

Local Plan Options Document 2025

Chapter 7 - Somer Valley

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Formatting Note:

The text within this document is based on the 2024 Options Document. New text and sections are added **shaded in blue**

7. Somer Valley: Vision, Strategy and Options

Strategy Overview

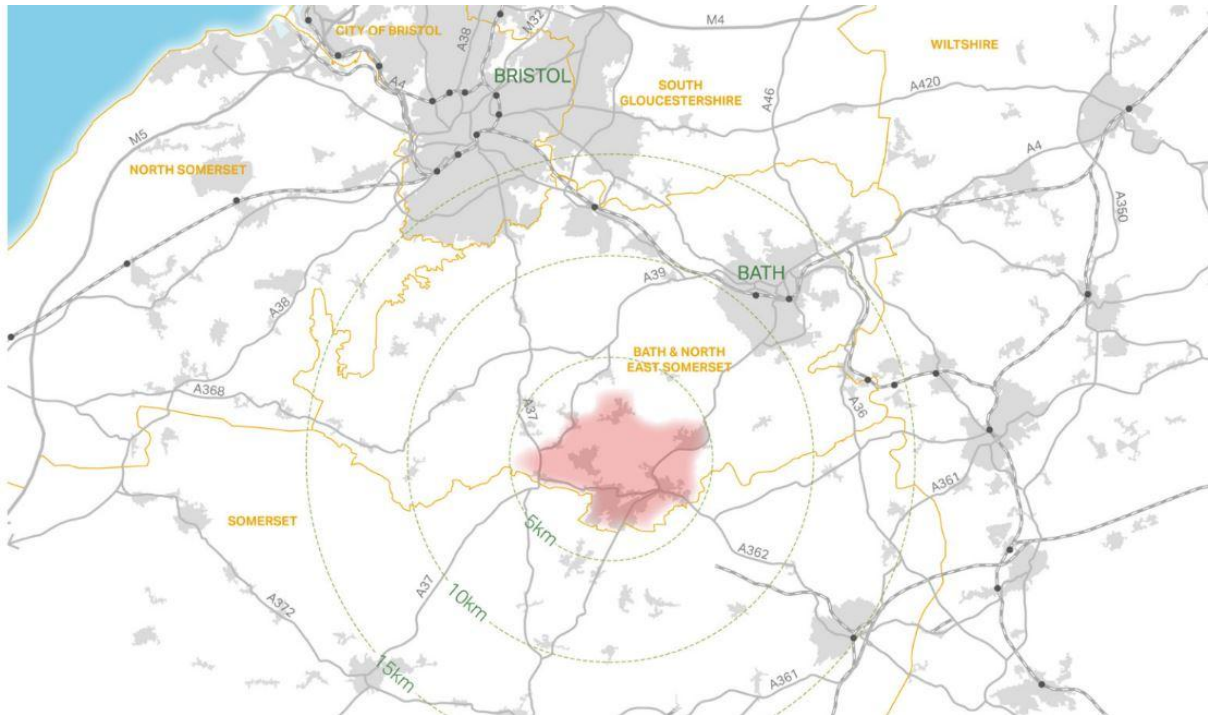


Figure 44: Somer Valley Location

7.1 The section below relates to the Somer Valley area illustrated on the map above and primarily outlines context, key issues, priorities and opportunities. It is followed by sections on specific places within the Somer Valley.

7.2 The Somer Valley area covers a large area including many larger and smaller settlements surrounded by hilly countryside and attractive green spaces. The larger settlements are Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield, Paulton and Peasedown St John and these settlements all have their own character and different amenities.

7.3 The area has a rich industrial and mining history, and this heritage is visible in both the settlements and landscape. Some of the paths to the old mines are still in use and old railway lines and the canal have found a more recreational use. The batches from former mining work characterise the surrounding landscape and can have high ecological value and nature recovery potential.

7.4 There has been significant population growth in the Somer Valley between the 2011 and 2021 censuses with 36,546 people recorded in the 2011 Census, which increased to 52,264 residents in 2021. In terms of household size, the largest percentage of households in the Somer Valley are made up of two people. There is a high level of out commuting and a high level of car use.

7.5 Manufacturing, Construction, and Transport & Storage are the most concentrated sectors for employment in the Somer Valley relative to Bath and North East Somerset as a whole. There have been significant employment losses in manufacturing in the Somer Valley in recent decades.

West of England Growth Strategy

7.6 B&NES Council is working with the Mayor and Combined Authority (WECA) to prepare a Growth Strategy for the West of England. This document sets the overarching context for investment and development to support economic prosperity for our region as a whole. The Strategy envisages growth driven by an interconnected set of regional Growth Zones, where investment will bring new businesses, jobs, homes, culture, nature and opportunity. Central Bristol & Bath, together with the river corridor that connects us, and the Somer Valley are recognised in the Strategy as the two growth zones within B&NES. This will be enabled by ambitious plans to transform our transport network, set out in the regional Transport Vision.

Somer Valley

7.7 The Somer Valley is the West of England's opportunity to showcase rural innovation and sustainable industry. With a rich legacy of mining, engineering and manufacturing, the Somer Valley is now entering a new chapter, evolving from its industrial past into a modern, green productivity zone, where sustainable business, vibrant communities and landscape-led regeneration can go hand in hand.

7.8 There is an emerging cultural and creative economy that can be developed alongside investments in housing and industry. With emerging projects such as Trinity Hub and Old Printworks in Radstock alongside established community festivals such as Midsomer Norton Carnival the cultural offer will be a vital component of creating vibrant communities.

7.9 The area's location, close to important transport routes like the A37 and A362, requires significant investment to make this a better-connected area that enhances its appeal for businesses seeking connectivity to regional and national markets.

7.10 The Somer Valley Enterprise Zone will unlock 1,300 jobs and 35,800 sq m of high-quality commercial space, with capacity for advanced engineering, creative industries, and clean technology businesses. Anchoring the site is the UK's first combined heating and cooling network powered by water from naturally flooded coal mines. Co-investment potential is strong, particularly if the site attracts energy-intensive users such as data centres.

7.11 Complementary investments include a Somer Valley Innovation Centre focused on engineering and net zero solutions, affordable creative workspace to meet unmet demand, and flagship town centre regeneration in Radstock and Midsomer Norton.

Duty to co-operate

7.12 Somerset Council administrative area is located directly to the south of the Somer Valley. Therefore, we are engaging with Somerset Council to discuss strategic cross-boundary matters such as housing provision, transport and other infrastructure.

Transport

7.13 The Somer Valley has a dispersed settlement pattern, an undulating topography and is physically distant to other key settlements such as Bristol and Bath. The Somer Valley has relatively limited dedicated cycle infrastructure to connect towns and villages and no railway provision and therefore, to access rail services residents need to travel to Bath, Bristol or Frome. There is a lack of bus connections between the east and west of the Somer Valley, poor services in more rural areas and lack of connections between villages. The principal roads within the Somer Valley are the A367, A37, A362 and A39. There is typically congestion during peak hours on the A367, A362 and A39. Congestion and the associated impact of traffic is also experienced within the Somer Valley, notably in the centres of Radstock and Midsomer Norton.

7.14 To support sustainable growth in the Somer Valley, improvements to the area's connectivity must precede any new housing or economic development. The council is actively collaborating with the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA) to secure appropriate investment within the region. Enhanced connectivity is fundamental to unlocking the area's full development potential.

Key Issues

- Restructuring of the local economy has resulted in some businesses closing and an increase in out-commuting.
- The Somer Valley area has had significant housing development over the adopted local plan period from 2011. However, that has been delivered on a piecemeal basis with little infrastructure provision resulting from and needed to serve development.
- There is a lack of integrated high quality sustainable and active travel links in the area, and steep topography creates a constraint to active travel. Access to public transport is patchy, and within some areas access is very limited. Bus provision has been reduced in recent years.
- There is a lack of wayfinding which impacts residents and visitors ability to access the countryside.
- A significant amount of housing growth has been permitted in the Somerset Council area connected to the Somer Valley. This will result in additional pressure on services and infrastructure.
- There is an identified need for accessible greenspace of at least 100 ha to serve the Somer Valley. There are a number of opportunities to be taken forward through the Somer Valley Rediscovered project linking Waterside Valley; Haydon Batch, Grove Wood, and Norton Radstock Disused Railway Line, with the Midsomer Norton Town Park and beyond.

Emerging Vision and Priorities

7.15 The council is working on an emerging vision and set of priorities for the area. These priorities reflect and seek to address the issues identified above which have been informed by engagement with community representative groups, including parish and town councils. The priorities outlined below are primarily focussed on those that can be addressed through the local plan. The council's emerging vision is likely to encompass priorities that are outside the remit of the local plan.

7.16 The following list sets out the key priorities for the Somer Valley. Many of the priorities can be addressed by new development, and site or policy approach options have been selected in response to the key issues. However, there are some priorities that won't be addressed through new development but will be addressed through other policies in the local plan, or by strategies or initiatives undertaken by the council, WECA or by other stakeholders.

Affordable Housing

7.17 A significant number of new homes are set to be built in both the Somer Valley and across the wider district, addressing the growing need for affordable housing.

Employment

7.18 Additional employment spaces will be allocated in the Local Plan, to meet the increasing demand for jobs while also helping reduce the need for residents to commute elsewhere for work. This will contribute to balancing the distribution of jobs and homes, ensuring that people can live and work within the same community.

Transport

7.19 Enhancing bus services and developing efficient mass transit options is key to improving overall access to public transport in the region. Better active travel links, such as walking and cycling routes, will encourage more people to live locally.

Town Centre and Local High Streets

7.20 Supporting the regeneration of Radstock and Midsomer Norton High Streets is a vital step in revitalising these local areas. New housing development can increase footfall and overall activity within the town centres.

Green Spaces

7.21 The surrounding landscape is a defining feature of the Somer Valley's unique character and identity. New development should seek to enhance and reflect this natural identity. By creating strong connections to existing green spaces, future growth can integrate more harmoniously with the local environment.

Opportunities

Economic Development

7.22 The Somer Valley is identified as a growth zone in WECA's emerging growth strategy. It is important to improve local employment opportunities, including through the delivery of the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone.

7.23 A key issue within the Somer Valley is the lack of employment space which has led to a high level of out-commuting. The provision of additional employment space is key to the ongoing development of the Somer Valley.

7.24 Current evidence suggests around 7.8ha of additional economic land is required in the Somer Valley comprising of ;

- Office: 7,000 sq. metres
- Industrial: 14,000-17,000 sq. metres
- Warehouse: 15,000-16,000 sq. metres

7.25 The previous options consultation has considered the expansion of Bath Business Park in Peasedown. Additional options for employment development are included in this options document.

Retail

7.26 Work is currently underway on the Midsomer Norton town centre masterplan which looks to increase the employment levels within the town centre, such as through the provision of light industrial premises. The current town centre policies in the adopted Local Plan can help to facilitate this in the short term.

7.27 The proposed site options for additional housing outlined in this chapter have the potential to generate a significant level of capacity or need for additional retail floorspace and in particular for convenience goods (primarily food) equivalent to one large supermarket or two medium sized food stores. In preparing the Draft Local Plan and determining the housing site options to be progressed we will also consider and identify the most appropriate form and location of additional retail provision.

Transport Opportunities

7.28 Some of the key issues in the Somer Valley relate to transport and highways. A number of transport opportunities and potential interventions have been identified for the Somer Valley. These interventions will need more detailed consideration whilst preparing the Draft Local Plan, including mechanisms for funding them.

7.29 The area can be improved in terms of active travel. Currently there is a high level of out commuting and limited active travel links. Dedicated cycle links can be improved and a network of Quiet Lanes identified. The extension of e-bike and scooter rental could be provided within the Somer Valley. The introduction of car clubs in the area could also offer an alternative to private car ownership. Mobility hubs should be strategically located to support an improved public transport offer. Development should be located in areas with access to shops and services.

