staplegrove comprises a significant proportion (approximately 9%) of the 17,000 dwellings identified under Core Strategy Policy CP4: Housing over the plan period 2008 - 2028.

A Comprehensive Masterplan

Policy SS6 states with regard to the evolution of an integrated, sustainable development at Staplegrove that:

"...A Masterplan will need to be prepared to co-ordinate the development and ensure that it provides the necessary physical, social and green infrastructure required..."

PM Asset Management has therefore worked closely with Ptarmigan, the promoters of the Staplegrove West site, to develop a comprehensive, integrated masterplan, to provide the framework within which the Staplegrove East and West sites could then be independently refined and tested.

It was established early in the design process that each development should be capable of being implemented independently of the other should there be any delay in delivery, until such a time as the neighbouring development proceeds. A core premise has therefore been that the Spine Road in its entirety would be capable of being delivered by either development.

Evaluation of the Design

This chapter will present a summary of the key changes and issues during the design process, how the issues were tackled, and their resolution. This chapter also portrays how the evaluation has informed the design, parameters and the illustrative masterplan shown in the next few sections. The assessment of the site and its surrounding, as well as the consultations with key stakeholders and the local community has helped shape the proposal. The previous section (section 4) has outlined the public consultations carried out, and the outcomes of each event. The information gathered about the site and the evolving proposals have been tested at varying stages with the public and key stakeholders.

The evaluation of key topics is set out below. This list includes the main aspects of the scheme that have been a major part of consultations with the public, the local residents, the county, borough and parish councils.

- Spine Road
- Green Wedge
- Bat Mitigation Planting
- Hedgerows and Dormice
- Surrounding Listed Buildings and Properties
- School, Local Centre and Employment
- Framework Plan

Constraints and Opportunities

The constraints and opportunities of the site and Staplegrove West have been used to inform the design principles, which in turn have helped refine and structure the proposal. The key constraints and opportunities of the site have been identified as:

Constraints:

- Core Strategy green wedge in the centre of the site.
- Ecological sensitivity of nearby SAC including bats.
- Visibility of the site from existing properties, including the Grade II* Listed Pyrland Hall.
- Bisection of the site by Rectory Road, Whitmore Lane and Kingston Road.
- Inclusion on the Staplegrove Link Road (the Spine Road) within the Taunton Deane Core Strategy Key Diagram between Kingston Road and the A358.
- Flood Zone 2 and 3 associated with Mill Lease Stream.

Opportunities:

- Provision of about 900 residential properties.
- 2-Form Primary School.
- Local Centre.
- Employment Land.
- Retention of mature trees and hedgerows where possible.
- Open space and landscaping (including extension to the Green Wedge).
- Supporting infrastructure and utilities.



5.2 Spine Road

Requirement

The SADMP draft policy TAU2 highlights the requirement for a new northern link road extending from Silk Mills Road roundabout on the A358 to Kingston Road, with provision for a future eastern extension.

Constraints

- Rag Hill ridge.
- Existing hedgerows and trees.
- Level difference between site and Kingston Road.
- Topography at west entrance.
- Linking to Silk Mills roundabout.
- Providing a safeguarded route to the north-east.
- Spine Road crossing Rectory Road and Whitmore Lane.

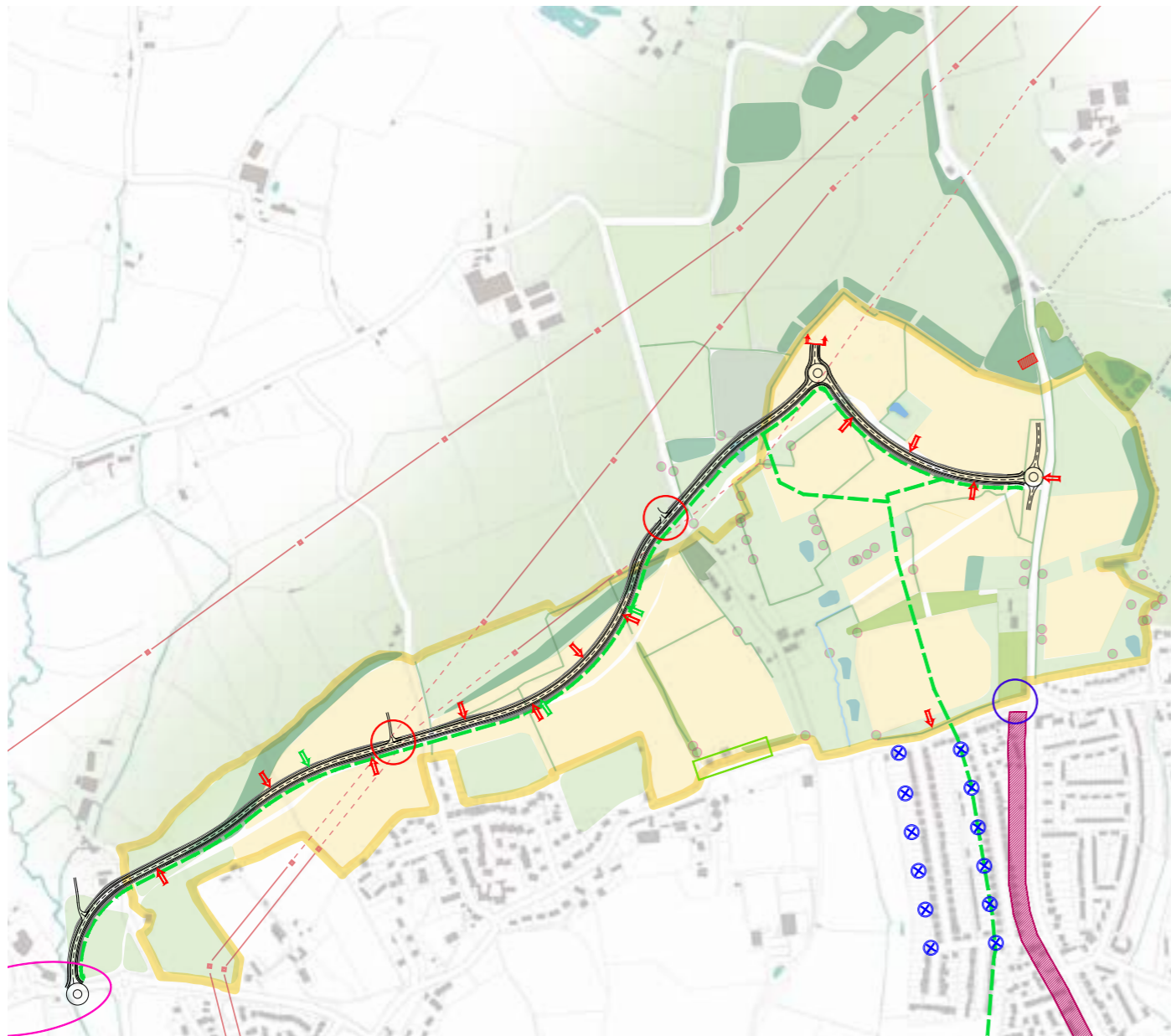
Evolution

The Spine Road was initially shown further north towards the Rag Hill ridge, this was altered and the road now sits much further south within the centre of Staplegrove West. The evolution of the Spine Road alignment can best be seen in the Framework Plan drawings, with two options presented, one for a southern and one for a northern alignment. Within Staplegrove East topography was not as much of an issue as in Staplegrove West, the driving factors here were the existing hedgerows and dormice activity. A northern route was favoured as it would not cut across the proposed Green Wedge, and proposes a road that keeps intact a network of hedgerows.



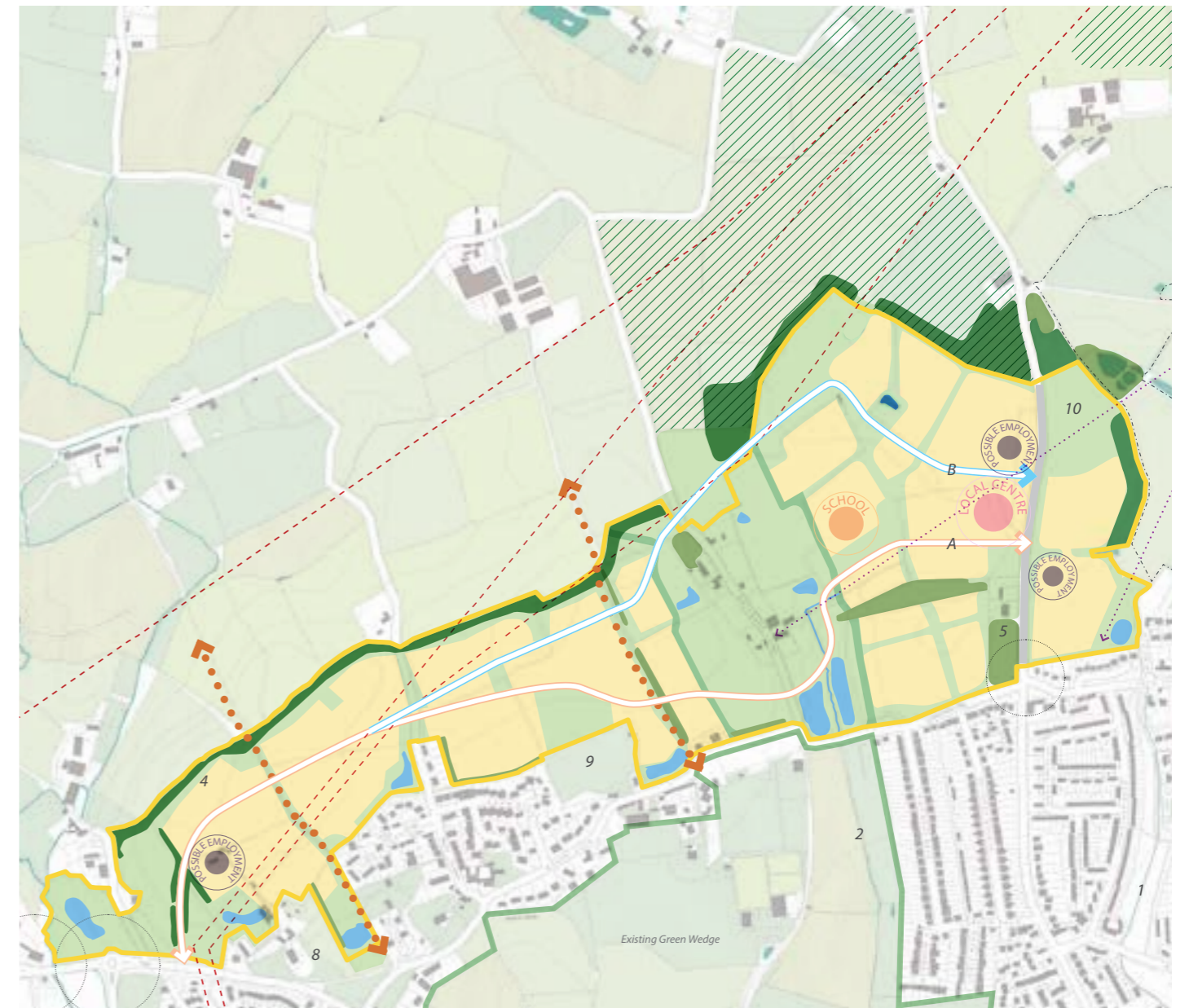
October 2013

Sketch plan showing the Spine Road connecting Silk Mills Roundabout to Kingston Road. The Spine Road is shown with a north alignment, running along the ridge line, with a tree belt shown to the north of the road for visual screening.



May 2014

Drawing presented at the third public consultation, which shows the Spine Road linking Silk Mills roundabout to Kingston Road. The alignment through Staplegrove West has been moved further south to avoid breaching the Rag Hill ridge line. A future access route is also shown within Staplegrove East, which would form the safeguarded route for a wider north-eastern link road.



September 2015

Final Framework Plan showing two Spine Road alignment options: a northern alignment which crosses Whitmore Lane to the north of the existing dwellings and farm buildings, and a southern alignment which crosses through the proposed Green Wedge. Both options are shown with a western access off Staplegrove Road rather than Silk Mills roundabout due to the topographical constraints and existing buildings around Silk Mills. The proposed junction onto Kingston Road at the eastern end of the Spine Road is shown as two options as well. The final alignment proposed uses a northern road alignment but a southern junction onto Kingston Road.

5.3 Green Wedge

Requirement

One of the Strategic Objectives set out on the Taunton Deane Core Strategy relates to Environment, and under policy CP8 the need for a Green Wedge is defined:

"A network of green infrastructure is identified, to be retained and enhanced; including the development of new, and extension to existing, Green Wedges."

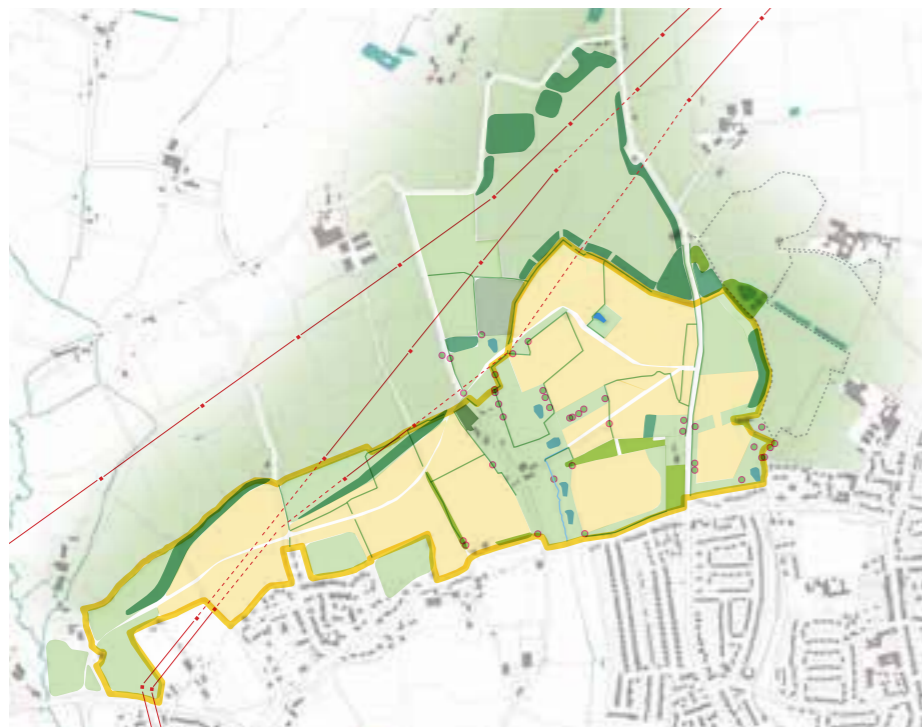
The key points listed for a Green Wedge are to prevent coalescence of settlements, bringing the countryside into the town, providing valuable ecological corridors, providing formal and informal open and recreational space, maintaining an open character, and protecting areas of landscape importance and visual amenity.

Constraints

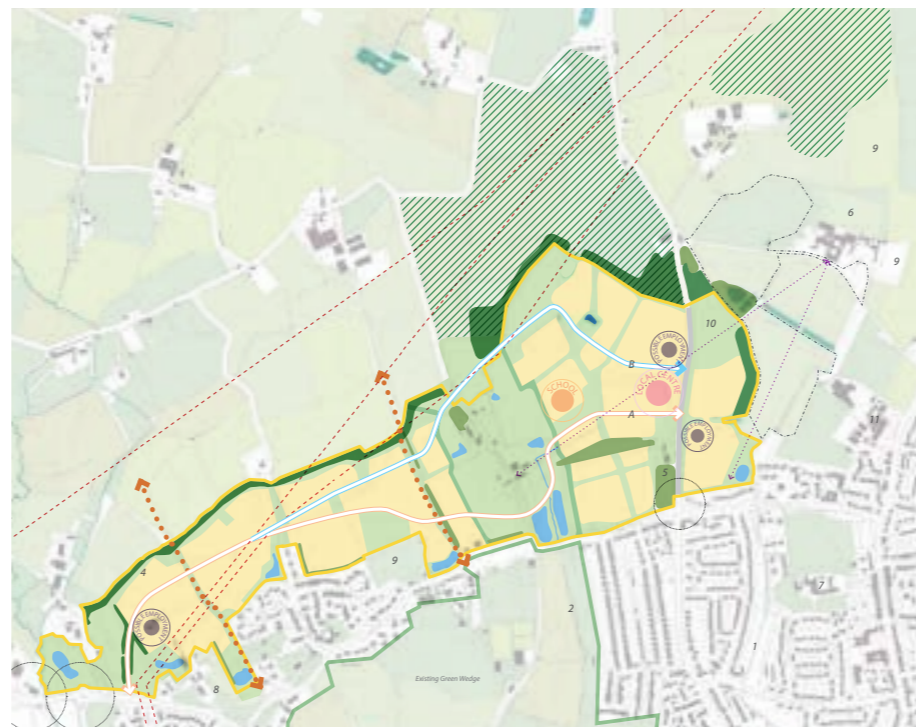
- Existing Green Wedge to be extended through site.
- Existing properties along Whitmore Lane.
- Spine Road needing to cut through Green Wedge.