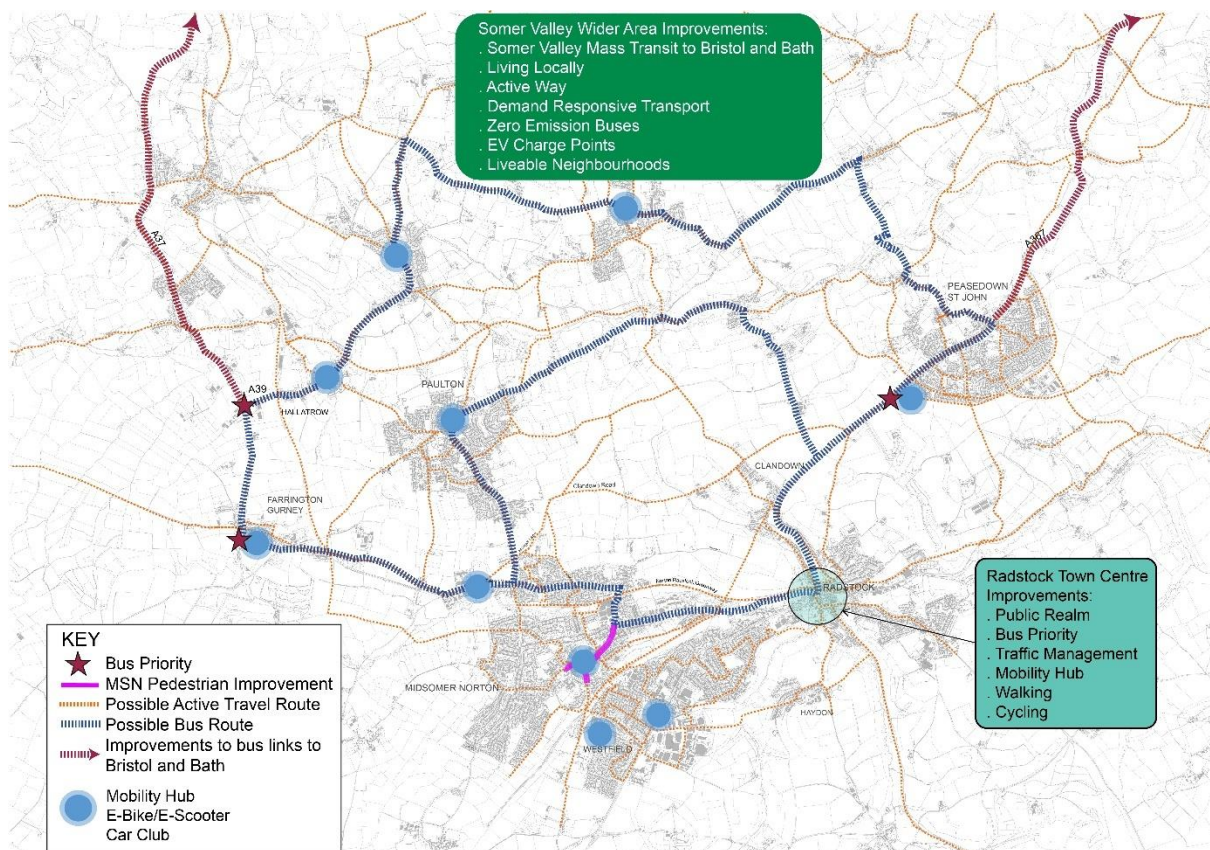


Figure 45: Somer Valley wider area transport improvement plan

Green Infrastructure Opportunities

7.30 Green infrastructure (GI) is a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, and communities. To enhance and extend the network, GI should be central to the design of new developments, and development proposals should demonstrate strong links to the wider green infrastructure network.

7.31 Some of the site options set out in this chapter include reference to 'Strategic Green Infrastructure Opportunities', which are located outside of the area shown for potential development. Identifying where these are is work in progress, but the aim is to indicate where the council consider that GI could be provided or improved to meet B&NES GI standards, and where they also offer nature based solutions to address issues such as flooding and nature recovery. New and enhanced green infrastructure will either be funded by development in the area, or through other mechanisms to be explored as we prepare the Draft Local Plan.

Ecology

7.32 The West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Toolkit (LNRS) was published in November 2024. The LNRS identifies the following areas:

- Areas that are already of importance to biodiversity. These are sites that are nationally designated for their value to nature, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). It also includes sites that are designated as Local Nature Reserves; sites that are locally designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), and/or are irreplaceable habitat including ancient woodland.
- Focus Areas for Nature Recovery. This is where action to recover nature will have the biggest impact and is most feasible. These have been mapped to reflect the priorities for nature recovery, and include all of the mapped measures for nature recovery. The focus areas for nature recovery are referred to as 'areas that could become of particular importance' in regulation.

7.33 The diagram below shows where these areas are located in the Somer Valley and the relationship between these areas and the Site Options under consideration in this Options consultation. Constraints and opportunities are referenced for each Site Option where appropriate.

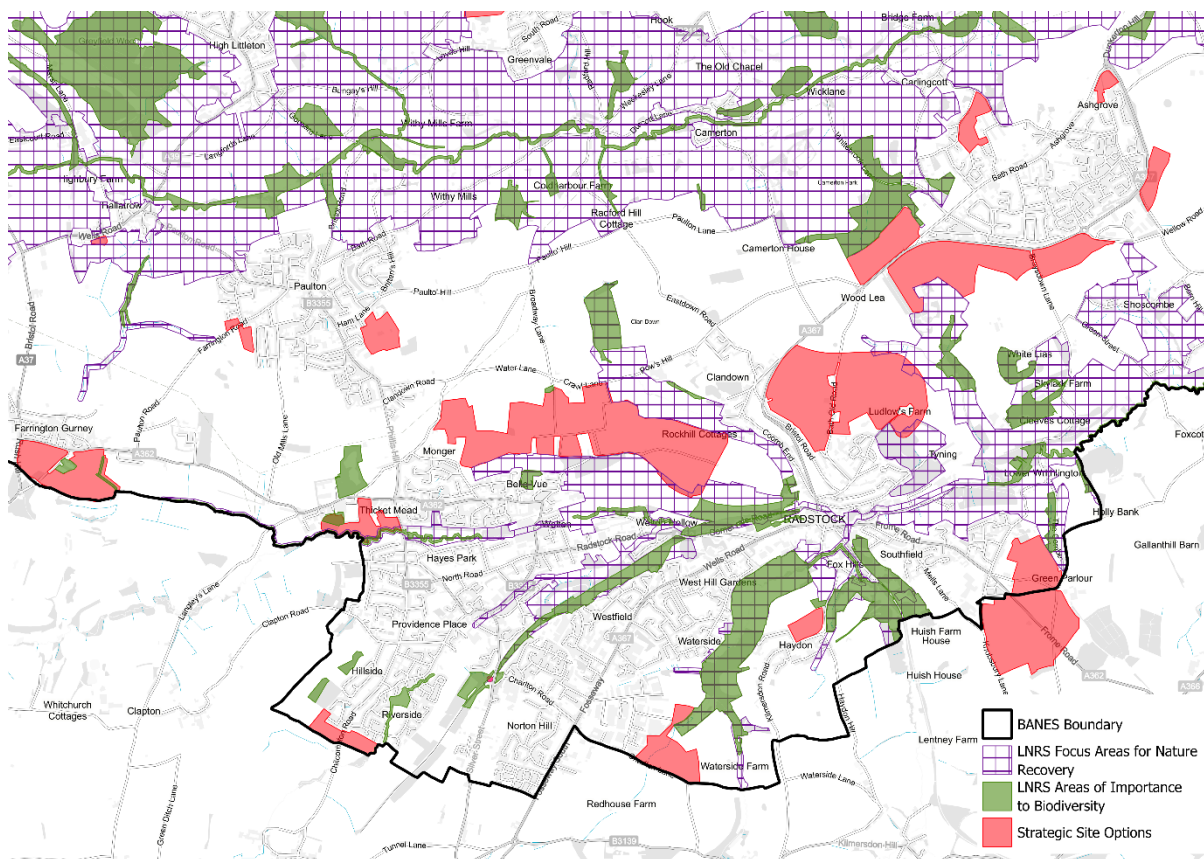


Figure 46: Somer Valley Local Nature Recovery Sites

Options Consultation 2024

7.34 Comments on the previous Options Consultation in Spring 2024 are still relevant. These comments will be reviewed and taken into account, together with additional comments received, when the draft plan is being prepared. Below is a short summary of some of the main issues raised in the previous consultation.

- There is a high level of car dependency in the local area and limited access to public transport. Additional housing would exacerbate this issue and impact the existing road network.
- Concern is raised over the impact of a larger population on existing services such as doctors surgeries and schools
- There is limited access to local employment.
- The proposed locations for housing are not sustainably located.
- Improvements to active travel are needed.

Strategy

- 7.35 The strategy for the Somer Valley focusses on boosting the economic role of the area and providing additional housing to help address local needs (including for affordable housing), with this development unlocked by substantial investment in improving sustainable transport connectivity to and from and within the Somer Valley. Economic growth will reflect and build on the area's strengths and also shift towards green/renewable energy and creative sectors. The strategy for employment space focusses on the Peasedown area (linking to economic needs associated with Bath), as well as Midsomer Norton and Westfield serving the needs of the more local economy and businesses. Economic growth and additional housing needs to respect and help deliver key GI improvements recognising the opportunity to deliver additional GI through the Somer Valley Rediscovered project.
- 7.36 The map below indicates all potential sites for development within the Somer Valley. This includes strategic options at Peasedown St John, Radstock, Midsomer Norton and Farrington Gurney. These strategic sites will need new infrastructure such as schools and local centres in order to be developed. To unlock large scale growth in the Somer Valley investment in public transport infrastructure is required.
- 7.37 The proposal also includes a number of small site options which would be largely housing sites that do not require additional site specific infrastructure to be developed.
- 7.38 The SVEZ has been allocated in previous local plans and is covered by a Local Development Order. The Options Document proposes additional economic floorspace at Peasedown and Westfield to help meet additional requirements for further economic floorspace.
- 7.39 Currently only Westfield has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan. However, neighbourhood plans are currently being prepared in Radstock and Farrington Gurney.

Site Options

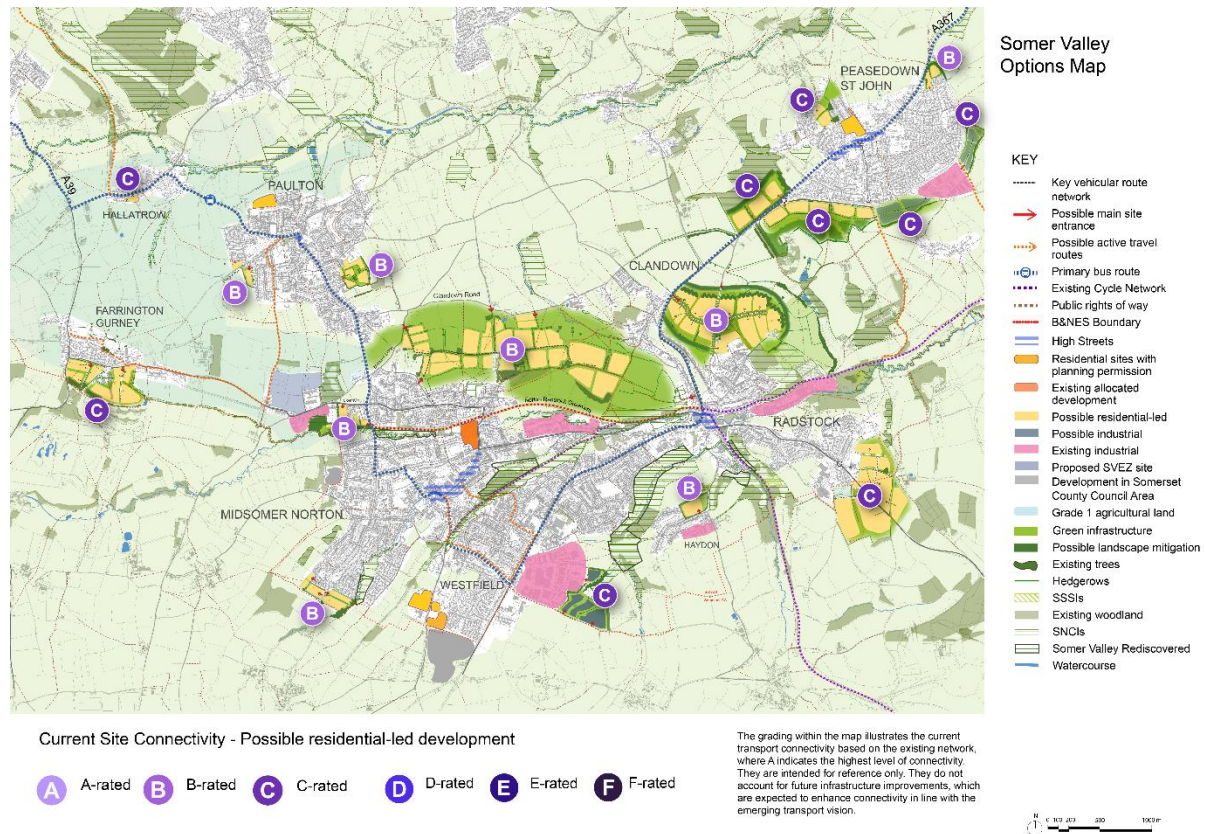


Figure 47: Somer Valley site options map

7.40 A variety of site options for development are set out for each place below, which have been prepared in response to the key issues, priorities and opportunities. Explanation as to how each of the site options responds to the key issues, priorities and objectives is outlined within the opportunities and constraints tables for each site option. Where mitigation or additional evidence work is required to achieve priorities and objectives, this is referenced within the table, as well as any conflicts with priorities and objectives.

7.41 The land parcels which make up the site options below have been assessed in more detail in various supporting documents, including the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Somer Valley Area of Search Assessment, and the Strategic Planning Options Document (SPO).

7.42 Within these documents, a number of additional sites have also been assessed, and discounted, for various reasons. These sites are not included in the site options below, for the reasons set out in the evidence base.

7.43 Following consultation on these site options, a detailed assessment of the transport impact of each site will be undertaken, to inform selection of sites to be included in the Draft Plan. The cumulative impact of all sites included in the Draft Plan will also be assessed. Any site allocations in the Draft Plan will define site specific interventions required.

7.44 As highlighted above, some areas within the Somer Valley have limited access to public transport and limited employment opportunities, as a result there is a high level of out commuting by private vehicles. To deliver the options below would require a significant improvement in the area's connectivity through the provision of frequent and widespread public transport. Alongside this, investment in its economy is required to provide local jobs and reduce out commuting. The council is in ongoing discussions with WECA with regards to economic development and public transport provision in the Somer Valley.

7.45 The Department for Transport has developed a Connectivity Tool that integrates transport and land use data to produce a national measure of connectivity for any location in England and Wales. This tool allows users to filter connectivity scores by local authority, assigning each location a grade from A to J, where A indicates the highest level of connectivity within its local authority area.