Evolution

The Green Wedge underwent a number of iterations. The most important issue for the proposal was to design usable open space, which has specific uses and contributes positively to the new neighbourhoods rather than just being left as undefined open space. The green wedge has been defined by existing landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and streams.



May 2014
At the public consultation in May 2014 a Green Wedge was proposed which was informed by existing field boundaries. This wedge was narrower than that shown in the SADMP documentation.



September 2015
The final Framework Plan (September 2015) shows the Green Wedge wider and responding to the edge of the existing Green Wedge.



April 2016
The final plan indicates the Green Wedge extending further north and encompassing proposed ponds and orchards.

5.4 Bat Mitigation Planting

Requirement

In order to mitigate for the loss in habitat for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat, an area of bat mitigation planting needs to be proposed that would wrap around the northern and eastern edges of the site.

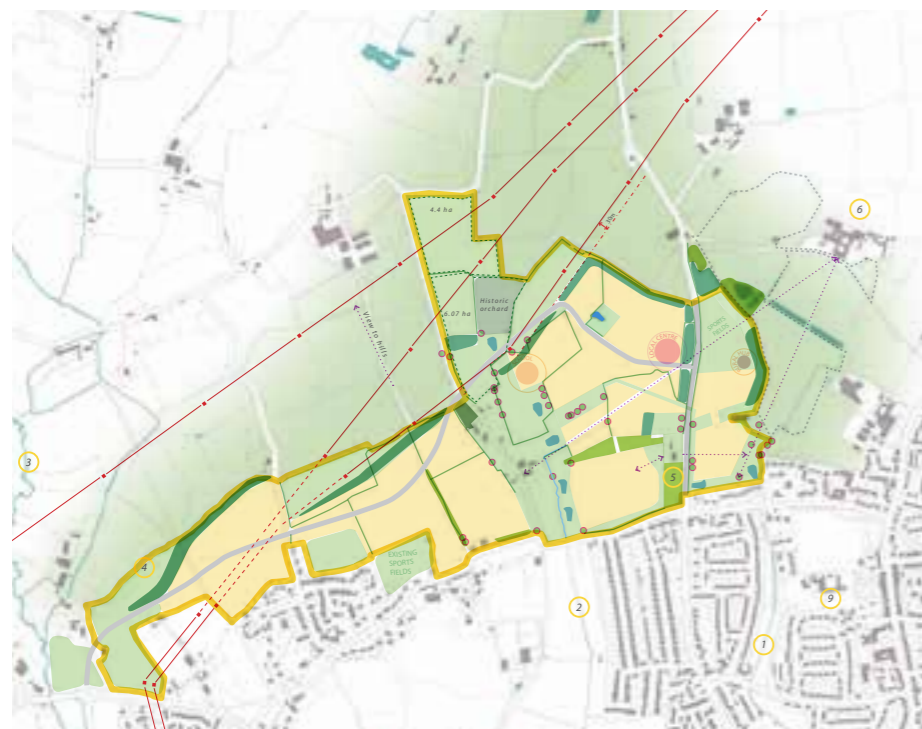
Constraints

- Power lines to the north of the site.
- Tree belts are not characteristic of the area, so a design was needed that would propose tree blocks rather than thin belts.
- Bat mitigation planting to act also as visual screening to protect views from the Quantocks and from the Grade II* listed Pyrland Hall.

Evolution

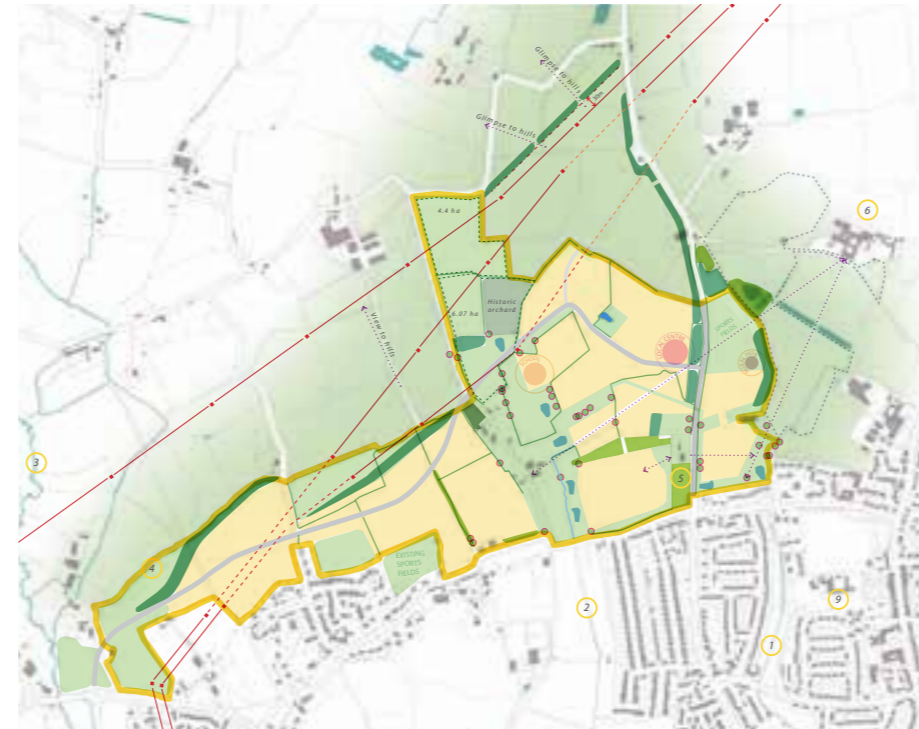
In order to provide an uninterrupted flight route for the bats, a belt of trees was to be provided along the northern edge of the site. This tree belt would also wrap around the eastern edge and together with the existing tree blocks within the Pyrland Hall would create an uninterrupted route along the edge of the site boundary. Tree planting was initially proposed along Kingston Road as well, however, if planting was to be proposed here it would not benefit the bats, bringing them into the development rather than away from the built up areas. This tree planting along Kingston Road was therefore removed.

Further to extensive consultation with the County Ecologist, a detailed area requirement and specification for the tree planting was decided based on the HRA (2014). Approximately ten hectares of bat mitigation tree planting is proposed on Staplegrove East, with a further seven hectares on Staplegrove West.



April 2014

A tree belt is proposed to hug the northern boundary of the site as well as the eastern edge. Planting is also proposed along Kingston Road.



April 2014

The tree planting is moved to the north of the high voltage power lines and extended northward along Kingston Road, to provide habitat enhancements for bats associated with Hestercombe House, whilst maintaining a heritage setting and a visual screening function.



September 2014

Further to consultation with the County Ecologist, a total of approx. 16ha of bat mitigation planting is proposed to wrap around the north and east of the site boundary.