7.46 Each site option has been evaluated with the Connectivity Tool, and an average grade reflecting its connectivity relative to the Bath and North East Somerset area has been assigned. It's important to note that this assessment is based on the current transport network and existing land uses such as schools and shops, and does not take into account planned or future developments.

Peasedown

Place Profile

- 7.47 Peasedown St John is located to the south west of Bath. The village sits on top of a plateau above the Cam Brook and Wellow Brook Valleys. Both brooks, whilst designated as SNCIs, have potential for nature recovery and habitat enhancement. The village has a population of approximately 6,500.
- 7.48 The small hamlet of Carlingcott existed before the large 19th century expansion when the Somerset coalfield was expanded as the Industrial Revolution increased demand for coal. By the second half of the 20th century there were at least six collieries within 3km of Peasedown St John. Evidence of the area's mining heritage can be seen within the landscape, most notably Braysdown Colliery batch which sits to the south of the village.
- 7.49 The south east side of the village was greatly extended in the 1990s which included the provision of a bypass on the A367. The southern boundary of the village is now formed by the Peasedown by-pass. Bath Business Park is located to the south east and is now nearing full occupation.
- 7.50 The village is served by a number of existing amenities such as a primary school, local shops and sports facilities. There are bus connections along the A367 to both Bath and Radstock.



Map 18: Peasedown St John site map

Key Issues and Opportunities

- The bypass is a hard boundary to the settlement and residential development on the southern side of the bypass could result in severance issues if not carefully designed.
- There is an increased requirement and opportunities for employment in the area in order that local residents can access good jobs.
- The village sits on a busy commuter route between Radstock and Bath

Priorities and Objectives

7.51 The following list sets out the key priorities and objectives for Peasedown.

- Expansion of the Bath Business Park would allow for job growth providing local employment opportunities within the Somer Valley, whilst not impacting on the delivery of employment space at the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone.
- New housing development in Peasedown St John should be well connected for pedestrians to the existing village centre to allow for pavement access.

Site Options

South Peasedown

7.52 The area to the south west of Peasedown St John comprises three fields aligned along the northern side of the A367. While this parcel projects beyond the current boundary of the settlement, it is well connected to the existing urban area and there are clear opportunities to create better connections, particularly in terms of active travel. The land is nestled adjacent to an ancient woodland as well as having a well treed road frontage with hedgerows that reduce intervisibility with other parts of the wider landscape. All of these features and especially the ancient woodland are vulnerable to damage or loss from new development.

7.53 The area has the potential to be developed for residential uses providing an estimated 250 – 300 homes, together with landscape and habitat enhancement/creation. There is also scope for the creation of new public transport and active travel connections back into the village and towards key destinations such as the village centre, the church and primary school.

7.54 The area south of Peasedown St John bypass is open arable fields which were historically part of a local estate and includes parkland trees. There are several Public Rights of Way leading out into the countryside, originating in the village centre of Peasedown St John and extending out through the area to the south of the A367, which forms a hard, southern edge to the village. The existing buildings on the southern side of the village turn their backs to the A367. The parcels on the southern side of the A367 are on a skyline which slopes gently towards the south and is clearly visible in medium- and long-distance views across the valley.

7.55 In the previous Options Document the land to the south of the bypass was proposed as an option that could be developed for renewable energy. In light of the local plan reset and substantially increased housing requirement the site has been reviewed and identified as a potential option for housing. It would have capacity for an estimated 550-700 homes. Given the high

landscape value of the site any development would need to include extensive green infrastructure to integrate into the surrounding landscape. Public rights of way would need to be protected and walking recreational routes provided.

7.56 The site is also severed from the village by the existing bypass. To facilitate development the nature of the bypass would need to be substantially altered for example through the provision of crossing points, slower traffic speeds and for development to address the street scene. Pedestrian access to the village centre is required. There may be potential for additional retail provision.

7.57 Previous engagement as part of the Somer Valley Links project had proposed a roundabout on the south junction of the A367 and Bath Road to improve access to the village. The provision of the roundabout may be required to facilitate development at the proposed location.

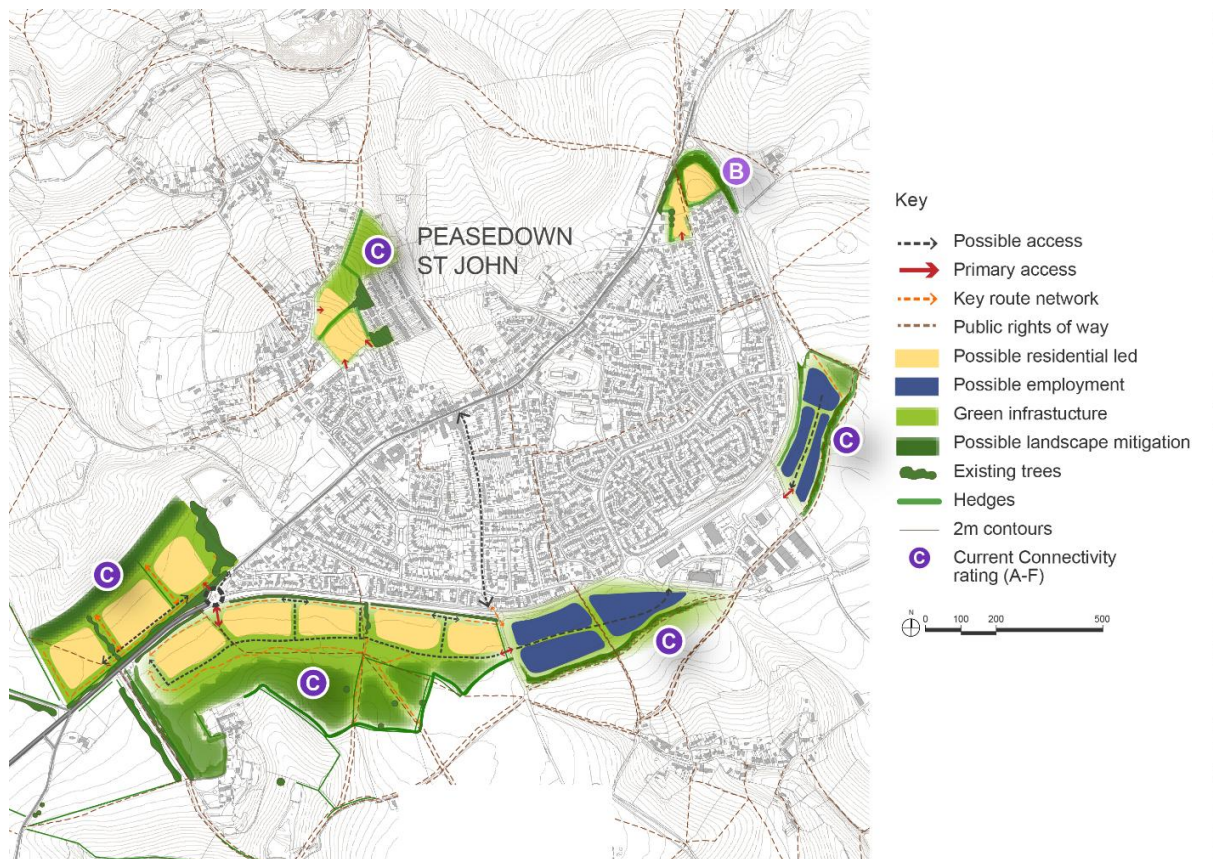


Figure 48: Peasedown St John site options



Figure 49: South Peasedown Options

Bath Business Park

7.58 Adjacent to the hospital and existing employment site (and, therefore, taking advantage of the existing junction) there is an opportunity for suitably scaled industrial/commercial development.

7.59 The current development is highly visible within the landscape and therefore any development here would need substantial mitigation to screen the buildings from the surrounding landscape.

7.60 In addition to the previous consultation, land to the north east of the business park has also been identified as a potential extension.

7.61 These sites are located within the Green Belt and therefore, exceptional circumstances to justify release of the land from the Green Belt would need to be demonstrated in order that it can be allocated for

employment development. This process will be informed by updated Green Belt assessment.

7.62 Expansion of the Business Park has the potential to provide the maximum floorspace for the following uses should only one use class come forward. A mix of uses would result in a lesser amount of floorspace of each use type.

- Industrial – 19,840 square metres
- Office – 39,680 square metres
- Warehouse – 24,800 square metres

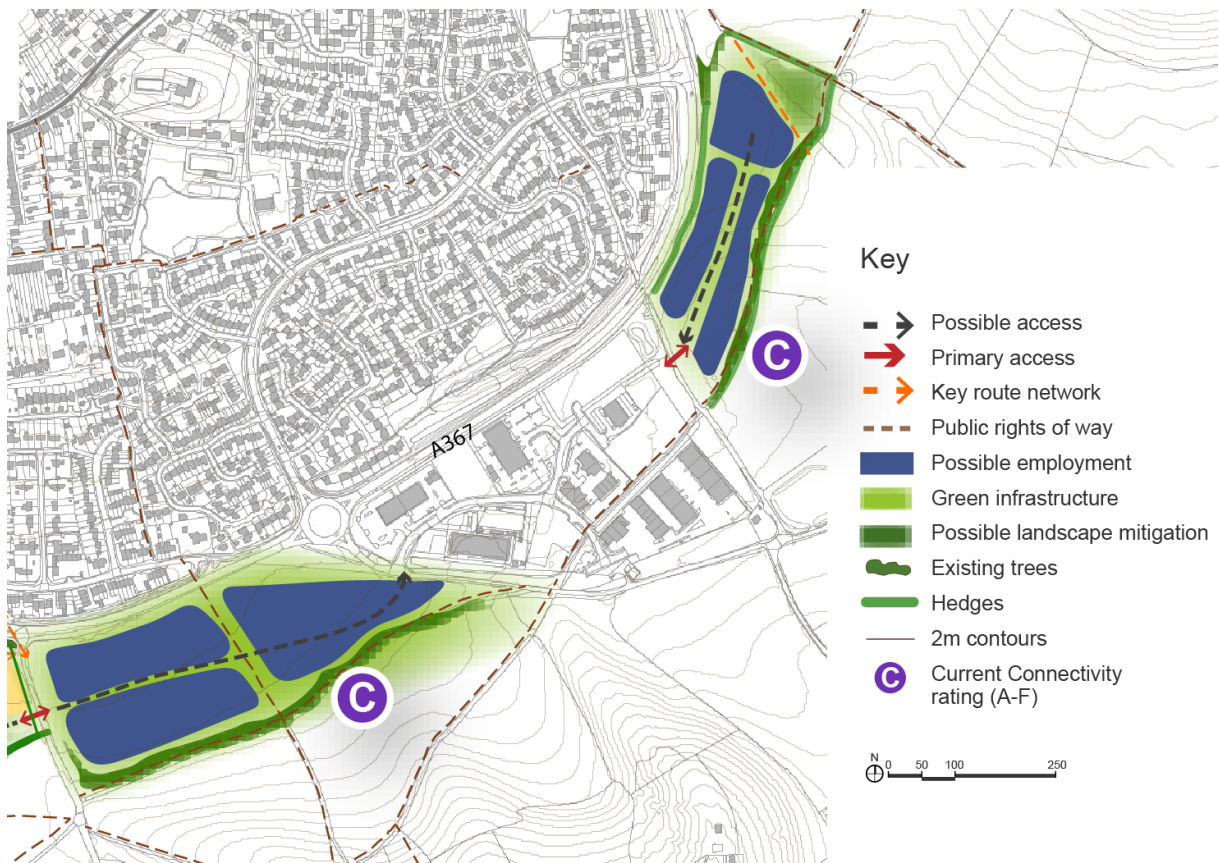


Figure 50: Bath Business Park Options

Peasedown St John	Description
Opportunities	Addition of approximately 800 to 1,000 homes (250 to 300 to the north and 550 to 700 to the south), of which an element would be affordable housing Expansion of Bath Business Park Highway improvements to existing junctions. Quiet Lanes proposed by the Somer Valley Links project.
Constraints	Landscape character, Conservation Area, highways, Ancient Woodland, green space provision Secondary school pupils may need to be transported to Writhlington School in Radstock at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach the school using active modes of travel. 17th century landscape of Woodborough Court and Medieval fishpond. A367 is a barrier to the village. Close to an SNCI
Mitigation required	Landscape buffers Protection of nearby SNCI Highway improvements Biodiversity net gain, planting, provision of on site green space and access to local food growing. Alterations to the A367 Addition of a new roundabout Pavement access to the village centre

Further evidence required	Archaeological assessment Heritage assessment Confirmation of highways improvements Landscape Visual Impact Assessment. Transport Assessment
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Smaller non-strategic sites

7.63 Alongside the strategic development options above some additional smaller sites have been identified within Peasedown as potential opportunities for additional housing.

7.64 Lower Peasedown - the site sits to the north of Peasedown above Hillside View. The site is relatively flat and the steep slope within the site is not proposed for development. The site can be accessed from Church Road.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
PEA 05a, 05b and 06	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of around 100 to 150 homes Affordable housing Improve pavement access to the village centre	Impact on the existing landscape. Setting of Grade II church



Figure 51: Lower Peasedown Options

7.65 North Peasedown - these parcels of land sit on the northern tip of Peasedown Village. The site is largely screened from the surrounding area by vegetation and is accessed from Eckweek Lane. This site is located within the Green Belt and therefore any allocation for residential development would require exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated justifying removal of the land from the Green Belt. This will be informed by an updated Green Belt assessment.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
PEA 08 and PEA 09	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 30 to 40 homes. Affordable housing	Impact on the existing landscape. Green Belt Possible bronze age barrow-archaeological assessment required.



Figure 52: North Peasedown Options

Radstock

Place Profile

7.66 Radstock lies within the sunken valley of the Wellow Brook and is surrounded by hillsides, once used by operating collieries. Radstock

Conservation Area is extensive, stretching from Lower Writhlington to incorporate elements of Westfield, primarily designated due to the town's well preserved mining heritage. The Somerset Coal Canal first opened to support the coal industry but was superseded by the tramway in 1814. It was the role Radstock played as a railway logistics hub to the Somerset Coalfield which spurred expansion. By 1874, the town had two stations on separate lines, the first was the Great Western Railway (from Bristol to Frome via Radstock) and the second was the Somerset and Dorset Railway (from Bath to Poole via Radstock). This had implications for Radstock's morphology, which saw pockets of expansion focused on hillsides close to collieries and away from the heritage core. The town incorporates smaller settlements such as Clandown, Haydon and Writhlington which historically were separate villages.

7.67 The residential areas in the town are served by the town centre which provides a range of retail and other facilities and is proposed to be improved through the Radstock Town Centre Regeneration Action Plan. Other commercial areas are located to the east of the town centre in lowland areas beside Wellow Brook, and the town's sewerage facility is located further east. Coombe End which runs parallel to the A367 in the west is an area which lacks formal structure comprising small commercial enterprises and residential housing, a former industrial rail line once passed nearby. The Radstock and Somerset Coalfield Museum is located centrally, and Radstock Town Football Club and Dragonfly Leisure are located towards the southern extent of the town, south of Frome Road. Recently, investment in cultural infrastructure has begun in the town centre including the Trinity Hub project and the Old Print Works. Surrounding Radstock Town Football Club there is a playing field, and there are further small scale play areas in other areas of the town and allotments north of Springfield Crescent and south of Manor Road. Radstock has two primary schools and one secondary school.

7.68 Radstock is served by bus services including on the A367 towards Peasedown St John and Bath. But to the south of Radstock in areas such as Haydon and Writhlington public transport options are more limited.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- The pedestrian and cycle movement within Radstock town centre is severed due to the convergence of the A362 and A367 which cuts through the centre negatively impacting the quality of the public realm within the town centre.
- Access to the Wellow Brook is limited within Radstock town centre.
- Radstock town centre is well serviced by public transport to and from Bristol, Bath and Wells, however there are limited opportunities to access other destinations by public transport.
- Radstock town centre has limited footfall due to the lack of diversity in retail offers, as well as a lack of cultural amenity, night-time economy businesses and an attractive food and beverage offer.
- There is a strong network of public rights of way. Local residents would like to see access to the countryside improved.
- Public transport has been reduced in the Somer Valley with some areas having very limited access to bus services.
- The Conservation Area covers a large proportion of the town and the boundaries are being reviewed to possibly extend them.
- The town is surrounded by green hillsides which are integral to its landscape character. The town's mining heritage has shaped its landscape character.
- There are limited employment opportunities

Priorities and objectives

7.69 The following list sets out the key priorities and objectives for Radstock. Many of the priorities can be addressed by new development, and site options have been selected in response to the key issues, priorities and objectives. However, there are some priorities that won't be addressed through new development but will be addressed through other policies in the local plan or initiatives undertaken by the council or by other stakeholders

- Provide homes to meet the needs of the local area, including provision of homes that are affordable.
- New development should work with the Radstock Town Centre Regeneration Action Plan and help to increase footfall to the town centre.

- New development should complement relevant elements of the Somer Valley Rediscovered Project to provide greater opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with and enable nature recovery.
- New development should enable a greater choice of transport via sustainable and active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport). New development should link into the existing public transport network allowing for buses to become more viable.
- Ensure built and natural environments promote health and wellbeing for all.
- Improving the town centre public realm, cultural assets, heritage assets, facilities and infrastructure will help attract visitors and investment

North Radstock

Context

7.70 Land immediately to the north of Radstock currently consists of agricultural fields, mostly on the plateau above the town. Bath Old Road, a historic route, runs through the area of search and has a few homes dotted along it. Trinity Church School (primary) sits at the southern edge with access to Woodborough Lane. The area is close to Radstock town centre in the south and is bordered by countryside to the north and east. The A367 runs along the western edge of the area of search with the small settlement of Clandown immediately beyond.

7.71 Landscape character is an important attribute in this area given that it sits above the rest of the town and forms part of the green setting of Radstock and the Conservation Area. The landscape and visual impacts of any new development would therefore need to be minimised and mitigated by integrating new development within a robust landscape planting framework and ensuring it blends in with the existing hillside that continue to provide a green setting for Radstock.

7.72 A single Scheduled Ancient Monument lies to the north-west of the area, comprising Camerton Romano-British town and associated prehistoric and early medieval monuments. As a consequence of the close proximity to

the Scheduled Monument there is some potential for previously unrecorded remains to be present within the area of search, although the part of the area closest to the Scheduled Ancient Monument was subject to landfill and any former archaeological remains would have been removed. There is no record of any remains having been reported during those works.

7.73 Bath Old Road appears to be used as a 'cut through' and speed is only limited in the built up areas to the south. There is currently no pavement access to and through parts of the area. Existing walking, cycling and wheeling connections into the town centre and to Trinity Church School are poor. Any new development would require and could deliver significant improvements to these connections.

7.74 Works to Bath Old Road to provide a Quiet Lane could help to facilitate active travel. The speed limit would need to be reduced and a new pavement provided giving better pedestrian access into the town centre. New vehicular access onto the A367 would be needed so that any development is not accessed solely from Bath Old Road and to ensure there is direct access to nearby bus stops.



Figure 53: Map of North Radstock

Site Option

7.75 The site option presented below could provide up to 1,250 to 1,550 new homes in total, as well as supporting facilities and green infrastructure. The site options have the potential to create a new neighbourhood with a connection to the A367 and direct access to Radstock town centre via the Bath Old Road. It is a residential and landscape led development with green screening to the north and south and a tree-lined street running through the middle of the development creating a sense of place when arriving at the new neighbourhood and contributing to the landscape setting.

7.76 Development can also incorporate small scale economic uses that are compatible with a residential area.

7.77 Other green links to the countryside will run north-south through the development to create biodiversity links, support habitat improvement, provide views to the countryside and improve the connectivity within the neighbourhood.

7.78 The proximity of the development to Radstock town centre will benefit the regeneration strategy for the town centre and should help to increase footfall. Creating a critical mass of residents with easy access to current and new facilities would help the town centre to thrive. The town centre's regeneration will benefit from future public realm improvements focussing on pedestrian safety and accessibility.

7.79 The development will extend to the west and east of the Bath Old Road, with a direct link to Radstock town centre along both the existing Public Rights of Way and routes through the new development. Development is stepped away from the Bath Old Road to preserve its characteristic far-reaching views towards Radstock to the south and open countryside to the north.

7.80 Vehicle access to the development areas can be provided to connect onto the A367. Bath Old Road could become emergency access only, and will be a key active travel link between the development and Radstock Town Centre, and north to Peasedown St John.

7.81 A greater quantum of development would allow for additional facilities such as a local centre. Wide tree belts around the development area along with a strong boulevard of trees through the centre, should be strategically placed to provide screening to mitigate the visual impacts of this prominent development from long views to the north, east, and south-west. There is a strategic green infrastructure opportunity on the slopes to the east of the site and work is underway to assess the opportunities for strategic green infrastructure, nature recovery and climate resilience.

7.82 Whilst the A367 is not currently an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), it is the main road into Radstock and therefore care must be taken if a larger quantum of development is provided to ensure that this does not result in harm to air quality.

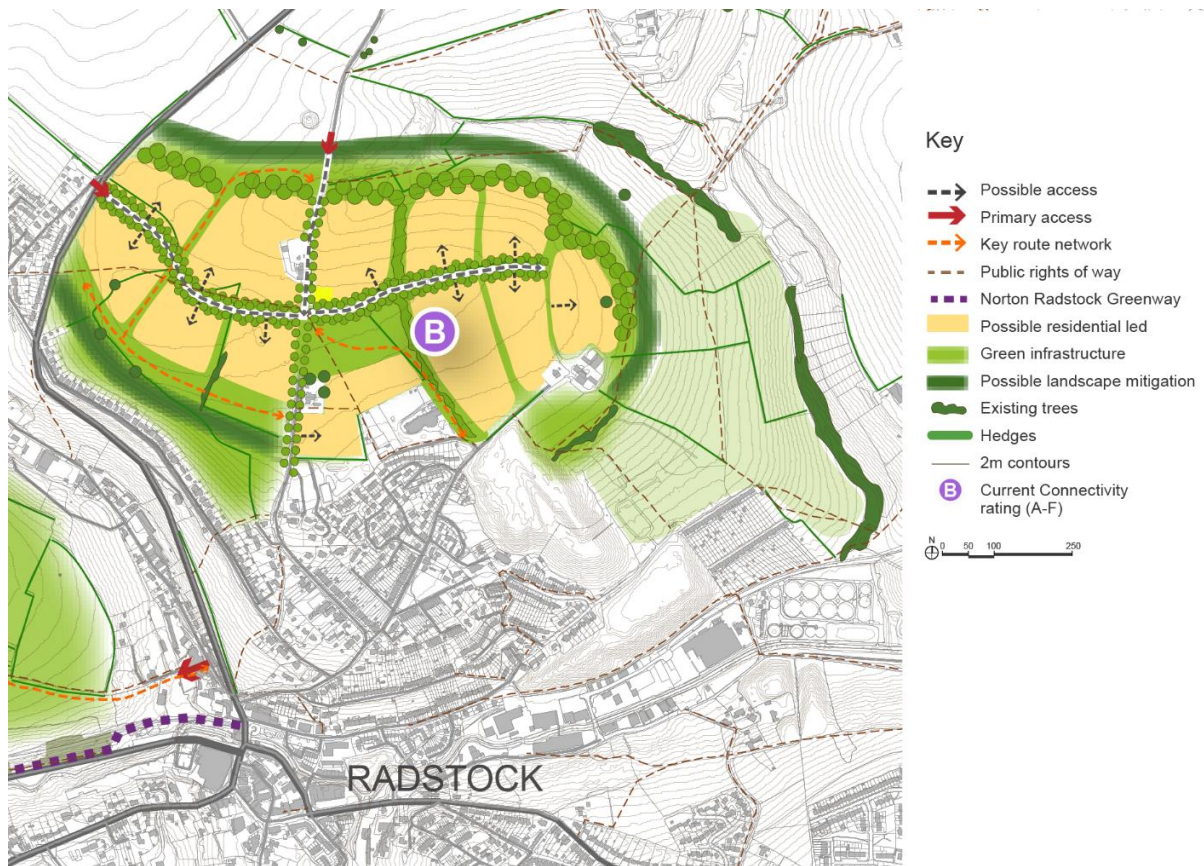


Figure 54: North Radstock Options

North Radstock	Description
Opportunities	Approximately 1,250 to 1,550 homes, of which an element would be affordable housing. The speed of traffic on Bath Old Road could be reduced and new pavement provided. There is potential for a Quiet Lane. A larger quantum of development can provide new community facilities. Improved access to Trinity Church School. Improved access to the countryside and surrounding public rights of way. Strategic green infrastructure opportunities. Green space provision and Allotments New local centre Connections to the bus route along the A367 Small scale economic uses compatible with residential uses
Constraints	Hillside location with landscape value and close to the Conservation Area. Bath Old Road is used as a cut through and does not have pavement access. Nearby is Camerton Romano settlement which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Safeguarded existing sport and recreational facilities (Roundhill Recreational Ground) Proximity to the Conservation Area Air quality Cumulative impact on school places in particular secondary school Development between Radstock and Peasedown will impact on the heritage assets Trinity School may need to expand and be funded through developer contributions

Mitigation required	Landscaping and green infrastructure. Additional access to Trinity Church School. Provision of on-site green space (including provision for local food growing) Consideration of site layouts to avoid canyoning and avoid harm to air quality.
Further evidence required	Archaeological assessment. Detailed Landscape Assessment Heritage Assessment Detailed assessment of primary school capacity

Writhlington

Context

- 7.83 The area sits within the existing landscape comprising agricultural fields, enclosed by the valley to the northeast, which forms part of the Wellow Brook valley to the north. To the south of the valley, the landform rises to form a shallow plateau, centred along Green Parlour Road.
- 7.84 The A362 runs through the area providing vehicular access to both the northern and southern parts of the locality.
- 7.85 Writhlington has one secondary school and one primary school.
- 7.86 New development would generate the need for new and improved links to the town centre and to the surrounding countryside. The existing five-way junction at Frome Road, Old Road and Manor Road is heavily congested. In particular, there are schools and associated traffic either side of the junction. Development would require and could help facilitate improvements to the existing junction, which would provide better access to and within the area also better supporting a local centre. In order to enable development and in addition to improving the existing five-way junction, a new junction would need to be created to relieve pressure on the existing five-way junction. Manor Road is currently used as a 'cut through' to access Peasedown St John. Braysdown Lane which connects to Manor Road is proposed to be designated as a Quiet Lane which may help reduce use of Manor Road by cars.
- 7.87 There are limited public transport connections into the town centre therefore, currently people without a car struggle to access services. The potential to improve public transport connections associated with any development would also need to be explored.
- 7.88 The area is surrounded by gently rolling, open countryside, easily accessible by existing lanes and new and improved connections. Nearby

ancient woodlands would be a natural edge to the development and these areas of planting could be expanded by the creation of a buffer zone, which would provide protection for the ancient woodland and improve biodiversity.