5.5 Hedgerows and Dormice

Requirement

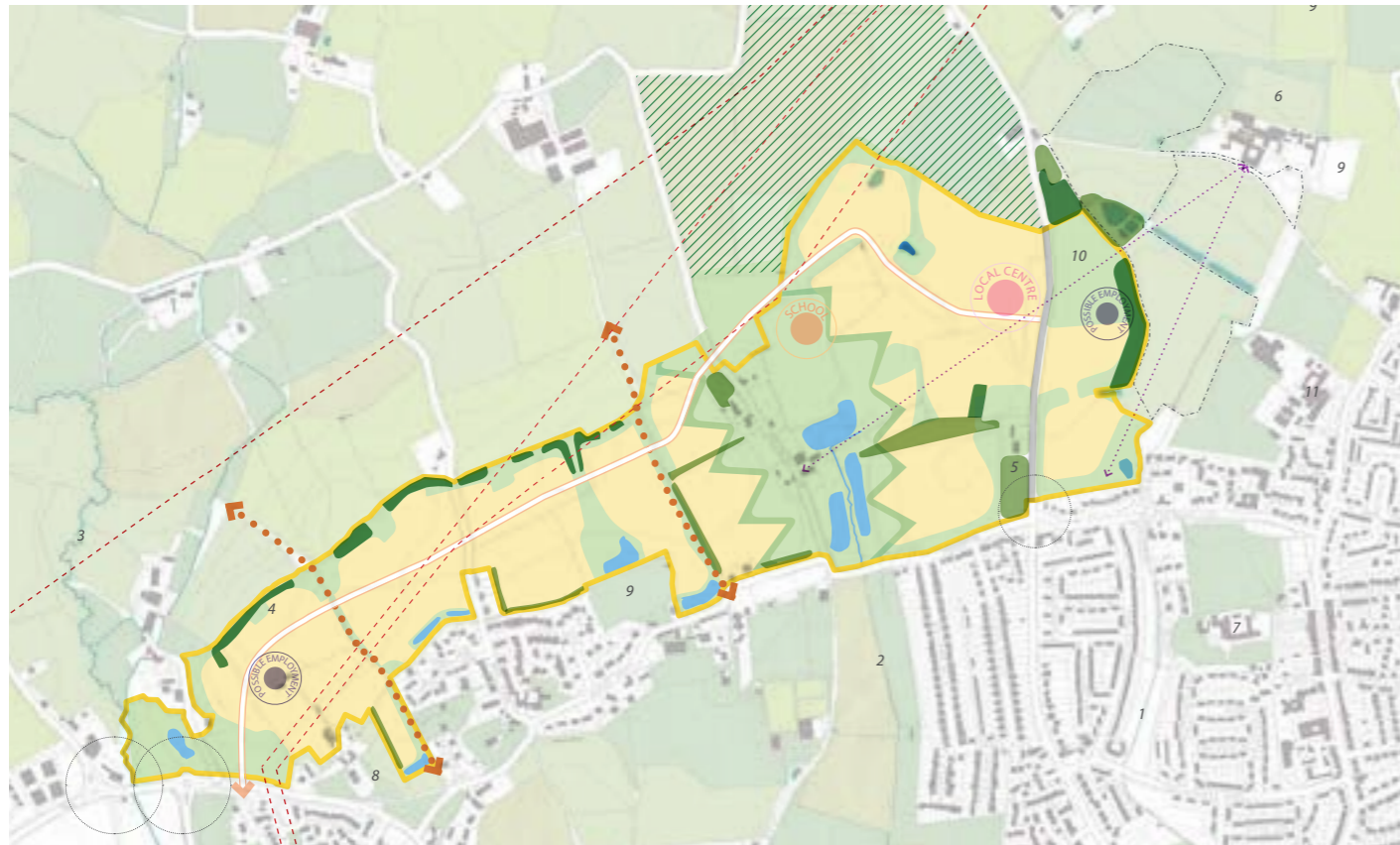
To retain vital connectivity for dormice activity along the existing hedgerows, and where possible propose new connections to the wider green areas.

Constraints

- Dormice survey revealed high activity in many of the on site hedgerows.

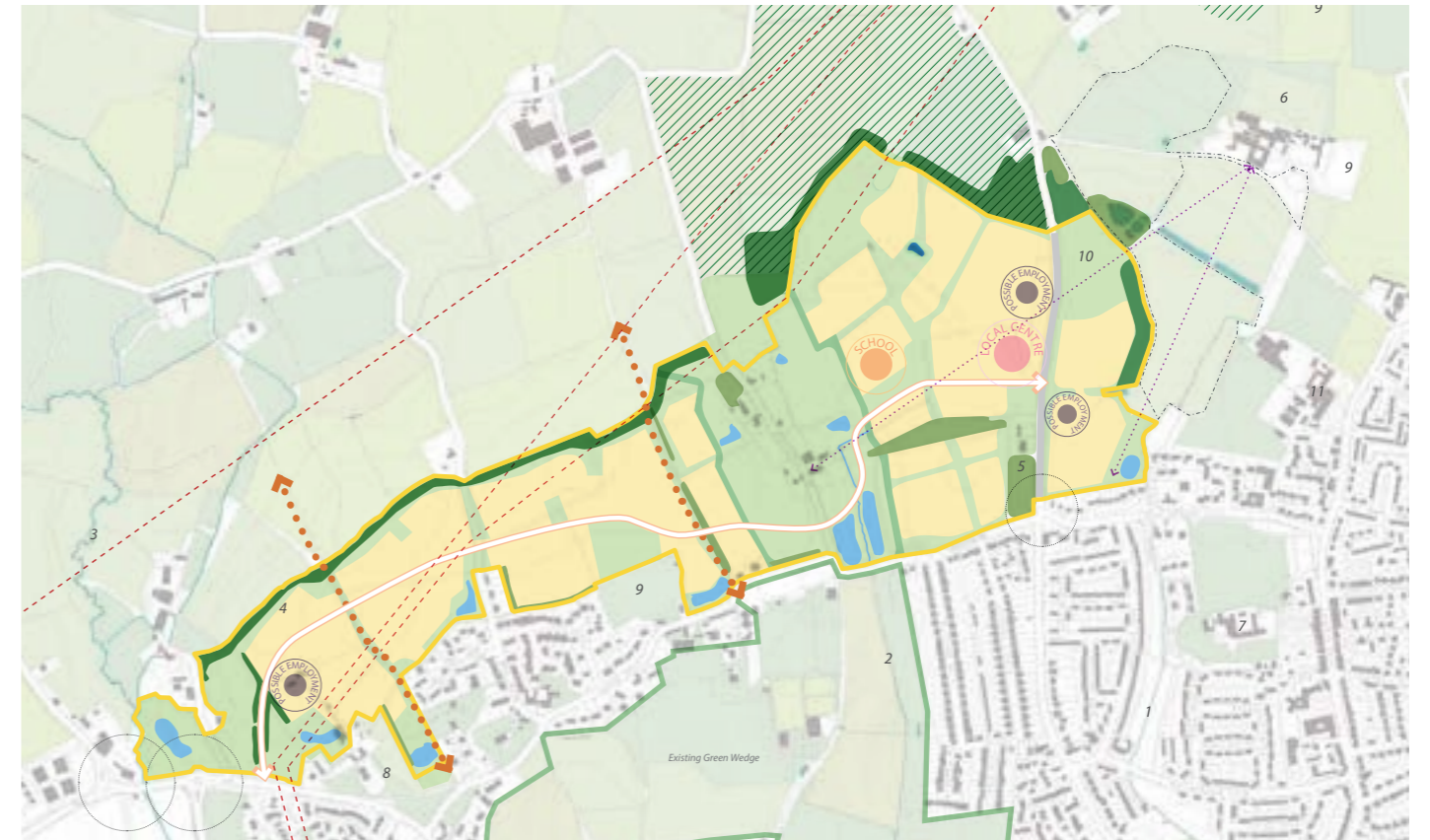
Evolution

The initial northern alignment of the Spine Road severed existing hedgerows which impacted on the connectivity for dormice. The road alignment was altered to a southern alignment to allow the connectivity to be retained. New hedgerows have also been proposed which provide connectivity to the wider green areas to the north of the development.



December 2014

With the northern alignment of the Spine Road, the existing hedgerow network is severed.



May 2015

The Spine Road is altered to a southern alignment and allows for the existing hedgerow network to be retained and enhanced. However, this alignment would cut across the Green Wedge.

5.6 Surrounding Listed Buildings and Properties

Requirement

The setting of the existing listed buildings as well as dwellings surrounding the site should be considered.

Constraints

- Grade II* listed Pyrland Hall to the north-east of the site.
- Grade II listed Okehills sitting along Kingston Road at the south of the site.
- Properties backing onto the site at Hope Corner Close.
- Existing low rise properties along Corkscrew Lane.
- Existing properties along Whitmore Lane.

Evolution

Buffers allowed for Okehills, Hope Corner Close properties, Corkscrew Lane properties, and Pyrland Hall. The proposed Green Wedge provides a buffer for the existing dwellings on Whitmore Lane.



October 2013

No buffers shown to Okehills, Corkscrew Lane, and Hope Corner Close.



February 2014

Further to consultation with the residents, buffers were introduced around Okehills and Corkscrew Lane. The development line at the south-west end of the Pyrland Hall parkland was pushed further to the west to allow for a continuation of the existing avenue of trees. Further buffers were added to the back of the properties on Hope Corner Close.

5.7 Design Evolution - School, Local Centre and Employment

Requirement

The SADMP under draft policy TAU2 asks for:

- An inclusion of a mixed-use local centre comprising convenience store (500sqm), other convenience retailing (500sqm), financial/professional services, restaurants/cafés, at least one public house, takeaway, community hall building and a place of worship.
- A minimum of 2ha of serviced employment land comprising Class B1b and c, B2, B8 and other appropriate employment generating activities use.
- A 2.5ha site of a 14-class, 2-form primary school with pre-school facilities.

Constraints

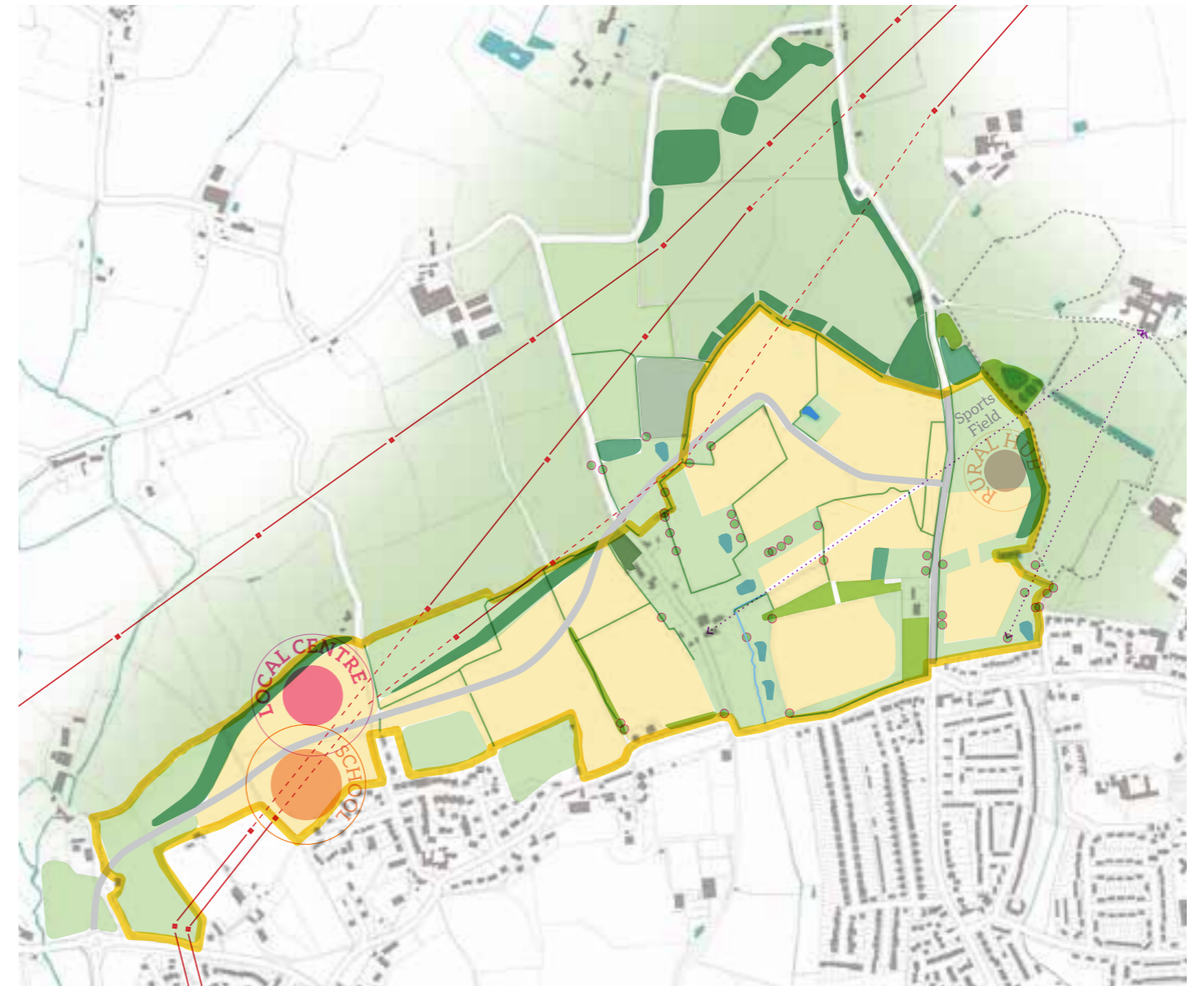
- Walk-able catchments to facilities.

Evolution

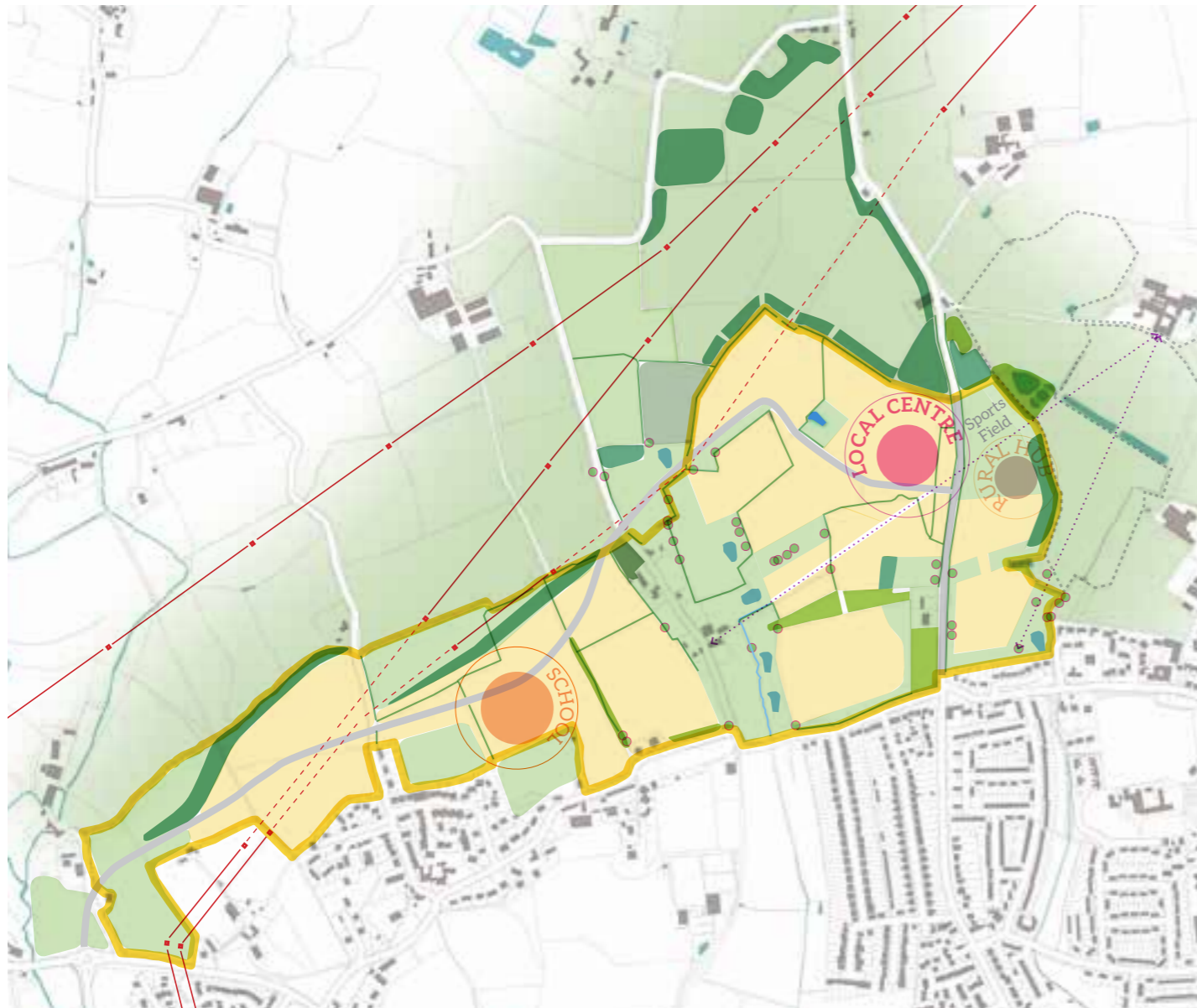
The location of these key facilities has been informed by the site analysis, locality of existing settlements, and the proposed main access routes.