7.89 The area is located at the edge of a rolling and indented plateau with the steep sided valley of the Wellow Brook immediately to the north. It occupies an elevated position on the skyline. It is therefore important that any development retains a green landscape setting of the wider Writhlington area. The existing network of hedgerows, along field boundaries and roads, would also need to be strengthened and new open spaces created to form a landscape setting for any new development. New landscape planting would be needed to soften the visual impact of development. There are also walking connections of paths and lanes into the countryside and scope for more and improved connections.

7.90 Given the topography of the site close attention would need to be paid to the drainage of the site to ensure that development does not cause surface water flooding.

7.91 Any future development would need to be on land within both B&NES and Somerset Council administrative areas in order to provide a quantum of development necessary to facilitate provision of shops, services and improvements to the road network. This requires ongoing dialogue between the two councils regarding the potential for future development. If development were to be progressed the two councils would also then need to co-operate on their respective local plans and work together on preparing a placemaking strategy to facilitate creation of a high quality, sustainable and healthy development well connected to the rest of Radstock and the surrounding area.

7.92 In addition, the councils would need to liaise on identifying infrastructure requirements and funding arrangements including developer contributions. This will need to be carefully assessed from a school admission

perspective as Somerset residents may look at school provision within B&NES.

7.93 The area has the potential to support a reasonably large scale residential-led development, which would also deliver open space, social infrastructure, nature recovery and improved local facilities over the Plan period. Development of this scale and in this location would also support regeneration efforts in the local town centres.



Figure 55: Map of Writhlington

Site Options

- 7.94 Development in this location could provide up to 950 to 1,150 homes. If the site is to be developed then the quantum of the development must be viable to allow for and help deliver junction improvements along the A362.
- 7.95 Development can also incorporate small scale economic uses that are compatible with a residential area.
- 7.96 The new development would be located partially on the shallow plateau, with existing hedgerows strengthened and new planting established along key access roads and the new footpath and cycleway network, to help integrate the development into the landscape and in views from the east.
- 7.97 The nearest frequent bus services are located in Radstock town centre, although there may be potential to extend services if critical mass can be achieved. **WECA are currently trialing a new 768 service between Writhlington, local villages and Bath.**
- 7.98 Vehicle access would be provided from routes which provide connections to the A362. To the north, the A362 connects to Radstock town centre and surrounding residential areas. Access points for active modes can also be provided to both of these routes. Providing a vehicular access onto the A362 offers the potential to reduce the number of traffic movements at the nearby five-ways junction, which could reduce safety and congestion issues.
- 7.99 A larger development might provide the opportunity to deliver better supporting facilities. Providing supporting facilities offers the potential to improve access to amenities for the local population, reducing distances that people need to travel.
- 7.100 If development is extended to the south there could be the option to provide new recreation facilities. There would be a further road connection onto Knobsbury Lane.**

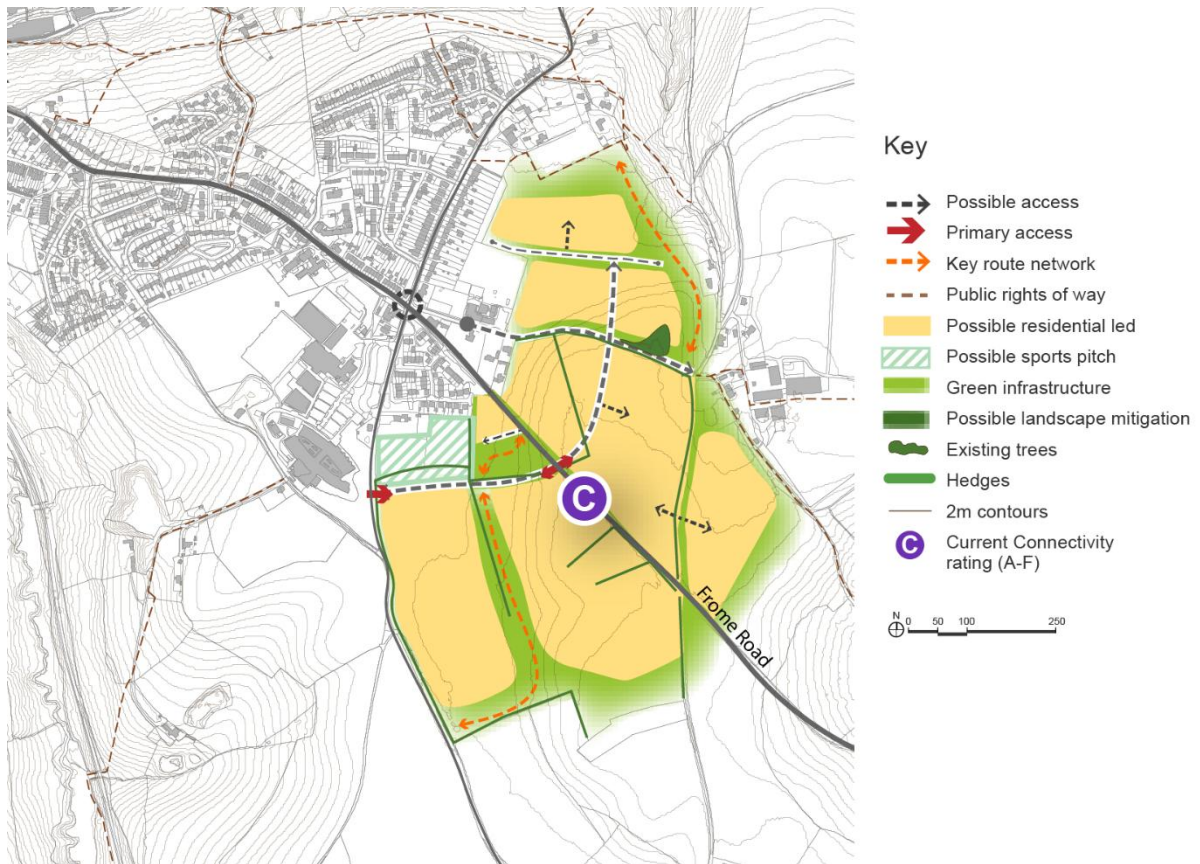


Figure 56: Map of Writhlington Options

Writhlington	Description
Opportunities	Provide up to 950 to 1,150 homes, encompassing an element of affordable housing. New community and recreation facilities. Improvements to existing road junctions. Improve access to the countryside Small scale economic uses compatible with residential use
Constraints	The landscape setting of the existing site. Existing traffic congestion. Cumulative impact on school places, particularly secondary school Knobsbury Lane is an important skyline view and would require significant landscape buffering Ancient woodland Proximity to the Conservation Area Limited access to public transport Close to an SNCI St Marys primary school may need to expand and be funded through developer contributions
Mitigation required	Highways improvements including facilities for buses Landscaping Community facilities Site drainage Protection of nearby SNCI Local Green Space

Further evidence required	Landscape plan Ecological assessment, Transport assessment
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Smaller (non-strategic) Sites

7.101 In addition to the strategic locations the following non-strategic sites has been identified.

Haydon

7.102 The site is located to the north east of Haydon village, sitting on a plateau above Radstock Town Centre. To the north of the site is a Regionally Important Geological Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
RAD 31C	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 110 to 140 homes. Affordable housing Infill development following the contours of the existing settlement. Opportunity for nature recovery. Existing infrastructure can be used.	No public transport. Environmentally sensitive location close to SSSI and SNCI. Proximity to the Conservation Area Potential changes to the Conservation Area boundary Setting of nearby listed buildings

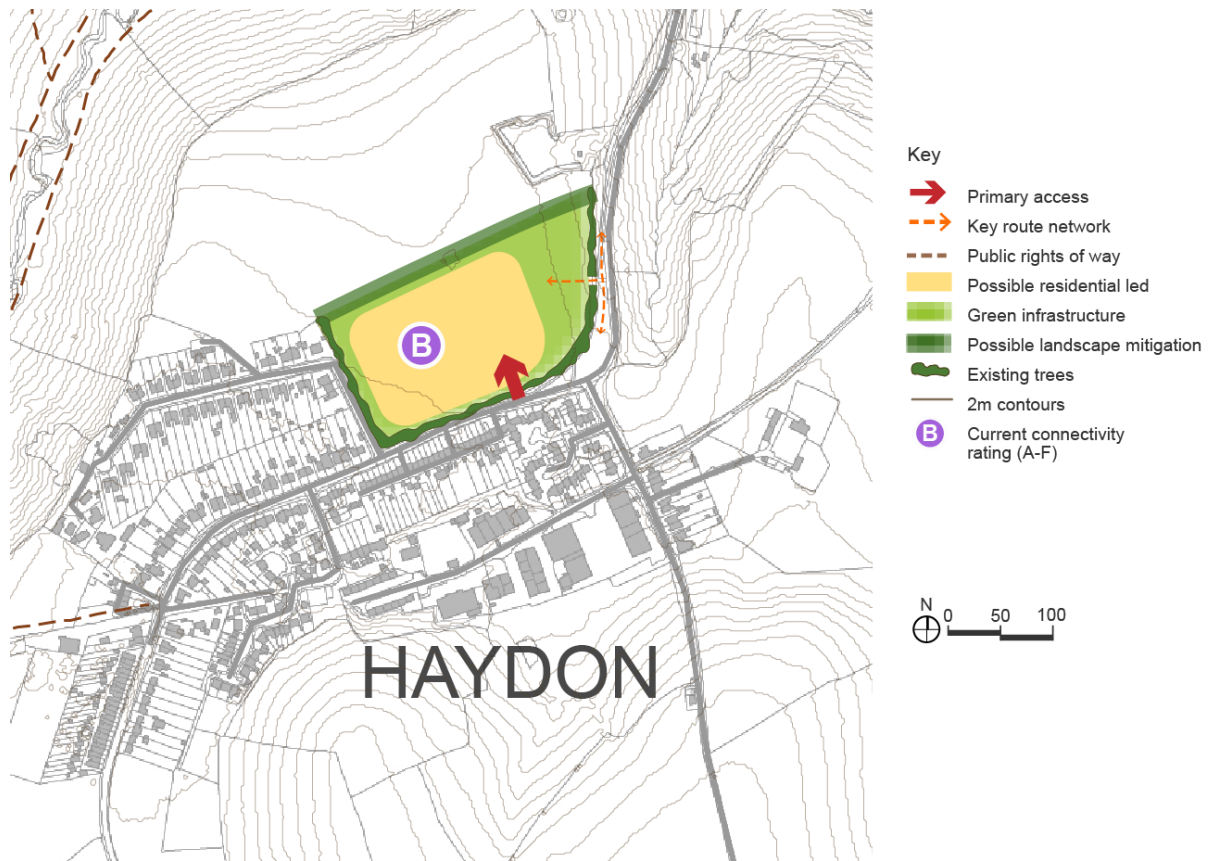


Figure 57: Map of Haydon Options

Westfield

Place Profile

7.103 Westfield is located between Midsomer Norton and Radstock. It was designated as a parish in 2011, with the boundary incorporating Westfield industrial estate and Norton Hill to the south and extending north-east to the centre of Radstock. The main road serving the area is the A367 from which both residential and industrial development extends to the east and west, housing predominantly being in the form of cul-de-sacs.

7.104 The parish has a rich history with heritage from its Roman settlement and later mining industry. Coal mining was established in the area in 1763 and became a significant industry in Westfield until the closure of the mines in the mid-late 20th century. Up until the early 19th century Westfield remained a predominantly rural area.

7.105 Development and infrastructure grew in the parish alongside its coal industry during the 19th and 20th centuries and the terraced Miners' Cottages, built to accommodate local workers, defined the street scene. During the late 20th century, following the closure of the coal industry, residential development utilised the brownfield sites with several residential cul-de-sac estates being built in this period. Other industries were also established, primarily at Westfield Industrial Estate to the southern end of the parish.

7.106 In recent years new housing development has been permitted to the south of Westfield on the other side of the border in Somerset. The majority of Radstock Town centre sits within the Radstock boundary and therefore Westfield currently lacks a local centre of its own.

7.107 There is a primary school, Fosse Way School and Bath College Somer Valley Campus.

7.108 There are two important green corridors within Westfield comprising Waterside Valley and the green land which borders the cycleway in the north which provide valuable recreational space and long-distance views into the surrounding rural landscape.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- There is a strong network of public rights of way and connections to the cycle path. Local residents would like to see access to the countryside improved.
- Public transport has been reduced in the Somer Valley with some areas having very limited access to bus services.
- The town is surrounded by green hillsides which are integral to its landscape character.
- The town's mining heritage has shaped its landscape character.
- Westfield does not have its own High Street
- Housing development has been permitted to the south of Westfield within Somerset impacting on local services

Priorities and Objectives

- Provide homes to meet the needs of the local area, including provision of homes that are affordable.
- New development should complement relevant elements of the Somer Valley Rediscovered Project to provide greater opportunities for people to engage with and enable nature recovery.
- New development should provide a greater choice of transport via sustainable and active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport). New development can link into the existing public transport network allowing for buses to become more viable.
- Ensure built and natural environments promote health and wellbeing for all.

Site Options

Westfield Industrial Estate East – Economic Use

7.109 The site is located on the southern edge of Westfield and sits adjacent to Westfield Industrial Estate. Whilst this land is being promoted for housing it

has the potential to become an extension to Westfield Industrial Estate and connect into the existing access points.

7.110 Expansion of the Industrial Estate has the potential provide the maximum floorspace of the following uses should only one use class come forward. A mix of uses would result in a lesser amount of floorspace for each use.