At the third public consultation (May 2014) the public were asked to comment on their preferred location for the primary school and the local centre. Three options were presented, all were formulated following the completion of detailed survey work (these options are shown to the right). The preferred option was Option 3, and this was then further developed into the current masterplan.

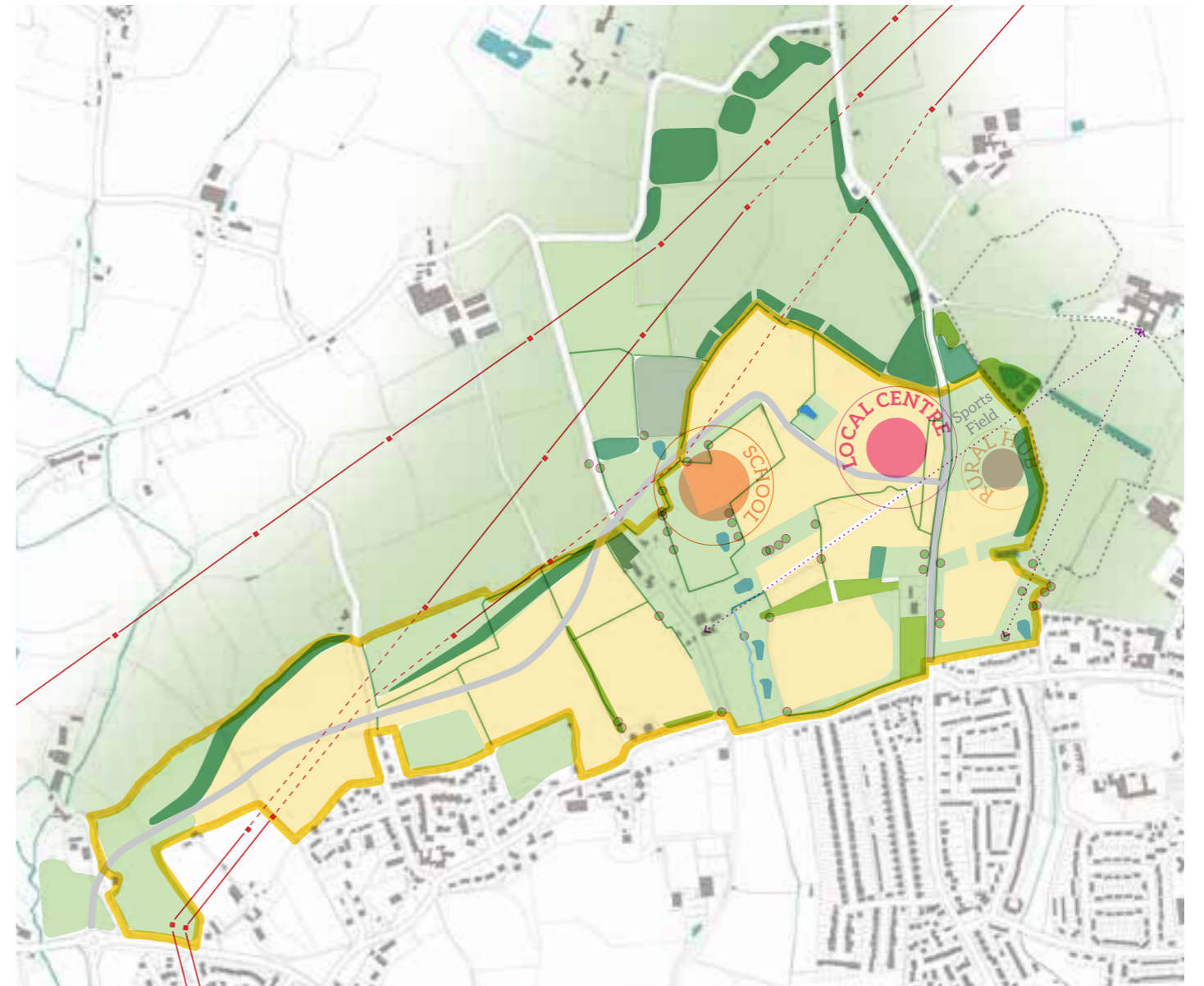
The final proposed location for the Local Centre along Kingston Road will be able to serve Kingston St. Mary as well as the new development. The school location adjacent to the proposed Green Wedge is able to utilise the Green Wedge for the school playing pitches, and is located centrally within the comprehensive development, as well as off the Spine Road.



May 2014
Option 1 - school and local centre in the west



May 2014
Option 2: school in west, local centre in the east



May 2014
Option 3: school and local centre in the east

5.8 Design Evolution - Framework Plan

Framework Plan and Development Brief

A comprehensive Framework Plan covering the entirety of the site was prepared in December 2014 based upon the alternative draft masterplans described above. This high-level masterplan reflected the requirements of both the Core Strategy and the emerging Site Allocations Development Management Plan, which provided further draft detail on the proposed urban extension at Staplegrove.

The Framework Plan was presented to Community Scrutiny and Executive Committees on 2nd and 3rd December 2014 and approved for wider consultation over a six week period. PM Asset Management and Parmigan sought views from the general public on these initial proposals for the urban extension at Staplegrove in this consultation period.

The document set out the broad location for housing and associated physical, social and green infrastructure required by the Core Strategy. The teams worked alongside the Borough Council, stakeholders and the community.

The Framework Plan was amended and adapted further to comments and feedback received from this initial consultation period. The amended plan formed part of the July 2015 consultation.

In response to consultation feedback and following discussions with the council, minor modifications were subsequently made. The final version was taken to TDBC's Full Council on 15th December 2015 where it received their endorsement as a document to guide future development of the site.