- Industrial – 48,240 square metres
- Office – 96,480 square metres
- Warehouse – 60,300 square metres

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Westfield Industrial Estate East – Economic Use	Development could facilitate additional employment floorspace and form an extension to a successful industrial estate.	The presence of the stream will make it difficult to develop. Visual impact of the development on the wider landscape. Setting of Kilmersdon colliery and Conservation Area No pavement access to the main road and bus routes The North East boundary is adjacent to the Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)

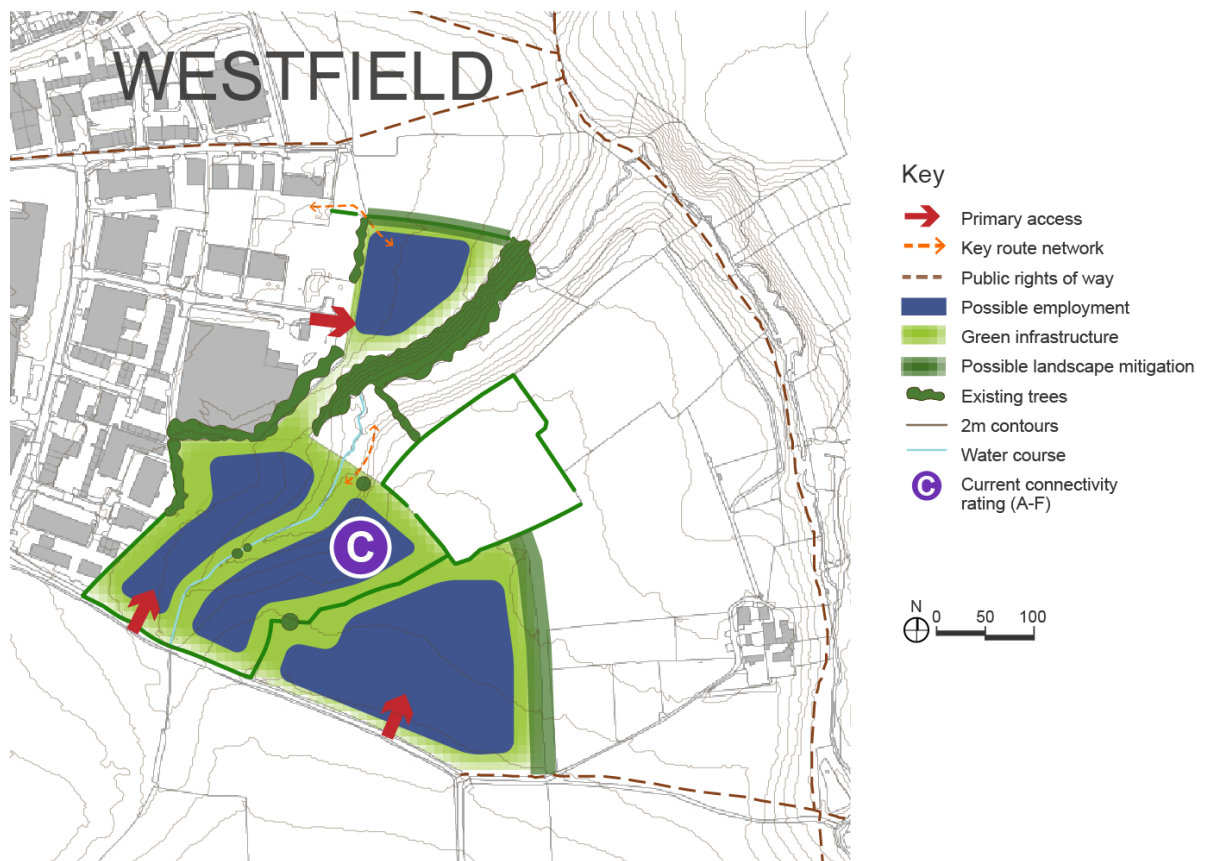


Figure 58: Map of Westfield Industrial Estate Options

Westfield Industrial Estate East – Housing

7.111 Within the previous consultation the site was also considered as a housing site. It sits adjacent to the existing Westfield industrial estate. There is currently no pavement access to the main road and the site accommodates an existing stream that flows into the waterside valley. The land could accommodate around 200 homes.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Westfield Industrial Estate East – Housing	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 200 homes. Affordable housing Development could facilitate new pavements and lower traffic speed limits. Improved connection to Hayden Batch and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	The presence of the stream will make it difficult to develop. There is no pavement access to the main road. The site is cut off from shops and services. Access would need to go through a busy industrial site. Development of this land might be more suitable for industrial/employment purposes. Visual impact of the development on the wider landscape. Setting of Kilmersdon colliery and Conservation Area No pavement access to the main road and bus routes The North East boundary is adjacent to the Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI)

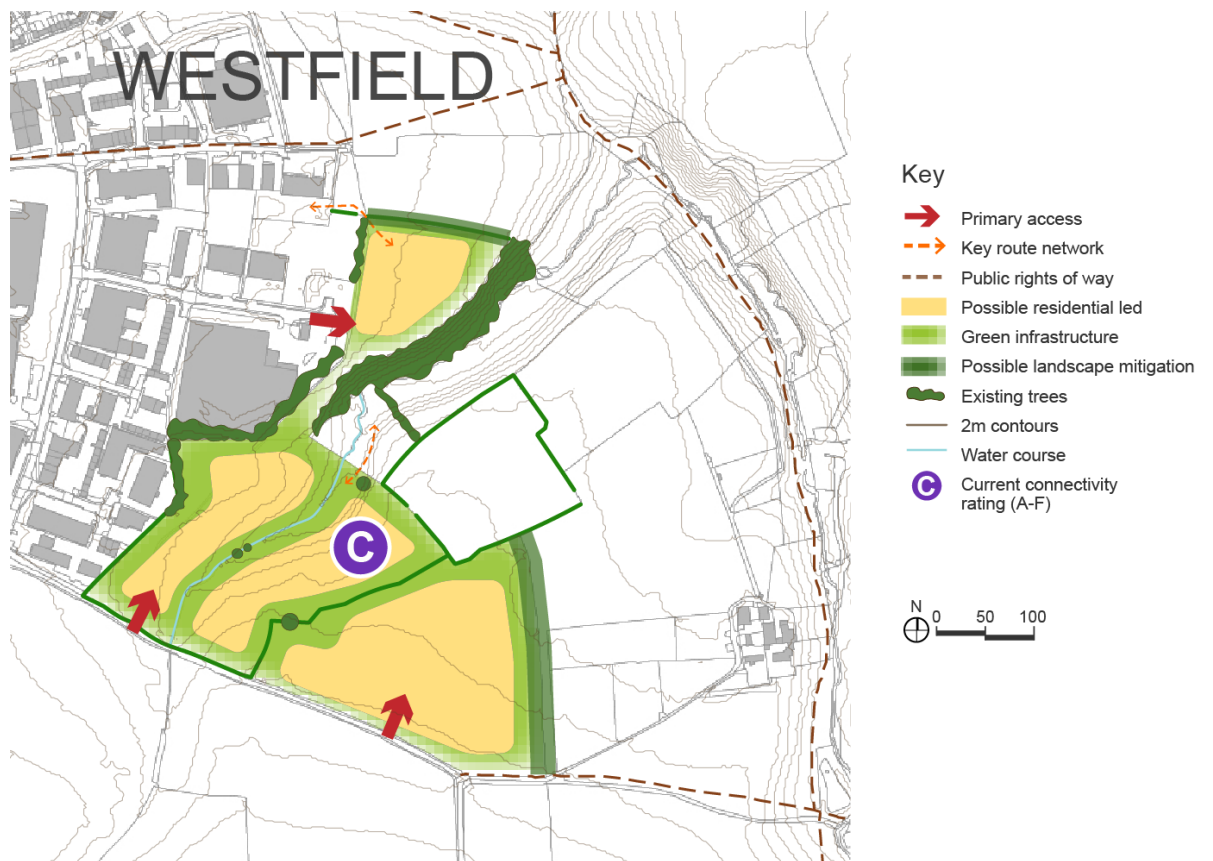


Figure 59: Map of Westfield Options, Housing

Midsomer Norton

Place Profile

7.112 Midsomer Norton is a Medieval market town which later became an important coal mining settlement during the 18-19th centuries following the discovery of coal at Welton. The railway arrived in the 1870s, providing further impetus for development investment, supported by coal mining employment at Norton Hill Colliery.

7.113 The historic core of Midsomer Norton covers the southern and eastern side of the settlement, along the B3355 and incorporating the area of Welton. Formalised expansion during the 1920's along North Road included development at Clevedon Road, Burlington Road and opposite the recreational ground at Elm View (which took the form of small terraces set back) as well as the area parallel to North Road. Westfield, located to the south of the Somerset & Dorset Railway, expanded during the late 19th and 20th centuries, with development focussed close to Norton Hill Colliery in an area characterised by short row terraces. Development continued at pace across the area through the post-war period.

7.114 The Conservation Area in Midsomer Norton is focused on the valley of the River Somer. The small settlement of Welton, located to the north-east of Midsomer Norton, forms part of the Conservation Area and can be characterised as being primarily an 18th century coal mining community. Listed buildings are principally focused within Midsomer Norton.

7.115 The town is well served by Midsomer Norton Town Centre which is being improved by the High Street regeneration programme, with ongoing masterplanning work. The town includes leisure facilities at Dragonfly leisure and the new Town Park. The town has two secondary schools and five primary schools. The Somer Valley Links Enterprise Zone sits to the north west of the town. It will be accessible by public transport links and new cycle infrastructure from the town centre.

7.116 The town is served by the bus route which connects Midsomer Norton with Bristol, Bath and Wells. But some areas of the town can be seen as less well connected including Welton and Radstock Road. The town is connected to the active travel route which connects Midsomer Norton to Radstock and the Colliers Way.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- There is a strong network of public rights of way and connections to the cycle path. Local residents would like to see access to the countryside improved.
- Public transport has been reduced in the Somer Valley with some areas having very limited access to bus services.
- The town is surrounded by green hillsides, a number of which are designated as Site of Nature Conservation Importance which are integral to its landscape character.
- The town's mining heritage has strongly influenced its landscape character.

Priorities and Objectives

- Provide homes to meet the needs of the local area, including provision of homes that are affordable.
- New development should work with the Midsomer Norton Town Centre Plan (Masterplan and Regeneration Action Plan) and help to increase footfall to the town centre.
- New development should complement relevant elements of the Somer Valley Rediscovered Project to provide greater opportunities for people to engage with and enable nature recovery.
- New development should enable a greater choice of transport via sustainable and active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport). New development can link into the existing public transport network allowing for buses to become more viable.
- Ensure built and natural environments promote health and wellbeing for all.

Land to the North of Midsomer Norton

Context

7.117 Land to the north of Midsomer Norton and west of Paulton consists of agricultural fields. The area is just over 1km walk to Midsomer Norton Town Centre. There are a number of public rights of way across the fields and some residential dwellings.

7.118 Landscape character is an important attribute of the area. The green hillsides are integral to the setting of Midsomer Norton. Any new development should be confined to the plateau above the town and should not encroach onto the green hillsides or the landscape setting of Midsomer Norton.

7.119 The site is currently accessed by a series of narrow lanes and any development would need to improve access to the site, incorporating wider roadways and footways. The western part of the site is within walking distance of the 172 bus route providing access to Paulton, Bristol and Bath. Should a wider area be brought forward for development then there is an opportunity to provide a new link between Paulton and Clandown. Development should provide pedestrian links to public transport, town centre facilities and schools.

7.120 The site sits to the north of the designated Conservation Area which extends up the green hillsides. To the west of the site planning permission has recently been granted for a solar farm. Nearby Bowditch Quarry is an SSSI.

Site Options

7.121 The site option presented below could provide up to around 1,000 homes, as well as supporting facilities and green infrastructure. The development would need to be landscape led with screening needed to the north and south alongside landscape buffers to ecological assets.

7.122 The site is currently accessed by a series of narrow lanes. Therefore, any development would need to significantly improve the current access to the site, incorporating wider roads and pavements. Part of the site to the west is within walking distance of Phillis Hill providing access to bus services to the local area as well as Bristol and Bath.

7.123 There is a potential opportunity to provide a new route linking Paulton and Clandown. It is envisaged that the route would play a strategic role, removing vehicles from Midsomer Norton and Radstock town centres and helping to relieve congested local roads. This will enable significant improvements to be made to the wider area enabling enhancement of the public realm and increasing space and facilities for sustainable modes of transport. Development will also provide active travel links to public transport, town centre facilities and schools to improve connectivity and make sustainable travel a viable realistic option for more people.

7.124 If this option is pursued through the local plan, further detailed studies will need to be conducted to understand the broader impacts including the effect on the wider transport network.