Public consultation that took part in July 2015



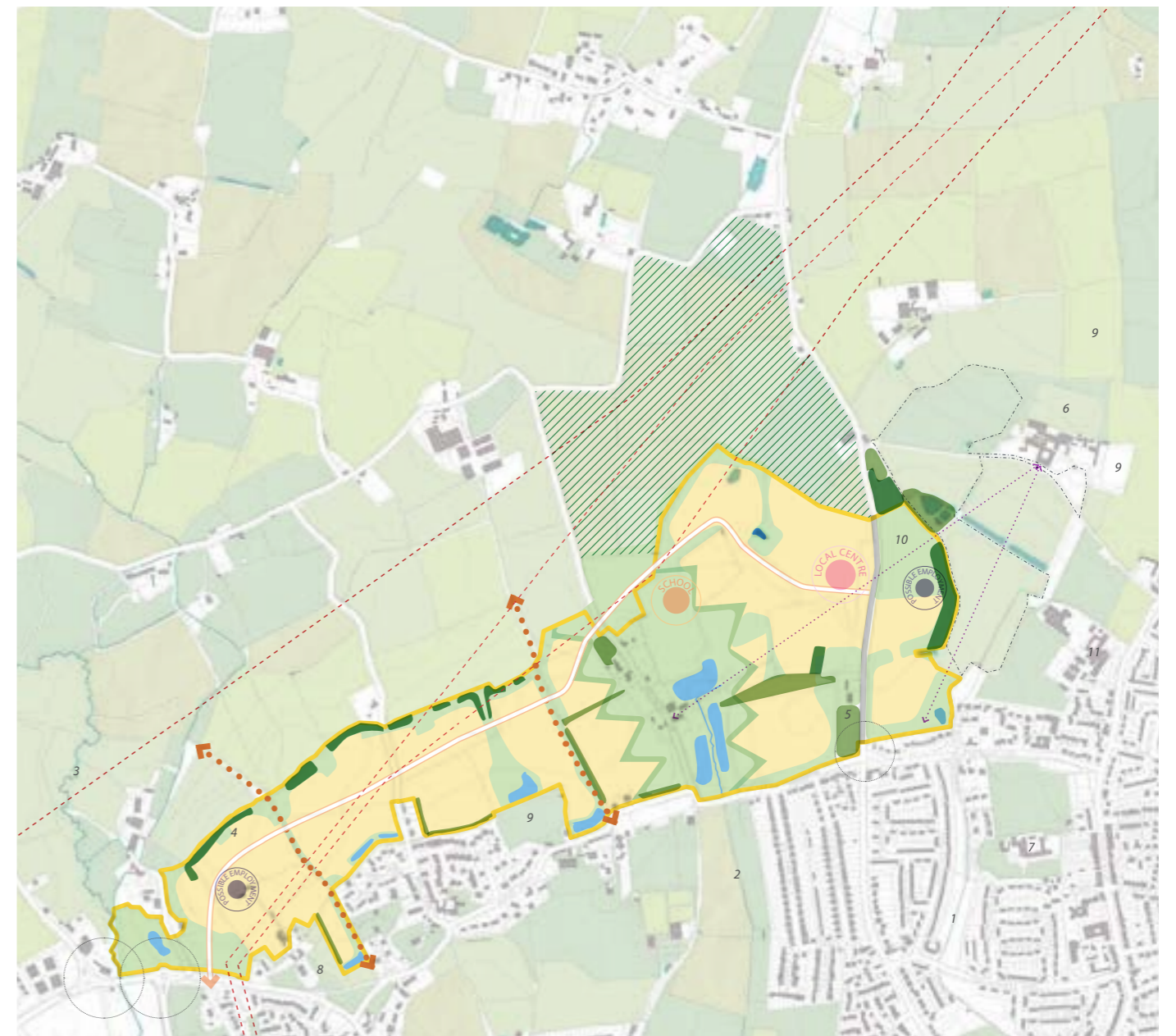
Public consultation that took part in July 2015

Framework Plan December 2014

- Spine Road to the north.
- Bat mitigation planting to the north of the development boundary.
- Green Wedge presented diagrammatically.
- Employment shown to the east.



Sketch showing proposed development - looking towards Taunton



Design evolution - framework plan December 2014

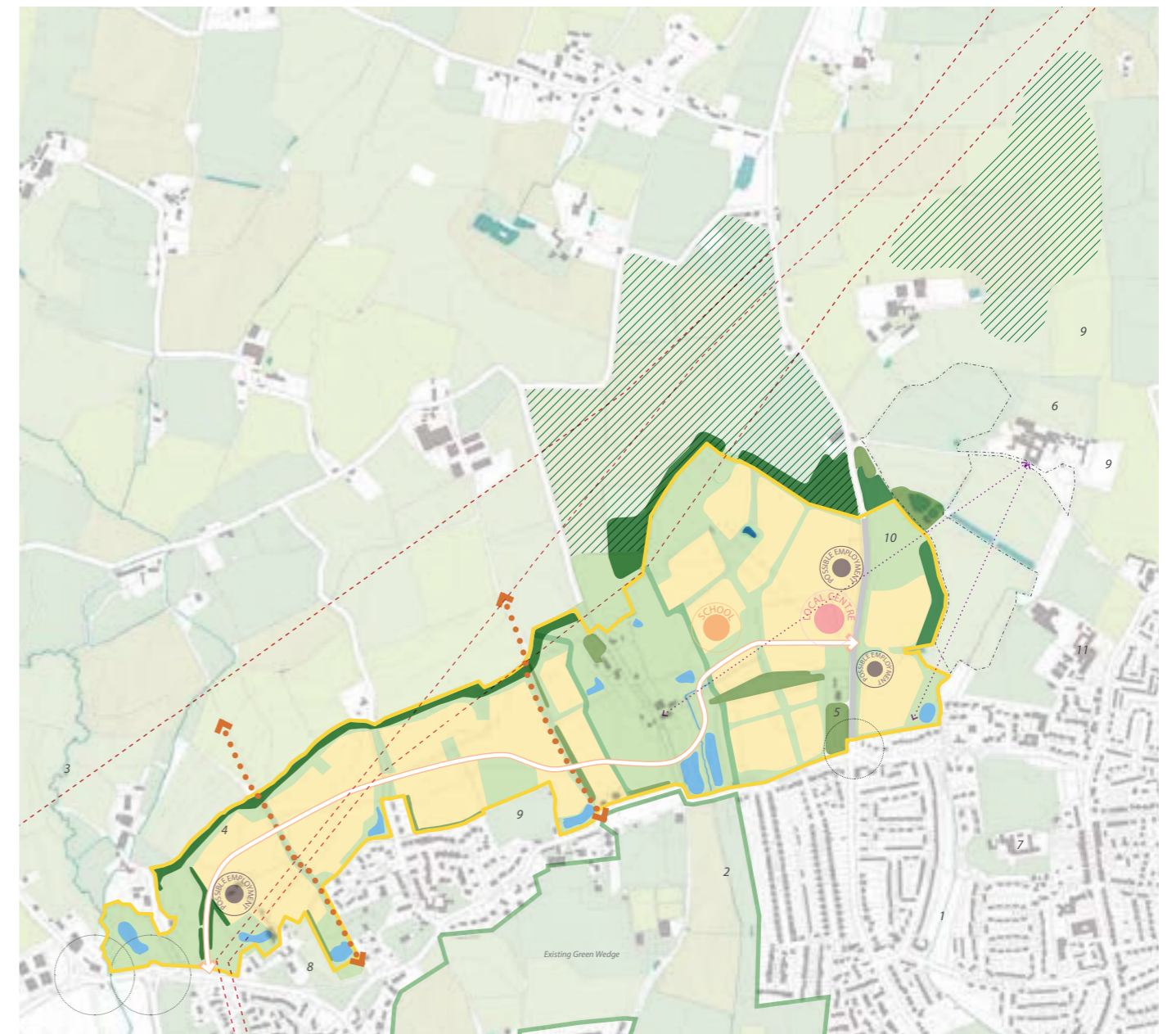
5.8 Design Evolution - Framework Plan

Framework Plan May 2015

- The potential for a Southern Spine Road alignment was presented as part of this plan.
- Network of hedgerows retained.
- Extra land is used to the north of Pyrland Estate for bat mitigation.
- Employment split between two sites, one north of the local centre, and one to the south-east of the new Kingston Road junction.