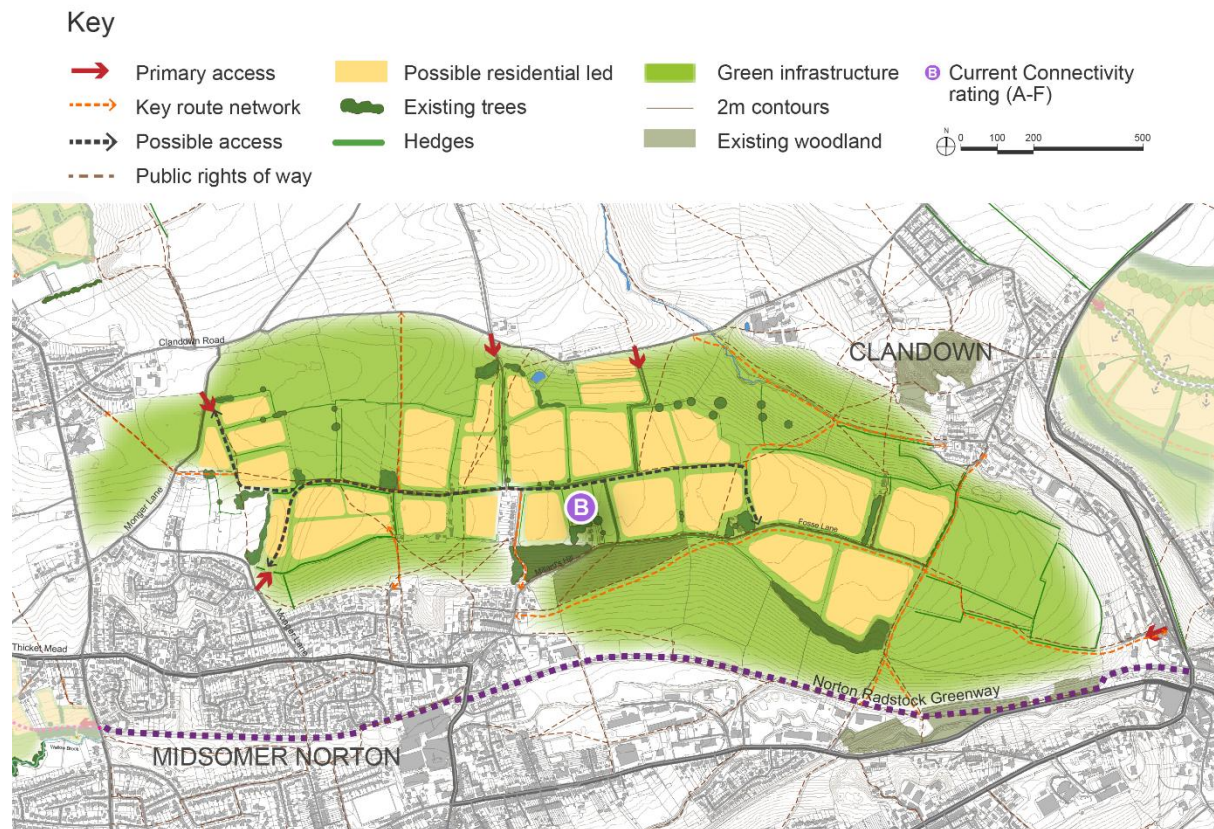


Figure 60: Map of North Midsomer Norton Option

	Description
Opportunities	Provide up to 1,000 homes, encompassing an element of affordable housing. New community and recreation facilities. Improvements to existing road junctions. Improve access to the countryside Connections to the existing Radstock Greenway and potential to improve the existing route.
Constraints	The landscape setting of the existing settlement Cumulative impact on school places Setting of nearby heritage assets. Cumulative impact on secondary school places Impact on the setting of Conservation Areas and boundary extension to Radstock Conservation Area Development between Radstock and Midsomer Norton will impact on the historic patterns of development
Mitigation required	Landscaping Community facilities Improvement of public rights of way and roads Pavement access to local bus routes, cycle paths and the town centre.
Further evidence required	Landscape plan Ecological assessment Highways and traffic assessment

Smaller (non-strategic) Sites

7.125 In addition to the strategic locations the following non-strategic sites have been identified

7.126 Midsomer Norton South A and B - the sites are located on the southern edge of Midsomer Norton adjacent to existing housing estates. The current pavement access ends adjacent to the site.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Midsomer Norton South A and B	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 130 to 170 homes. Affordable housing Extension to existing residential development. Development could facilitate new pavements and lower traffic speed limits. Potential for a pedestrian route to Staddlestones Park	The site is not close to local shops and services. Limited access to public transport South eastern boundary is adjacent to the River Somer SNCI

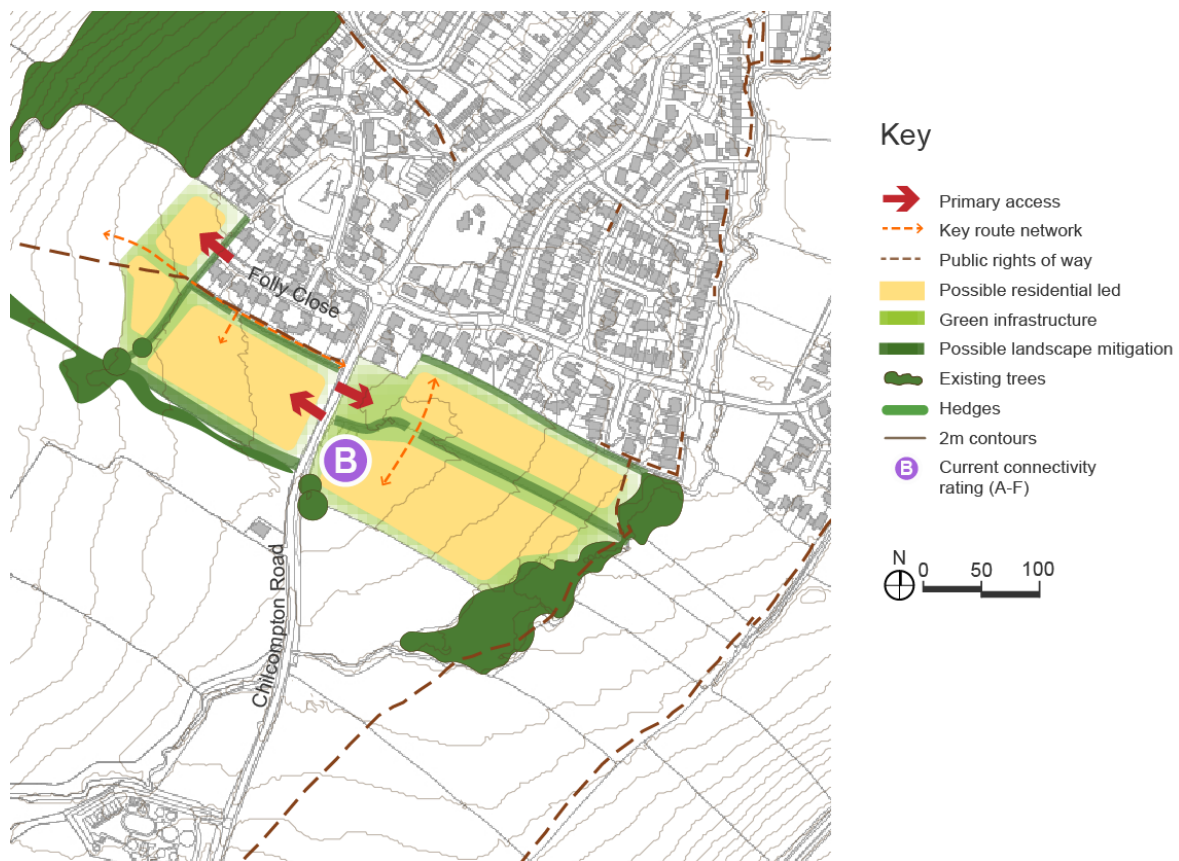


Figure 61: Map of South Midsomer Norton Options

Thicket Mead A and B

7.127 The sites are located on the western edge of Midsomer Norton close to the Tesco store at Old Mills. Site A is a sloping site that sits close to the valley floor. Site B is a plateau site adjacent to Tesco that slopes down toward the valley.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Thicket Mead A and B	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 250-300 homes. Infill gaps within existing development. Opportunity for better pedestrian connections between Tesco and Midsomer Norton. Opportunity to extend the Greenway along the disused railway line	Due to land ownership this will result in piecemeal development and there is limited opportunity for cohesive design. Landscape setting, including the route of the old railway line Site is adjacent to Springfield Colliery and Wellow Brooks SNCIs

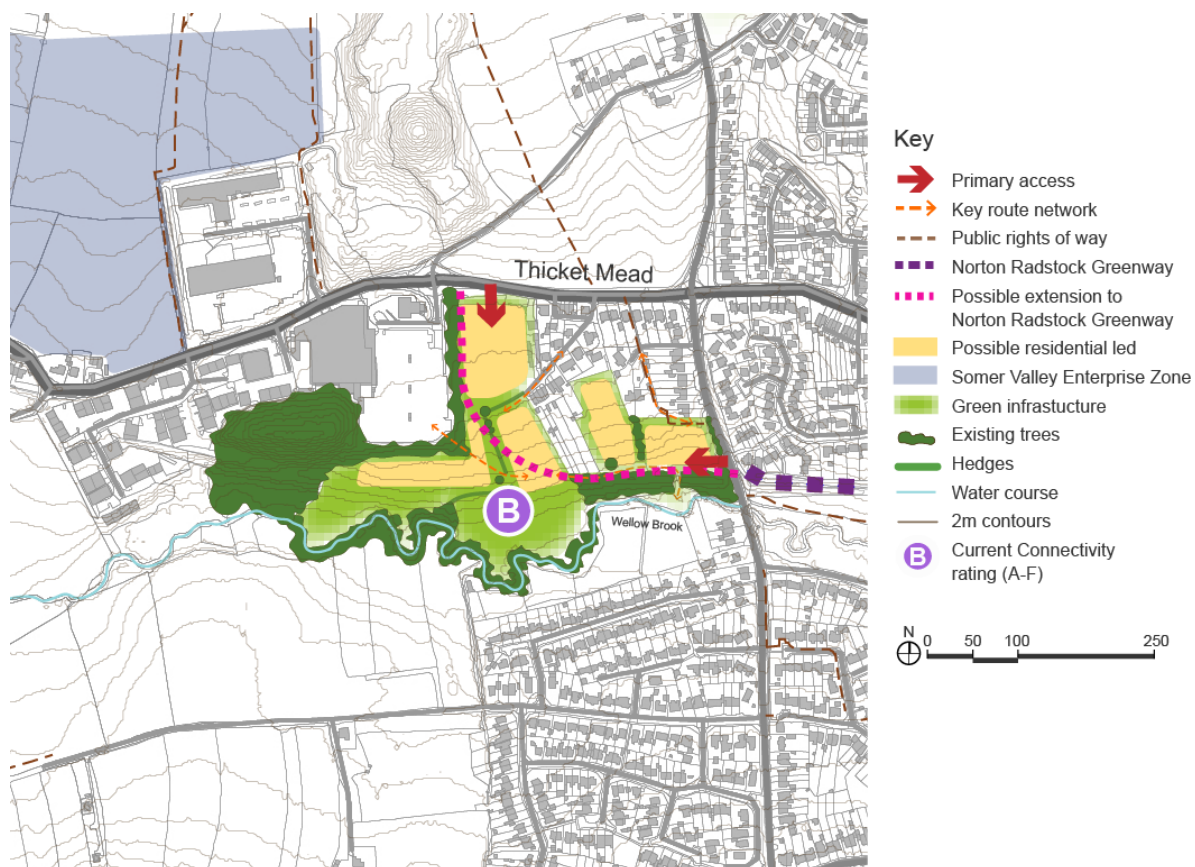


Figure 62: Map of Thicket Mead Options

Paulton

Place Profile

7.128 In Paulton the decline in coal mining brought opportunities in manufacturing and, notably, printing, with the print works on the lower slopes of the Cam Valley being a major employer for the settlement before it finally closed in 2005. Following the demise of Purnell's printworks, house building has expanded northwards and, in the northeast of the village, there is a concentration of recreational/sport facilities including Paulton Sports Club, Purnell's Bowls Club and the Cam Valley Sports Club. Paulton High Street is narrow with narrow footways meaning the area is dominated by the car. The Paulton Memorial Hospital is positioned to the south of the village along the B3355. Paulton is served by one primary school and a pre-school.

7.129 Paulton Conservation Area is split into several parcels, with the original part of the Conservation Area focused on the core of the village located on a ridgeline. As with Radstock, the designation reflects the coal mining and industrial heritage of the area as represented by the buildings and landscape surrounding the village.

Key Issues and Opportunities

- Paulton has good public transport access to Bristol and Bath however, opportunities to access other destinations are limited.
- The village is surrounded by green hillsides which are integral to its landscape character.
- The village's mining heritage has shaped its landscape character.
- The village has been subject to substantial growth to the north

Priorities and Objective

- Provide homes to meet the needs of the local area, including provision of homes that are affordable.
- New development should enable a greater choice of transport via sustainable and active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport). New development can link into the existing public transport network allowing for buses to become more viable.
- Ensure built and natural environments promote health and wellbeing for all.

Small non-strategic sites

Farrington Road South and North

7.130 Farrington Road North sits to the north of Farrington Road adjacent to Westview and Downsway. It is a relatively flat site. Farrington Road South is accessed from Abbots Farm Close and slopes upwards to the south.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Farrington Road South and North	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 70 – 100 homes. Affordable housing Extend 20mph speed limit and provide pavement access to the village centre.	Due to the location of the site development would likely be characterised by cul-de-sacs with little connectivity to the surrounding settlement. Impact on the existing landscape. Medieval field system and potential archaeological interest.