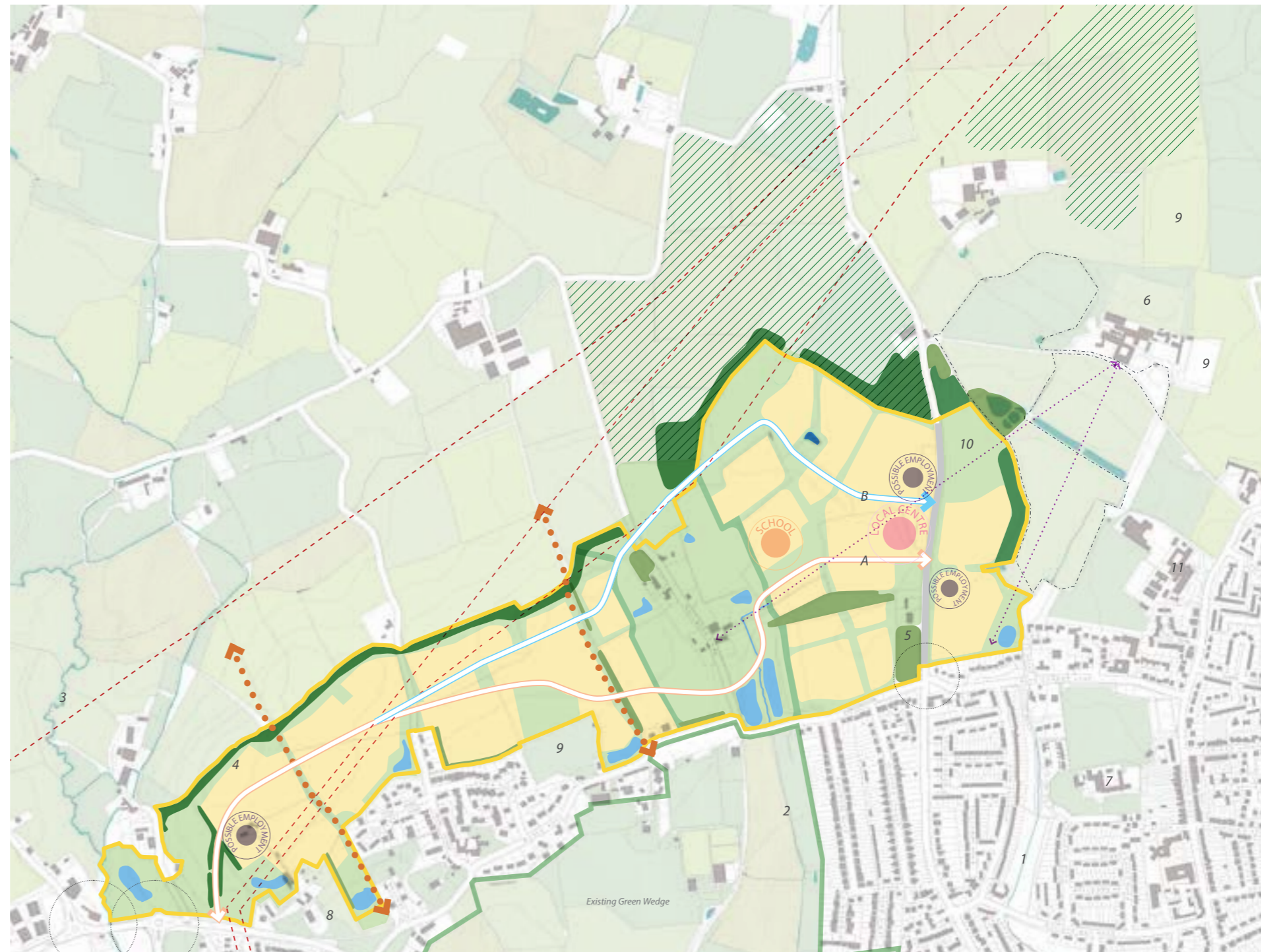
Sketch showing the proposed Green Wedge



Design evolution - framework plan May 2015

Framework Plan September 2015

As an amendment to the framework plan, further to comments received, two options were presented for the Spine Road, a northern and a southern.



Design evolution - framework plan September 2015

5.9 Current Design

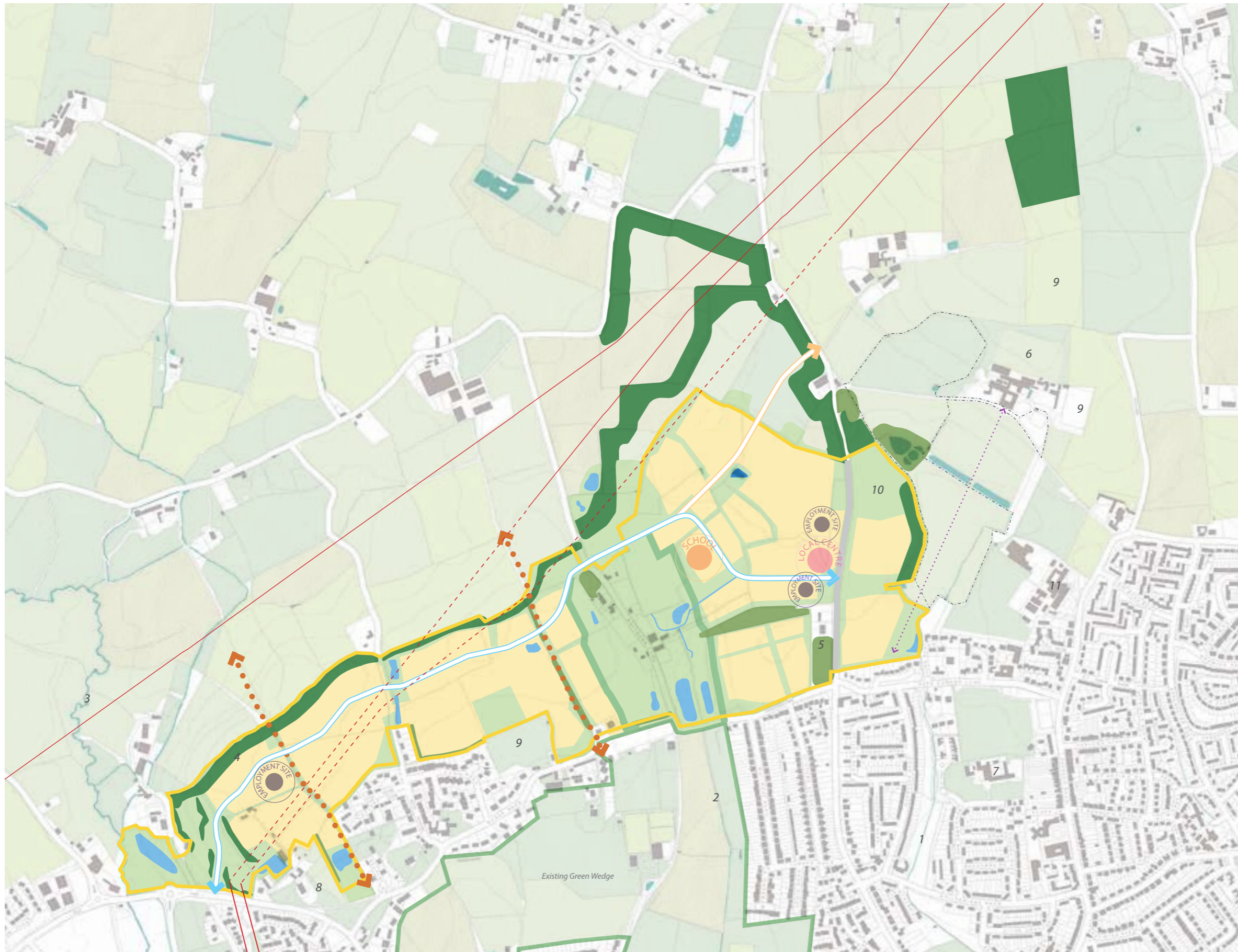
Current masterplan

A comprehensive and well coordinated masterplan has been prepared following the detailed design evolution. The masterplan includes an evaluation of the technical constraints for the site including topography, existing heritage, visual impact, ecology (to consider a number of species) and access requirements.

The consideration of the technical aspects have been balanced with an 'in-depth' public consultation as well as the need to provide a distinctive place that is appropriate for setting with a unique character. By undertaking many design iterations that have been reviewed objectively, a high quality masterplan has been achieved.

As a result of the lengthy design evolution, the mixed uses for the site (including employment and a local centre) as well as the provision of the necessary infrastructure is well connected with the surrounding context and will provide an enhanced and attractive environment to the existing suburban area. The design evolution has ensured that a truly sustainable scheme is provided that can be delivered and meets with the many challenging and often conflicting requirements for new residential communities.

The detailed evolution and assessment will also act as robust support when considering future reserved matters applications.



- Boundaries**
- Framework Plan Boundary
 - - - - - Pyrland Estate Local Wildlife Site
- Constraints**
- ◀...▶ Interesting Views
 - - - - - Existing Power Lines to be Grounded
- Proposed Development**
- Proposed Development Areas
 - Safeguarded Route
 - Proposed Spine Road
 - ⬮ Existing PROWs
- Existing Landscape Features**
- Existing Tree Belt
 - Existing Pond
- Proposed Landscape Features**
- Proposed Tree Belt
 - Proposed Green Space
 - / / / / / Indicative location for tree planting/ bat mitigation and landscape integration
 - Proposed Pond
 - Green Wedge (extent to be confirmed)

- 1 Kingston Stream
- 2 Mill Lease Stream
- 3 Back Stream
- 4 Rag Hill
- 5 Okehills
- 6 King's Hall School
- 7 Wellsprings Primary School
- 8 Staplegrove House
- 9 Existing Sports Field
- 10 Proposed Sports Field
- 11 Taunton Academy

Concept Plan