Figure 63: Map of Farrington Road South and North Options

Paulton East

7.131 The site is located to the east of Paulton village. Access to the site would need to be taken from Alexandra Park.

Option	Opportunities	Constraints
Paulton East	Opportunity for small scale additional housing of approximately 190 - 230 homes. Affordable housing	Due to the location of the site development would likely be characterised by cul-de-sacs with little connectivity to the surrounding settlement. Impact on the existing landscape. Impact on former colliery and potential for contaminated land Impact on heritage assets including the former Memorial hospital



Figure 64: Map of Paulton East Option

Farrington Gurney

Place Profile

- 7.132 Farrington Gurney sits on the junction of the A37 and A362 and has good access to the surrounding towns and cities. The village already supports a variety of facilities including a school, pub, restaurant and a community facility.
- 7.133 The Somer Valley Links project and Somer Valley Enterprise Zone will provide an off road cycle path into Midsomer Norton. The Somer Valley Links project also proposes a new mobility hub at Farrington Gurney.
- 7.134 Historically, the development of the village has moved away from St John's Church, which is a listed building and now stands on its own in fields to the east of the village. The isolated setting of the church will be an important consideration for any development proposals.
- 7.135 Farrington Gurney is surrounded by rolling, relatively flat countryside. The gentle escarpment to the south creates a boundary for any proposed development. The Nature Reserve at Hollow Marsh and countryside are accessible via local Public Rights of Way.
- 7.136 The main constraint is that almost all of the land within the area of search is classified as Grade 1 in the Agricultural Land Classification, and land adjacent, to the south, is classified as Grade 3a. Grade 1 and 3a are referred to as 'best and most versatile' land, where development should be avoided.
- 7.137 There are opportunities for a good size residential and landscape-led development. The new mobility hub along the A37 would help with access to public transport, and active travel is promoted through the Somer Valley Links.

7.138 To improve walking, wheeling and cycling permeability throughout the village, the existing main roads need to be downgraded and vehicle speeds need to be reduced to provide improved safety. The existing pedestrian and cycle routes need to be improved and widened. A thorough archaeological investigation would be needed as part of the planning and development process.

7.139 There is an Air Quality Management Area within Farrington Gurney at the junction of the A37 and A362. An increase in development to the village may impact on air quality and any new development may need to be designed so as to avoid damage to future air quality.

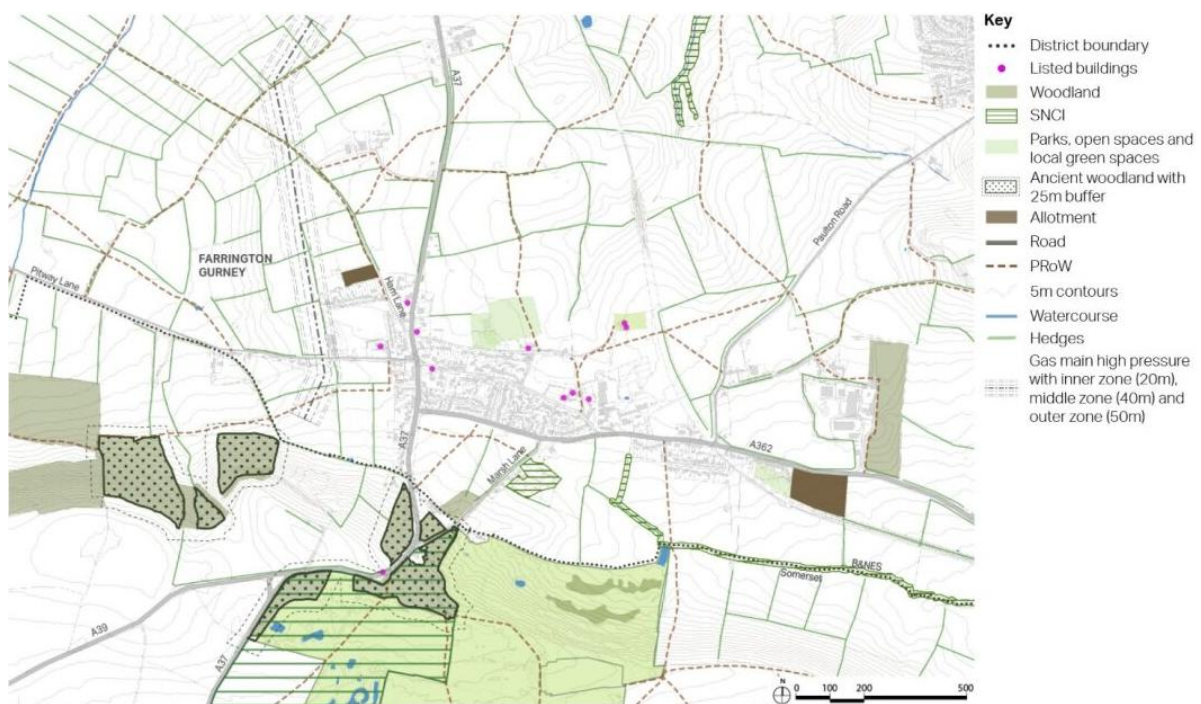


Figure 65: Map of Farrington Gurney

Key Issues

- Setting of the existing Grade II listed church.
- Setting of the surrounding landscape.
- Impact of development on the existing highway network and access to public transport
- Impact on the Farrington Gurney Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and AQMA in Temple Cloud
- Distance from Midsomer Norton town centre is over 3 miles.
- Secondary age pupils from any new development at Farrington Gurney would need to be transported to Norton Hill School in Midsomer Norton, at cost to the council. These pupils would not be able to travel to school sustainably by active modes.
- Agricultural land classification

Priorities and Objectives

7.140 The following list sets out the key priorities and objectives for Farrington Gurney. Many of the priorities can be addressed by new development. However, there are some priorities that won't be addressed through new development but will be addressed through other policies in the local plan or initiatives undertaken by the council or by other stakeholders.

- Around 500 homes could be provided, including housing that is affordable and meets local needs
- The existing primary school has limited capacity to accept new children. Therefore, a new school would need to be provided which influences the scale or quantum of development required.
- Opportunities to improve local services and facilities.
- There is an opportunity to connect to the Somer Valley links project which along with the Somer Valley Enterprise Zone will provide an off-road cycle link to Midsomer Norton. This will provide cycle connections to the network in Midsomer Norton.
- Landscape mitigation would be required to soften the impact of the development.
- Ensure any new development provides mitigation measures so as not to cause harm to the Air Quality Management Area.

Site Options

7.141 The previous options consultation included a strategic option for housing to the north of the village. This land is situated wholly within Grade 1 farmland and therefore its development would result in a substantial loss of Grade 1 farmland.

7.142 The land to the north of the village also sits adjacent to the Grade II listed St John the Baptist Church. The church's isolated setting away from the village is integral to its history and therefore development in this area could harm the historic setting of the church.

7.143 Therefore the option of development to the north of the village is not proposed to be taken forward.

7.144 The development option to the south of the village proposed below would require vehicular access off the A37, which would need to be downgraded (e.g. speeds reduced) as it passes through the village, in order that safe pedestrian and cycle routes and crossings can be provided.

7.145 Green links throughout the residential areas would enhance local biodiversity and provide a high-quality public realm and direct access to the countryside.

7.146 The new development needs to be respectful of the historic character of the village when it comes to connecting to the existing settlement. Historic routes could be used for active travel, and it is important to retain and enhance the local character of the settlement.

7.147 Development could also incorporate small scale economic uses that are compatible with a residential area.

Option 1

7.148 The existing road running through the site (Marsh Lane) would become an important connecting route, providing access to the main body of development. There will be additional green links and active travel routes connecting to the existing village and, in particular to the various amenities and services, such as the school and the Co-op.

7.149 Residential parcels would be located within a series of green corridors and buffers to protect the Site of Nature Conservation Interest in the centre of the area and Rush Hill Wood, an Ancient Woodland to the south. Marsh Lane which connects the two areas of woodland is identified as a Nature Recovery Network opportunity for woodland connectivity. The buffer along the southern boundary also helps protect the setting of the Grade II registered park and garden of Ston Easton Park to the south.

7.150 Planting along the A362, which runs between the existing settlement and the new development, would help to integrate it into the settlement, framing views towards the ridge to the south and to key buildings within the existing settlement.

7.151 There would be a need for pedestrian improvements along the A362, which provides access for vehicles and active travel modes to the development. The Somer Valley Links proposes an active travel route along the road to connect with active travel links in Midsomer Norton.

7.152 Evidence from DEFRA mapping suggest that the land is partly Grade 1 farmland (high grade) and partly Grade 3 (lower grade). Anecdotal evidence has been provided through the previous options consultation that none of the site is Grade 1. Therefore, if this site were to be allocated for development in the Draft Local Plan further investigation would be required to ascertain if any of the site is high grade farmland.

7.153 Marsh Lane colliery is an undesignated heritage asset and important landscape feature. Its setting should be carefully considered if this site were to be allocated.

7.154 There is limited access to public transport particularly going east towards Midsomer Norton. Further crossing points would be required to provide pedestrian access to bus stops.

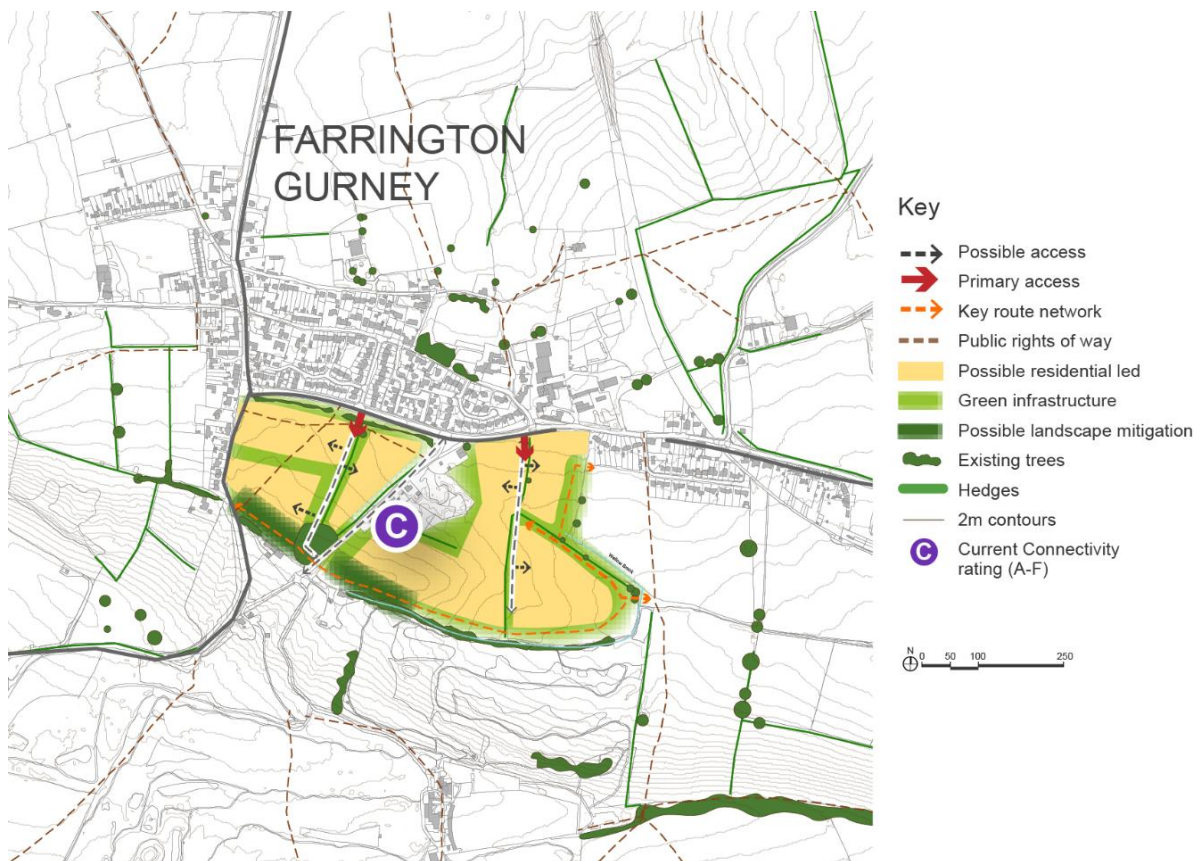


Figure 66: Map of South Farrington Gurney Options

Farrington Gurney (south) - Option 1	Description
Opportunities	Approximately 400-500 homes of which an element would be Affordable Housing Small scale economic development compatible with residential uses.
Constraints	Site of Nature Conservation Importance Ancient Woodland Mendip Hills Agricultural Land Classification Air Quality Management Area Marsh Lane Colliery Limited access to public transport
Mitigation required	New primary School Highway improvement on the A362 and A37 Landscape buffer to ancient woodland and SNCI Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to Norton Hill School in Midsomer Norton at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using active modes of travel. Consideration of site layouts to avoid canyoning and avoid harm to air quality.
Further evidence required	Archaeological assessment Landscape assessment Contaminated land assessment Agricultural land assessment Air quality impact assessment Transport assessment

Option 2

7.155 The option for 400-500 homes would yield a quantum of development that could facilitate a new 210-place primary school. However, current assessment of primary school admissions suggests that the school could potentially accommodate children generated by a residential development providing around 50 homes. Therefore, option 2 proposes a smaller development to the south of the village for 50 homes.

Farrington Gurney (south) - Option 2	Description
Opportunities	Approximately 50 homes of which an element would be Affordable Housing
Constraints	Site of Nature Conservation ImportanceAncient Woodland Mendip Hills Agricultural Land Classification Air Quality Management Area Marsh Lane Colliery
Mitigation required	Highway improvement on the A362 and A37 Landscape buffer to ancient woodland and SNCI Secondary school pupils would need to be transported to Norton Hill School in Midsomer Norton at cost to the council, and would not be able to reach school using actives modes of travel. Consideration of site layouts to avoid canyoning and avoid harm to air quality
Further evidence required	Archaeological assessment Landscape assessment Agricultural land assessment Air quality impact assessment Transport assessment